



Harvey ahead of the herd

When people are savouring a taste of WA, they choose Harvey Beef.

WA's legendary Harvey Beef brand has long been one of the nation's most enduring meat exporters with its world-class beef products exported to more than 30 countries.

In the past two years the iconic WA producer has been undergoing a major rejuvenation, which has nearly doubled its capacity to meet growing global demand for safe naturally grown beef products.

"Now, more than ever, buyers are going beyond taste and presentation." Harvey Beef chief executive Michael Rapattoni says.

"Consumers want to know the history of the beef products they are buying, where the animals have been grown, and what they have been fed.

"Fortunately for us, the lush rolling green hills and temperate climate of Harvey provides some of the best natural conditions for growing beef in the world, and our geographical isolation also ensures we produce the safest beef on the planet"

In order to meet the challenges and opportunities faced by a much more demanding and discerning international marketplace, Harvey Beef operates within a culture of continual quality improvement throughout manufacturing, equipment, service, and product delivery.

"Our innovative processing procedures meet the highest production, safety, and hygiene standards, which ultimately results in premium beef products for consumers to enjoy," says Mr Rapattoni.

Harvey Beef meets all legislative requirements under the Australian Quarantine Inspection Services (AQIS) to which the plant and all operations conform, and is fully accredited for export to Japan, under the JAS Japanese program, as well as being USDA approved. It also complies with the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) that has been developed to enable lifetime traceability of all Australian Livestock.

Currently 145, 000 grass and grain-fed animals are processed each year and this quota is expected to increase to excess of 200,000 in the near future

In early 2008 Harvey Beef significantly increased its carcasses boning capacity with the purchase of Fremantle City Processors, which now operates as the Harvey Industries Processing Centre.

"Recently the plant went to two shifts, with our aim to process 1000 bodies per day by September this year," Mr Rapattoni says. "We are also in the process of relaunching our brand and improved suite of diverse high quality beef products many of which we previewed at Food Asia 2008."



Michael
Rapattoni from
Harvey Beef.



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Harvey Beef chief executive Michael Rapattoni says the Harvey area provides some of the best natural conditions for growing beef anywhere in the world



Prime price for prime meat in Busselton

by Usman Azad

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BUSSELTON residents are paying more for prime cuts of meat than their counterparts in Bunbury and Bridgetown, according to the Red Meat Action Group (RMAG).

This was the outcome of a walkthrough by the group in retail outlets in the three South West towns and in Perth.

RMAG chair Gary Buller admitted that the meat in Busselton was a higher quality and was probably reflected in the price.

However, he said the issue was where the money was going to.

"If producers are being paid more for the meat because of the quality then that's okay, but if they aren't then it's exploitation," he said.

The group has claimed that the major supermarkets were "screwing" meat producers and processors by not paying them more for the meat but still making a profit at the checkout.

Last month in Bunbury, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) conducted its country-wide investigation into grocery prices.

The ACCC will present its report to Federal Consumer Affairs minister Chris Bowen in late July.

Mr Buller said that producers were being paid prices similar to the 80s without current day expenses being accounted for and warned that the beef industry was "diabolical and unsustainable".

"Retailers are going to have to pay more or things are going to get worse," he said.

Mr Buller also flagged the introduction of "Meat Watch".

He said the program would be similar to Fuel Watch but would publicise retailers who sell WA meat.

"South-West meat is first class, it's actually world class," he said.

"We are having low-quality imported meat undermining our local industries."

Vasse Blackrock Angus Stud farmer Ken MacLeay said that he accepted the price for cattle but hoped the situation would improve.

"I think we should sit tight and see how things go," he said.

However, if the current benchmark price remained the same in the long term there would be less Western Australian cattle.

"I think that is a given," he said.



Counting on the cut: Vasse Blackrock Angus Stud farmer Ken MacLeay is prepared to sit tight and see what happens with meat prices. PHOTO BY LEONIE PAINE