

Tis The Season

This is the Season for many things – first we want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! It seems like once November comes around January is here before we know it because everyone is so busy. We hope everyone had a nice Thanksgiving with family and will also have the opportunity to share time at Christmas with your loved ones.

With the business our members are in, we know you are busy with deer season and processing the holiday foods everyone enjoys. We have the best doing custom processing, catering and filling their retail cases with food that brings everyone together.

CHRISTMAS VENISON



As we move through winter, the board has already planned for the 2023 Convention. During the last convention we voted on a few topics that you would like to learn more about. Shelf – Stable products received the most votes so we are prepared to bring a full weekend of educational classes not only on Shelf –Stable but many other hot

topics. The schedule is included along with registration forms. Along with the rotation sessions we do on Friday, we have added a few classes on Thursday. There are many new sessions to look forward to – Creating Poultry Deli Meat Products / Cutting to Fit Roll Stock Film / Creating Value with Coated Nettings. Don't forget about the President Reception, Friday night Social, and the Awards Dinner on Saturday night. Fellowship with members is a highlight to many at the convention.



**PAMP CONVENTION SESSION
CREATING POULTRY DELI MEATS**

Take some time over the next few months and plan to enter a product or two into the Product Competition. The complete rules are also enclosed. If you have any questions, please reach out to a board member and we will find the answer out for you. If this is your first time or 10th time there are always ways to learn from entering a product.

We also hope you are able to bring a worker or someone that is interested in learning more about PAMP. We are positive that whoever you may bring, they will learn something that will benefit your business. So block the date and we hope to see you there.

Again, Tis the Season! Enjoy and hope to see everyone in May!!



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CONVENTION REMINDERS

- **Registration Forms** - Please note some events require you to Pre-Register.
- **PAMP Apparel** - There will be limited amounts for sale at the show. Please pre-order to make sure we have what you need.
- **Parking at the Meat Lab** - We are now required to pay to park in the lot next to the meat lab. More information will follow as we receive it.
- **Supplier Special Invitations - NEW THIS YEAR** - we are giving each supplier the opportunity to invite people to the convention (each will receive 2 invitations to our convention.) Please find the forms enclosed with your registration forms. Must be pre-registered and no walk-in will be permitted on convention day. Reach out to Renee with any questions.
- **Hotel Information** is listed below.

The Penn Stater Hotel

(Host of the Convention)
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Hints and Tips HACCP PLAN

HACCP at Retail Exempt Operations

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) is focusing attention on retailers that perform special processes. HACCP plans are required at Pennsylvania retail exempt operations that perform "Special Process". Curing of meats and poultry with traditional sources sodium or potassium nitrite / nitrate and natural sources of sodium nitrite / nitrate including but not limited to celery, kale, and beets, are identified by the Food Code as special processes. Most retail exempt meat and poultry processors that are curing and smoking meat and poultry products, are also conducting reduced oxygen packaging. This also a special process that requires a HACCP plan.

Not all HACCP plans are created equal. The some of the critical control points (CCPs) utilized in a Food Code compliant HACCP plan are different than those found in a HACCP plan used in a USDA FSIS establishment. Additionally, the PDA published a Reduced Oxygen Packaging Policy in April of 2014 that has specific requirements for cured meats and poultry that utilize reduced oxygen packaging.

Please keep in mind that if you are considering adding product lines that are classified as special processes, a HACCP plan will need to be submitted to the PDA for prior approval. For those of you that are already conducting special processes, there is some grace provided to you, to give you time to get a HACCP plan in place if you can show that you are actively working to comply. The frequency of inspection is also being adjusted based on risk. Operations conducting special processes are identified by the PDA as high risk and will be visited by PDA inspectors more frequently in the near future than those who do not.

HACCP is coming your way sometime soon if it hasn't already. Please consider creating your HACCP Plan in the first quarter of next year instead of waiting for the inspector to give you dead line.

Helpful tips courtesy of:
Rodney M. Schaffer
Schaffer Label Consulting LLC



I think best in those early morning hours when I can't sleep. In fact, I'm writing this at 2:30 am. I have no idea why I woke up — maybe it was the rain or maybe I just had something on my mind.

Either way, when I have these nights, I do the worst possible thing; I grab my phone and check social media. I know better. I know I'll see something that stirs me up, usually related to poultry misinformation.

Sure enough, I was stirred up. Back-to-back posts on don't eat chicken because of the hormones and the benefits of chicken sashimi. As we all know, eating raw chicken is just not ok. It's a raw agricultural product, meaning it's not ready to eat. Why would chefs think this is a good idea? Just thinking about the texture when eating raw chicken is not appealing to me. Gross! Just in case anyone is reading this and has questions, chicken is not treated with hormones. Ever.

I know better than to check the comments, but I did it anyway. Both sides bantering back and forth, and I must read them all. My blood is boiling at this point, and then there's the comment if you don't like it, "keep scrolling." Well, that makes my blood boil even more.

"Keep scrolling" means I don't have time for your opinions, facts, comments or even existence sometimes. At some point that "keep scrolling" mentality keeps us from hearing the truth about matters that concern us as a society. It helps us from having healthy conversations. When it comes to agriculture (and my love for poultry science), "keep scrolling" is the opposite of what I'm going to do. I haven't figured out how to totally engage the truth with some of these people on social media, but I'm not going to keep scrolling. I'm going to share experiences and teach what I know to be truth about our industry.

I know many companies and organizations use social media to voice the truth about poultry and agriculture, but I believe the mentality of "keep scrolling" prevents the real education from happening. We have to start thinking about what will make people stop scrolling and read and learn. I am sure the marketing folks have discussed this and have some ideas. I just wonder how I can be more effective personally. Any ideas? For now, I am not going to "keep scrolling" when someone misrepresents our industry. I didn't get a lot of sleep last night, but I did engage with some people willing to listen and not "keep scrolling." It didn't help me get back to sleep, but it did make me feel like I was having a small impact.

The next time you're awake at 2:30 am and grab that phone to look at social media, engage and teach. Don't "keep scrolling." It helps our industry when we can engage in a meaningful way and teach about what we know best.

Reprinted from Christine Alvarado's Blog
"For the Birds" from meatingplace.com





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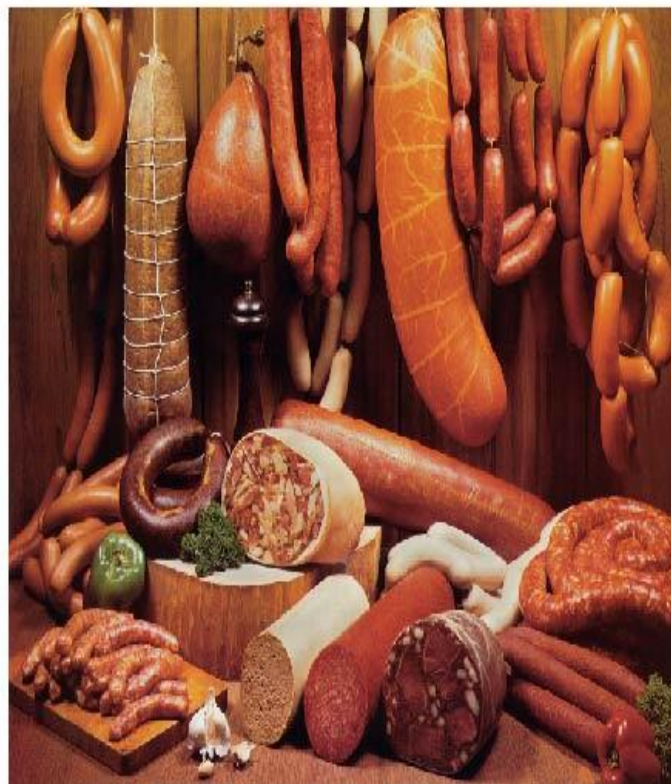
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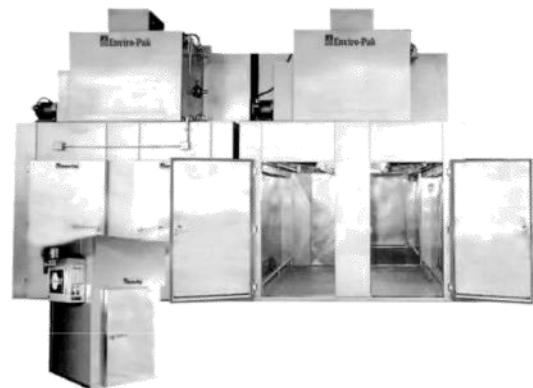
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WHO HAS THE BEST RETAIL MEAT CASES?

It's true that we buy with our eyes. Presentation is everything when it comes to food merchandising. Certainly retail store chains know this is true, and many have really upgraded their meat departments over the last decade. I sadly say many and not all, because some retail meat departments are in want of some serious upgrades.

Out West, most of the retail store chains and independents have remodeled their stores over the past few years and the produce departments at most shine bright. Many remodels are made to look like a farmers market with faux wood floors, faux wooden bins and pictures hung from the ceiling of the farm families that raise fruits and veggies in the region.

As for the meat department remodels, some chains have really gone all out to make the meat department look as good or better than the adjacent produce department. Savvy meat marketers have also redone the floors and made the once white and sterile, blah-looking meat department have a warmer more welcoming feel. Those offering a full-service meat case spend a lot of time prepping those cases each day to make them really beautiful, warm, welcoming and some have an old-fashioned meat market theme with the added decorum.

In Colorado, Whole Foods does a great job, as do some locally owned stores like Tony's Meats, Lever's Locavore, Lucky's, Sam's and Edwards. If I had to pick one winner in Colorado, I'd say Tony's Meats wins for locally owned and Whole Foods wins for national chain for having the best meat departments with full-service cases and meat cutters trained to answer customer questions about the meat and seafood they sell.

In Arizona, I'd vote for Aj's Markets. In Southern California, I like Gelson's. In Texas, I think HEB does a great job with the displays and meat department overall experience. In Ohio, my favorite is Heinens. What store chain has the best meat department where you live?

As criteria for evaluating what stores we should nominate for regional award winners for best meat departments, we should consider the following:

- Cleanliness and overall look of the meat department
- Warm, welcoming colors and decorum
- Display case
- Selection
- Friendly meat department workers with extensive product knowledge
- Enthusiasm of the meat department staff to great customers and answer questions

What did I leave out?

What about Costco? Costco sells a lot of meat, no doubt about it and the overall quality of the meat they sell is very good. And yet, their self-serve meat departments with their reach-in coffin cases are very sterile. The meat cutters are so busy trying to cut meat to keep the meat cases full that their customer service lacks, as does the staff training to answer questions about the meat they sell. But this could be said for Wal-Mart, Sam's Club, Kroger, and others. Retailers suffer with finding good quality help like many other businesses, and so more case-ready self-serve packaging can be found all the time.

Is there still a need for small meat shops?

My all-time favorite meat departments are found in Mexico. For those who've traveled to Mexico and seen the amazing way meat is displayed in full-service meat cases, you know what I mean. If I owned a retail store chain, I'd send my meat department managers to Mexico to visit a dozen stores in any of the big cities to understand all a meat department can be for overall customer experience. My favorites are La Comer and HEB.

But in Mexico, more meat is sold in local meat boutique meat shops than in retail stores. At your local neighborhood Carniceria in Mexico, they likely know your name and what you like to eat. You have the local butcher cut two small chuck steaks for the kids, a large ribeye with an extra-large spinalis for dad and a petite tender, silver skin completely off for mom. And it will cost you less, not more, than buying meat in retail chain store. Many families go to their local butcher shop every day or several times per week.

I've seen lines up to 15 people deep at these local meat shops and up to five cashiers. The butcher shops have artful displays of meat, all sold full-service with eye-to-eye direct communication with the butcher. It's a very personal experience.

Where in your travels have you seen meat merchandised differently or exceptionally well?

Reprinted from Gregory Bloom's Blog
"The Meat Business" from meatingplace.com

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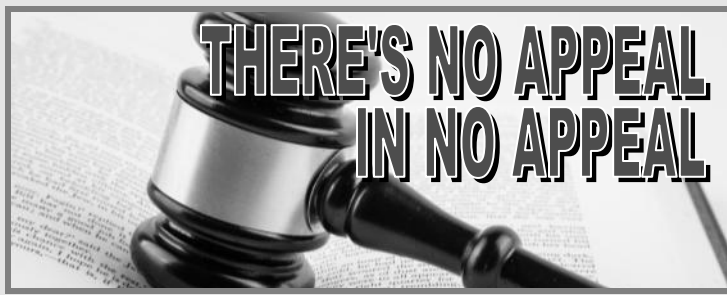
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Everyday, in thousands of FSIS inspected establishments, an army of federal inspectors make countless inspectional decisions and issue, what may sometimes feel like, waves of Noncompliance Reports (NRs). In most cases, the NRs issued by inspection personnel appropriately document alleged violations of the regulations, and are adequately supported by the underlying facts and FSIS observations.

In some cases, however, weary, tired, or even disgruntled inspectors will issue NRs that are not fully supported by the evidence or reflective of the underlying facts and circumstances. In these cases, federal establishments have always enjoyed the right to question the merits of such NRs by filing an appeal.

Historically, while FSIS encouraged establishments to submit appeals as soon as reasonably practical, there was never any set time period in which appeals were required to be lodged. The lack of any deadline for filing appeals following an adverse agency decision in some cases led to appeals being filed months after a decision. As is true in any adjudication, however, with the passage of time, memories fade, facts become more obscure, and evidence withers away.

In an effort to bring more certainty and structure to the FSIS appeals process, the agency recently published a final rule designed to establish a uniform time period for the filing of appeals. In the final rule, FSIS has limited the time period for any appeal for most inspectional decisions to 30-days after written receipt of the decision. This time period will also extend to any subsequent appeals filed for the same issue within the same chain-of-command. Thus, if a NR is appealed to the inspector's immediate supervisor (as is required), and the appeal is denied by that supervisor, then the establishment will have only 30 additional days to appeal the denial.

Although some in industry argued for a longer deadline to file appeals, the agency stated in response that 30 days should be sufficient for any establishment to file an appeal following the receipt of a written decision. In turn, while some of those same commentators asked that FSIS also be given a deadline to respond to any appeal filed within a corresponding 30-day period, the agency politely declined. Rather, FSIS stated that its current practice of responding to appeals "in a timely manner" would remain intact.

Moving forward, some may find the new rule to be appealing — and some may not. In the end, it is likely a positive development in that it will, in fact, add additional certainty and structure to FSIS appeals. The more quickly an appeal of an inspectional decision can be asserted, the more quickly the facts and law can be assessed, and an appropriate decision be made.

As for industry, one of the largest challenges will be to remind itself that, when an adverse inspectional decision is made, the decision about whether to appeal will need to be made quickly. If it is not, FSIS will likely deem that the right to appeal has been waived. So, moving forward, be sure to remember, when it comes to timely challenging inspectional decisions, move quickly. If you don't, you may find that there's no appeal in no appeal.

Reprinted from Shawn Steven's Blog
"Legally Speaking" from meatingplace.com



Sarah Fister Gale was a wife of 27 years, a mother of two children, and the youngest of her parents' five children. We didn't know that, though, until she died. I can only guess, based on the quality of her work, that she excelled in all of those roles.

It came as a shock on Nov. 4 when we'd learned that Sarah, one of our key contributing editors, had suddenly passed. We'd been in touch with her days earlier, checking on how several assignments were coming along. We knew she had been dealing with COVID, but she assured us she was feeling better. We had extended her deadlines, and we waited.

Those assignments never came. Another email check-in, and this time her husband responded with the sad news. I can only imagine how he felt in writing it.

The convenience of being in a transactional business, of only depending on the content Sarah was producing, is that we don't have to feel what Sarah's husband and children feel. Still, the feeling of immediately having to worry about how to fill the holes in our editorial lineup instead is, nonetheless, a terrible one. Duty with a heaping side of selfishness.

We're all in the business of selling something. We're engulfed in a never-ending tidal wave of having to get things done. We pay for services. We get paid for services. We make, hopefully, more money than we paid. What are we losing, though, in that pursuit?

Well, when everything is going according to plan, nothing of concern. It's when things go wrong, though, that the relationships that you've made really begin to matter most.

Take the COVID-19 pandemic, and the supply chain disruptions it caused. The meat industry was at its most vulnerable state ever at that time. When you were short on people, short on animals, short on equipment or even short on cleaning supplies, how important did a relationship you'd invested in make a difference in alleviating those challenges? How relieved were you that you'd made more than regular visits with a customer or a partner, and that when you'd made those visits, you discussed things ultimately more important than business? Family, children, avocations, passions.

Conversely, when things went south, were there relationships you wished you'd made? And not just external relationships; how about those within your staff? And not just those in full-time positions; how about all those doing that behind-the-scenes but highly valuable contract work?

Knowing Sarah (one of our contract workers) more closely wouldn't have prevented what we now know to have been her bout with leukemia, which her recurrence of COVID made untenable. It wouldn't have saved her life. It's an uncomfortable reminder, though, of the human emotional need for connection beyond our asking for the business services we need, and only when we need them. It's a reminder of the importance of making meaningful connections, and more of them.

For all of us, that makes a better company, a better workforce and a better supply chain.

Reprinted from Thomas Johnston's Blog
"Writer's Block" from meatingplace.com

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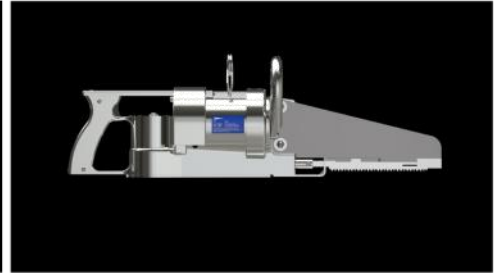
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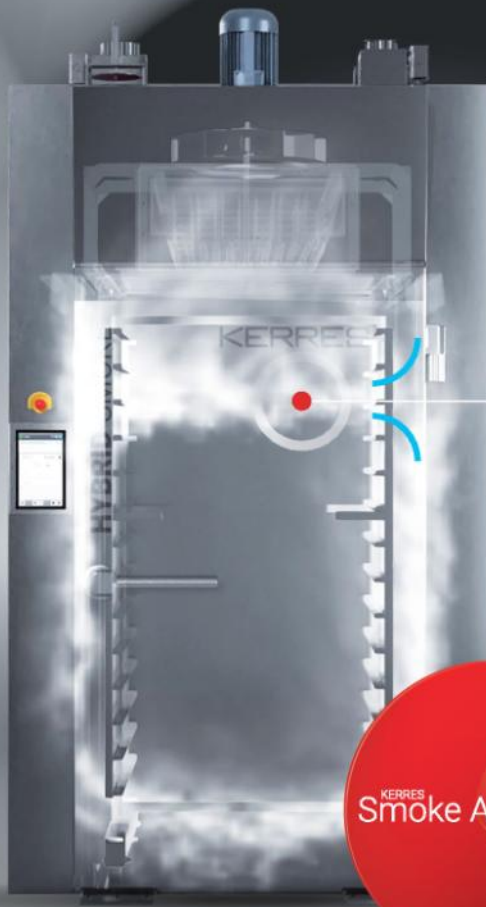


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What You Need to Know About the Employee Retention Credit

The Employee Retention Credit (ERC) is COVID relief funding for small and midsize businesses. Passed at the height of the coronavirus pandemic, this government tax incentive was designed to help companies continue to pay employees during the crisis. Omega Accounting Solutions is a highly respected accounting firm with expertise in government tax incentives and can help you determine your qualification for the credit (now a refund check from the IRS).

What is the Employee Retention Credit?

In response to the many challenges faced by small businesses during the coronavirus pandemic, Congress passed relief legislation including the Employee Retention Credit. This government tax credit allowed employers keep staff working during the worst of COVID-19.

IF YOUR BUSINESS QUALIFIES FOR THE ERC, YOU CAN RECEIVE UP TO \$26,000 PER EMPLOYEE!

Does Your Business Qualify?

There are two ways for employers to qualify for the ERC.

1 The business suffered a significant decline in 2020 or 2021 quarterly revenue (gross receipts) when compared to the same quarter in 2019.

- OR -

2 Government orders had a more than nominal impact on their overall business operations. This may include full or partial suspension of operations due to social distancing or capacity requirements, supply chain issues, reduced operating hours, employee training issues, etc.

How the IRS Determines Your Refund

The ERC is calculated based on the payroll taxes you paid for full-time employees in 2020 and 2021. In the first year of the ERC, only companies with less than 100 employees were eligible for the credit. In the second year, the rules changed, allowing companies with up to 500 employees to receive the credit.

2020 CALCULATIONS

The IRS allowed **50% of the first \$10,000 in qualified wages** for each employee for the year or **\$5,000 in credit**.

2021 CALCULATIONS

The IRS allowed **70% of wages paid per quarter, up to \$7,000 in qualified wages** per employee, per quarter, for the period January 1, 2021–September 30, 2021, for a **maximum credit of \$21,000**.

If anyone has any questions, John Biggie of Biggies Quality Meats has gone through the process and would be able to answer any questions! or Contact Omega Accounting Solutions at their website..

There's Still Time to Claim Your ERC!

Your business has up to three years to amend previously filed payroll taxes for 2020 & 2021 and claim your ERC refund from the IRS. Omega's ERC experts will help you discover how much you are qualified to receive and maximize your credit—even if your company received PPP funds in 2020. Contact Omega now to get started.

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Lenhartsville, PA 19534
610-756-6344
info@DietrichsMeats.com

SAVE THE DATE: PAMP 2023 CONVENTION - MAY 11-14.

2023 DUES: Your 2023 dues are included. We would like to say Thank You for all your support and we are excited for the upcoming convention. In order to attend, dues must be paid.

CONVENTION REGISTRATION: Operator and Supplier Registration forms are also included. They will be posted on the website as well. Looking forward to seeing everyone.

BOARD SEATS: We will have several board seats that we will need to fill this year. Please consider - you will serve for 3 years and 2 annual meetings are held each year. One is held in the fall and the 2nd is during the convention. If needed there are zoom meetings and emails sent throughout the year. If you are interested, please email Renee or reach out to a current board member.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF ROBERT A. HEBRANK, JR.

The family of Robert A. Hebrank, Jr. has shared that he passed away on Thursday, November 3, 2022 after a brave fight with cancer. He was a beloved husband, brother, uncle, friend, teammate, and fire-fighter. A life well lived for 48 years.

Born in Montclair, NJ to Robert and Jean Hebrank, Robert was one of three boys in the family. Raised in West Caldwell, he graduated from JCHS in 1992 where he was on the soccer and rifle teams; it was also where he met and fell in love with his future wife, Melissa Bonadonna. He attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute on a ROTC scholarship. Upon returning home, he worked in the family business, Linker Machines, and eventually opened his own business, LinkNJ.net.

Surviving to carry on his legacy are his beloved wife, Melissa; loving brothers, Michael and his wife, Kelly, and Brian and his wife, Jessica; loving funicle of Jackson, Mackayla, William and Evelyn; Godfather to his nephews and Sebastian Schleck; dear nephew of Allie Lull and Barbara (Peter) Ramsay; close cousin, Stephen (Cynthia) Tischio and their children, Sophia and Gabriel; also many cousins and their families.

CLASSIFIEDS

If you would like to add items, feel free to email or call me with the details. Also, be sure to let me know if any items need to be removed to keep the listings current. Classifieds for Operators ONLY.....No Suppliers.

FOR SALE: Commercial Ham Presses, \$25 each, Call Gary Karas @ 724-468-5811 - kountrykows@windstream.net

FOR SALE: Globe Slicer - Model 725 - Manual or Automatic Runs on 110 - Like New in excellent condition. \$2,500.00. Call Floyd @ 570-254-6921

FOR SALE: 301 Non Forming film from Cryovac - 84 Rolls - 2.50 mil. Best offer for the lot. Contact Joe @ 856-423-4000 x 101 - Mickleton, NJ

FOR SALE:

- BIRO MIXER/GRINDER: -#32 Head; -230 V; -3 Phases;
- HOBART MIXER/GRINDER: -#32 Head; -230 V; -3 Phases;
- ROSS TENDERIZER
- TALSA HYDRAULIC STUFFER: -100 lb. Capacity

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FOR SALE:

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