

Organic meat



Dalene Wray of OBE with Australian organic meatballs in Hong Kong.

# From prime-cuts to meatballs – organic meat travels well

INTEREST IN ORGANIC MEAT IS rising from Australia's east coast to key markets in the US and Asia, including China and Hong Kong. Simone Tully, CEO of OBE (Australia's largest organic meat co-operative), says for the first time OBE organic meat fans in Hong Kong will have an Australian organic meatball – as well as prime cuts of organic meat – available to them.

"The meatball has been launched in

Australia and overseas and we are optimistic about rising interest in all organic meat products in these areas," she says.

Domestically, the meatballs will be distributed with the well-known hospitality company PFD Food Services.

"This is proof of growing interest in organic in the hospitality and food service industry.

"We will be looking further into supplying organic meat products to restaurants, resorts

and hotels along the east coast," she says.

In Asia customers are also proving keen on Australian 'clean and green' organic meat products. "OBE now has a fully staffed office servicing Asian customers in Hong Kong and we are focusing on developing our market into China, establishing Chinese-language websites and information," says Simone. OBE meat is currently selling in Hong Kong in the leading supermarket chain, Park and Shop.

"We are taking a very long-term view of these markets, focused on developing personal relationships with our distributors and retailers," Simone says.

She says OBE organic beef producers are set for a good season in months ahead, with rivers in the Channel Country in south-west Queensland receiving strong rainfall.

"Provided seasons stay strong, we are positive about the future of organic beef. There is a worldwide shortage of beef and herds are at the lowest they've been for 10 years so Australia is well placed to service this market. Following Copenhagen, there has also been a real drive toward environmentally responsible food, which is good news for organic."

She says OBE's recent venture into lamb production and processing is also going well, though she notes lamb supply is short of demand.

"We are taking the same approach to lamb as we did to beef, focused on direct producer relationships and stable pricing."

Alister Ferguson, marketing manager for the Organic Meat Company (subsidiary of Sanger Australia Pty Ltd), is also optimistic

"We'll be pushing organic MSA graded meat to butchers and restaurants."

about the future of organic meat both in Australia and overseas.

"Our big export focus remains in the US. Orders for our Australian organic meat are gaining momentum in this market. Interest from large supermarket chains that have not traditionally stocked organic meat have converted into some key customers with continuously growing demand, and we will be focused on supplying these customers," he says.

He says the Global Financial Crisis of 2009 had surprisingly little impact on organic meat exports to the US.

"This is great news for us and proof that organic is not a one-off or disposable purchase."

He says meat quality in 2010 will be high, with many producers experiencing a strong early season.

"It's the best start to the season we've seen for 10 years – we'll have beautiful

cattle and meat quality coming through."

He says this is particularly important given the Organic Meat Company's continued work on MSA-graded organic meat.

"We'll be pushing that market to butchers and restaurants who want meat with a guaranteed eating quality."

He says supply is looking good, with several new organic producers expected to reach full organic certification status in the second half of the year.

"Because our US customers are growing, it is important we have new suppliers coming into full certification at all times. We are for that reason always more than happy to speak and offer support to good producers interested in gaining organic certification."

"We encourage growers with an interest in supplying the US market in the future to be in touch early to ensure their management practices are compliant from day one."

Organic Meat Company product sold in the US can additionally be certified as "grass-fed" where appropriate.

"This is a fantastic double claim and very effective in the US to help introduce people to an organic product," Alister says. ☺

## Supporting the Organic Grain and Livestock Industry

ORGANIC STOCKFEEDS FOR:  
BEEF \* DAIRY  
SHEEP \* GOATS  
PIGS \* POULTRY

"WE ARE CURRENTLY SEEKING MORE  
GRAIN CONTRACTS"

*Please Contact:*

COUNTRY HERITAGE FEEDS  
STOCKFEED AND GRAIN SALES

Ph: (07) 4630 8571

Email: [sales@organicstockfeed.com](mailto:sales@organicstockfeed.com)

[www.organicstockfeed.com](http://www.organicstockfeed.com)

