



Ontario's Finest Meat takes centre stage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Guelph, ON – March 5, 2011 – From Sweet Cooked Capocollo and Apple Cinnamon Glazed Back Bacon to Turkey Kielbassa and Lacshinken, the **2011 Ontario's Finest Meat Competition™** winners proved to be an innovative yet tasteful line-up when announced at a gala awards evening on March 5, 2011 in Toronto, Ontario.

The **2011 Ontario Finest Meat Competition** attracted 149 entries from 21 Ontario processors. On January 27th, 2011, a stellar roster of knowledgeable, influential judges including retail buyers, media, chefs and home economists determined the Platinum, Gold, and Silver award winners in each category.

Competitors showcased their goods in the following categories: Side Bacon, Back Bacon, Coiled, Black Forest Ham, Bone In Ham, Cold Cuts, Beef/Veal Deli Roast, Poultry Deli Roast, Fermented Sausage, Premium Dry Cured, Fresh Sausage, Cooked and/or Smoked Sausage, Premium Wiener, and Health Trends.

“Hosted by the Ontario Independent Meat Processors, the Ontario Finest Meat Competition promotes the artisanal products that Ontario’s family of meat processors have to offer,” said Laurie Nicol, executive director, Ontario Independent Meat Processors. “To be eligible to enter, all of the products had to be made with meat and poultry raised by Ontario farmers and processed in this province.”

Judging criteria was based on taste, aroma, texture, consumer and visual appeal, and the top three entries from each category were selected based on the judges’ combined scores. The Platinum winners of the 2011 Ontario Finest Meat Competition are as follows:

Category	Company	Product Name
Back Bacon	Halenda's Fine Foods	<i>Smoked Back Bacon</i>
Beef/Veal Deli Roast	VG Meats	<i>Chipotle Beef Roast</i>
Black Forest Ham	Osogood Meat Products Ltd.	<i>Black Forest Ham</i>
Bone In Ham	Springer's Meats Inc.	<i>Smoked Whole Pork Leg Ham</i>
Coiled	Schinkel's Legacy	<i>Turkey Kielbassa Coil</i>
Cold Cuts	Bona Foods	<i>Sweet Cooked Capocollo</i>
Cooked/Smoked Sausage - Tie	Florence Meat Supplies Ltd.	<i>Kranska Smoked Pork Sausage</i>
Cooked/Smoked Sausage - Tie	Franz's Butchershop	<i>Franz's Smoked Black Bean & Salsa Sausage</i>
Fermented Sausage - Tie	Bona Foods	<i>Paisanella Hot Salami</i>
Fermented Sausage –Tie	Halenda's Fine Foods	<i>Suduk</i>
Fresh Sausage	VG Meats	<i>Lamb Tzatziki Sausage</i>
Health Trends	Halenda's Fine Foods	<i>Home Style Roasted Turkey Breasts</i>
Poultry Deli Roast	Uniqpol Inc.	<i>Roasted Chicken with Garlic</i>
Premium Dry Cured	Halenda's Fine Foods	<i>Lacshinken</i>
Premium Wiener	Schinkel's Legacy	<i>Ball Park Wiener</i>
Side Bacon	Metzger Meat Products	<i>Side Bacon, Traditional Style</i>

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Winners will benefit from the industry recognition, professional photography and an extensive media outreach program. In addition, winning products may be eligible to be featured in a Market Development Pilot Project, an initiative championed by the OIMP that is designed to get member products onto retail shelves and into the hands of consumers across the province.

For the full list of Platinum, Gold and Silver winners from the competition, please visit www.ontariomeatproducts.ca.

With the highest overall score in the competition, Halenda's Fine Foods took home the top prize, the 2011 Ron Usborne Award of Excellence. Owner Richard Halenda accepted the award and was proud of the win.

"We are honoured to have been chosen for this award," said Halenda. "And we are proud that the judges recognized the excellent taste and quality that Halenda's provides."

Generous sponsors of the 2011 Ontario Finest Meat Competition include: Conestoga Meat Packers, Erb Transport, FCC Agribusiness and Agri-food, Government of Ontario, Malabar Super Spice, Ontario Cattlemen's Association, Turkey Farmers of Ontario, Ontario Veal Association.

About the Ontario Finest Meat Competition™

In 1987 the Ontario Independent Meat Processors (OIMP) launched its first meat competition with four categories and a handful of entries competing for peer recognition and bragging rights. The competition moved from an annual to a biennial competition in 2003 and now, in 2011, it is the largest of its kind in Canada with 14 categories that embrace both modern trends and the enduring heritage of Ontario's artisanal meat and poultry products. To be eligible to participate, all of the meat and/or poultry in the product must be raised by an Ontario farmer and processed by an Ontario processor.

About the Ontario Independent Meat Processors

Ontario Independent Meat Processors is the representative voice of the independent meat processor in Ontario, working closely with agricultural and commodity organizations and various levels of government for over 30 years. The association's membership includes meat and poultry processors, retailers and wholesalers; industry suppliers and not-for-profit organizations that support OIMP's objectives. Ontario's meat sector represents 20% of Ontario's food manufacturing industry, contributing over \$6.5 billion to the province's economy.

For more information, please visit www.oimp.ca.

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Media, please contact:

Cara Epp

t. 647-217-2835 or projects@oimp.ca