

## Preview: The British Cheese Awards 2016

Celebrating its first year under the ownership of the Royal Bath & West Show, the British Cheese Awards goes from strength to strength. Mike Pullin, Chairman of the awards, previews the event

The Royal Bath & West Show is a fitting setting for the British Cheese Awards, offering even more opportunities for entrants and visitors alike. With a heritage in rural activities spanning centuries, the Society was formed to encourage agriculture and commerce, and to provide a marketplace for countryside products. Where better then, to appreciate and reward excellence in the very best cheeses Britain can produce?

### **Increased range of dairy classes**

The four-day event comprises a range of activities to support, promote and champion the dizzying range of cheeses on show this year, with approx. 1,000 entries from producers across the UK. As well as the same classes and categories regulars to the event have seen in the past, this year the show includes an increased range of Dairy Product classes including butter, yoghurt and ice cream.

### **Live judging day**

To support the Society's mission to help educate and inspire in every area of agriculture and production, judging day is now open to the public for the first time this year and visitors can see for themselves exactly what goes into choosing a winning cheese. Whilst judging is taking place within the Cheese Hall the public will have plenty of opportunity for them to observe what's going on, in a viewing area overlooking the judging by the entrance. Stewards will be on hand to answer questions and make observations about the judging, bringing the whole experience to life and encouraging tastings which are available throughout the four-day event.

### **British Cheesemonger of the Year**

Becoming a cheesemonger is more than learning how to operate a cheese wire. Understanding cheese varieties, how to care for and sell cheese is a skill that takes years to develop. At this year's show, we're testing eight nominated contestants to find out who is the British Cheesemonger of the Year, taking place on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, Eight contestants will take part in three rounds: Identify territorial – taste and identify five cheeses; Cut & Wrap – five different weights from five whole cheeses; Quiz – five questions. This last round will be like Mastermind in style, putting all eight contestants under pressure to perform!

### **Award dinner date changed**

As well as a great opportunity to educate the public about the fantastic range of cheeses we produce in the UK, the awards are, of course, a time to network and meet up with

colleagues and friend within the industry and to celebrate their achievements. And, another first for this year, the Award's Dinner will take place on the first night of the show, allowing those attending the Dinner to enjoy a day at the show and experience all that it has to offer before hand, to help create a real buzz about the day's events. There'll be plenty to talk about, as opinions on how the judging has gone will no doubt spark debate!

With experts on hand to answer questions from the public, categories designed to award across the board, The British Cheese Awards are a recognised symbol for all British cheese and an award win provides a great PR opportunity, endorsing winners to customers and peers alike. For entry forms, dinner tickets and details please contact Rachael Hann on [rachael.hann@bathandwest.co.uk](mailto:rachael.hann@bathandwest.co.uk) or tel no: 01749 822215.

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British Cheese Awards 2016

**WHERE:** The Showground, Shepton Mallet, Somerset BA4 6QN

**WHEN:** Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> – Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June

**WEBSITE:** [bathandwest.com](http://bathandwest.com)

**By car:** The show is situated on the A371 between Shepton Mallet and Castle Cary. From the Bristol area, turn off at M32 and take the A37. From Devon or Cornwall, turn off at junction 23 off M5. From the East, take the M3, A303 or A371.

**By train:** Nearest stations – Bristol, Castle Cary, or Temple Combe. Website: [nationalrail.co.uk](http://nationalrail.co.uk)

**By bus:** First on 08456 064446 or Travel Line on 0871 200 2233. Coaches from Castle Cary, Shepton Mallet and from Yeovil.