



ROYAL
QUEENSLAND
AWARDS
SHOWCASING AUSTRALIA'S BEST



MEDIA RELEASE

25 March 2024

Royal Queensland Awards' cheeses and judge amongst the world's best

Champion cheeses from the 2023 Royal Queensland Awards (RQA) competition plus the RQA's chief judge are the cream of the crop according to the prestigious 2024 World Championship Cheese Contest (WCCC).

Held in March in Madison, Wisconsin in the U.S., the biennial WCCC is the world's largest dairy products evaluation, which sees a team of 54 internationally renowned judges assess entries across 142 classes for cheese, yoghurt, butter and dry dairy ingredients from 25 countries and 32 U.S. states.

The WCCC awarded a Gold Medal and Top 20 Cheese listing to 2023 RQA Champion Cow's Milk Cheese of Show winner, Saputo Dairy Australia's Heidi Farm Tilsit and a Silver Medal to 2023 RQA Champion Queensland Cheese or Dairy Product of Show winner, Woombye Cheese's Blackall Gold Washed Rind.

The Chief Judge of the Royal Queensland Cheese and Dairy Awards, Russell Smith, was also the recipient of a major WCCC accolade - the Aschebrock Award which recognises an outstanding WCCC judge and mentor. This year's competition is the seventh time Russell Smith has been a judge in the WCCC.

Mr Smith said he was thrilled that the WCCC had voted Royal Queensland Award-winning cheeses as some of the world's best.

"It was very rewarding to see two of our 2023 RQA champion cheeses from Saputo Dairy Australia and Woombye Cheese take out gold and silver medals at the world's leading cheese competition," Mr Smith said.

"It was an extraordinary achievement for Saputo Dairy Australia's Heidi Farm Tilsit to make the Top 20 cheeses – out of 3,302 entries. Less than one percent of the cheeses entered into the 2024 WCCC received that recognition.

"I was also delighted to see that previous RQA-winning cheese producers Meredith Dairy and Kris Lloyd Artisan took home awards from the WCCC.

"Australian cheeses performed very well at this year's WCCC and, in many cases, these products were first recognised at our country's strong, state-based competitions such as the Royal Queensland Awards.



**ROYAL
QUEENSLAND
AWARDS**
SHOWCASING AUSTRALIA'S BEST



MEDIA RELEASE

“This is evidence that entering competitions like the RQAs can put producers on a pathway to achieving global recognition,” he said.

Mr Smith said he was honoured to have received the WCCC’s 2024 Aschebrock Award.

“I was very surprised but greatly appreciative of the award the WCCC has bestowed upon me,” Mr Smith said.

“I have been evaluating dairy products in Australian competitions since 1998 and I am passionate about this country’s cheese industry. It was with great pleasure that I helped facilitate the impressive 65 Australian entries in this year’s WCCC.

“I will no doubt draw on my recent WCCC judging experience when assessing the entries in the 2024 Royal Queensland Cheese Awards next month,” he said.

The RQ Cheese Awards will be judged in the week commencing 13 May and Australia’s best cheese, beef, lamb and ice cream will be crowned at the Royal Queensland Awards Presentation on 17 May 2024.

Don’t forget to follow us on social media [@royalqueenslandawards](#)

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

Veronica Carew
General Manager Communications
Ph: 07 3253 3930/ 0408 323 631
Email: vcarew@rna.org.au

Natalie McKeering
Senior Media Consultant
Ph: 0418 986 084
Email: nmckeering@rna.org.au.