

What to expect this year

FROM August 11, the Royal Queensland Show, held in the heart of Bowen Hills, will come alive with some of the most exciting cultural attractions, the tastiest local produce and the best of the agricultural industry.

Imagine the showgrounds buzzing with activities, featuring thousands of animals, food, art, craft competitions, sideshow alley, wonderful food and wine, educational displays and great value family fun. And picture yourself right in amongst it, enjoying bars, live entertainment, spectacular fireworks, family feasts, cuddly animals and much, much more.

The Ekka is a chance to showcase tradition and heritage by bringing the city and country together for an incredible and unforgettable experience.

Canine

The Royal Queensland Dog Show was the largest Ekka competition in 2010 and this year will feature more than 200 breeds and more than 2200 animals. Pat a Golden Retriever, find out what a Xoloitzcuintle is or see if your dog is up to scratch in the obedience and agility trials.

Horses

Queensland's best horses are on show during Ekka, including the pint-sized Shetland Ponies and the picturesque Clydesdales. The traditional art of farriery and blacksmithing will also be a sight to see with the competition heating up on August 17, 18 and 19.

Young Farmers Challenge

A flurry of checked shirts, moleskins and cowboy hats will descend on the Energeek Community Arena during the opening night of Ekka 2011. The Young Farmers Challenge will put Queensland's finest farmers against their city counterparts and folk from across the border – all aiming to secure the title of champion young farmer. The mini-marathon of everyday farming activities will include riding a four-wheel motorbike through an obstacle course, milking a cow, building a fence, and assembling a water pump plus much more.

Agricultural Hall

Head to the Brisbane Markets Agricultural Hall to see an abundance of fresh produce, free tastings and friendly faces. The hall showcases the state's horticulture industry and also provides an opportunity to taste some of the many varied fruits, vegetables and other primary produce on display. The effort and pride taken by the many rural producer groups and schools in presenting their produce is something that has to be seen.

Showbags

Offering the same great range, this year's showbags will be housed in a temporary facility located in the sideshow alley. There are 331 different bags to choose from this year, including 63 new showbags. Some showbag favourites under \$13 tipped to be popular this year are:

- Bertie Beetle Blue, \$2



Models showcase a taste of what is to come at the glamorous Cotton and Wool fashion parades, at the recent Ekka media launch. Local designers will be the main feature and crowds can see their new season styles at the fashion parades held daily at the Ekka this year.

- GrainWaves bag, \$4
- Red Rock Delt bag, \$4
- Mars bag, \$4
- Skittles bag, \$4
- Cadbury Special Treats bag, \$4
- Fyna Licorice bag, \$4

- Gobstoppers, \$5
- Nerds, \$5
- Hubba Bubba, \$5
- Caramello Kaala, \$5
- Watheads Extreme Sour, \$10
- Ultimate Magic, \$12

Other highlights:



Sunny Queen Little Miracles Newborn Corner: Giving Ekka visitors a glimpse of the miracle of birth

RACQ Insurance Animal Nursery: Visit 400 baby animals at Ekka's most popular attraction

Gourmet Harvest: Featuring gourmet pies, seafood, pasta, Indian dishes and yum cha

Seafood and Wine Bar: Taste the very best in fresh seafood and enjoy some great wine

Royal Queensland Steak House: New for 2011 – Fine-dining steak house

Triple M Show Starter: Competition to unearth a support act for Wolfmother

Cotton and Wool Parades: Featuring all Brisbane designers for the first time

League of Sideshow Superstars: Featuring one of the world's elite contortionists – Ruby Rubberlegs

Ekka Ignites, presented by B105: Show stopping two hour night time program

Guinness World Record Attempt: A Brisbane scuba-diving extraordinaire will attempt to stay submerged for more than 8 hours 20 minutes and 38 seconds using only a single 12-litre oxygen tank

The Smurf Show Live: Magical adventure with free shows twice a day

Sideshow Alley: New rides this year – Disk-O, Extreme, Giant Wheel and family-friendly Jurassic ride

City designers to wow crowds

The iconic and immensely popular Cotton and Wool fashion parades are back bigger and better than ever at this year's Ekka.

They will once again grace the Royal Queensland Show featuring a distinctly local Brisbane flavour. More than 16 local designers will be showcased in the Ekka's most glamorous event which continues to draw massive crowds, since they were first held in the 1980s. Last year's event saw the theme of the parades return to Cotton and Wool, which supports the ideals of the Ekka and the RNA.

RNA chief executive Jonathan Turney said the parades were important in paying tribute to Queensland's agricultural sector through an innovative promotion of cotton and wool.

"A key cornerstone of the Ekka is education and the heart of the show is all about bringing city and country together," he said. The parades encompass this by "showcasing the diversity of our cotton and wool industries" to city folk. The parades not only offer visitors the chance to experience the largest publicly available fashion shows in the state but also support local Brisbane designers.

"The parades are a wonderful highlight of the Ekka and draw massive crowds, and it's great to see local designers be able to showcase their designs on this unique stage. It's an event not to be missed," Jonathan said.

Fashion event director Lindsay Bennett, who created the original Cotton and Wool parades, will once again produce the parades this year.

Mr Bennett said the event parades would involve Brisbane's leading fashion designers, presenting a captivating collection of couture and ready-to-wear styles.

"Quality wool and cotton fabrics remain the most versatile and enduring of all and in the hands of designers of the calibre featured in these parades, the remarkable quality and endurance of the two will be fully displayed," he said.

"By selecting designers who have chosen to work in natural fibres, we are celebrating the finest fabrics nature has to offer."

Audiences are invited to witness the natural beauty of cotton and wool fabrics in the form of daywear, casual and evening wear.

This year's line-up of designers is of the highest standards yet. Participants include Francis Leon, Jacqueline Buck, Sacha Drake, Pistols at Dawn, dogstar, Malocchi, Nelson Molloy, Talulah, Neon Heartache, QUT (Queensland University of Technology), MSIT (Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE), Vanguard, Foxton Danger, Bora, Gina Kim, Darb Couture and accessories by Adorne.

The Cotton and Wool Parades bring all the extravagance and spectacle of the fashion industry to the Queensland public, with an international standard and a distinctly local focus.

● The Cotton and Wool Parades will be staged in the auditorium in the Walter Burill Building at 12:30pm, 1:30pm, and 2:30pm daily. An additional show will be staged at 3:30pm each day of the first weekend. The best parades will be staged at 2:30pm on Saturday 20 August.

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The Display Suite is open Daily Wednesday to Sunday from 10am to Noon or by appointment. Display Suite located at 81 Lawson Street Morningside. For more info contact Simon Wheelans on 0417 799 963 or Hannah Bryan 0401 539 928 or see more details at carbondevelopment.com.au.

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