

At Martin Rosol's, tradition makes the recipes memorable

By **SCOTT WHIPPLE**

STAFF WRITER

NEW BRITAIN — Over the years, Martin Rosol's may have changed but its quality never has.

"Ever since Martin Rosol started the business in 1928, we've kept his original recipes," says Karen Rosol, vice president and company secretary. This adherence to tradition seems to have paid off.

Martin Rosol's makes frankfurts, sausage, its own chili and has carved out a favorable reputation for its kielbasa among area residents of Polish descent.

"We make the best tasting kielbasa, bar none," brags President Bob Rosol.

Not surprisingly, comments posted online at the company's website (www.martinrosolsinc.com) are highly complimentary. Typical praise from a Middletown customer: "Martin Rosol's Frankfurts have more snap in each bite."

Comments such as these put a grin on Bob Rosol's face and might have had the same effect on his grandfather.

Martin Rosol started his business 83 years ago in a converted garage with eight workers. In

1937, when his workforce grew to 18, Rosol built the current facility on Grove Street. Over the next 25 years, the Rosols enlarged the plant. As their business grew, so did the work force. Annual company sales now range between \$5 million and \$10 million. Rosol's 28 workers are either making the products or driving company trucks.

They also tend to be loyal.

"Several employees have worked

for us for more than 50 years," says Bob Rosol. Martin's oldest son, Eugene, Bob's father, joined the company in 1946 after serving in the Marine Corps during World War II. Eugene Rosol was active in the business and remained its CEO until his death in November.

Bob joined the business in 1981.

Bob's son, Ben, is the plant manager, and his other son, Tim, a recent University of Connecticut graduate, is learning the business. Some meat markets convert part of their business into a restaurant. Years ago, Rosol's decided against this move.

"We sell to restaurants in the area," says Karen Rosol, Bob's sister-in-law, "and don't want to compete with them."

"When it comes to Frankfurts, our best-known customer is Capitol Lunch," Bob Rosol says.

Current best-sellers are Rosol's

Frankfurts, kielbasa and luncheon loaf.

Bob Rosol says during Easter the company changes spices in its kielbasa.

"It has a different combination," he says.

When asked why, he shakes his head.

"I can't say," he says. "It's a family tradition that started with my grandfather."

Although Rosol's calls supermarkets and restaurants every week to get their order, the company doesn't take phone orders from individuals. It's first come, first serve at the meat counter. During Easter a customer might wait two hours.

The business used to be done primarily with mom-and-pop shops;



Chris Richie | Staff

Meats for sale at Martin Rosol's meat market in New Britain.

the product was sold by a driver/salesman off a company truck.

When small, privately-owned stores began to fold, sales routes changed. Now Rosol's sells to Stop and Shop and Shaw's. During the warmer months the company also sells to hot dog stands. Last month Rosol's opened an online store.

"We've already had online customers from 10 different states," Karen Rosol says. "Some tell us they buy from us online because they've been searching for that perfect Frankfurt or perfect kielbasa. I guess we come pretty close."



Chris Richie | Staff

Michael Iljuczzonek weighs kielbasa for a customer at Martin Rosol's meat market in New Britain.

IF YOU GO ...

Martin Rosol's retail shop at 45 Grove St. in New Britain is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday from 7 a.m. to noon. Closed Sunday. Telephone: (860) 223-2707 and (860) 223-2708. The online store is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week (www.martinrosolsinc.com).

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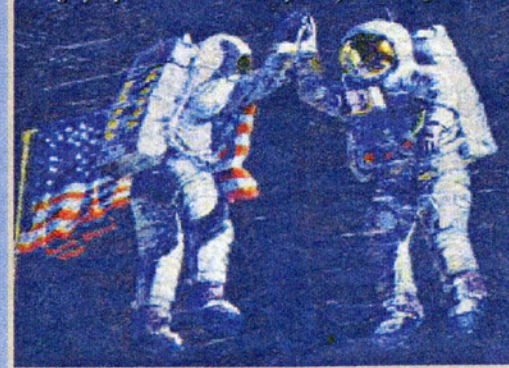
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