

The meat of the matter

After introducing Clancy's Meat Co. to Ontario, a franchisee plans a recipe for expansion



Mark Edmundson opened Ontario's first Clancy's Meat Co. franchise last December, and plans to open an additional two London units

FOR CLANCY'S MEAT CO., franchisee Mark Edmundson, shooting for a hat trick is, well, old hat. A London native, Edmundson played hockey for the Ottawa 67's of the Ontario Hockey League in the early 1990s and later spent four years in the United States playing professionally with several teams.

This time around, however, Edmundson is not aiming to put pucks in the net. Instead, he's shooting for a trio of Clancy's Meat Co. franchises in London.

A former financial adviser with London Life, Edmundson opened Ontario's first Clancy's Meat Co. at the corner of Southdale and Wonderland roads last December. Early next year, he'll open a second unit in the north end, and he plans to follow that with a third location in east London in 2014.

"I just want everyone to come in and try it," he says of the retail fresh and frozen meat and side dish store. "We have fresh foods that distinguish us from some [frozen food] competitors and single servings if you don't want the big boxes."

Established as a retailer of premium meat products in British Columbia in 1997, Clancy's has slowly driven its brand east over the past 15 years, finally breaking into the Ontario market last year with Edmundson's unit. There are now two in the province and four more stores outside of London primed to open soon.

Interestingly, another Londoner, Brian Davy, is spearheading the company's expansion eastward. One of the original M&M Meat Shops franchisees (he owned eight franchises in Southwestern Ontario and opened London's first M&M Meat Shop in London in 1983), Davy came out of early retirement to join the Clancy's executive team as vice president of franchise development in 2011. He is leading both franchise recruitment and site selection of all new stores in Ontario.

As well as expanding its geographic reach, Clancy's Meat Co. has invested in expanded product lines. The product selection, described as "West Coast inspired appetizers, entrées and desserts", includes a combination of fresh, pre-marinated, ready-to-serve foods, an extensive selection of frozen products and a variety of packaged sauces and marinades.

"Half the store is fresh items that people

can take home to cook for dinner," says Edmundson. "It's ideal when you've had a busy day at work."

While most of the fresh food is shipped in from the west, Edmundson says he also tries to source naturally grown food and meats locally.

"The other half is frozen food, and includes single-serve so people can try out different items by buying individual portions," he continues. "For example, we have five flavours of tilapia, so customers can try them all before they commit to a full box. It's also perfect for seniors and people who live alone or who don't have large freezers."

After spending so many years on the ice, it's not surprising to learn that Edmundson maintains many of his ties to the hockey world. In fact, he catered a barbecue for Londoner Jeff Carter when the Los Angeles player brought the Stanley Cup to town this past August. "It certainly was a great experience," says Edmundson, "and definitely a meal fit for a king." ■ KYM WOLFE

CLANCY'S MEAT CO.

Fresh and frozen meat and specialty food franchise
Established 2011 (1997 corporate)
4 employees
Local market
www.clancysmeatco.com

