

## **But is it an Aussie HAMburger?**

It's time to put the ham back in the burger with Australian Ham Week (10–16 November 2013) – the celebration of Australia's finest, home-grown ham.

The best 100 per cent Australian hams will be officially announced as part of Australian Ham Week and the Australian PorkMark Ham Awards for Excellence on Monday 11 November at 8.30am.

The Awards are open to all butchers and smallgoods processors that make their ham from Australian grown pork, with this year's competition receiving 146 entries. The Australian PorkMark Ham Awards for Excellence is divided into three categories; Traditional Artisan Bone-In Leg and Artisan Boneless, and for the first time in 2013, the 'Nationally Available' category. Key judging criteria including appearance, texture, aroma and taste.

The addition of the 'Nationally Available' ham category was in response to consumers who were unable to purchase the previously crowned best hams due to geographic location. The 'Nationally Available' ham category is open to processors who make a ham that is available in at least one retail outlet of every state and territory of Australia. A total of 11 hams were entered into this year's competition from five different processors.

The judging of the best Australian hams is carried out by true ham "aficionado's" and includes Fleishmeister Horst Schurger, who has a Master's degree in Butchering and Smallgoods from the Master College in Mönchengladbach Germany. Mr Schurger is ably accompanied by two chefs, Paul McDonald and Simon Bestley. Between them, McDonald and Bestley have broad international experience working in Michelin starred restaurants, cruise liners and premier teaching institutions.

Australian Ham Week and the Australian PorkMark Ham Awards for Excellence were initiated to raise awareness around the \$10m worth of imported pork that arrives on Australian shores every week, equating to over 2.7 million kilos, or around 52,000 pigs. In addition, Australian ham accounts for about 35 per cent of the total domestic ham market, with the rest being made from imported pork meat from countries with different food preparation and health food standards to our own, and are often heavily subsidised by the exporting nations which creates an uneven playing field. Some 75 per cent of the overall smallgoods\*\* consumed in Australia is made from imported pork.

As a response to this, Australian Pork Limited (APL) introduced the PorkMark - a square pink label that clearly shows when ham (or smallgoods) is made from Australian pork, making local produce easier to identify for consumers. With Christmas looming, the message is clear: Look for the pink PorkMark label when choosing a leg ham for Christmas or ask the butcher for ham on the bone to ensure that it is Australian. All bone-in ham can only be Australian.

A number of venues around Australia will be featuring a 'HAMburger' to celebrate Australian Ham Week. Visit [www.pork.com.au](http://www.pork.com.au) for a full list of participating restaurants and retail activity and the full list of individual State winner can also be found here.

\*\*NOTE: Imported pork meat can ONLY be used in processed products. All fresh pork has to be Australian – by law.

And the competition winners are...

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**Overall Winner and Best Australian Ham**

Paul Rae            Master Meats QLD (also known as Aussie Smokehouse)    07 5309 5797

**Traditional Bone-in Leg Ham**

1st	Paul Rae	Master Meats Qld	07 5309 5797
2nd	John Bartlett	Wattle City Meats Vic	03 5460 4637
3rd	Franz Knoll	Barossa Fine Foods SA	08 8447 6200

**Boneless Ham**

1st	Tony Rapone	Bertocchi Smallgoods Vic	03 9355 5109
2nd	John Yeo	Westridge Meats Qld	07 4635 6611
3rd	Franz Knoll	Barossa Fine Foods SA	08 8447 6200

**Best Nationally Available Ham**

IGA Naturally Smoked Bone in Leg ham

ENDS

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