

Taylor's Country Meadow Meats

At the same time that farmers Al and Kathy Taylor were contemplating new ways to market their lamb, they learned that the owners of Gardiner's Abbatoir near Springmount were selling their business. It seemed a perfect fit and by May 2006 the Taylors were the owners of Country Meadow Meats, carrying on Gardiner's 40-year tradition of custom-processing beef, pork and lamb for local farmers. The Taylors expanded the retail store line and built up an inventory of notable new local products including bison meat from the Bruce Peninsula, honey-ginger syrup processed in Walters Falls, and Pine River cheese from Ripley.



Al and Kathy wear the three hats of producer, processor and consumer, which gives them an advantage in quality control. Their years of farming experience strongly influences the products they sell. As managers of the abbatoir they have the flexibility to bring animals in when they are ready, without rushing them. They also demand that their animals are not corn-fed and are antibiotic- and hormone-free because "they are what they eat". By the time the meat reaches the counter Kathy says, "we can sell it because we know the story behind it" and she adds "when you start with quality, you end with quality".

One of their specialties is serving local farmers who sell meat to family, friends and neighbours. They supply the same quality cuts for farmers as for their retail customers, and will provide sides and mixed quarters if requested. Conscious of minimizing the carbon foot print the Taylors have already made strides in reducing cardboard and plastic waste in the facility. In 2007 they won the *Premier's Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence* for a successful farm-to-business transition and for promoting local product sales.

Local products available....

The Taylors' own lamb and beef

Turkey - Hayter's Farm (Dashwood)

Beechwood Smoked Bacon - Metzger's Meats (Hensall)

Chicken - Abate Packers (Arthur)

Bison - Stoney Keppel Bison (Hepworth)

Pine River Cheese (Ripley)

6 kinds of homemade sausages - garlic, honey garlic, applesauce & brown sugar, Italian, plain (good for diabetics)

Honey, ginger syrup - Cowan Organic Apiaries, Walters Falls

See the website for an extensive list of all products
countrymeadowmeats.com

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