

July 5, 2018

Back to the future as Ekka set to wow

Visitors to this year's Royal Queensland Show (Ekka) presented by RACQ will get to experience a world first new animal pavilion, new indoor arena for the iconic woodchop competition plus a digital experience like no other as the RNA drops ticket prices at the gate for the first time in more than 15 years.

As the countdown to the Ekka began at the show's official launch in Brisbane this morning, RNA Chief Executive Brendan Christou said the show wanted to deliver value with affordable ticket prices plus an on ground experience like no other.

"The heart and soul of the Ekka lies in agriculture and our competition traditions – it's what makes coming to the show such a unique experience," he said.

"There's nothing else like the Ekka, you cannot see 10,000 animals or witness competitions which date back to our first show in 1876 anywhere else.

"That's why we have invested in building a new home for large and small breeds during the show – The CRT Pavilion, plus giving woodchop a brand new all-weather indoor arena experience."

Mr Christou said the pavilion was part of stage three of the RNA's Brisbane Showgrounds Regeneration Project and a building Ekka exhibitors have been waiting for.

"It is the only building of its kind in the world and has been specially designed to house animals during Ekka and act as an events space and car park facility outside of show – with all revenue invested back into the Ekka."

"This year, the ground and first floor will be home to beef and dairy cattle, poultry and dairy goats – another two football fields of space where you can see animals at the show.

"We have made a major investment in our charter which is to champion and celebrate agriculture; the pavilion will be in full use at the 2019 show – offering four football fields of space to see animals."

The new Woodchop Arena is located at the Bowen Bridge Road end of Sideshow Alley and it has been expanded by 50 per cent.

Mr Christou said it was a fantastic all weather indoor space that will make woodchop one of the most entertaining arenas at show.

"It is part of our redevelopment and a major investment in the traditions of show," he said.

"Our Ekka competitions are the heart and soul of the show and we are delighted to be able to give woodchop a much bigger home."

With Ekka just 36 days away, Mr Christou said the RNA had dropped the prices of its most popular tickets.

“The gate price for a family ticket has dropped from \$89 to \$80 and is even cheaper to buy online with more discounts on offer,” he said.

“We understand cost of living pressures and the impact on family budgets, so we try and make the show affordable for all to enjoy.”

Almost 31 million people have come through the gates since the first Ekka in 1876 - this year about 400,000 are expected to flock to the state’s largest annual event.

This year’s show will feature brand new world class entertainment including a jam-packed night show, the return of the early children’s fireworks, plus the spectacular fireworks finale, 10,000 animals, 21,000 competition entries and brand new award winning food and wine precincts.

NEW TO THIS YEAR’S EKKA

The 141st Ekka is jam packed with more than 300 free things to do and see each day of show. Below is a snapshot of some of the most exciting new elements of the Ekka to enjoy this year:

PAVILIONS:

- **The CRT Pavilion** is the new home for large and small animal breeds during show. This year, the ground and first floor will be home to beef and dairy cattle, poultry and dairy goats - another two football fields of space where visitors can see animals at Ekka. It’s the only building of its kind in the world and has been specially designed to house animals during show
- **Woodchop Arena** - the new Woodchop Arena has expanded the popular competition area by 50 per cent. The undercover space will make woodchop one of the most entertaining arenas at the show and for the first time ever events will now run from 11am to 7.30pm each evening of show

COMPETITIONS

- Australia v New Zealand - Open Men’s Invitational woodchop event to be held at Ekka for the very first time
- The Queensland State Shearing and Wool Handling Championships where eight of the best sheep shearers and wool handlers will go head to head

DAYTIME ENTERTAINMENT - Sure to wow the crowds, new daytime entertainment at Ekka this year includes:

- The return of the popular Heritage Bank Racing Pigs, last seen at Ekka in 2015. These popular little piggies will fly through the sky, dive into a pool of water and race each other around a track
- Ekka’s most glamorous event – The Natural Fibres Fashion Parades presented by Moët & Chandon is back again and this year features a stunning new Winter Wonderland theme
- The energetic Crackup Sisters will perform a unique blend of comedy, whipcracking and slapstick acrobatics, as they tell stories of the outback and its larrikin characters
- The ag-ucational Farmer Rob Show, teaching kids how to grow seedlings at home and what products can be recycled
- Stunning praying mantis and beetle stilt walkers that will bring nature to life as they dance, wander and tiptoe through the crowds on Gregory Terrace

- Ekka's inaugural Dagwood Dog Eating Competition that will see competitors hungry for a win, including Australia's No.1 Ranked Pro Competitive Eater 'Hulk Smash Food' (aka Cal Stubbs), compete across amateur, professional and celebrity classes
- i-Sing Karaoke where performers will compete karaoke style in the Queensland state and national finals of the i-Sing Australia competition
- A boot-scooting Line Dancing Hoedown featuring social dancing, competition demonstrations, beginner workshops and the inaugural Queensland Club Challenge

EKKANITES supported by RACQ LifeFlight

Featuring a world first and Ekka firsts, the new night show includes:

- A futuristic fireworks spectacular featuring a world first 'fireball' vehicle and Australian first remote control cars strapped with pyros that will zoom around the Main Arena at more than 100km an hour
- New and extended Children's Fireworks presented by MG Motor – Colours of the Outback
- A Wild Colonial Wagon Chase featuring a ground shaking cattle stampede of 20 bulls and a talented stockman who leaps from a galloping horse onto a moving Cobb & Co carriage
- The Ekka's very own Bronco vs Cowboy Lowd V8 UTE challenge featuring awe-inspiring precision driving and a thrilling race
- A monster truck competition that will see father and son drivers balance the four and a half tonne vehicles on their rear wheels
- Flawless aerial tricks from ShowTime FMX's new show - Battle of the Golden Helmet II
- A 10 seater monster truck for the 4KQ Greatest Seats in the House vehicle, custom built in the USA

TECHNOLOGY PRECINCT

This year's Ekka features a brand new technology hub located in the Technology Precinct on the upper floor of the Royal International Convention Centre. The tech hub will showcase the latest in virtual reality technology and agri-tech, with interactive activities including:

- Virtual Barambin interactive virtual reality experience where Ekka visitors will walk in the footsteps of Aboriginal people from the 1770s
- Snow Slingers multi-player virtual reality experience created by Lightweave, where users will sling snowballs at each other in a chilly snow environment
- Ace Aviation stand where Ekka visitors will fly micro-drones around an obstacle course in a netted area
- Telstra will roll into the tech hub with Australia's first 5G Connected Car and run coding activities for kids

EKKA APP

Once you are in the gates this year you will enjoy a digital experience like no other. The Ekka is the first Royal Show in Australia to offer augmented reality experiences via our new Ekka App. The App will enable people of all ages to scan dozens of different augmented reality markers around grounds to view educational and entertaining content plus an amazing colouring-in experience for the kids. **Download the Ekka App now on iTunes and Google Play.**

THE OLD MUSEUM

Back for a third year, this growing precinct will feature the new:

- Cosmic Star Dome which uses projection technology to provide a realistic recreation of the night sky, as seen from a rural area of Queensland
- 'Making Gardening Accessible - Everyone, Everywhere' display which was shown at the prestigious Chelsea Flower Show in London
- Our Backyard by Claire Bickle which showcases a collection of backyard designs featuring bean teepees, chicken coops and ponds
- A Workshop Marquee with plenty for the kids from planting tomato seeds to looking at and learning about bugs
- A Floristry Competition featuring five classes, with entrants to create wedding table and corporate table centrepieces and compete in two mystery box challenges
- Entertainment on the Flower and Garden Stage including a Water Warriors show encouraging kids to save water and an RSPCA show teaching children how to best look after their pets around native wildlife

EDUCATION

There are plenty of new activities in the Agricultural Hall presented by seqwater this year, including:

- Free Rivers - kids will learn all about the water cycle through an AR experience on an ipad at the seqwater stand
- Green Screen - standing in front of a green screen at the seqwater stand, children will pick a water-related background to feature in
- New look 'Ekka Learning: A Dam Good Trail presented by seqwater' featuring 10 trail points - more than ever before

FOOD

New food and beverage offerings at Ekka this year include:

- **The Taste Triangle** - for foodies to get lost in. It includes the new and trendy Bavarian Beerhaus (German food and craft beer) and Welcome to Bowen Hills (food truck park), along with the popular Gourmet Plaza, Woolworths Fresh Food Pavilion, Royal Queensland Steakhouse presented by JBS Australia and Moët & Chandon Fashion Bar
- **Vegan Ekka** - with the vegan lifestyle becoming more popular, Ekka has more vegan foods on offer than ever before

EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

The 2018 Ekka Media Kit is now available to download. It is the most comprehensive information guide to the show - to download please visit www.ekka.com.au/media

Don't forget to follow us on social media #ekka



And download the Ekka App from [Google Play](#) or [iTunes](#)

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