

Fair Dinkum Success

Butcher opens in Emerald

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IT HAS been Jason O'Loughlin's dream for the past nine and a half years, and last Thursday that dream came true when he and his wife Tracey opened the doors to the Fair Dinkum Meats butcher shop in Emerald.

"So far we've had a great response," he said.

"I've wanted to open a butcher shop in Emerald since we moved here in February 2008.

"I looked all around Emerald trying to find the right location with a rent that was suitable. It took all this time to find the right mix of rent and location."

In the past week since opening the doors, Mr O'Loughlin said the sausages had proven very popular with customers, given his claim to the Sausage King title earlier this year and in 2015.

A butcher by trade, Mr O'Loughlin opened his first Central Highlands store in Springsure in 2013, and his business and popularity grew from there.



NEW STORE: Tracey and Jason O'Loughlin with staff Demi Clarke and Brett Krickel outside the Emerald Fair Dinkum Meats store.

"Springsure was the first spot I found. It had been a butcher shop since 1868 but it had closed for two years before we came and bought it," he said.

"I never expected to have the response we got. It goes to show that if you have the right quality, value and service, that's what people want."

Mr and Mrs O'Loughlin then opened a store in

Blackwater in July last year and said customers could expect great taste and service at all three stores.

The couple place a strong emphasis on employing locally, with nine trainees and apprentices employed to learn from Mr O'Loughlin, who has worked throughout Australia and in all types of butcheries.

"I am passionate about passing on my knowledge to

my staff," he said.

Mr O'Loughlin said it gave customers the confidence of knowing that regardless of which store they visited, they could rely on his

butchers for knowledge and advice on all cuts of meat.

With the Emerald store now up and running, the new dream for Mr O'Loughlin is to open his own bacon factory – when the time is right.



FITNESS FOR EVERY AGE: Elite Youth Training Program at Emerald PCYC.

PHOTO: JESSICA DOREY

Teens break a sweat at new PCYC gym program

A NEW youth program at Emerald PCYC is allowing teenagers the opportunity to gain independence and fitness.

The program is aimed at 12 to 17-year-olds, allowing them to gain access to the gym while supervised by PCYC instructor Nicole McLean.

Nicole said teens were taught gym etiquette, correct technique and had access to one-on-one instruction.

"It is great for building their fitness and social abilities," she said.

"We've had very positive results. They go home absolutely pumped and motivated to continue learning."

Branch manager Sergeant Julia Henderson said the program was started after parents raised a need for it.

"It enables the youths to gain a bit of independence and freedom," she said.

"It's an incredibly safe environment and they are able to take part in a positive activity they wouldn't otherwise be able to."

Without this program, children younger than 18 cannot access the gym without the supervision of their parent or guardian.

Sgt Henderson said the program was a great way to get youths involved in physical activity.

"Team sports is not for everyone and this program allows youths to interact with other people their age they normally wouldn't, while staying active."

The Elite Youth Training Program for ages 12 to 17 years is held every Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 3pm and 5pm.