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Journal

2. OF AUST PORK'S AUST BACON AWARDS

2ND BEST AWARD IN AUSTRALIA NATIONAL
PORK MARK BACON

Best of British butcher

By Casey Neill

Dandenong's British butcher is bringing home the bacon awards.

Rob Boyle's Suffolk black bacon was named the state's best and the country's second best at Australian Pork's Australian Bacon Awards.

Judges selected the Rob's British Butcher smoked middle back bacon as Victoria's third best bacon.

The announcement kicked off Australian Bacon Week, which runs from 25 June to 1 July.

"A lot of the big companies, so-called best in the world, bring in a lot of Canadian and Chinese pork frozen and boneless," he said.

"Then they thaw it out, cure it here and say 'made in Australia'."

Rob's products are all made using Australian pork.

His Irish short back bacon was named best in Victoria at the 2014 Australian Bacon Awards.

"That was salted and cured and then air dried and cold smoked so it takes a fair while," he said.

"The process takes about 14 days to do it.

"Then I saw Rick Stein on TV doing a best of British program.

"He was going to the experts in the trade and talking to them about their product.

"He went to a bacon place in Suffolk where they did a thing called Suffolk black bacon.

"It's cured the same way I do it, in the salt and the brown sugar. Then it's done for an extra 14 days in molasses.

"The taste is just so different.

"I tried it, and it just went off. We took it to the food and wine festival two weeks ago and sold out in a matter of hours."

Entering the contest with it, he thought the judges would either love or hate its quirky flavour.

Rob said awards helped to bring in customers to his Lonsdale Street store, but quality products kept them coming back.

He said some butchers made one product for the judges and another for their shop, so he'd prefer judges drop by randomly for a sample.

"That's a good indicator of the quality for the customers year-round," he said.

Rob has been in Dandenong for 26 years this November.

"I used to work for a company in Dandenong called Peter's Meats, which was part of the Castrium group.

"They closed down and I moved out and opened up my own shop," he said.

"I went down the track of making continental smallgoods and tried to be Rob's Continental Butchers."

He switched to his British roots after about three years.

"My pommy accent, I'm sure it helps," he said.

Rob will be handing out free bacon butties - or sandwiches - on Saturday 1 July to mark the end of Australian Bacon Week.



Rob Boyle with his award-winning bacon.



The Suffolk black bacon.

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