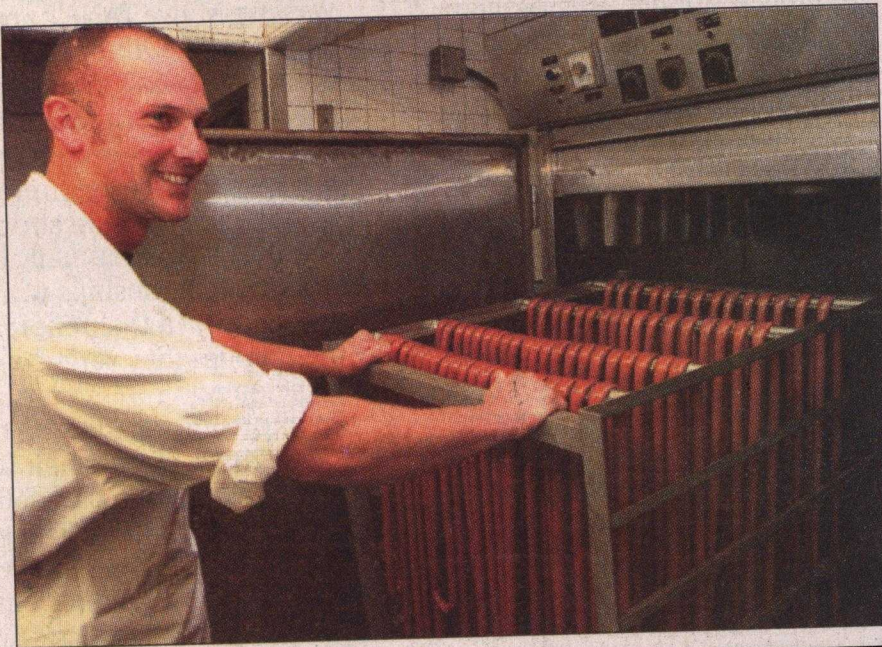


Jeff Bassman wheels a rack of beef strips into the smoker at Freedom Meat Lockers. The company recently earned awards for a variety of original meat products.

Tarmo Hannula
Register-Pajaronian



Freedom Meat Lockers racks up awards

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Several new products garnish long list of inventory

By TARMO HANNULA
OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

Freedom Meat Lockers and Sausage Co. recently earned 14 new awards from the California Association of Meat Processors.

Owned by Howard and Debra Walker since 1972, the full-line butcher shop, sausage maker and meat-smoking business adds the wood plaque awards to a host of previous awards that have stacked up in the company office.

"It's always an honor to be awarded and these awards are certainly a compliment," said Will Panis, general manager.

"Howard and Debbie are tremendous people and I think these awards help show how much these people care about their products and their staff."

The awards fall under the categories of fresh sausage, other emulsified sausage and jerky, liver sausage and blood sausage, bacon, lunchmeat, salami and summer sausage, specialty class, smoked turkey, cooked sausage, frankfurters/wieners, featured class ring bologna, bone-in ham, boneless ham, jerky-whole muscle, grand champion and reserve

grand champion.

Panis said Freedom Meat Lockers has also recently added new products to its long list of original recipe products including Fiesta Cheddar sausages, Hawaiian style sausages and Mandarin Almond Chicken sausage.

"It's the quality of the meats and the flavor — the flavors are unbeatable," said longtime customer Kerri Miljanich, who works at Martinelli's. "I try to bring guests from out of town

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Staff at the Freedom Meat Lockers and Sausage Co. show 14 awards the company recently earned for a variety of original meat products made at the meat lockers.

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here and let them know about this place."

Panis said that as summer approaches sales of meats for barbecuing ratchet up.

"Besides all our in-house marinated meats, we have a regular butcher counter with all the standards cuts such as top sirloin, rib-eye, New York and fillet mignon," Panis said.

The counter also features a selection of porterhouse steaks, T-bone, boneless pork chops and sliced sirloin.

Panis said the most popular marinades are the Skirt Steak in Wine and Spice, Spicy Mesquite, Wine and Spice Tri-Tip, Italian Chicken Breasts and the long-standing Barbecue Skirt Steaks. Panis said the marinated meats, which come in sealed plastic bags, are ready to toss directly on the grill, or will also freeze.

Though the Walker family has run the business for the past 35 years, Freedom Meat Lockers has been in existence for the past 74 years.

Panis said that the business specializes in processing any game or farm animals. Customers can bring in any type of fish, including salmon, trout and albacore to be custom smoked.

Freedom Meat Lockers is located at 160 Hi-Grade Lane in Freedom. For more information, call 724-4355.



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Will Panis (left) and Joe Rocha show several sides of beef in the Freedom Meat Lockers refrigerator.