

## **AUSTRALIA'S 'EKKA' SHINES FOR ITS 130<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

Queensland's Royal National Show, or 'Ekka' as local residents know it, enjoyed perfect winter sunshine and record crowds for its 130<sup>th</sup> Show.

Held annually over ten days in August, Brisbane's Ekka is unique to Australia because its Showgrounds are located right in the heart of Queensland's Capital City of Brisbane.

Royal National Association President Dr Vivian Edwards said the Ekka was truly a convergence of the country on the city. "People find it hard to believe that for 10 days we have around 3,000 prime cattle and horses as well as thousands of other animals and exhibitors on 22 hectares in Brisbane's inner city.

"This year's Ekka has been sensational, with temperatures averaging 24 C, an increase in competition entries and more than 600,000 people through the gates," said Dr Edwards.

'*Ekka, Fresh as you like*' was the 2006 marketing campaign theme, highlighting the fact that after 130 years, the Ekka is still as fresh as the next generation of exhibitors, competitors, volunteers and visitors.

"It's all about *Fresh*; fresh smiles, fresh faces, fresh experiences and fresh memories, all waiting for you over ten fun-filled days," said Dr Edwards.

In keeping with the theme, the RNA focused on showcasing Queensland's emerging young talent in fashion design, modelling, performing arts, music, auctioneering and judging. With the opportunity to have their work and talents seen by hundreds of thousands of people, the Ekka proved a great showcase and career launching pad for Queensland's emerging young talent.

Entertainment highlights of the 2006 Ekka included the Buffalo Bill and Bison Show in the Energex Green Arena, the Nova Live and Loud @EKKA Concert Series, the Granny Rap and Son Show and the Coffee Club natural fibres fashion parades, which attracted over 5,000 people a day.

Show competition was also strong with 28,000 entries across 40 major competition categories. Despite drought conditions Stud and Prime Beef Cattle, Poultry and Horse competitions were particularly strong this year.

A great family event, the RNA took great pride in welcoming children from the neighbouring Royal Children's Hospital prior to the Show opening on August 10. Usually these kids watch the carnival rides from their hospital windows, but this year many got to experience all the fun of the Show first hand before the crowds converged on the site.

For more information about Australia's 'Ekka', which is staged by the Royal Industrial and Agricultural Association of Queensland, visit [www.ekka.com.au](http://www.ekka.com.au) or contact Chief Executive Jonathan Tunny on [jtunny@ekka.com.au](mailto:jtunny@ekka.com.au).

If you are planning a trip to Brisbane Australia, best plan it for 9 – 18 August 2007 so as not to miss the biggest and best loved event on Queensland's calendar.