

## 2022 ROYAL SHOW – FINAL REPORT

Following the Covid-19 induced cancellation of the event in 2020 and 2021, the Royal Show returned with meaningful participation and approbation in 2022; this despite only four months of planning, continuing restrictions in respect of gatherings and the reappearance of 'Foot and Mouth'.

In partnership with corporate sponsors Coca-Cola, First National Bank and East Coast Radio, the Show took place from 27 May through 5 June.

For record purposes, throughout the Society's 170 year history extending from conception in 1851, the event had only been cancelled on nine previous occasions; being 1900, 1901, 1906, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945 and 1946.

Overall attendance stood at 114 217 (against 116 687 in 2019). Interestingly, 4 838 access tickets were purchased online, well up on the 1 748 sold in 2019.

The occasion saw a number of changes from that of earlier years; most notably the outsourcing of internal stand sales to Conker Exhibitions, an experiment that worked moderately well for both parties. Whilst a final decision is yet to be made, it is possible that this could be perpetuated in 2023.

With a strong focus on sustenance and food, a notable move from the norm saw the renaming of the Olympia Hall for the duration of the Show to the 'Dawood Pavilion'.

From a commercial and an industrial perspective, 475 exhibitors were accommodated, three less than the 478 in 2019.

These included an impressive presence of heavy agricultural and construction equipment. Being 'blue-chip' operators, the participation of such entities bears testimony to the deemed credibility of the Royal Show, both provincially and nationally.

Also, despite persistent economic constraints, satisfactory sales were reported.

The service sector was well represented and included displays by national, provincial and local government. In particular, that of the South African Police Services and the Msunduzi Municipality were applauded by the judges.

Coupled with the reappearance of Avian Flu and following the outbreak of 'Foot and Mouth' in Limpopo, the North West province and Northern KZN – these being important 'feeder' areas for Royal Show participation – livestock numbers, per the table below, dipped significantly.

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
Goats, fat lamb and sheep breeds	407	1 076	681	558	473
Cattle	320	705	662	504	498
Birds	590	1 902	2 287	2 200	2 501
Rabbits	260	343	439	432	412
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 577</b>	<b>4 026</b>	<b>4 069</b>	<b>3 694</b>	<b>3 884</b>

Regrettably, this resulted in the cancellation of the Chianina National Championships; disappointing, as they would have been first time participants. Equally, the Cattle Section and indeed the broader public, were denied the opportunity of being exposed to this larger than normal cattle beef breed of Italian lineage.

This notwithstanding, the Royal Show was privileged to successfully host the Ile de France and Hampshire Down Nationals.

The Royal Show is well known for affording a fun-filled learning experience, and 2022 again included the hosting of the KZN Youth Show catering for school going youngsters and students. This took place during the course of the first weekend.

In similar vein, the KZN leg of the Toyota SA Young Auctioneer Competition was held in the Cattle Arena on Monday afternoon, 30 May.

The Sheep Section sale-ring saw the Landbouweekblad Royal Show Carcass Competition on Tuesday, 31 May, and as in 2019, the occasion was live-streamed to an audience of 959 viewers.

Whilst bids were subdued in the case of pork, the Beef Champion Carcass, bred by Weston Agricultural College, sold for R72 per kg, and the Lamb Champion Carcass, bred by Bertus Steenkamp, going for R350 per kg. These premiums respectively equate to 22% and 268% above the Ruling Market Prices on the day.

The Show saw the first-time participation of the Milk Producers Organisation (MPO) with a well-choreographed and eclectic exhibit reflective of the dairy industry value chain. Unfortunately persistent challenges experienced by milk producers continue to preclude the meaningful show presence of cows in milk in favour of on-farm competitions.

Whilst 'cold-comfort', this is an international phenomena.

The Sheep Expo, coupled with interactive demonstrations including sheep shearing, continues to be a drawcard of note.

The livestock side of the Royal Show concluded with the Standard Bank Gold Cup Parade, Presentation and Dinner, on Wednesday, 1 June; certainly one of the most prestigious events on the national agricultural calendar.

Owing to advanced years, and the ever diminishing size of the committee, it became necessary to hybridise and reinvent the 150 year old Crafts and Home Industries Section. This took the form of upgrading the appearance of the hall to cater exclusively to vibrant displays overseen by the Cake Icing and Quilters Guilds.

Pleasingly, by way of expanding the exercise, it is understood that a meaningful Floral Art component will be added to the mix in 2023.

Also, with an interactive presence adjacent to the Crafts Hall, the Woodworkers Guild again participated.

To complement the return of KwaZulu-Natal's largest funfair, a full entertainment programme catered for all tastes and genres. This included:

- 'The Witness Wheels Car Show' on Friday, 27 May. This first-time event at the Royal included a 'Sound-Off', 'Dyno' and 'Show & Shine' competitions.
- KZN Dog Agility Nationals on Saturday, 28 and Sunday, 29 May.
- The East Coast Radio Royal Rock Concert on Saturday afternoon, 28 May, featured Prime Circle, Wonderboom, Cantrel, Fear of Falling and Jacques Moolman.
- The Royal Symphony Concert on Sunday, 29 May.

At this time, the KZN Youth Orchestra and The Wykeham Collegiate Wind Band presented a varied classical and popular selection of music with robust rhythms and broad popular melodies.

- The RSG Concert on Sunday afternoon, 5 June, featured Elvis Blue, Demi Lee, Pietman Geldenhuys (aka Peter Mitchell) and the Coffee Snobs.
- The Hindvani FM Extravaganza focused largely on the colourful Indian art and culture with a fusion of music and dance on Saturday evening, 4 June.
- The Equestrian Section encompassed a full programme spanning six days. This included Show-Jumping, Boerperd, Childrens and National Showing Classes and an international women's tent-pegging competition between the sides of South Africa and Jordan.
- With the focus on creating awareness, Working on Fire hosted a lunch hour demonstration for schoolchildren.
- Two freestyle Moto-X performances took place, culminating on Saturday evening, 5 June, with the Monster Flight Night show; an outstanding professional Moto-X display with pyrotechnics.

- On the same date, a classic parade of the inimitable Mini motor car, spanning the years 1959 through 1972, was enjoyed by an appreciative audience.
- Skydiving displays, sponsored by Coca-Cola, on both Sunday, 29 May and Saturday, 4 June, were similarly well received.

The intense marketing programme focused largely on print, broadcast, street posters and social media, the latter of which – per the table below - grew significantly in 2022.

	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2022</b>
Facebook Page Likes	11448	15 476	17 203	18 675	20543
Annual Facebook Impressions	n/a	n/a	n/a	685 536	1762198
Facebook Impressions for Duration of Show	n/a	n/a	n/a	402 649	790566
Annual Website traffic page views	97977	149 182	218 524	223 682	179263
Website Sessions for Duration of Show	21 848	15 214	22 128	28 556	30813

Also, 40 videos were filmed, edited and published on Facebook during the course of the Show.

An element of negative news. Under the auspices of Umgeni Steam Railways, recent Royal Shows have seen the show hosting visitors arriving by train from Durban. This year two trips were arranged, and within a few days of going online, both were fully sold out to in excess of 700 patrons. Regrettably, owing to damage caused to the lines by the floods in April and May, these had to be cancelled.

That aside, with perfect weather throughout, the 2022 Royal Show appeared to meet the expectations of exhibitors and visitors alike.

The Royal is indebted to and acknowledges with appreciation the support of its numerous sponsors – in cash and kind – and very especially, First National Bank, Coca-Cola Beverages and East Coast Radio.

*Issued by the CEO  
Royal Agricultural Society  
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