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## **AMERICAN PROSCIUTTO MAKER DECLARES “HAM INDEPENDENCE”**

*Specialty retailers and chefs across the nation to show “pork patriotism” by celebrating American-made prosciutto and charcuterie June 27-July 3; La Quercia owners to make their third Ham Independence Ride.*

DES MOINES, IA, June 23, 2014 – La Quercia, Iowa’s award-winning cured meat company, is taking on its European competitors with Ham Independence Week, a celebration of artisan cured ham. Said La Quercia co-owner Herb Eckhouse, “Too long have Americans toiled under the hoof of foreign ham powers! No longer dependent on other nations for artisan cured ham, America is finally ready to assume its rightful place.”

La Quercia has been making handcrafted prosciutto in Iowa for a decade, using humanely raised pigs from family farms in the Midwest. The company’s products, which include several varieties of prosciutto, pancetta, coppa, guanciale, lardo and salami, have been embraced by taste-making chefs and retailers, and hailed by *Food & Wine*, *Bon Appétit*, *Vogue* and many other publications.

During Ham Independence Week, June 27-July 3, more than 50 select retailers across the country, including Murray’s Cheese Shop in New York City, Zingerman’s Deli in Ann Arbor, Mich., and Di Bruno Bros. gourmet grocery in Philadelphia, Penn., will host unique prosciutto sales, tasting events and cured meat classes. Fans can vote online for the retailer with the most creative displays and activities during Ham Independence Week at [www.hamindependence.com](http://www.hamindependence.com). The top vote-getting retailer will win a whole Acorn Edition Prosciutto leg from La Quercia. (This prosciutto, one of the company’s varietal offerings, comes from heritage breed pigs fed a diet of 60 percent acorns during their last four months. The result is a deep red prosciutto with a nutty fragrance and sweet, buttery finish.)

Also during the week, Herb and Kathy Eckhouse will be making their third annual Ham Independence Ride. Herb describes their activities along these rides as “rousing the troops, kissing babies and feeding everyone prosciutto.” This year’s ride includes stops in Des Moines, Austin, New York City, and Philadelphia. Herb and Kathy will be sampling their Acorn Edition Prosciutto at pairing events, tastings, cocktail parties, and special dinners along the trail. Space at each event is limited, and ham-lovers can check out <http://www.hamindependence.com/events> for more details.

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The Ham Independence Ride schedule:

6/26 Ham Independence Launch party with [The Cheese Shop of Des Moines](#) (Iowa)

6/27 Beer, Cheese & Prosciutto pairing event with [Antonelli’s Cheese Shop](#) (Austin, TX)

6/28 Ham & Bubbles Breakfast at [Antonelli's Cheese House](#) (Austin, TX)  
6/30 Ham & Cheese Party with [Cellars at Jasper Hill](#) at the [Wythe Hotel](#) (Brooklyn, NY)  
7/1 Ham Independence Happy Hour at [Huertas](#) NYC (NYC, NY)  
7/2 Festival of Cured Meats with [Di Bruno Bros](#) (Philadelphia, PA)

### **About La Quercia**

Husband and wife Herb and Kathy Eckhouse began La Quercia with the goal of making uniquely delicious cured meats from humanely raised American pork. Their appreciation of fine cured meats was sparked by several years living in Parma, Italy, but it was the bounty of the Midwest that inspired them to start curing meats in their Des Moines, Iowa, basement a decade ago. Although the company now operates in a much larger facility in nearby Norwalk, Iowa, they still salt, turn and trim each piece by hand in their aging rooms. Learn more at [www.laquercia.us](http://www.laquercia.us).

La Quercia's products now available directly to consumers via mail order. The full lineup of products is here: [http://laquercia.us/order\\_cured\\_la\\_quercia\\_meats](http://laquercia.us/order_cured_la_quercia_meats).

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To interview Herb Eckhouse and learn more about Ham Independence Week, contact Ruth Holbrook (contact information above) or call 515/981-1625.

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