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RNA beef comp smashes entry record

Australia's richest beef competition has smashed records with more than 1,000 head of cattle entered – the most ever in its 18 year history.

The RNA's prestigious Paddock to Palate Competition, presented by Mort and Co, has attracted 149 entries with pens of 7 (1,043 cattle) competing for the nation's biggest prize purse of its kind – more than \$45,000.

RNA Beef Cattle Committee Chairman Gary Noller said 63 of the country's top producers would compete in the four-phased competition which sets a benchmark for the industry.

"Considering the ongoing drought and high beef prices due to recent sporadic rainfall, the RNA is ecstatic with the number of entries received and the support shown for the competition," he said.

"The committee was unsure of the number of available cattle for competition and we weren't sure whether producers would disregard the competition to take advantage of current high prices on offer.

"Our entries have increased by almost 300 per cent on last year alone, going from 40 entries in 2014 to almost 150 this year."

Mr Noller said it was heartening that entries had more than tripled and the competition was a great example of how the RNA was committed to championing agriculture through recognising and showcasing the efforts of hard working primary producers.

The prize money has also proved a sweetener for competitors, increasing from \$7,900 last year to \$45,000 in 2015, securing its place as Australia's richest beef competition.

Mr Noller said a combination of record prize money and current record cattle prices after recent rain had proved an incentive to exhibitors.

"While rainfall has been sporadic, cattle numbers have tightened after recent falls," he said.

"Producers at last have been afforded the opportunity to take advantage of record prices for export product which in turn has increased value for the domestic product."

Mr Noller said the competition was highly regarded by seed stock and commercial producers.

“They benefit from the opportunity to benchmark their genetics and breeding operation against their peers through the controlled feeding regime in a commercial feedlot,” he said.

This year the competition features a new Trade Class (steers monitored over 70 days) while the Export Class has tripled its prize money (steers monitored over 100 days).

The competition is four phased comprising of the best aggregate weight gain over 100 days (70 days for trade); a carcass competition; MSA eating quality competition and finishing in a beef taste off – a palate competition where a portion of striploin is cooked and judged by expert chefs.

The exhibitor who polls the highest aggregate score across these four categories is then awarded the overall prize which will be announced during the Royal Queensland Show at a special Paddock to Palate Competition Awards Presentation Breakfast.

All steers will be forward sold over the hooks to JBS Australia Dinmore on a price and grid to be negotiated so that all exhibitors have full transparency on pricing. Similarly ration pricing will be advised to all exhibitors by Mort & Co.

The feedlot phase of the competition will be conducted at Mort & Co’s Grassdale Feedlot at Dalby which is one of Australia’s largest and most modern feedlots.

For further information please visit www.royalqueenslandshow.com.au

Sponsors for the 2015 competition include – Mort & Co; JBS Australia; Rabobank; Zoetis; Elanco Animal Health; Virbac; Performance Feeds Pty Ltd; Black Truck Sales; Grant, Daniel & Long (GDL) and Thompson Longhorn.

Ends

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