

MEDIA RELEASE

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ALLIANCE GROUP LAUNCHES PREMIUM AGED BEEF PRODUCT

Leading food company Alliance Group has launched a new kind of premium beef with a focus on two key disciplines – ageing and individual selection.

The new HANDPICKED 55 Day Aged Beef, which is marketed under the co-operative's Pure South range, features visual assessment, a high marbling score, targeted low Ph range and extended 'wet ageing' to create an unprecedented level of succulence, tenderness and flavour.

The co-operative is targeting the food service sector in New Zealand and overseas for the product, which is the culmination of a three-year research and development programme.

Peter Russell, General Manager Marketing for Alliance, said the co-operative has been trialling the product with chefs and premium restaurants over the past year.

"Currently, many chefs purchase beef and age the product themselves for up to several weeks with varying degrees of success.

"With Alliance effectively pre-ageing the product, it enables HANDPICKED 55 Day Aged Beef to be delivered to a tight specification for a guaranteed high-quality eating experience. The product can be used straight away or dry aged further."

Pure South HANDPICKED 55 Day Aged Beef is purposely *breed-agnostic*, with careful hand selection by master graders selecting from any prime young cattle from any breed.

"Only a fraction of the very finest beef we handle ever makes the grade, certainly in the low single percentage figures." said Mr Russell.

"The feedback from our trials at restaurants around the country has been exceptional, as well as from 'blind' taste testing panels alongside other premium beef products."

The launch of the product fits with the co-operative's strategy of capturing more market value for farmer-shareholders, he said.

"This is about building a differentiated portfolio and enabling our farmers the opportunities to partner with the co-operative on new products for new segments across our entire range."

Pure South HANDPICKED 55 Day Aged Beef joins Alliance's growing other premium and super premium brand portfolio which includes Silere and TE MANA LAMB, as an offer to the premium dining market in New Zealand and internationally.

It was unveiled to leading chefs and food media at Auckland's Clooney fine dining restaurant in March and also showcased to international chefs on Alliance Group's *Antipocurean Series* tour recently.

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