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100% New Zealand Bacon Competition Winners Announced

The Lesnie's 100% New Zealand Bacon Competition results are out, recognising New Zealand's best bacon makers

New Zealand's tastiest bacons were revealed today as the winners of the Lesnie's 100% New Zealand Bacon Competition received their awards.

The Bacon of the Year winner, Peter Timbs Meats based in Christchurch, also took home the streaky bacon gold medal with their honey cured streaky bacon.

"We are very excited to have won, especially after winning silver last year in this same category – means we are continuing to make good improvements," says Chris Timbs of Peter Timbs Meats.

"We cure and smoke our meat over a period of a week, using a special recipe that has been in the family since 1876. We make minor adjustments occasionally to make sure we get the perfect taste, texture and versatility from our bacon."

The Lesnie's 100% New Zealand Bacon Competition celebrates New Zealand's best bacon, all of it made from 100% New Zealand pork. Twenty four judges were led by restaurateur, co-owner of Logan Brown and star of Hunger for the Wild, Steve Logan; President of the New Zealand Chef's Association, Anita Sarginson; and acclaimed food writer, Jan Bilton. They all agreed the competition this year was fierce.

"All of this year's entrants were of a very high standard, so it was a tough decision," says head judge Steve Logan.

"As judges, we need to make sure that the bacon not only tastes great, but also smells fantastically mouth-watering and doesn't shrink when it hits the pan. It is always great to see the variety of rashers entered – from sweet or salty to smokey or gluten-free."

Other gold medal winners include Goodman Fielder, the only food services company to win with their Kiwi Heritage triple smoked middle bacon (a great brand for supermarket shoppers), Sam's Butchery in the Auckland suburb of Kelston and Netherby Meats in Ashburton.

The competition is open to all New Zealand butchers who make bacon from 100% New Zealand pork. This year 177 bacons from 82 different bacon makers entered the competition.

The bacon is judged on taste, aroma, texture, and appearance within the four categories – streaky, middle, shoulder and middle eye. Taste is the key element in the competition, with saltiness, sweetness, aftertaste and overall good taste judged.

“Taste is obviously the most important factor in deciding the winners, but we take into account the way it looks and how it sizzles in the pan,” says Anita Sarginson, acclaimed chef and President of the New Zealand Chef’s Association.

“The butchers are all very passionate about what they do, and put a lot of time, care and effort into making delicious bacon for their customers.”

With more than 700,000kgs of imported pork entering New Zealand each week, it is important to keep an eye out for the 100% New Zealand Bacon label to avoid getting stuck with bacon made from imported pork.

“It is important that we support our local butchers and farmers by buying top quality, 100% New Zealand bacon and pork products. Besides, New Zealand bacon is always so much fresher and tastier than imported bacon,” says Steve Logan.

So keep an eye out at your local butcher or supermarket for the award winning bacons, and be sure to support New Zealand farmers and buy only 100% New Zealand bacon, ham and pork.

Winners by category

Middle Eye bacon

Gold – Sam’s Butchery, Kelston, Auckland

Silver – Harris Meats, Cheviot, Canterbury

Bronze – Redcliffs Butchery, Redcliffs, Christchurch

Shoulder bacon

Gold – Netherby Meats Ltd, Ashburton

Silver – Harris Meats, Cheviot, Canterbury

Bronze – Elite Meats, Riccarton, Christchurch

Streaky bacon

Gold – Peter Timbs Meats, St Albans, Christchurch (also Bacon of the Year)

Silver – Bulls Bacon, Bulls, Manawatu

Bronze – The Village Butcher, Blenheim

Middle bacon

Gold – Goodman Fielder, Auckland

Silver – Butcher Jacks, Glenfield, Auckland

Joint Bronze – The Meat Factory, Te Awamutu

Joint Bronze – Manly Village Butcher, Whangaparoa, Auckland

Further Information

- The competition was judged by 24 independent experts from the retail, hospitality, food industry and media sectors.
- 700,000kgs of pork is imported into New Zealand every week; often this is made into cheap, watery, low quality bacons.
- Entries are in four categories: Middle, Shoulder, Streaky and Middle Eye bacons. All entries are judged in fresh and cooked form under criteria such as appearance, texture, shrinkage, aroma and taste.

- An audit process is in place to ensure the bacons are only made from 100% New Zealand pork.
- This competition is about helping consumers to buy great bacons made from New Zealand produced pork.

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For further information or interviews with the Lesnie's 100% New Zealand Bacon Competition judges or winners, please contact:

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