



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



MEDIA RELEASE

9 February 2024

Greener pastures bring about Australian cheese and ice cream producers' dairy best

Greener pastures have ensured this year's entries for the Royal Queensland Cheese and Dairy Awards and the Royal Queensland Ice Cream, Gelato and Sorbet Awards presented by King Street will be some of the best ever.

Entries open today for the RNA's prestigious Royal Queensland competitions which are regarded as a showcase for the best dairy products Australia has to offer.

Renowned international dairy judge and cheesemaker Russell Smith, who forms part of the 16-person Awards judging panel, said weather conditions have led to prime production conditions for milk.

"Most of the dairy farmers on the East Coast of Australia have had very good pastures for growth; I haven't seen pastures this good for more than 10 years," Mr Smith said.

"As a result, the milk is the best it's been in a decade and we are starting to see that come through with an increase in the quality of dairy products.

"Cheese and yoghurt makers in particular would be delighted to have such high-quality milk delivered to their factory."

There are 59 classes in Cheese and Dairy including cheese, desserts, yoghurt, butter, milk and cream, while there are 14 classes in Ice Cream, Gelato and Sorbet including vanilla, chocolate, strawberry and fruit.

The entries are judged on flavour, aroma, body, texture and presentation.

Mr Smith said given the manufacturers have the luxury of such a high-quality ingredient, he anticipated they were unlikely to tweak their recipes for the 2024 awards competition.

"Here in Australia, we are privileged to have clean, green and happy cows who are out in green pastures almost the whole time. As a result, the dairy products produced in Australia are up there with the world standard," he said.

RNA Chief Executive Brendan Christou said through this event Australian dairy producers have the chance to be rewarded and recognised in one of the country's most prestigious competitions, which



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forms part of the RNA's Royal Queensland Awards showcasing some of the best Beef, Lamb, Wine, Beer and now Aquaculture.

"The Royal Queensland Ice Cream, Gelato & Sorbet Awards was the first in the country dedicated to judging the best in sorbets, gelato and ice cream," Mr Christou said.

"Since its introduction in 2011 as a standalone competition, entry numbers have remained consistently high, confirming it as one of the nation's premier dairy competitions."

The Royal Queensland Cheese and Dairy Awards and the Royal Queensland Ice Cream, Gelato and Sorbet Awards presented by King Street judging panel comprises of 16 of Australia's most respected and experienced food industry professionals, including Mr Smith, who will taste test the products in May.

All Gold-medal winners from these Royal Queensland Awards are eligible to enter the Australian Grand Dairy Awards, which are held annually.

To enter go to www.rqa.com.au

ENTRIES CLOSE – FRIDAY 5 APRIL

JUDGING – MONDAY 13 MAY TO THURSDAY 16 MAY

AWARDS PRESENTATION – FRIDAY 17 MAY

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