



## Press Release

15 May 2017

### **Record livestock entries at Royal Bath & West Show.**

Sheep entries at this year's Royal Bath & West Show have reached record levels, with the very best livestock in the country competing for the Supreme Champion crown.

Attracting 154 exhibitors and a record-breaking 1,525 entries, the sheep classes are sure to be closely contested. In addition, there are over 600 beef cattle and more than 200 pigs competing for top honours, with dairy entries also looking promising.

"Farming is at the very heart of the show, and the calibre of livestock we see each year is outstanding," says head of shows Alan Lyons. "We have over 4,500 entries every year and have built up a fantastic reputation for showing – it's something of which we're extremely proud."

Showing will once again take place on all four days meaning visitors and exhibitors are able to make the most of the event. "We feel it is important to hold classes every day, as it gives the exhibitors more days on which to compete and visitors more opportunities to experience showmanship at its very best," says Mr Lyons.

This year's beef cattle classes have seen increased entries across many breeds – including Angus, British Charolais and British Simmentals. The British Limousin classes are set to be particularly strong, with 31 entries from 13 exhibitors.

While dairy entries are yet to close, the competition looks very promising with a number of new exhibitors – particularly in the dairy calf and showmanship classes, says Mr Lyons. "The recently introduced any other dairy, dual purpose or hybrid class has attracted some good interest," he adds. "We hope this will be the launch pad for breeds that have been previously missing from the general classification."

Exhibitors will benefit from a fresh look to the cattle buildings this year, as well as a substantial investment to the milking area. "We host some of the very best animals at the Royal Bath & West Show," says Mr Lyons. "Therefore, we have endeavoured to provide top-class facilities for exhibitors and livestock alike."

Picking out the prize-winning stock in the rings will be a host of highly experienced judges from across the UK, with the coveted Interbreed Sheep Championship being judged by Richard Wear, 18-time Ryeland Flock Champion.

When selecting his winner, a decent walk is top of his list. “Locomotion is particularly important because if it’s poor, sheep can’t graze,” he explains. “I’m looking for a smart animal that is eye catching – something that is bright, alert and active.”

The Texel Focus Show will again be held at the event and has matched last year’s entry of 112. Another section enjoying a huge growth is the commercial lamb class with 91 entries. “No doubt many of these lambs will have benefited from some Beltex in their breeding, which may explain the huge success of the new pedigree Beltex classes, receiving 74 entries,” explains Mr Lyons. “However, the real comeback story of this year’s event must be the return of the distinctive Kerry Hill sheep - whose classes were cancelled last year – but have bounced back with an amazing 53 entries.”

While animals are prepped and preened to the highest standard, and presentation is extremely important, competing at the Royal Bath & West Show is about more than just looks, says Mr Lyons. “It’s about recognising the highest quality animals from a commercial perspective; pedigree stock have to earn their keep back on the farm, and showing is all about finding the best genetics to improve productivity in the future.”

- The Royal Bath & West Show will be held on 31 May – 3 June. Tickets are available from the website: [www.bathandwest.com](http://www.bathandwest.com) or by calling 0844 776 6777.

For further information or media enquiries contact Olivia Cooper on 01392 840009 or e-mail [olivia@agrihub.co.uk](mailto:olivia@agrihub.co.uk).

### **About the Royal Bath & West of England Society**

The Society was founded in 1777 in Bath by a group of philanthropists led by Edmund Rack. We are a registered charity organisation (Registered Charity Number 1039397). The Society was formed with the aims of encouraging agriculture, arts, manufacture and commerce.

Our charitable activities provide:

- Agriculture, veterinary, educational and art scholarships
- Technical events and Seminars
- Practical farming advice and conferences
- Countryside Education
- Diversification advice for farmers
- Education for children
- A market place for countryside products

As the Society approaches its 240<sup>th</sup> year it continues to deliver a wonderful mix of established traditional exhibits through to the latest energy technology and contemporary entertainment.

The entertainment and features around the 242-acre site ensure enjoyment for every member of the family and include attractions that are spectacular to watch, educational, inspirational, “hands on” or just plain fun.

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