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Revamped Ekka Prime Beef Competition set to attract record entries

The Royal Queensland Show (Ekka) has unveiled a major overhaul of its Prime Beef Competition, with the refreshed format expected to attract record entries when the competition returns this year.

Entries open on Thursday 26 February, following a one-year hiatus that allowed the RNA Beef Committee to redesign the competition to better reflect modern commercial beef operations.

RNA Beef Committee Chair Gary Noller said the changes are expected to drive entries toward a record 1,000 head of cattle.

“The competition will no longer feature single-animal classes, instead focusing on pens of three and six head, along with new pen-of-10 feeder classes,” Mr Noller said.

“These new classes introduce another important commercial aspect of the industry – backgrounding and feeder cattle coming from less arable regions that aren’t suited to finishing stock.

“With more cattle being entered from a wider range of areas, exhibitors will benefit from more meaningful benchmarking, alongside more than \$30,000 in prize money on offer.”

As part of the overhaul, the Prime Beef Competition will relocate to the Dalby Regional Saleyards for judging on Friday 3 July - one of Australia’s largest livestock selling centres renowned for its strong weekly throughput and prices.

“The competition will operate under the same commercial conditions as a standard Wednesday sale at Dalby Regional Saleyards, which reflects a shorter turnaround and superior end product,” Mr Noller said.

The competition will also feature a new Awards Presentation Dinner, to be held at the Dalby Events Centre following the day’s judging, providing networking opportunities for exhibitors and industry stakeholders.

The return of the Prime Beef Competition coincides with the Ekka’s 150th anniversary milestone and the 85th anniversary of the Dalby Regional Saleyards.

“Cattle competitions have been part of the Ekka since the very first Show in 1876 and that legacy is something we’re incredibly proud of,” Mr Noller said.

“They’ve always played a critical role in showcasing livestock performance, but just as importantly, they bring people together - giving producers the chance to meet like-minded people from across the industry and share ideas, technologies and management practices.

“Our beef competitions have always been commercially relevant and this revitalised format for Prime Beef ensures they continue to reflect the way the beef industry operates today.”

Entries for the Prime Beef Competition open on Thursday 26 February and close on Friday 5 June, with judging and awards taking place on Friday 3 July.

PRIME BEEF COMPETITION CLASS INFORMATION

Grass/Pasture Fed Classes:

- Pen of 3 Heifers:
 - 380kg to 430kg
 - 431kg to 480kg
 - 481kg to 530kg
- Pen of 3 Steers:
 - 380kg to 430kg
 - 431kg to 480kg
 - 481kg to 530kg
- Pen of 6 Steers:
 - 400kg to 530kg
 - 531kg to 620kg
 - 621kg to 740kg

Grain/Grain Assisted Fed Classes:

- Pen of 3 Heifers:
 - 380kg to 430kg
 - 431kg to 480kg
 - 481kg to 530kg
- Pen of 3 Steers:
 - 380kg to 430kg
 - 431kg to 480kg
 - 481kg to 530kg
- Pen of 6 Steers:
 - 400kg to 530kg
 - 531kg to 620kg
 - 621kg to 740kg

Feeder Classes:

- Pen of 10 Heifers:
 - 320kg to 400kg
 - 401kg to 500kg
- Pen of 10 Steers:
 - 320kg to 400kg
 - 401kg to 500kg

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