



PAMP NEWSWATCH

PAMP Newswatch is an opportunity to highlight PAMP Members that have been featured in the local or national media. This month's article features this month's Blue Plate Operator, Hollenbaugh's Hometown Meats. This article was run in a local Clarion newspaper. If you have an article for the PAMP Newswatch send it to: pamp@pameatprocessors.org

Fresh products, friendly service, and a family-like atmosphere are on offer at one of Clarion's newest businesses, Hollenbaugh's Hometown Meat Market. Located on Route 322 at the former site of Clarion Bowl Arena/Ragley's Bowling Alley, Chad and Darlene Hollenbaugh opened the business in mid-November to, in part, fill the void left by the recent closure of Comet Food Warehouse, a community fixture for nearly 50 years, and the closure of Alderton's Meat Market's store front, just outside Brookville.

"We've always had a little meat processing shop in Strattanville where we've done wild game and custom beef and a few hogs for people. And then the need grew stronger (for a larger store) with a lot of different things taking," Chad Hollenbaugh said.

"I've always worked in the meat industry. I actually started at Comet back in 1980 or 1981. From there I worked for a couple different grocery store chains and then ended up at Con Yeager Spice Company and I've been there for the last 20 years teaching meat processing and how to make bolognas, snack sticks, jerkies. So over the years that's where I've learned almost everything," he said.

The new market carries a full line of beef, pork and poultry products, much of which can be custom cut on site to fill requests or special orders. "We have a large full service (meat) counter. And I think that makes it different, that people can come in and say 'Hey, this is what I'm looking for. Can I have this?'" Hollenbaugh said.

"We've had a lot of special orders in here, things that people don't want to travel to go get or run to different places. We're right here and willing to get those items in or cut them from the swinging meat (whole carcass animals) that we have in the back."

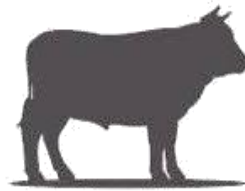
The Hollenbaughs also take satisfaction in obtaining products from local growers and suppliers, something they believe their customers value. "We really try to support the local guys, the local farmers, local produce people. We're really trying to lean into as much local stuff as we can," he said.

"We've got a few people raising chickens for us, as well as buying local hogs that we process in the back (meat cutting area) and some local beef. I think truly that the people in the area want to support locals," he noted.

The Hollenbaughs are slowly branching out to include other products in the store, such as homemade meat pies, lasagnas, goulashes, stuffed meat loaves and meatballs. They also stock a full line of deli items, baked goods, canned and jarred foods, bulk candies and locally produced dairy products.

"As people are asking for things, we're reaching out and getting those items in here," he said. "It's been a big learning curve, but we've been fortunate the community has been very patient with us in figuring out what they want and how to keep it out here. We've learned as we went along."

Despite growing their business, the Hollenbaughs continue to process wild game, with this past deer season being particularly busy. "I could never hold many deer before. Then this year we crushed some pretty big numbers and had to shut them off at the end of the season. Just



HOLLENBAUGH'S

HOMETOWN MEAT MARKET



because we can hold a lot more doesn't mean we can get a lot more done," he said.

"We had to stop after a while and get caught up. Now we know what the potential is. And, we're making sure everybody gets their own deer back."

Not only do the Hollenbaughs pride themselves on the products and services they provide, but also the family nature of the business. This extends beyond the immediate family to also include all others that work at the market, many of whom they've known for a long time. "It's a family business and the people that work for us are family as well," Darlene Hollenbaugh said.

"Our son (Noah), daughter (Alecia), and granddaughter (Malia) all work here," Chad Hollenbaugh said.

He said, "There's always three or four people behind the counter that are standing here ready to wait on: customers. 'I think with the larger chains you don't get to see anybody anymore. I think that makes a big difference.'"