

Brilliance at Brion's

A family-owned Northwoods deli uses a Rice Lake Weighing Systems Ishida Uni-3 retail scale to make community dreams come true.

Homemade brats. Fresh, squeaky cheese curds. Soup, sandwiches and a family atmosphere. All of this and more can be found at Brion's Smokehouse Deli in Cameron, Wisconsin.

When Gregg Brion was a teenager, he started working as a bagger at a grocery store. Eventually he began working in the deli area and learned how to butcher and process meat. When the opportunity emerged to buy a grocery store, Gregg and his wife Gen knew they needed to take it. The store became a community gem.

For 20 years they continued to operate the space as a grocery store, but as larger stores developed in the surrounding area, they noticed the busiest part of the store was their deli and meat counter (where regulars were always treated like family). They also saw a need in their community for a family-centered deli restaurant; a place for people to come together with good company and great food. In March 2017, Brion's Smokehouse Deli went from dream to reality.

Not as Easy as 1, 2, 3...

They would be combining Gen's love of cooking and Gregg's 30 years of meat processing experience, but even that didn't make the change less daunting. Before Gregg and Gen could begin feeding their hungry customers, they had to completely remodel the existing grocery store and update the point-of-sale (POS)

Gen Brion uses the Ishida Uni-3 price computing scale's preset keys to calculate product costs and quickly print customer labels.

register and counter scale. The outdated scale they had been using in the grocery store deli wasn't going to work anymore. For years Gen had been unrolling, inking and rerolling the printer paper by hand because ink ribbons weren't available for the old scale's printer. Their new scale also needed to store the PLUs/SKUs (price look-up codes/stock keeping unit codes) of every product being weighed.

When Gregg and Gen first began thinking of turning the grocery store into a deli-style restaurant, they took stock of what they would need to weigh on a daily basis. They knew they would need to weigh salads, cheese and meat products (including their homemade brats), and they needed a scale that would keep up with their demands.

When asked why they chose a Rice Lake Weighing Systems Ishida Uni-3 retail scale, Gen said, "It's local. It was the right scale and it does what we need it to do." With such strong community ties, it's no surprise that Gregg and Gen wanted to support other local businesses. Rice Lake's reputation for customer support and dependability were just perks making the choice that much easier.

Before upgrading their deli scale and POS system, Gregg and Gen had been handwriting prices and manually adding them at the cash register. The new POS and price-computing scale systems were a huge leap in technology. Once they started using the Uni-3 retail scale and POS system together, Gen's only comment was "It's so easy!"





The Ishida Uni-3 retail scale has an expansive memory for simple operation, a matching customer display and fast label printer. Gen is very happy with how quick it is to press a preset key for ground beef, steaks or potato salad, weigh the product and have a label clearly printed with the weight and price for the customer.

More than a year after officially opening Brion's Smokehouse Deli, Gregg and Gen are still hand-butchering meat, serving up local classics every day. Gen also said they cater events, smiling as she mentioned a wedding for a local family. When asked about the homemade brats, she said the Garlic Colby Brats are probably the best seller, though her personal favorites are the Cranberry Wild Rice Brats because "they taste like Thanksgiving!"

Gregg and Gen Brion may not have expected to open a restaurant when they bought a grocery store 20 years ago, but thanks to patience, determination, an Ishida Uni-3 scale and a loving community, they did just that. Brion's Smokehouse Deli is a family-owned deli that welcomes the community with a steady supply of local favorites perfect for lunch or dinner with the family. ■

Brion's Smokehouse Deli offers hand-butchered meat and deli options in Cameron, Wisconsin.



FROM A-Z

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