

April 6, 2020

2020 Royal Queensland Show cancelled

Due to the worldwide coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, increasing social distancing measures and public gathering restrictions being implemented, the RNA has made the decision to cancel the 2020 Royal Queensland Show (Ekka) in the best interests of public health.

It is just the third time in the Ekka's 143-year history that the show has been cancelled. It was previously cancelled in 1919 due to the Spanish Flu epidemic and in 1942 when the grounds were used as a World War II staging depot.

RNA Chief Executive Brendan Christou said ensuring the health and safety of the Ekka community and the general public was paramount.

"This is the biggest worldwide health crisis in generations; these are very challenging and unprecedented times, and nothing is more important than ensuring the best outcome for public health is achieved," he said.

"The RNA will provide every assistance to the Government during this public health emergency, including the use of our Royal International Convention Centre which can be transformed into a functioning hospital as required.

"Over the past 144 years, the Brisbane Showgrounds have been used to help the community in times of need, including being used as a treatment centre in 1919 for those suffering from Spanish Influenza to an evacuation centre for those impacted by the devastation of the 2011 Brisbane floods.

"The RNA is dedicated to providing all the assistance and support it can to Government and the health authorities in these ever-changing and uncertain times."

Mr Christou said it was also important to decide on the Ekka now as many exhibitors and competitors spend months preparing for the show and getting entries ready plus the hundreds of volunteers who give so generously of their time each year, many of whom take annual leave.

"They are incredibly passionate and supportive of the Show and we wanted to give them as much notice as possible," he said.

"We are also very mindful of our farming families who rely on events like the Ekka that not just showcase and reward the best of the best, but also provide much needed respite and highlight the many challenges they face such as drought.

"Just as our bush communities and farming families inspire us with their resilience the RNA will work tirelessly to ensure the 2021 Ekka is the biggest and best yet.

Mr Christou said the Ekka was also much more than the 10 days of show each August.

“While the gates won’t open this August, we have programs running throughout the year educating the public on the important role agriculture plays in their everyday lives and helping bridge the city country divide,” he said.

“That engagement will not just continue but expand.

“We thank the people of Queensland for their support of Ekka and we look forward to bringing the community together once again to celebrate the country coming to city as planning now starts on the 2021 Show.”

Don’t forget to follow us on social media @TheEkka



For more information please contact the Ekka Media Unit:
Veronica Carew
General Manager Communications
Ph: 07 3253 3930/ 0408 323 631
Email: VCarew@rma.org.au

Nicole Clifton
Media and Communications Officer
Ph: 07 3253 3931/ 0417 451 775
Email: nclifton@rma.org.au