

# media release



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## Ekka Forever!

It's one of a kind, a loved Queensland icon and just 21 sleeps away!

Ekka organisers today celebrated the upcoming Royal Queensland Show at the official launch of Ekka '09.

"There's nothing like the Ekka," RNA Chief Executive Jonathan Tunny said.

"We've got award winning bulls, glorious cakes, sheep herding dogs, monster jet trucks, cows to milk, thrilling rides, jackaroos, rock band Evermore, the Ten Tenors at sunset, superb fashion, fresh produce – and it's all here for you Queensland!

"The long range weather forecast has perfect winter sunshine coming our way, we've got record entries in all our livestock competitions and all your Ekka favourites," he said.

The message from the RNA this year is come along to enjoy the Show you know and love, before the redevelopment begins in 2010.

"Make no mistake, the Ekka is here to stay at the RNA Showgrounds in inner-city Brisbane, but from next year onwards, the face of the Showgrounds will begin to change," Mr Tunny said.

"The Chairlift, Showbag Pavilion, Dog Pavilion and Brisbane Markets Agricultural Pavilion will be the first to change.

"The Ekka is the largest agricultural show in the State and its purpose is to showcase the best of Queensland produce, resources and initiatives in a fun environment, and that's what Ekka 2009 is set to deliver," he said.

### Ekka 2009 highlights include:

#### Fabulous Food Destinations

- The very best produce and products are on display at the Ekka and for the first time visitors will have a chance to sample some of the Show's winners through the **Royal Queensland Showbag**.
- **Taste of Queensland Stage** aims to profile the best produce from Queensland through cooking demonstrations; judging panels; interviews with farmers, fishermen, winemakers and others, and the Sausage King Finals.
- Ekka icon the **Strawberry Sundae** originated at the Ekka in the early 1950s and quickly became synonymous with all things Ekka. So recognised are they as an Ekka icon, Peters Ice Cream elected not to produce the sundaes for any other event in Australia. Enjoying a delicious iconic strawberry sundae (or two!) at the Ekka will help The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation.
- Experience cuisine and performances from around the world in the **International Food Village**.

#### The Sweet Sounds of Ekka

- **Nova Live & Loud @ Ekka** is back in Nova Park with headline acts Evermore, Paul Dempsey and Bob Evans set to rock out over three big nights.
- In 2009 the Ekka will pay homage to the **Ten Tenors**, who are returning home this year to wow Ekka audiences with an exclusive Ekka Sunday Sunset Concert.
- Nova 106.9 and Ekka are once again on the hunt for Brisbane's best school bands for **Nova Rock School**. In 2009 there are two new categories, Primary Schools and Secondary Schools, with the major winners of each title walking away with \$5000 each.
- Billy Hyde Music presents **Urban Upbeat @ Ekka**, a major musical event, showcasing school and community music ensembles from all over Queensland and even interstate!

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### **Best in Show**

- 2009 marks one of the Ekka's most popular Beef Cattle competitions ever with up to 2600 head of cattle from 30 different breeds to be paraded, displayed and judged during the 10 days of Ekka.
- The Ekka Dairy Cattle competition is by far the biggest Royal Show competition in Australia, attracting more than 350 head. It's also one of the most fun competitions at the Ekka. Ekka patrons can take part in the Gum Boot Throwing competition (an unofficial competition) and have a go at milking a cow.
- The competition will be fiercer than ever on Thoroughbred Day with prizes jackpotting at \$66,000 plus stallion services.
- Puppies across all canine breeds will be judged this year and Ekka 2009 welcomes felines for the first time.

### **Ekka IgNITES in the Energex Community Arena**

- In a brand new, never before seen show, The Man from Susan River will perform daring stunts on horseback with the added thrill of fire. Flames will lick at the horses' hooves as they are manoeuvred through the daring ducking, diving and jumping routines.
- Watch as this monster of machines, the Jet Truck, goes from zero to 200km/h in just 11 seconds.
- Toyota Australia has teamed up with some of Australia's top professional drivers to bring the Toyota V6 HiLux Heroes stunt precision driving team to the Ekka who will demonstrate precision driving from nose to nose driving, high speed drifting, donuts, 12 metre ramp to ramp jumps, driving a HiLux on the driver side with just two wheels and formation ramp jumps, to name a few.

### **Ekka Threads**

- The Coffee Club Parades are the largest and longest running public fashion event staged in Australia, attracting 50,000 Show goers annually. For the first time, Ekka patrons can reserve a seat at the parades when buying tickets online.
- High fashion makes a comeback to the Fine Arts Competition with items from fascinators and accessories to cutting edge clothing on display.
- Learn about current fashion trends and how to wear them at daily fashion workshops with leading stylist Susie McWatt-Forbes.

### **Kids will love**

- For 2009 the RNA will create the Sunny Queen 'Little Miracles Newborn Corner', where lambs will be born during the Show, giving city visitors a real taste of country life.
- Nine News working broadcast centre – see the news being made and presented.
- Signature Brisbane Backyard – experience a 1960s backyard and learn how to recycle products to decorate your yard, like turning old tyres into swans.
- Fun abounds in the Nestle Peters Enchanted Forest where you can join in the Peters Ice Cream Eating Competitions, see what you can create with the new Peters Ice Cream Sticks, Sunny Queen Egg and Spoon Races and Dairy Farmers Sack Races.
- Direct from Richmond in North West Queensland is Kronosaurus Korner, a display giving city visitors a 100 million year trip back in time complete with real dinosaur fossils.

### **Ekka thrills**

- *Sky Flyer* – a high vertical swing tower with a capacity for 24 riders. Sky Flier sends riders flying through the air at a height of 35 metres while spinning at 60 kilometres per hour.
- *XXXL* – the latest extreme ride with a rocking and twisting action that takes riders from 30 metres upside down to face down near the ground: maxing at 360 degrees of 7.5 G force.
- *Dodgem Cars* – the popular sideshow alley veteran has had a makeover, promising even more driving and dodging action.

### **Ekka Essentials**

- Tickets are \$23 for adults, \$17 for concessions, \$13 for children 5 to 14 years, and free for children 4 years and under. Discounts apply for family bookings with \$57 for two adults and two children and \$32 for one adult and one child.
- 2009 brings the Ekka voucher booklet featuring pages of discounts and 'Ekka Secrets' – activities that are included in your standard Ekka ticket.
- To celebrate Q150, the first 5000 Ekka tickets purchased online will be discounted by 15 per cent.
- This year Ekka is affiliated with the Companion Card, which allows carers of people with a disability to come to Ekka for free.

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