



**From gate to plate and hoof to tooth**

From gate to plate and hoof to tooth, often heard when talking about food provenance, but rarely experienced by many. But this is certainly not the case for a group of IHG Chefs who recently enjoyed a full day out in the West Country to witness firsthand how beef is procured and produced. The day started at the Somerset premises of RWM with Richard Phelps, MD, giving a brief overview of the operation before all donned full protective clothing (sadly no photographs were taken as there were some sights to behold!) to start a full tour of the operation. The boning hall was the first stop where a Master Butcher cutting demonstration showed the Chefs, led by Development Chef Jayne Spreadborough, how primals are broken down to produce the main steak cuts before moving on into the Abattoir and lairage. Presentations were made by Hugh Judd of EBLEX, Gavin Iles of Blade Farming and Paul Summerton of Fairfax Meadow before driving into Wiltshire where all enjoyed a visit to a Blade beef farm near Malmesbury owned by Mr Collins. Marc Frankl and Matt Gell, of iTrade Network, both agreed that the whole day gave everyone a greater insight into the food chain and commented how the Chefs were impressed with the passion and commitment demonstrated by everyone they had met that day.

**Market News**

**Beef** -UK cattle prices finished up 3% on the month, 22.6% higher than a year ago for R4L deadweight carcasses with market predictions saying these increase have further to run yet, Irish prices once again are even higher. All beef cuts have increased again into October with fore-quarter cuts for braising, dicing and mincing being particularly strong, this is very early in the season for such increases so watch these cuts as we head toward the cold weather as they have further to rise. Topsides, silversides and knuckles have also risen sharply and early as we head toward the festive season we expect to see record cost prices! Imported beef prices remain very strong with very poor supply, beef from Argentina and Uruguay is becoming a rare site whilst Australian meat is available but only at top Dollar. In summary there is still a shortage of imported beef coming into Europe from any of the major beef exporting countries, cattle will be short across Europe and seasonal increases in demand will see prices rise. Forward projections for World beef supply make grim reading, we expect to see very difficult market conditions now until early next year at best, and only weaker demand will change things.

**Lamb** - British lamb is in good supply and prices are at the seasonal low point with carcasses being only 8% more expensive than last year which is the smallest year on year gap so far this new season, legs and best ends seem good value for great quality product. Imported lamb is expensive and is not good value, we do not expect these prices to ease for the foreseeable future.

**Pork** -Pork, bacon and gammon prices are stable so represent best value for our customers

**Poultry & Game** -Turkey prices have stabilised for the time being as demand across Europe steadies, however all forecasts see record high Christmas pricing! Chicken prices are stable. Venison stocks are short and prices are rising.



**Grab Bag Appeal**

Fairfax Meadow chose to support our supplier and local business Hardy Signs in their charity appeal in aid of Burton Hospitals.

Grab Bags are mobile resuscitation units that can be placed around the hospitals so that emergency car can be given rapidly, so far they have raised £3,000. They are hoping to raise £10,000 if you wish to help please contact [adam@hardysigns.co.uk](mailto:adam@hardysigns.co.uk)



**Butchery School Open for Business**

Fairfax Meadow opens its butchery school with its first intake of eight apprentices next month. Our intention is to train our apprentices to a high standard of butchery to fill the skills shortage we have found in the current market.

The apprentices study for an NVQ in meat and poultry processing and over a period of 24 months will learn to become butchers. For further information please contact [Yvonne.Yates@fairfaxmeadow.co.uk](mailto:Yvonne.Yates@fairfaxmeadow.co.uk)