

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS FOR THE 2009 PRETORIA SHOW

From a humble start of only trade exhibitions and 125 cattle on show to a remarkable show of products in more than 200 categories and nearly 5 000 animals on show – this is the growth of the Pretoria Show over the past 70 years.

The Pretoria Show is celebrating its diamond anniversary this year. The 70th Show begins on Friday, 28 August and ends on Sunday, 6 September, and the agricultural section will once again be a highlight on the show programme. The very full agricultural programme already commences on Thursday, 20 August.

As usual, the Show's agricultural programme is divided into two categories. Firstly there is the show riding equestrian classes' regional championships for Gauteng, which will most definitely be the major draw card for the province's horse riding enthusiasts during the first week of the Show. Following this event, competitors from countries such as New Zealand and Holland will compete in the International Alzu World Cup Qualifying Round for show jumping.

The categories for farm animals, including all the cattle and small livestock breeds and interesting work-horse breeds, will be in action from Friday, 28 August, while the commercial exhibitions will be in full swing in the halls.

Wim du Toit, Chief Executive Officer of the Pretoria Show, says there are a number of agricultural highlights on this year's show programme. "The Pinzgauers, who will have their National Championships at the Show this year, should definitely not be missed. This is the conclusion of a series of competitions at four recent shows, namely Vryburg, Bloemfontein, the Royal in Pietermaritzburg and Thabazimbi. Interest in this breed is growing above expectations and we are expecting about 150 entries from 25 breeders – amongst others also the cattle breed's Gold Cup winner at this year's Royal, Mr. Silence."

This links in with another first for the Pretoria Show, namely a similar award for the Grand Champion Male as part of the Show's upgrading of their interbreed classes. A Grand Champion Female will also be selected. In total there will be 13 classes this year, of which exhibitors can enter five classes and breeders' societies can enter eight.

Du Toit is also excited about novices who are making their show debut at the Tshwane Events Centre this year. These are:

- The Huguenot Cattle Breed that will be judged on 1 September.
- The Percheron and Clydesdale – both heavy work-horse breeds that will be judged in lead reign and in three riding classes on 3 September. These broad-back powerful giants are known for an unforgettable riding sensation. In the current economical climate these easy-to-handle powerful horses are seen in a different light.
- An introductory show by the Emu – the Australian 'ostrich' – consisting of six month old chicks and three year old birds, including their products, such as processed meat in meat patties, biltong, beautiful eggs, skins and feathers and the valuable remedial oil for which the emu's are known worldwide.
- Savanna goats will be on show from 20 August to 6 September at the Pig Complex.

Another annual highlight is the region's carcass competition in the category for slaughter animals as part of the Land Bank/Samic National Carcass Competition. Judging on the hoof (cattle and sheep) will be done on Saturday, 29 August at 08:30 next to the Obaro Ring. The carcasses will then be judged on the hook on Tuesday, 1 September at 08:00 at the Cullinan Abattoir.

The Show will also include the Agricultural Research Council's announcement of the 2009 winner in the Performance Test Class. This gala event will be held from 16:30 on 1 September in the ABSA Arena.

BEEF CATTLE

A total of 13 cattle breeds will compete in this year's Show, including the Pinzgauer National Championship, which will be held on 1 September.

The other beef and dual-purpose breeds taking part in the Show are Dexter, Braunvieh, Limousin, Red Poll, Drakensberger, Simbra, Santa Gertrudis, Herefords, Simmentaler, Brahman and Huguenot. Jerseys will be the only dairy breed on the show.

Fifteen beef breed bulls are qualifying for the 2009 Platinum Performance Awards. These awards, which is being held for the 31th time this year, is organised by the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) and Bayer Animal Health Care.

Platinum awards are issued annually by the ARC. The requirements for these awards are that the bull must have achieved Gold Merits in a phase C-growth test (C1, C2 and C3) during the previous year, while his dam must have achieved Elite status earlier in the same year in which the relevant bull received his Gold Merit.

The winners of these awards are not necessarily the top achievers of their breeds, however the awards fill a gap in the performance testing, namely linking a bull's official growth rate with the fertility status of his mother – an important aspect of animal improvement.

CARCASS COMPETITION

The judging of the slaughter animals on the hoof (cattle and lambs) in this competition will be done on 29 August. The carcasses will be judged on the hook on 1 September at the Cullinan Abattoir. The normal auction and prize-giving will take place on 1 September.

PIGS

Some 15 boars and between 20 and 30 sows, varying between Large White, Landras and Duroc, will be on show.

HORSES

The horse show starts on 20 August, with judging from 08:00 (some days from 07:00) until 18:00, over a period of 18 days. Two arenas will be used for the lead reign, riding and harness classes. So far, 13 breeds will be competing in the various championships and in the Alzu World Cup Qualifying Round for show jumping, which promises to be a highlight on the programme. Shows of the beautiful Friesians, Saddle horses, Miniature horses and the Star Stallions will most definitely attract the cream of these breeds.

- The Pure Arab show is scheduled to be judged on 31 August in the ABSA and East Arenas.
- The Alzu World Cup Qualifying Round for show jumping will be held from 28 – 30 August, 08:00 – 17:00, in the ABSA Arena.
- The Star Stallion is a spectacular event and will be held on 31 August from 19:30 in the Obaro Championship Ring.
- Some of the country's most beautiful Friesian horses can be seen in the Friesian horse show which will be held in the ABSA Arena on 26 August.

- The interbreed judging of horses is taking place in the ABSA Arena, on 5 September at 16:00.
- The Percheron and Clydesdales, both heavy work-horse breeds, will be judged in lead reign and in three riding classes on 3 September.

SHEEP AND GOATS

The judging of the SA Boerbokke is being held on 31 August and on 1 September. There will again be a boerbok auction at the Show this year, which will be held on 2 September at 11:00 in the Sheep Complex.

The Kalahari Reds are coming to the Show for the fourth time this year. This breed will be judged on 31 August and on 1 September and will be auctioned in the Sheep Complex on 2 September.

Dorpers and White Dorpers will be judged on 3 September, and auctioned on 5 September.

Suffolk sheep will be judged on 4 September and auctioned on 5 September.

The Pretoria Show also welcomes Savanna goats for the first time this year. Savannas will be on show from 20 August to 6 September.

FEATHERED FRIENDS

Some 450 poultry will be on show from 26 – 31 August, including breeds like Australorps, Bramas, Orpingtons and Leghons. During this time the pure bred poultry will also be for sale. More than 300 fancy pigeons will compete in various competitions from 1 – 6 September.

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