

Q GUILD

Midlands Regional Meeting held on Monday 24 February 2014
at Chase Farm, Weeford Road, Roughley, Sutton Coldfield
commencing 2.30pm

Present:

Robert Jones	Joint Chair	Walter Smith Fine Foods Ltd
Stephen Robinson	Joint Chair	Robinsons Butchers
Nigel Rose	Vice Chair	Walter Smith Fine Foods Ltd
Gaynor Richards	Minute Secretary	Walter Smith Fine Foods Ltd
Allan Bennett		Alan Bennett Ltd
Scott & Kelly Barlow		Barlows Butchers
Richard Taylor & Paul Swain		Owen Taylor
Russell Allan & Simon Kelly		Aubrey Allan
Nick McAndrews, Richard Carter, Colin Beaman, Brian Dunkley		Chase Farm Shop
Tony Yorath, Stephen Hewitt, Jack Fisher		Walter Smith Fine Foods Ltd

Corporate Members:

Mike Warmer, Chris Davies, Paul Beaman, Sean Taylor (A W Smith) Dalziel Ltd

The meeting was held concurrently with the Midlands Region BBQ Event and the overall winners of each category are stated at the conclusion of these Minutes. Gold, Silver & Bronze award winners will receive separate notification of their awards and certificates applicable.

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Robert Jones(RJ) opened the meeting and welcomed members and corporate members.

RB thanked everyone at Chase Farm for hosting the meeting and Dalziel Ltd for agreeing to judge the Midlands Region BBQ competition. Thanks were also extended to Nick McAndrews of Chase Farm for his invaluable assistance in cooking the BBQ products.

Apologies had been received from Nigel Poxon (Poxon Butchers) and Arthur Wright (C & N Wright)

2 SUMMER EATING PRESENTATION BY DALZIEL, VERSTEGEN & MRC

A superb product display by Dalziel was available for members' to view and obtain inspiration.

Chris Davies introduced Verstegen's new PERUVIAN range explaining that the range is a totally different innovation from that existing and should prove useful with the range's South American influence and World Cup in mind. A Peruvian range booklet is now available from Dalziel.

MRC have launched a new range of Flava Glaze RUB with an American concept. Scott Barlow drew attention to the Seaweed & Dried Garlic pot by Verstegen which was excellent sprinkled over Roast Potatoes. Also recommended was the use of Verstegen's Royal Mint & Rosemary Oil over the top of MRC Garden Mint - this helped to prevent the base coat Garden Mint from drying out and extended the products shelf-life (eg minted lamb chops).

3 DEMONSTRATION MACHINERY & DISPLAY EQUIPMENT BY DALZIEL (A W SMITH)

Sean Tower(ST) explained that since partnering with Dalziel, Smiths are now able to offer a wider range of products, big name products at best value prices. A W Smiths 2014 brochure is now available and ST urged members to take a look at the service now available and to contact their Sales Team for further information.



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Gordon Hepburn

Chairman:
Brindon Addy

RJ expressed his thanks to Dalziel and AW Smiths for their excellent presentations.

4 ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

(a) RJ advised that the Executive Meeting had received resignations from Frank Taylor and John Mettrick.

(b) At this point Allan Bennett (AB) expressed his dissatisfaction with the current format of the Q Guild annual inspection and the matter was discussed at some length.

It was generally felt that the inspection was too extreme on the side of Hygiene/Cleaning without any consideration on a shop's ability in respect of quality of meat, display, ticketing etc. The inspection had simply become a duplication of the Environmental Inspection and it was suggested that perhaps only businesses that had achieved less than a "5" Score on the Door by local authority should receive a Hygiene Audit by the Q Guild.

RJ explained that the Guild is only responding to legislation in view of the fact that most butchers businesses were now classed as full manufacturing businesses. RJ added that the annual inspections can initiate a good housekeeping discipline and act as a catalyst for addressing outstanding shop maintenance matters.

It was concluded that whilst members recognised the importance of hygiene and cleanliness within their shops, the inspection should be two-fold: an element of hygiene and that of shop appearance in general which should include quality of meat, display, ticketing etc. in order to ensure that shops maintained the requisite Q Guild standards.

(c) Steve Robinson(SR) and Tony Yorath(TY) both expressed their view that the Guilds move to introduce benchmarking would be a useful tool in taking the Guild forward.

(d) RJ advised that the Mystery Shopper project would re-commence during the course of the year.

(d) **Trip to Ireland to view Elite Butchers** It was agreed that late May 2014 would be a suitable time to visit and RB would progress making trip arrangements with Sandy Boyd. **Action RB.**

(e) RB drew members' attention to Walter Smith's Valentine Day promotion which had worked well and they would move this forward to a Mother's Day promotion. SR explained that he was doing a similar promotion. Simon Kelly(SK) advised that Aubrey Allen were also undertaking promotions of this nature and had included a £5.00 Voucher for use in March. It was concluded that these "Grab & Go" type promotions were becoming popular and SK added that a Friday Night Deal for Two would be a good idea for customers on their way home from work.

(f) **On-line Business** The matter of selling online was raised and discussed by members. Those members who undertook this side of the business explained that relative costs involved did make it difficult if not impossible to make it pay. Tony Yorath(TY) expressed the view that you had to have good value, regular customers to make it work and pitfalls do exist with courier services etc. It was concluded that perhaps using local postcodes is the best option and maybe undertaking in Frozen form rather than Fresh.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING



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The date proposed for the next Midlands Region meeting (Christmas Planning etc.) was given as Monday 1 September 2014 (venue and time to be decided).

Meeting concluded

Midlands Region BBQ Event

At this point members were invited to view Chase Farm's herd of Limousin cattle whilst BBQ competition cooking continued.

The meeting was held concurrently with the Midlands BBQ Event and following judging/evaluation of members' products by Corporate members present, Dalziel Limited, the overall winners in each of the six categories were announced as following:

Pork Sausage	Allan Bennett Limited
Beefburger	Walter Smith Fine Foods (Lichfield)
Sirloin Steak	Walter Smith Fine Foods (Knowle)
BBQ Speciality Sausage	Allan Bennett Limited - Pork & Caramelised Onion
Speciality Burger	Walter Smith Fine Foods (Albrighton) - Lamb & Apricot Burger
BBQ Product	Aubrey Allen - Flat-iron/Harrissa Boneless Shoulder of Lamb

The above winners will attend the Regional Finals to be held at the Weber BBQ Academy, Oxford on Tuesday, 29 April 2014. Further details will be available in due course.



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