

THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF NATAL

2010 ROYAL SHOW – 28 MAY TO 6 JUNE

PRESS RELEASE NO. 1 – GENERAL OVERVIEW

The 159th Royal Show will open its gates to the public on Friday morning, 28 May through to Sunday, 6 June.

Whilst the traditional and special character of the Royal will remain largely unchanged, the show will incorporate a variety of new components.

From an agricultural perspective, the show anticipates having in excess of 1000 livestock on site and will also host three national championships, being the Santa Gertrudis breed in the case of beef and Hampshire Downs and Suffolks in the sheep section.

Aside from being judged to be the best agricultural show in South Africa by the Land Bank and the South African Red Meat Industries Company, the Royal is today the largest agricultural show in the country, catering for livestock and equipment. To this end, some 4000 farmers from around South Africa are expected to visit the show, with a large number emanating from out of province.

In addition to traditional livestock, the Royal Show plays host to one of the largest and most professional displays of birds, rabbits, poultry and honey on the African continent and 2010 will be no exception.

Industrial and commercial displays form a significant part of any Royal Show and a consequential presence of 'blue chip' exhibitors will again be in attendance. This will include heavy and light motor vehicles, construction and materials handling equipment, a range of machinery for industrial and household use and numerous displays relating to general enterprise.

The Royal will continue to maintain its policy of the past decade whereby in all major halls, up to 25% of the exhibitor mix will be newcomers.

The mainline KZN print media will partner the show in a variety of areas.

The Mercury Food Hall and Demonstration Kitchen with 110 000 visitors in 2009 is probably the largest dedicated exhibit in South Africa and incorporates a range of eclectic activities and displays spanning all facets of the food chain from farm to dining table.

The Witness Beautiful Homes Expo will be hosted in Hall 2 adjacent to the main gate and will focus on interior decorating in the broadest sense.

The Daily News Crafts and Home Industries section – certainly South Africa's largest display of its kind – is expected to be a hive of activity. With a mix of exhibits – from fine work to ethnic – including, amongst many others, photography, wood turning, needlework, scrap booking, mosaics, and foil and sand art; the venue promises to afford an interesting and educational experience for both young and old alike. Also and throughout the show a number of workshops

will take place at which time interested members of the public can learn more about any facet that takes their fancy.

Following its success in 2009, Hall 8 will again focus on safety and security, with superb informative displays by, amongst others, the SAPS, Correctional Services, the Director of Public Prosecutions and Business Against Crime.

By way of a co-operative arrangement between the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Business and the Department of Finance and Economic Development, Hall 1 will incorporate exhibits focused on the contribution made to the provincial economy by small and medium enterprises.

Overseen by various operations in the KZN midlands, Hall 4 will incorporate a mix of displays relating to products and services emanating from South Africa's most famous 'meander'.

Entertainment-wise, one of the most interesting and exciting programmes in recent years has been put together and includes:

- A full equestrian programme spanning several disciplines, including dressage, carriage driving and a gymkhana. The Show will also see the return of the FEI World Cup Qualifier, certainly the most prestigious A-Grade horse jumping event in South Africa.
- Also appearing in the main arena for the first time will be a display of miniature horses.
- An extravaganza of all things military, enjoyed by locals and visitors alike in various stadiums in and around Durban for many years, will move to Pietermaritzburg this year. It is, of course, the military tattoo at 18h00 on May 28 and 29 in the main arena
- Following a break of some six years, the Mayhem Monster Truck can be seen in the main arena during the course of the opening weekend and will perform a number of stunts, including the 'crushing' of motor vehicles. Always a crowd-puller !
- On Sunday afternoon 30 May, under the banner of Radio Sonder Grense, Derrich Gardiner will compère an exciting afternoon of music, including the well-known performers Di Ossewa, Piet Koen, Arno Jordaan and Lee Vaughn.
- Every second year the Royal Show hosts the Lipizzaners from Kyalami in Johannesburg and these highly trained dressage riders will be seen performing on Monday evening, 31 May in a joint display with singers Jannie Moolman and Nedine Blom.
- On Friday evening, 4 June, the traditional Royal Show 'student' concert will take place, with the lead band, Watershed, being supported by Wonderboom, City Bowl Mizers and the Ryan Calder Band.
- Saturday evening, 5 June, will see the Eastern Extravaganza and Bhangra, choreographed by Tansen Nepaul and hosted by Radio Hindvani. This event has become a 'must see' on the cultural calendar of the Indian community.
- The Royal Show concludes on Sunday, 6 June, with the traditional Ukhozi FM concert, the highlight of the year for the station and especially important in 2010 when Ukhozi celebrates their 50th anniversary.

- Aside from that mentioned, the arena will see dog displays, chainsaw competitions, two mini-concerts for school children, diski dancing displays, tent pegging and more.

A small, but state-of-the art- funfair will again be located in the grounds and promises to be of appeal to both the young and the young-at-heart.

With the exception of Wednesday, 2 and Sunday, 6 June, gate charges are R35 for adults and R20 for pensioners and children under R12. The Wednesday has traditionally been discounted to cater for any individual or group, who for whatever reason are disadvantaged. On this day the gate charge is R20 for all. On the final Sunday, entry is R40 (R5 of which will be allocated to charities chosen by Ukhozi FM).

Public parking is available on the Voortrekker sports fields at R15 per vehicle.

*Issued by the Office of the CEO
Royal Agricultural Society of Natal
20 April 2010*