

SHOWBIZ

Spring 2008

EKKA 2008

The campaign for 2008 was 'My Ekka' and the slogan rang true for many Queenslanders with more than 500,000 people pouring through the gates of the RNA Showgrounds during the ten days of Ekka.



RNA President Dr Vivian Edwards, said it was terrific to see so many people return to the Royal Queensland Show in 2008.

"Thank you Queensland for your support and love of the Show. It was wonderful to have you back," he said.

"This was the best crowd we have had for a number of years and judging by smiles on faces throughout the ten days, everyone had a ball.

"There was a fantastic atmosphere in the air that really made this year enjoyable. I look forward to many more Shows just like it."

The Ekka rocketed to international fame when a bull escaped from the RNA Showgrounds and ran down Gregory Terrace prompting headlines across the world.

Headlines closer to home judged the Show a success when Nestle Peters pre-made Strawberry Sundaes ran out on the last Thursday of the Show, and by the record amount of Bertie Beetle bags sold (new supplies had to be freighted urgently from Melbourne – 45 pallets to be exact).

Research conducted by the University of Queensland among patrons who attended the Show indicated 2008 was the best year overall from the past five years for excitement, atmosphere and the best overall experience.

Animal Boulevard, The Coffee Club Parades, Woolworths Fresh Food Pavilion and the XXXX Gold Woodchop Arena were among the most visited destinations during the Show.

The B105 Showbag Pavilion and Nova Park were popular entertainment areas and the new Ekka IgNITES program was a favourite with attendees who were wowed by the spectacular Dairy Farmers Fireworks and Laser Display.

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EKKA 2009
6-15 AUGUST



MESSAGE from the PRESIDENT

This year has been such an important one for the RNA on several fronts. Our Development Scheme Strategy is underway and a lot of work has been done behind the scenes to guide the RNA in the right direction for the coming years.

Secondly, it was important to hold a truly world-class event in the Ekka - and we certainly did that. With talk of change came questions about the Show's future and so it was vitally important we showed Queenslanders, and Australians, the Ekka was here to stay.

I'd like to thank all the exhibitors who returned this year and to those who were appearing at the Ekka for the first time. I hope to see you all back here again next year for what will be one of the most poignant shows we've hosted - the last Ekka before we start the redevelopment of the RNA Showgrounds.

Next September, work will start on the redevelopment of the Industrial Pavilion and Large Animal Pavilion which will ensure the RNA Showgrounds remains an all-year-round lifestyle and cultural hub. The show of course will go on, as it will for many more exciting events hosted here each year.

In this issue of Showbiz we welcome the insight of Steve Bryant from QMI Solutions on the opportunities for small and medium sized manufacturers to compete on a global stage.

We also look closer at some of the stories from the Ekka including a profile on champion woodchopper Shayne Maxwell and discover what it takes to produce award-winning prime beer. We also have our regular columns and articles which I hope you continue to enjoy.

Dr Vivian Edwards, OAM



EKKA FUN FACTS

- More than **130,000** people fed and cuddled baby animals in the RACQ Insurance Animal Nursery
- More than **150,000** dagwood dogs were consumed
- **120** bright and chirpy baby chicks were hatched and two Red Boer Goats were born
- **15,000** people a day enjoyed a cool ale and conversation at XXXX Bitter Cattleman's Bar
- The Dairy Farmers Stand in the Woolworths Fresh Food Pavilion sold close to **20,000** \$1 cheese toasties
- At least 800 hard-boiled eggs were used in the Sunny Queen Egg and Spoon Races and **400** sack races were run in Peter's Enchanted Park
- Petey Pies sold approximately **10,000** meat pies (that's 1.2 tonnes of meat!)
- Bethonga Pineapples gave away **40,000** tastes of their famously fresh pineapples

Continued from page 1

EKKA 2008

The RNA launched many new initiatives this year including online competition entries, an online itinerary builder and online ticketing where 5,000 discounted tickets were sold in a matter of days.

Competition entries were strong with more than 24,000 entries received across 22 major competition categories. New competition sections were also embraced in 2008 such as the Fine Arts Fashion competition section and the three new breeds of dog in the canine competition.

Many new milestones were reached in 2008 including the 80th year of Show Camp while the Ekka was celebrated through the launch of a new book, Showtime: A History of the Brisbane Exhibition, by Joanne Scott and Ross Laurie. The Museum of Brisbane also hosted the exhibition 10 Days in August: Memories of the Ekka from 25 July - 16 November in City Hall.

Prime Minister visits Ekka

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd made a surprise visit to the Ekka on the last day of the Show to visit Animal Boulevard. Queensland-born Mr Rudd watched a cow-milking demonstration run by students of Nambour High - his old school. Ekka attendees were delighted as Mr Rudd went through



the pavilion, petting animals, holding babies and posing for photographs.

New Governor officiates opening ceremony

New Queensland Governor Her Excellency Penelope Wensley AO was on hand to officially open the Ekka on the first Friday of the Show. The RNA was delighted to have Her Excellency open the Ekka in one of the Governor's first official duties since her appointment in July 2008.

Spanish royalty judges horse competition

Her Royal Highness Princess Dona Teresa de Borbón of Spain added a touch of blue blood to the horse competition section of the Show. Her Royal Highness judged the Miniature horses, Arabians and Andalusians while renowned stylist Joh Bailey selected the best dressed strapper of the day.



THE JOURNEY to manufacturing excellence

The RNA is a peak body which looks to lead national conversation on issues which affect the agricultural and industrial industries of Queensland. In this edition of Showbiz we look at the opportunities for small-to-medium-sized Queensland manufacturers to compete in a global market.



Steve Bryant
Marketing Manager, QMI Solutions

Queensland's manufacturing industry plays an important role in our State. It is the second largest employer in Queensland and is worth more than \$10 billion to the economy.

Today however, the manufacturing sector faces unprecedented levels of competition in both domestic and international markets. These pressures include competition from foreign products, rapid technological innovation and shorter product life, unanticipated customer shifts, and advances in manufacturing and IT.

To cope with these changes and remain competitive small manufacturers must adopt best practice - proven ways to get the best results from having the right processes and technologies in place, otherwise known as Lean Manufacturing.

QMI Solutions is a not-for-profit agency that receives State Government funding to assist small-to-medium-sized Queensland manufacturers compete on a global scale by building their capability in identifying and implementing innovative technologies and practices within their business.

One Sunshine Coast-based company which has transformed its business model and become globally competitive through help from QMI Solutions is Gourmet Garden.

Since launching in 1999, the Gourmet Garden brand has become the most successful Australian processed food manufacturer in the United States, with its products stocked in more than 8,000 stores.

The food manufacturing company produces conveniently packaged tubes of fresh herbs and spices that are easy to use and have a longer storage life. While Gourmet Garden manufactures its products on the Sunshine Coast and grows the herbs and spices in central Queensland, the company has been successful in exporting its product to markets in the United Kingdom, Northern Europe, New Zealand and Canada. More than half of its revenues and profits were derived from these export markets in 2004-05.

Despite its success in exporting its product the company recognised processes it could manage more efficiently and began working with QMI Solutions to identify areas for improvement.

Gourmet Garden's initial operations strategy involved multiple manufacturing sites around the world, but as its brand name grew and the company came to understand its manufacturing process better it realised one large site which services every market had enormous advantages for the company.

A secondary challenge was Gourmet Garden's market and product was unique. Unlike established products where best practice processes and markets have benchmarks, the company had a product which had no established operational guidelines or technology practices as a basis for its manufacturing strategy.

After working with QMI Solutions Gourmet Garden was able to identify improvements that included a reduction in its inventory storage days by approximately 50 percent. Achieved through developing systems to manage the supply of fresh herbs from the growers this move alone freed up \$1 million in resources, allowing those funds to be channelled in to other areas of the business.

Gourmet Garden was also able to improve in other areas such as production cycle times, customer delivery commitments, employee morale, process capability, customer satisfaction and priority orders.

By adopting Lean Manufacturing techniques Gourmet Garden has grown between 20 and 40 percent each year for the past five years.

As seen through Gourmet Garden's success, it is important other Queensland manufacturers continue to put emphasis on measurement and benchmarking to ensure the right processes and technologies are in place for achieving best practice.

Internally, it contributes to an open and accountable organisation because it visibly communicates the company's progress, identifies shortfalls and areas requiring attention.

Externally, a company can realise where it is placed alongside other organisations while simultaneously contributing to an overall roadmap to excellence.

Manufacturing organisations in Queensland will learn to cope with the changes to the industry environment and remain globally competitive. Ultimately the State's manufacturing industry will continue to maintain its position as one of the most important industries to Queensland's livelihood.

To find out more about how QMI Solutions helps the Queensland manufacturing industry go to www.qmisolutions.com.au or phone **07 3362 0700**.

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AGRIBUSINESS



SUNCORP



RNA Development Scheme Strategy gets THUMBS UP

Visitors to this year's Ekka had their say on the future of the Royal Queensland Show and the RNA Showgrounds.

During the 10 days of Ekka, an exhibition stand in the Woolworths Fresh Food Pavilion showcased the RNA's vision for the site and included spectacular 3D models and artists' impressions of new buildings and open spaces.

RNA staff were on hand to answer questions and take feedback on the proposed redevelopments. According to RNA President Dr Vivian Edwards, there was an overwhelming surge of support and relief from many who were worried about the Ekka's future.

"We have logged all feedback from the display stand and the consensus from show-goers is we are doing the right thing," Dr Edwards said.

"There was great relief from many when they heard the Ekka would be staying. There was a lot of excitement about what the future might hold for the RNA Showgrounds. All the feedback we received is being taken into account by the project team."

Three proponents have been shortlisted by the RNA and will submit their plans in December. A decision will be made in March 2009 on who will work with the RNA, with redevelopment of the Large Animal Pavilion and Industrial Pavilion starting in September 2009.



EKKA A SUCCESS for the Future Directions Committee

The 2009 Ekka saw the launch of a number of new programs and events initiated by the Future Directions Committee. Following are some of the highlights.

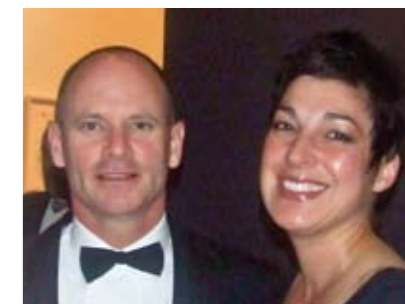
- Over the first five days of Ekka, members of the FDC hosted "Meet the Ekka Tours" which introduced show patrons to the agricultural exhibits at the show. Conducted this year as a test model, the FDC will be reviewing the benefits of offering such a program at future shows.
- *The Sunday Mail* VIP for a Day tours were also facilitated by the FDC with eight families given a royal treatment tour of the grounds. This initiative provided eight lucky families with an Ekka experience that money can't buy.
- The Finding our Future Forum held in conjunction with members of the Rural Ambassadors Program was a great success. Held on the first Saturday of the show, the forum attracted 60 young people from across the state, all with a similar passion of keeping their regional communities and rural shows alive and invigorated.

- The highlight of the Ekka calendar for the FDC was the City Meets Country Ball hosted in conjunction with the Lord Mayor's Community Trust. This inaugural event held at city hall saw 480 guests dance the night away while raising \$25,000 to the Lord Mayor's Community Trust for distribution to both city and rural causes.

Once again the committee is accepting applications for membership. Applicants should be aged 18 to 35, passionate about the future success of the RNA and the Ekka, and feel they can make a valuable contribution to the committee.

If you would like to know more about the FDC please contact the Chairman, Mr Bryce Camm.

bryce@cammgroupp.com.au





Nothing underhanded about HARD-HITTING HERO

Shayne Maxwell is no ordinary chip off the old block. With a lifetime of Woodchop experience under his belt, he is a family man, a professional and also President of the Queensland Axeman's Association (QAA).

Throughout a chopping career spanning 30 years, Shayne has travelled the world and has seen a great deal of success in the 'hard hitting' events, where the competition is based on skill and strength, rather than speed. If you are a Woodchop fan, you may have spied Shayne working behind the scenes at Ekka as a steward and handicapper, but there is much more to him than meets the eye.

Having grown up playing Australian Rules Football, Shayne was a keen team player. However in 1977, at the age of 15, Shayne entered the Queensland Police Academy and his new occupation didn't allow much time for sport.

With Shayne looking for a new social activity that would fit in to his work schedule, master Woodchopper Ken Jackson took him under his 'swing'. Ken, an officer at the Academy, was a four-time world champion. After a few lessons, there was no looking back for Shayne.

When he is on the clock, Shayne is a Detective Sergeant with the Queensland Police force. He said the balance between personal and professional life can be tough at times, however, he finds the greatest stress relief is returning to the 'axe box' after a tough case.

During the lead up to the Royal Queensland Show, Shayne was busy assigning handicaps and dealing with entries and record keeping. Because of his organisational role in the event, Shayne prefers not to compete in the Woodchop at Ekka, but said it is still his favourite competition of the year.

"It (Ekka) is the QAA's flagship competition. We were excited to see record entries this year – it means our hard work to improve the schedule is really paying off," Shayne said.

Some of Shayne's proudest achievements include the work he has done with the RNA to improve the catalogue of entries for the Ekka Woodchop events. Shayne said a greater variety of events and some minor rule changes have provided more opportunities for female contestants and have helped to alleviate to some initial safety concerns. The QAA continues to work closely with the RNA to make further improvements for 2009.

Shayne is pleased to be able to share his passion for woodchop with his family. His wife, Emma, found herself on the other end of a saw with Shayne during a quiet moment at a show a few years ago and they have been together ever since. As for his children, Shayne said he was keen for them to follow in his footsteps.

"Jacob (9) has had a couple of little axes in his hands since he could walk. We got him some little, blunted tomahawks and he used to run around tapping them on stumps and trees. I don't know if he will continue when he is older, but in the meantime he is learning some valuable life lessons from being involved in community events," Shayne said.

Shayne's advice to anyone interested in joining the sport was simple.

"Help your fellow axemen as much as you can, compete for yourself and if you don't win, share the victory with whoever did," he said.

Shayne uses his recreational leave to be a steward at the Ekka's Woodchop and for other competitions and shows throughout the year. One day he will look to retire from his administrative positions with the QAA to allow someone new to have their input into the sport he has loved for a lifetime.



The Courier-Mail ONLINE

The Courier-Mail continued to grow its partnership with the RNA this year, bringing the Ekka to life online at couriermail.com.au. This year, couriermail.com.au offered the popular Ekka Guide to its online readers via an interactive page flip as well as daily social galleries and up-to-the minute Ekka news.

Whether it's Queensland's breaking news and sports, entertainment and gossip or the latest finance and property information, couriermail.com.au continues to drive the online news agenda for Queensland, connecting people with what really matters to them - local online news, information, and events. You will also find Brisbane's hottest blogger Emily Everywhere and all the latest on the Brisbane music scene with Brizbands. Get your fix of news, sport and entertainment every day with The Courier-Mail and couriermail.com.au



SHOW TIME ONLINE

The online campaign for Ekka in 2008 was a runaway success, seeing 21 per cent more visitors to the Ekka website than in 2007. The multi-faceted campaign was presented through a number of online mechanisms developed to engage a variety of users in direct email, interactive activities and information gathering. Results for all of these areas have returned excellent feedback, proving the RNA is progressing with the digital times.

Ekka.com.au

During a year of firsts in online activities at the RNA, more people than ever before made their way to Ekka.com.au. The strongest message throughout the Ekka online campaign was one of self education. The Ekka website contained many activities that facilitated budgeting, planning and travelling to Ekka. The most visited pages on the site included the Showbag guide, ticket information and the Ekka Map.

Interactive Itinerary Builder

By far the most successful addition to the website this year was the Ekka Online Itinerary Builder, generating 100,000 page views throughout the lead up to the 2008 Show. The Ekka Online Itinerary Builder provided personalised event information for users, using preferences to refine hundreds of free entertainment options available at Ekka down to an individual itinerary. Research and development are already underway to expand the system for future applications.

Ekka Online Game: 'Knock 'Em Down'

The Ekka Online Game 'Knock 'Em Down' was played close to 20,000 times. Although there have been games created for Ekka in previous years, the increased versatility of 'Knock 'Em Down' was a result of improved technologies both in the development process and in the



marketplace. With more people being able to access the technology required to run the game, the RNA was pleased to see so many people able to take some time to enjoy a simple game that sparked a lot of competition among players.

Ekka eNews

The Ekka eNews was also very successful this year, with the subscriber database doubling in the space of a month. Six publications of the newsletter were released weekly throughout the campaign. The increased frequency allowed opportunities to communicate more information about how best to enjoy Ekka on a budget. Thanks to overwhelming support from businesses attending Ekka this year, the final issue of the 2008 eNews contained a selection of discount coupons. The eNews will be back again next year; be sure to visit Ekka.com.au to join the database for 2009.

EkkA visitors set new RECYCLING RECORD

Visitors to the EkkA donned their 'green' hats this year and recycled more than 57,000 plastic bottles (PET bottles) at Coca-Cola Amatil's (CCA) recycling stations during the Show setting a new record.

Each person who recycled two Coca-Cola or Mount Franklin products at the EkkA received a prize and an entry form for the chance to win a 5,000 litre water tank.

State Manager for Queensland Ian Sippel said the company was committed to making sure people enjoyed its products and disposed of them properly through its 'Recycle and Win' initiative.

"It's fantastic to see a new record set which is a strong indication of Brisbane residents' growing awareness of 'green' issues," Mr Sippel said.

"CCA is dedicated to initiatives that help save Queenslanders water and we will continue to offer our customers ways to be sustainable – particularly in water savings."



STUDENTS' HARD WORK comes to fruition

Students in Woodridge State High School's Special Education Program spent the earlier half of this year on a unique school project. At the suggestion of Councillor Greg Dalton, the students were invited to take part in the Queensland Youth Fruit and Vegetable Competition at EkkA.

It was a challenge from the first lesson, remembered Michael De Marchi, Special Education teacher-aide at Woodridge State High School.

"None of the children had attended the EkkA before so it was difficult to explain what needed to be done without giving the kids something tangible to relate to," Michael said.

The nine students focused on what they were proud of at their school and the multicultural environment that surrounded them. Meetings were held twice a week and a system was developed where students could submit their own ideas for the display and vote as a team.

"Once the children could see the project taking shape, they became committed to seeing it through to the end," Michael said.

Being challenged by fine motor skills, the students were encouraged to develop problem-solving and social skills to negotiate their way through the



project. Two talented grade nine girls were also enlisted to help with the finer details of the piece.

Teaching staff in charge of the project were pleased to see the students from the Special Education Program interacting with one another and members of the community to achieve their goals.

"The project forced the kids out of their comfort zones. All of a sudden they were dealing with people they would never normally meet and these are the social skills that will help them long after they leave school," Michael said.

EDUCATION AT EKKKA

As Queensland prepares to celebrate its sesquicentenary, a primary focus of the Royal Queensland Show is still one of education. Often it is assumed that learning is only for the young, but as many seasoned show-goers will agree, there is always something new to find out from each EkkA.

This year has been a transitional period for Education on Show with the engagement of a new Education Officer, a new set of entry protocols, a major sponsor and a new venue. Despite the level of change, continuity was presented professionally by a team of devoted Stewards and the student work reflected diverse and creative approaches to the challenge.

There will be further major developments ahead for Education on Show in 2009 with secondary schools coming on board in a new and innovative schedule of competition. Themes for the new schedule are intended to reflect those supported within the sesquicentenary celebrations, Q150.

Education at the RNA continues to engage students and seasoned Show visitors alike through innovative approaches to learning and strong partnerships.

The RNA Career and Training Expo

The Tuesday before EkkA is a busy day for students with the Career and Training Expo and the Junior Led Steer events being run simultaneously on the RNA Showgrounds Main Arena.

The RNA acknowledges engaging young people in Agricultural Sciences is necessary for the development of Agribusiness. With this in mind, the Career and Training Expo was developed. Through positive learning experiences, the expo allows students to directly access the information required for them to turn an interest in agriculture into a career.

RNA Councillor Ross Douglas was pleased to note this year's event was successful on many levels.

"The involvement of students and the knowledge base they already

had surprised many exhibitors this year. These students are not acting on a fanciful notion of life on the land as glamorous or nostalgic. The students we are seeing know what that future holds in general terms. What they get from the Career and Training Expo is access to a giant tool box full of ideas they can use to develop, shape and maintain a career, not just a lifestyle. There is plenty of support available in the industry and this event presented the options in a very accessible way," Councillor Douglas said.

Planning is already underway for the 2009 Expo and interested parties are encouraged to contact the RNA with any enquiries.

enquiries@rnashowgrounds.com.au

Read all about it

As always, this year's Royal Queensland Show had a great deal to offer the young and the young at heart. One of the longest running youth initiatives at EkkA, Show Camp, celebrated its 80th anniversary, this year. Primary students across Queensland submitted journalistic works in an effort to be chosen to attend the Royal Queensland Show as part of the team which produces the EkkA Courier, a student devised newspaper released during Show.



BIG CROWDS

Return to EkkA

Anyone thinking the EkkA had lost its appeal, only needed to attend just one day at the Show to see Queenslanders still love their EkkA.

Crowds of people were enjoying all areas of the show.

On Saturday the animal nursery had record daily attendances with over 19,000 people petting and feeding the animals.

During the first Sunday afternoon, the Show Bag Pavilion was near maximum capacity and there was standing room only at the Energex Main Arena for the evening program.

Cattle exhibitors said there were times when the number of visitors through the pavilion made it difficult to keep up with the daily tasks of removing the manure and cleaning the walkways. [sic]

Published in the EkkA Courier, 12 August 2008

Family Pastoral Group aims to **IMPROVE THE LAND**

Since early childhood Dudley Leitch had a vision for sustainable farming. Having worked on his family's dairy and sugar cane farm from boyhood, he had always wanted to raise superior quality animals while improving the land and community around him. This vision has now become reality through the Leitch Pastoral Group.

Dudley's farming career began when he purchased a small farm at Lamington in Queensland. Coming from a reputable background in the mining community, he looked forward to the new challenges that lay ahead in agriculture.

Today, the Leitch Pastoral Group implements world-class methods and uses state-of-the-art equipment to help the farming business prosper. Vertical integration has allowed the company more control over the growing, processing and distribution of meat products. The group is now multi-faceted and includes: Pittsworth Food Processors, Killarney Abattoir, Condamine River Meats, Bernie's Discount Butchers, Executive Meats and Vegetation Access Management which uses modern technology to nurture the land.



Restaurant-quality **BEEF AT HOME**

There aren't many people who have done more to promote red meat than Cha Cha Char restaurateur John Kilroy. Raised on a grazing property near St George in Western Queensland, John now excels at educating his diners and the wider meat and livestock industry on how to achieve consistent quality when cooking beef products. John talked to *Showbiz* about how to replicate restaurant-quality meat dishes at home.

"When it comes to cooking meat dishes at home, it's difficult to get the same results as a restaurant, as domestic cooking equipment doesn't get as hot. It browns the outside but doesn't put out enough heat to adequately sear a piece of meat before it starts to overcook the inside.

"A cast-iron pan will produce the closest result to restaurant cooking. When using cast iron cookware, you oil what you are going to cook, so you can allow a well-seasoned cast-iron pan to become very hot with no fear of a flame-up. To season your cast-iron pan, cover the surface of the hot pan with salt. Let the salt cool, then wipe clean with a kitchen towel. Add a few teaspoons of duck fat to the pan and wipe it down, working out any cooked-on food with additional salt.

"To cook in a cast-iron pan, preheat it over medium-high heat for at least 15 minutes. Once the pan is hot, add the oiled meat and let it sear. Then add salt and pepper, turning it only after the first side is nicely charred and finish cooking to desired degree, then rest the meat."

Cooking Degree	Cooking Time	Internal Temperature	Resting time Before serving
Blue Almost raw inside, but hot	1-2 minutes each side	49-52° C	9 minutes
Rare Red inside with plenty of red juices running freely	2-3 minutes each side	58-60°C	8 minutes
Medium Rare As rare, but with few free flowing juices, paler centre	3-4 minutes each side	60-63°C	7 minutes
Medium Pink in the centre with juices set	4-5 minutes each side	65-68°C	6 minutes
Medium Well Deep pink in the center, juices set	5-6 minutes each side	65-70°C	5 minutes
Well Done The centre brown but flesh still clear and juicy	6-7 minutes each side	70-77°C	4 minutes
Very Well Done Center beige, not many juices remaining	7-8 minutes each side	80-82°C	3 minutes

How to produce award-winning **PRIME BEEF**

Queensland is Australia's leading prime beef producer, so it is no surprise the judging of the 'branded beef' category at Cha Cha Char Wine Bar and Grill kicked off competitions for Ekka 2008. With a 100 per cent increase in entries from 2007, the 'branded beef' competition is becoming one of the most prestigious in Australia's prime beef industry. Senior Vice President of the RNA Council, Chairman of the Beef Cattle Committee and a beef cattle producer Mr Allan Warby OAM is no stranger to the role prime beef production plays in Queensland's economy.

Tell us a little about beef cattle...

Beef cattle have been in Australia since early settlement and have always been an important part of our diet. Additionally, the hide has been used extensively throughout the years for leather goods. There are currently more than 40 different breeds of cattle used to produce beef in Australia and it is great to see more than 30 of these breeds represented in competition at the Ekka.

Describe the qualities of award-winning prime beef...

Using genetics and appropriate nutrition, a suitable animal is produced for specific markets which require different quality attributes such as tenderness, juiciness and flavour.

The animal should have a particular live weight for its intended market and have good muscling to produce maximum yield of quality cuts of beef. Generally an animal would be under 20 months for the domestic market and under 30 months for export when the aim is to produce the most desirable table meat. The depth and colour of the fat is also important with general



standards outlining that a minimum 5mm fat depth for domestic market and 10-12mm for export is necessary.

Do you use methods to flavour the meat or improve the quality of the meat through feeding and rearing?

Ideally an animal will be on a constant plane of good nutrition from weaning. The different grasses and pastures produced by a variety of soil types and climatic conditions may have an affect on the flavour and quality of meat, as could different feedlot rations. The number of days for which an animal is lot-fed also influences the eating quality of the meat. A standard lot-feeding of 70 days for domestic trade, 100 days for most export trade and 200-300 days for specialist export markets is generally accepted practise in the industry.

Are there any special conditions the cattle should be kept in?

For pasture and crop-fattened cattle proximity to water, pasture, shade and avoidance of stress-inducing incidents are important factors. The correct handling of prime beef by stockpersons and appropriate yard facilities are also vital to producing the right end product.

Through which avenues is prime beef traded?

A large percentage of prime beef is sold on direct consignment to various processors and distributed in cartons

of specific cuts domestically or to some 180 countries internationally. Around 20 per cent of the prime cattle marketed are purchased under the auction system in saleyards.

Prime beef reaches the domestic consumer through butchers shops, supermarkets and the hotel and restaurant trade. Branded beef product is playing an increasingly important role in the marketing of quality meat and the MSA Tenderness Guarantee Scheme is giving consumers a high degree of confidence in the product they purchase. A significant amount of our high-quality prime beef finds its way to Japan and the European Union.

Can you see any industry trends developing?

At the consumer's end, there has been a definite trend away from the 'well done' steak to the 'medium' and 'medium rare' cooked steaks. There is no doubt this trend has helped the consumer gain maximum enjoyment from local premium prime beef.

In addition, continuing research into better pastures and nutrition, combined with the scientific developments which are happening in our seed-stock breeding industry, seem to be yielding positive results. It will only be a matter of time before these enhanced technologies and methodologies begin to take effect.



LOVE ON THE HORIZON

in trying times

There is no question life on the land can be hard. Climate change, labour shortages, lack of education and isolation issues mean the modern day farmer has more to contend with than simply harvesting or herding and heading off to market.

With few easy answers to the problems at hand, a small selection of farmers will have the opportunity of a lifetime to solve one problem that has troubled the bush for decades. The long anticipated third series of the *Channel Nine* reality television show, *Farmer Wants a Wife*, will tell the story of six lucky farmers in their quest for love on the land. The show is currently in production with Fremantle Media Australia and a number of hopeful farmers from across the country have put their hands up to take part.

Seedless watermelon farmer from North Queensland, Joe Ferraro, applied for the current season of the show scheduled to be screened on *Channel Nine* in the New Year. Joe owns 50 hectares of land just outside of Walkamin, 60km away from Cairns and is 37 years old. Joe says spending five months of the year in isolation on his farm can be tough, but is thankful to live closer to the coast than some of his counterparts in the west.

"I am lucky, it takes a little over an hour to drive to Cairns from my place. So I regularly head out for a movie or dinner with friends. I feel bad for the guys who are really isolated; they must be doing it tough. One thing I know, is that I couldn't do what they do," Ferraro said.

An aging farming population and rising fuel prices have served to increase the distances in isolated rural areas throughout Australia, said Director for the Centre of Rural and Remote Area Health at the University of Southern Queensland, Associate Professor Don Gorman. Professor Gorman explains with mines offering higher wages to labourers and youth moving away from rural areas, there is a distinct need for revitalisation of the Agricultural community of Australia.

Providing much needed publicity to Australia's agri-sector, *Farmer Wants a Wife* highlights the plight of struggling rural areas, providing an attractive image of farmers and farms to a popular market. With the possibility of love on the horizon for six lucky farmers, a group of young women and men will travel to the country to see if they are suited to the hopeful bachelors and bachelorettes. There is no money offered to the winners, but a successful few will walk away from the show with the greatest prize of all – love.



GIVEAWAY

Ghost Town - in cinemas
26 December 2008

In the comedy *Ghost Town*, Bertram Pincus (Ricky Gervais) is a man whose people skills leave much to be desired. When Pincus dies unexpectedly, but is miraculously revived after seven minutes, he wakes up to discover he now has the annoying ability to see ghosts. Even worse, they all want something from him, particularly Frank Herlihy (Greg Kinnear), who pesters him into breaking up the impending marriage of his widow Gwen (Téa Leoni). That puts Pincus squarely in the middle of a triangle, with spirited results.

For your chance to win one of 15 double passes to see 'Ghost Town' email your name, address and phone number to giveaways@ekka.com.au. Be sure to include the phrase 'Ghost Town' as the subject of the email.

Starring: Tea Leoni, Greg Kinnear, Ricky Gervais and Kristen Wiig.

www.ghosttown.com.au

In the NEIGHBOURHOOD

Northey Street City Farm (NSCF) is a non-profit community organisation situated on the banks of Brisbane's Breakfast Creek in Windsor a mere 800 metres from the RNA showgrounds.

About City Farm

In April 1994, a group of friends proposed to build a farm based on ethics and the practical principles of permaculture on the four hectare site. The council accepted the proposal and a peppercorn lease of \$1 a year was offered to develop the land. Since then, more than 1500 exotic and native fruit trees, bushfood plants, shrubs and ground covers have been planted. All planting at the farm is seen as an opportunity to learn about permaculture design to create a lush inner city oasis.

The farm has been developed for people to enjoy and participate in using the principles of permaculture. It is also intended to be a demonstration site where people of all ages can learn through practical, hands-on experience.

NSCF's mission is to create a working model of a cooperative, community-based urban permaculture farm which demonstrates, promotes, educates and advocates for environmental and economic sustainability in a healthy, diverse and supportive community.

The farm aims to encourage people to work together in the community to develop a practical relationship with and an understanding of its interdependence with the natural environment. It also aims to demonstrate different growing and farming practices using permaculture and organic farming principles.

A brighter future

In learning to live and enjoy a natural lifestyle, we host general farm tours open to the public and community groups, as well as learning tours tailored to various school curricula. NSCF has a diverse education program, from fun and informative

casual workshops, to Permaculture Design Certificates (PDC), Horticulture Certificate One, nationally accredited Permaculture training and beyond.

Workshops in partnership with Brisbane City Council such as GOLD, Gold n' Kids and Chillout programs are also held at the farm.

If you haven't got time to join one of the courses, the Northey Street Permaculture Design team can help create an edible food garden in your own backyard.

Celebrations form a vibrant part of farm activities, from solstice and equinox celebrations, to festivals and special events. A number of new programs are also developing such as "Culture Jam" which hosts a wide range of creative activities for all age groups.

Think globally - shop locally

Shopping at NSCF supports local growers and producers, and reduces your family's food mileage and environmental footprint. On offer is fresh organic produce at Northey Street Organic Market, tasty cakes and delicious tea from Northey Street Chai Café, while permaculture plants and organic vegetable seedlings can be found at Edible Landscapes Nursery.

Getting involved

Every week, more than 40 people regularly choose to spend their time nurturing our gardens, helping out in the nursery, building with recycled materials, creating art, assisting in the office or simply dropping in for a cup of tea and a chat. NSCF always welcomes new people to the farm.

Towards a sustainable future

As well as creating more self-reliant communities, growing your own food is the best form of primary health



care. We are committed to continually improving our programs to cater for a diverse and growing student, member and volunteer base.

At Northey Street City Farm, we continue to strive to lead the way in our field, showing permaculture and sustainability can be an important part of urban design and development.

Northey Street City Farm
16 Victoria Street, Windsor Q 4030
www.nscf.org.au Ph: 3857 8775
eMail: nnorthy@bigpond.net.au



A LONG-STANDING

partnership

Elders has been a valued partner of the EkkA for more than two decades. Each year, the Royal Queensland Show creates an ideal opportunity for Elders to connect with Queensland's rural community by sharing stories, information and expertise.

Livestock Manager for Queensland, Tony Gooden recently said the

company's greatest honour at the EkkA was presenting the Elders Shields of Excellence. The shields recognise the champion cows, heifers and bulls for each breed represented at the Royal Queensland Show. These shields are awarded to Queensland's best and are highly sought after by breeders across the state.

"The relationships we've built with EkkA and the breeders who show their livestock are a symbol of the partnerships we strive to build every day at Elders," Tony said.

Elders is looking forward to continued involvement with the EkkA in 2009.

SPOTLIGHT

on human resources



The human resources (HR) industry is currently going through a transformation, says Laura Dodd, Organisational Development Manager for the RNA. Laura explained companies are now looking for HR personnel with integrity, creativity and substantial operational experience

within a number of roles. HR managers are becoming increasingly essential to the organisational process. Laura said she is pleased to strive for excellence and leadership at the RNA.

HR can be broken down into a number of elements including industrial and employee relations, recruitment, training and organisational development, which are all vital to the operational structure of a company. The role of HR at the RNA differs slightly from the norm as it balances two very diverse functions throughout the year. Recently, Laura and her team managed the recruitment of almost 300 casual staff for this year's EkkA.

Although staffing for the EkkA is a large element of the job, Laura also fulfils an organisational development

role aimed to maximise the return on investment from the organisation's human capital. By considering the character, ethics, creativity and social connections which employees bring to the workplace, a corporate culture can be developed.

"At the RNA, there is a defined culture in the workplace unlike any other. The most exciting part about this job is seeing that culture evolve as the organisation moves forward into exciting frontiers, including the RNA Development Scheme Strategy," Laura said.

Looking to the future, Laura is optimistic about the organisational culture at the RNA and is excited to be playing her part in the Association's plans for the future.



WHAT IS THAT SOUND?

A brand new Brisbane-based music festival was introduced at the RNA Showgrounds this October with a vision for creating a fresh music platform for local artists. The Sounds of Spring Festival was a fresh, new music initiative that was coordinated by Michael Kerr, Director of the festival.

Less than a year ago with nothing but an idea and a passion for the music scene, Michael began planning the innovative event. With a background in event planning, Michael saw a need for a local music festival to showcase Brisbane's music industry. The idea quickly began to take shape and Sounds of Spring Pty Ltd was formed.

"There is no one else out there doing what we are trying to do on such a large scale. The response from the local community has been huge. I have been approached to recreate the festival in other states, but at this stage we are happy sticking with Brisbane" Michael said in a recent interview.

The first initiative of Sounds of Spring Pty Ltd was a band competition, held in the weeks preceding the festival. The competition had an underground feel, advertised only on the Sounds

of Spring website and in *Time Off* magazine. Michael was pleased with the response to the competition with over 200 bands from South East Queensland responding to the 'under the radar' advertising. To be eligible for the competition, bands had to be from South East Queensland, provide links to their music online and submit a 100 word biography. After careful deliberation, a short list of five bands was chosen to play in the finals on Friday, 26 September. The winners opened the *Time Off* stage on the first day of the festival.

"Making it in the music industry is about working hard and loving what you do. I knew if we made a big deal about the competition, hundreds of entries would come flooding in – but that's making it too easy. This competition was about targeting bands that have the same objectives as we do. Sounds of Spring is interested in talented individuals who seek out their own opportunities. That's what this whole festival is about," Michael said.

With preparations already underway for 2009, Michael hopes Sounds of Spring can help promote the local music community to a wider audience.

Formal Functions and FINE WINE

With the recent success of Queensland wines in the 2008 Royal Queensland Wine Show, the RNA was proud to continue its support and recognition of great Queensland Wines throughout the EkkA. A selection of Queensland's finest was selected by RNA Wine Councillors Dr Bill Ryan and Angus Adnam to be served in the EkkA's Official Dining Rooms.

The Honourable Anna Bligh, Premier of Queensland and her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley, AO Governor of Queensland were among some of the dignitaries who enjoyed the selection of wines at the EkkA's formal functions. Other guests included the RNA Council, Queensland Ministers and the Brisbane City Council Community Cabinet.

Wines from across the state featured in a select line up and included (pictured left to right): the Ballandean Late Picked Sylvaner, the Ballandean Viognier, the Boireann Lurnea, the Summit Estate Verdelho and the Romavilla Very Old Tawny. The last on the list came from the collection of the Honourable Bruce Scott, MP and was over 20 years old.

Feedback from guests on the wines was positive and the RNA is pleased to continue the tradition of serving fine Queensland Wines at all of its formal functions.



What's On

November

R.M. Williams Brisbane Bush Sale

13 – 23 November

Deck the halls, light the tree and hoist the mistletoe because Christmas has arrived early at R.M. Williams.

R.M. Williams, the Bush Outfitter, is getting into the festive spirit with its annual Brisbane Bush Sale starting Thursday, 13 November and running until Sunday, 23 November. There will be fantastic discounts on samples and seconds creating the ideal opportunity for some yuletide shopping.

With discounted stock of up to 70 percent on key items such as R.M. Williams world famous boots, belts and jeans the R.M. Williams Brisbane Bush Sale is the ideal opportunity to spoil yourself with some fresh R.M. Williams style, or pick up the perfect Christmas gift for any member of the family.



Bartercard Brisbane Trade Day

16 November

Bartercard members everywhere always look forward to the Christmas Trade Day. It's the perfect way to get the Christmas shopping out of the way early!

This year around 300 display spaces will offer gifts for kids and adults, business marketing ideas, travel and holidays, fashion, food and heaps more.

The food court will offer a number of new food styles and there will also be a fantastic wine bar as part of the Bartercard Suite area.

As usual, car parking is free for Bartercard members while parcel pickup will also be available on the day.

Open from 11:00am until 4:00pm on Sunday, 16 November.



Stereosonic08

22 November

Summer kicks off with Stereosonic08 across Australia - the freshest music festival showcasing the best in electronic

dance music and beyond. Stereosonic08 looks set to be a major hit with a focus on music, people and great locations. One hundred percent Australian owned and operated, it is a music and digital arts extravaganza which promises to deliver the best sun-drenched festival. The lineup includes Carl Cox, Booka Shade, The Crookers, Midnight Juggernauts, Faker, Pnau, DJ Hell, DJ Funk (Ed Banger), The Japanese Popstars, TV Rock, Giuseppe Ottaviani, Kaz James Band, Infusion, Headman, Don Diablo, Tommie Sunshine and many more.

Tickets are \$85 plus booking fee per person and are available from www.stereosonic.com.au, Oz Tix www.oztix.com.au and selected locations throughout Brisbane. www.stereosonic.com.au



SUNCORP Star Appearance at Ekka

Suncorp SunWise and Every Family Needs a Farmer (EFNAF) Ambassador Shane Webcke appeared as the special guest at this year's Suncorp Agribusiness Marquee on the Energex Community Arena on Thursday, 7 August 2008.

The rugby league great spoke about AgForce's EFNAF campaign and the importance of sun safety during an informal question and answer session.

Executive General Manager Suncorp Agribusiness Customers, Rod Davies said Suncorp was honoured to host Shane at the event.

"As a farm owner and a person who grew up in the country, Shane understands the issues people on the land are faced with. Shane has also been a strong voice for Suncorp across Queensland for the past six months as the Suncorp SunWise Ambassador, educating the community on the vital importance of skin cancer prevention and early detection," Mr Davies said.

Suncorp continues to support agribusiness through sponsorship of the Royal Queensland Show and looks forward to continued community involvement into 2009.

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95% of Woolworths fresh fruit and vegetables are grown in Australia.

If we don't buy it in Australia, it's usually because it doesn't grow here. That's why we're constantly working with local growers to develop our own crops. Growers like Eddy Zaina of Zaina's Farms in Bundaberg. Together we've created a growing program so you can enjoy fresh snow peas all year round.

Woolworths. We're fresh food people, because you are.

