

BACON LOVERS TAKE NOTE: THE SEARCH IS ON FOR AUSTRALIA'S TOP RASHER

Judgement time is drawing nearer for bacon makers as the hunt for Australia's best tasting bacon begins and with International Bacon Day looming, the search is perfectly timed.

Butchers and smallgoods manufacturers from all around the country have perfected their recipes and sent their entries into this year's Australian PorkMark Bacon Awards in the hopes of being announced as the nation's best.

Judging commenced this week and tempting as it may be for the panel to dive straight into tasting the entries, first, each individual bacon will be assessed based on its appearance. The judges then assess the aroma and lean to fat ratio in both the raw and cooked form.

The judging panel, featuring four passionate bacon connoisseurs, Fleischmeister Horst Schurger, chefs Simon Bestley, Adam Moore and Paul McDonald, will determine the winning bacon, set to be announced on August 26 in time to celebrate International Bacon Day on August 31.

Australian Pork Limited General Manager of Marketing, Peter Haydon says the competition shines a light on smallgoods makers who are using 100% Australian pork to produce their bacon, which is great news for both producers and bacon-lovers.

"People are becoming much more interested in where their food comes from – now more than ever - and this competition celebrates that by championing Australian grown," says Haydon.

"Many people are surprised to learn that 80% of bacon sold in Australia is made using imported pork. If you want to support Australian pig farmers, look for the pink Australian Pork logo on pack.

"Otherwise look for the green and gold Country of Origin Label and make sure the bar chart is almost full."

Having won the competition last year, Campbell's Superior Meats owner, Rhett Campbell, knows exactly what it's all about and more importantly, what goes into award-winning bacon.

"This competition celebrates the best Aussie produce and an iconic ingredient. I know I'm not alone in saying that it's not a successful Sunday morning if bacon and eggs don't feature on the menu.

"I think what set us apart last year was the salty smoke profile of our short cut bacon. But the fact is, we start with a pretty incredible product so it's easy to achieve a winning result," says Campbell.

The winning bacon, and winners in each state, will be announced on August 26.

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