

Ontario's Finest BUTCHER

Third Times a Charm

Peter Baarda takes title 3rd year in a row

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Guelph ON, October 27, 2016 - Peter Baarda, new owner of J & G Quality Meats, Burlington, was surrounded by a table of family and friends when the announcement was made Saturday night that he had successfully defended his title of Ontario's Finest Butcher for a third straight time.

Baarda, formally a wholesale meat manager for A. Lococo Wholesale, Stoney Creek, was one of the three finalists facing off in the final round that afternoon. Up against Brent Herrington, Herrington's Quality Butchers, Port Perry, and Nicholas Matusiak, Halenda's Meats, Oshawa, they each received a whole chicken, whole rabbit, and veal loin, to prepare barbecue-ready items in the short half hour they were given. A combined score from attendees and judges determined it was Peter who would carry the honour once again.

"I would like to thank OIMP for another fantastic weekend, my wife and I had a great time. We met up with some old friends and made some new ones, took home some hardware from what was the most intense Ontario's Finest Butcher competition to date," commented Baarda. "The days of butchers just being "meat heads" is long past us. The level of skill in the finals as well as the preliminary rounds is proof of that. I'm so proud to have cut alongside the other competitors. I wish continued good luck for the butchers in the years to come as this was my final year in the competition as my newly acquired business takes a great deal of my time."

"There is a constant need for butchers in Ontario. This competition helps elevate the profession and grow awareness of meat cutting as a lost art," says Laurie Nicol, executive director, OIMP. "We were pleased to have twelve competitors enter this year, ten of which had not competed previously."

In the elimination round held in September, competitors from around the province had thirty minutes to transform a fresh pork bone-in leg, bone-in butt, and bone-in loin, into merchandisable cuts of their choice, and were judged on the degree of difficulty/efficiency and skill level in boning, trimming and cutting, primal cut utilization and financial performance. In the final round, it was still about skill but creativity and consumer-appeal were added to the judging criteria.

Baarda has 25 years experience ranging from abattoirs to high-end butcher shops, has trained under second and third generation butchers, and opened the doors May 19, 2016 as the proud new owner of J & G Quality Meats, Aldershot, a neighbourhood in Burlington, Ontario.

In photo: Peter Baarda, J & G Quality Meats, Joe Abate, OIMP Past President

About J & G Quality Meats Ltd.

J & G Quality Meats has served Aldershot, Burlington and the surrounding area for 54 years. Peter and Keri Baarda recently purchased this small family-run butcher shop in May 2016. Peter is in constant contact with farmers and meat suppliers to always ensure the finest products possible. The Baarda's have a long standing reputation to live up to, from the original owners Jimmy and Gladys (28 years) to Peter and Johanna Smolenaars (26 years) to today.

Peter brings 26 years of experience to the business from starting in a slaughterhouse to custom cutting to working in some of Ontario's finest butcher shops to now operating his own.

About the OIMP

Ontario Independent Meat Processors (OIMP) is the representative voice of the independent meat and poultry processor in Ontario, working closely with agricultural and commodity organizations and various levels of government for over 35 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.

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