

THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF NATAL

2011 ROYAL SHOW – 27 MAY TO 5 JUNE

PRESS RELEASE NO. 1

The Royal Show celebrates its 160th anniversary in 2011 and is today South Africa's oldest and largest mixed agricultural exhibition.

As is customary, the event will again take place at the famous Royal Showgrounds in Pietermaritzburg from 27 May to 5 June and with two streams traversing the grounds, its well manicured gardens and upwards of a thousand trees, promises to afford all visitors a pleasing and informative experience.

Aside from the presence of all major tractor and implement manufacturers, the livestock section continues to grow both in numbers and in terms of national perceptions.

Not only does the occasion cater for the exposition of some of the country's finest livestock, but also a range of ancillary activities and displays covering the industrial, commercial and service sectors. Amongst others, this includes a consequential presence of construction and materials handling equipment.

2011 will see the Royal hosting a number of national championships, notably Hereford, Ile de France, Suffolk and Hampshire Downs. In addition most other major breeds will be well represented in the competitive sections.

For the first time in many years, Boer Goat classes have been introduced in response to interest from breeders and it is anticipated that high quality entries will be received from as far afield as the Northern Cape.

To complement the competitive cattle section, classes for commercial heifers – to be judged not on appearance but rather on functionality and performance – will take place for the third consecutive year, during the course of the final week-end. This component alone is expected to draw in excess of 200 entries.

In line with Royal Shows elsewhere in the Commonwealth, 2011 will see the breed societies given marketing and branding exposure via an expo, this to be sponsored by the Land Bank. The objective being not only to provide current and potential breeders and commercial farmers with pertinent information, but to meaningfully inform and educate the overall visitor mix – young and old – many of whom are 'town folk'.

Now in its 12th year, the Sheep and Wool Expo is acknowledged to be an important event for the entire supply chain involved in natural fibres (and associated products) and with the presence of Alpacas, indigenous goats, various sections of the ARC, daily sheep shearing and the display of end product, 2011 promises to be a show of note.

Throughout its history the Royal Show has focused on future farmers and the youth and during the course of the first weekend, every effort will be made to again add value to agriculture by enthusing and creating opportunities for youngsters interested in showmanship and livestock.

The Royal Show carcass competition is acknowledged to be the premier red meat event of its kind in the country. Having achieved world record prices in past years (R3000 per kg. for

the winning lamb carcass in 2007 !!) and with over 200 entries expected, all expectations should again be met.

Included in the mix, is the 2100 sq. metre Mercury Food Hall and demonstration kitchen, where by way of exhibits and demonstrations, the entire food chain – from farm field to dining table – is displayed. This particular component attracts in excess of 100 000 visitors each year (probably) making it the largest dedicated display of any kind in the country.

The Royal is committed to introducing 'town to country' and with its eclectic mix of displays and activities, a significant entertainment programme including, amongst others, Johnny Clegg, the presence of the SANDF with three substantial military tattoos and the largest fireworks display in the province, any visit should prove to be an informative, educational and fun-filled experience.

Corporate sponsors in 2011 are Telkom, Coca-Cola, Land Bank and the KZN Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs and Rural Development.

Note: Although the Royal Show runs for 10 days from Friday, 27 May to Sunday, 5 June, the final Sunday caters exclusively for the Ukhozi FM Zulu concert. Accordingly, visitors are respectfully reminded that as displays are in 'run down mode' and there will be no livestock on site at this time; this is not a good day to experience all that the show has to offer.

*Issued by the Office of the CEO
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