

Flexible training from NMIT

The Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE is a brand new facility that offers a range of food and agriculture and specifically meat training courses.

NMIT is a multi purpose facility that offers formal meat training from Advanced Diploma level through to two-day orientation courses for prospective employees. But the facility is also 'for hire' to organisations wanting to arrange meat-related seminars, workshops and demonstrations.

A special feature is its flexibility – to customise courses to match the training needs of students and employers. NMIT's employee orientation courses have proven popular with meat processors. The courses provide prospective employees a two-day orientation program before they start their employment ensuring they are familiar with the work environment.

"Meat processing is not for everyone," explains Phil Tripp, Acting Head of the



Shannon Combridge and students: looking for contamination on sheep carcasses.



Technical Officer Shannon Combridge uses a combination of enthusiasm, body and spoken language to communicate with students. A translator is on hand to assist given the varied work experiences and cultural backgrounds of students. Shannon is the main meat skills trainer at NMIT and is a fully qualified and experienced butcher from slaughter floor to retail.



The NMIT meat processing facility has chillers, freezers, 16 boning stations as well as sausage making equipment and vacuum packers.

Agriculture and Animal Science Department and manager of the meat training facilities. Perhaps less than half the students who do the course stay-on in meat processing, but the course itself weeds out some who are not suited to the work and environment and the balance know what they are in for when they start.”

The orientation module is primarily about OH&S and hygiene with demonstrations

and hands-on introductions to knife sharpening and boning. Orientation courses typically have 16 students who spend virtually the whole course in the processing rooms and chillers. Certificate II and III and Diploma training is delivered either at NMIT or at the workplace.

The NMIT meat processing facility has capacity for 100 beef quarters or lamb/pork equivalents, 16 boning stations and freezer and chiller rooms. It also

has sausage making and vacuum packing equipment.

NMIT has an agricultural heritage and runs courses on livestock handling (during transport and lairage) and animal nutrition and runs aquaculture, viticulture and winemaking courses. It also has a separate fish processing, smoking and packing facility and winery. The campus is located in Epping on the northern fringe of Melbourne. ■

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