



# Neven all set for new series

Neven Maguire's third series of *Home Chef*, produced by InProduction.TV and sponsored by Bord Bia begins to air tonight, Thursday 12 January at 8.30pm on RTÉ One. In our own series - Celebrate Icons of the Irish Food Industry - *Country Living* profiles the products focused on by Neven in the show. So we're going to let the food, and Neven, do the talking ...



## MURPHY'S STOUT

Murphy's began brewing stout in Cork in 1856, and have seen through all manner of historic events that range from Easter 1916, two world wars and the Queen's recent visit. The brand identity of the stout reflects its long heritage as it features the

medals awarded to Murphy's at the Brewers and Allied Trades Exhibitions in Dublin in 1892 and in Manchester in 1895. 'Don't fix what ain't broken' was Murphy's policy thereafter and that quality has been carried through to the new Millennium as the recipe hasn't been changed

since.

In fact, the only thing that has changed are the holding vessels: the wooden kegs in which the stout was originally brewed are now made from steel. And the awards are still coming, with Murphy's winning gold medals in the Monde Global Quality Awards twice in the 2008 and 2009.

"We are very proud of our product" says Marketing Manager Peter Murphy. "It's prepared in a completely natural brewing process using 100% natural ingredients and I believe this is the key to quality."

There are no additives. We take grain from the fields and use malted Irish barley. We crush it, add it to hot water, ferment it and let it mature. The creaminess of the head is

driven from the use of naturally malted barley and the flavour can be attributed to the coffee and chocolate undertones which results from the roasting of the grain."

A man who knows all about quality is Neven Maguire and he loves to cook with Murphy's Stout. "It works really well for braising meat, particularly for pork. It is also very nice with chocolate in ice-cream. I find it's smooth and slightly sweeter than other stouts, and has a nice after-taste. It was very interesting pouring my first pint of Stout. It took me ten go's to do it!"

Located in the heart of the city, Murphy's Brewery is part

of the history of Cork: but it also forms part of the Rebel City's present – and not just because of the 425 jobs currently provided by the company. The Murphy's Little Big Night Out is a platform from which the company celebrates Cork city and culture, commemorating Cork music, cinema and sport. The events have been embraced by

locals, with 20,000 people attending the Nights Out in the past three years.

A pint of Murphy's is the ideal way to unwind in settings that vary from the bustling social scene of cities such as Cork, to a coastal pub, accompanied by shellfish. Popular also on shores beyond ours, it's sold in 48 countries. **CL**



The official pint of us

Enjoy MURPHY'S Sensibly. Visit [drinkaware.ie](http://drinkaware.ie)

# 'We've the best lamb in the world'



**R**ing of Kerry Quality Lamb was established in 2009 by 23 farmers from around the Ring of Kerry who were frustrated with the price of lamb. "We were getting between €3.40 and €3.60 per kg whereas a UCD/Teagasc survey found that over €4 per kg was necessary to make it sustainable" explains co-founder and Teagasc sheep specialist Michael Gottstein.

Quality was also a concern: "people were having bad taste experiences with lamb. We wanted to guarantee a good taste experience each time" says Michael. The farmers, with support from Teagasc, Bord Bia, Kerry Country Enterprise Board and South Kerry Development Partnership developed

a strategy to provide their lamb directly to the marketplace and so the Ring of Kerry Quality Lamb brand was born. The price was set at €4 per kilogram which was a significant premium at the time, it's now €5. To be part of the brand the farmers must meet specific standards - intensive feeding of the lambs isn't allowed. The structure of

the Group has brought pride back into the job that is now a direct link and feedback from the consumer. The drive for quality and a fair price has also been rewarded with the endorsement of none other than award winning chef Neven Maguire.

"We've the best lamb in the world" says Neven. "Ring of Kerry Quality Lamb is very innovative and most importantly, it's Bord Bia Quality Assured: we know we're getting Irish lamb. I buy my lamb directly from them. Interestingly you have to buy the full lamb, and they butcher it for you. The environment this lamb is farmed in is very natural, they feed off heather and clover and the meat has a lovely sweet taste."

The innovation mentioned by Neven is the vac-pack developed by the group which is much thicker than the industry standard. This stops it from blowing and it doesn't burst or puncture.

Another initiative was getting the lambs slaughtered locally. "There is no abattoir near us and with all the tour-

ists around Killarney, a lot of lamb came back to this area, but they weren't making our lambs. It just didn't make sense" says Michael. Now all lambs are slaughtered locally with three local butchers.

And what has demand been like? "We thought we'd do well in five-star hotels. But the people who really support us are local pub-grub outlets which depend on repeat business – they have sales reps calling in several times a week so the quality of the meat is crucial."

Every fledgling enterprise needs a helping hand and

Ring of Kerry Quality Lamb received great assistance from Bord Bia, particularly Margaret McCarthy. "Her expertise with marketing, the website, and the vac-packing issue was fantastic" says Micheal. The Group also won the Kerry Farm Biz Competition and was the food section winner in the JFC Awards 2010.

You can buy Ring of Kerry Quality Lamb online at [www.kerrylamb.ie](http://www.kerrylamb.ie) and lamb will be delivered anywhere in Ireland in a special box that keeps the lamb chilled during transit. **CL**



Some of the members of the Ring of Kerry Quality Lamb