

160th People First Bank Toowoomba Royal Show Report

27th- 29th March 2025

After the huge success of the 2024 show, the committee was excited about the prospects for our 160th show.

Numbers were up across the majority of competitive sections, our commercial sites were almost all sold, the Showmen had delivered numerous large rides that had never been to Toowoomba before and our entertainment program was the largest we had ever put together with a lot of the old favourites plus new attractions.



On Tuesday, the Toowoomba Showgrounds was announced as the venue for the equestrian competition of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. We were on a high. What could go wrong.

And then the rain came. Relentless rain with 50 kph winds. And it did not stop. All day Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. No matter how often I checked the radar it never went away. Constant bad weather creates so many problems. It becomes dangerous, site holders wanted to leave, we start spending more time pulling trucks out of the mud than putting on a great show. Entertainment is cancelled or rescheduled. Communication to our patrons becomes paramount at an already busy time.



Credit where credit is due. All our competitors were extraordinary. Particularly in our animal areas. The beef & dairy cattle, horses, sheep dogs and show dogs continued judging throughout the show. So did the woodchoppers. Not a single competition cancelled.

All of our other competitive sections were excellent.

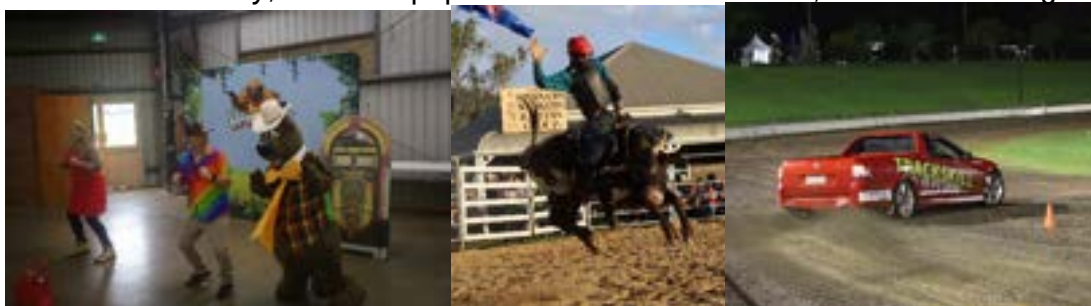
The pavilion exhibits were full and our small animals including sheep, goats, alpacas, pigs and poultry put on a fantastic display.



The highlight was the display of Droughtmaster cattle with over 130 head. The beef cattle section at this years show was the third largest in the country only behind Brisbane and Sydney. A real credit to the exhibitors and the hard working committee & stewards.

We had over 550 school children booked into our Ag Discovery Day Program which unfortunately had to be cancelled due to the weather. Educating children about the importance of agriculture is a significant part of our charter and one that we will continue to actively pursue.

Once in the door, pay no more has been our mantra for many years and our plans this year were no exception. Unfortunately, due to the weather a number of attractions had to be relocated or cancelled. Bluey & Bingo and Humphrey had to be moved to the Founders Pavilion each day while their appearances on Thursday & Friday nights were cancelled. Due to safety concerns the Medieval Combat could not proceed at all. Our new First Fives activation zone could not be activated at all. I would like to thank all our entertainers who continued as best they could. In particular I must thank Clive Featherby who put on a spectacular monster truck, fireworks and laser show every night in appalling conditions and the V8 Trackskill Utes, Farmer Dave and the Dog HighJump and Hall Family Rodeo who put on a great rodeo on both Friday and Saturday nights. The animal nursery, the most popular attraction at the show, continued throughout.



Our food vendors stuck it out which is a credit to them. They were wet and cold but kept the fires stoked. The Showmen did the best they could but in such trying conditions some rides become dangerous, and I applaud them for putting patrons first and only opening within safe conditions. It is vitally important we continue to support these stoic families as they continue to support agricultural shows across the country.



The show kicked off on Thursday with the Rural Press Club Lunch featuring Bruce Vandersee as the guest speaker. Bruce is on our Executive Committee and has been instrumental in steering his family business Vanderfield Machinery now RDO Equipment for many years. Over 160 guests attended including Agricultural leaders from across the region as well as a number of the leadership team from People First Bank who celebrated their 26 consecutive year as the major naming rights sponsor of our iconic event. It is fantastic to have their commitment and support and the transition from Heritage Bank to People First Bank has been seamless. We look forward to our partnership continuing for many more years into the future.



Another highlight was again the Darling Downs Showgirl, Rural Ambassador and Emerging Leaders Events, functions and judging held during the show. The future of the agricultural show movement is in very safe hands if the calibre of young people involved in these events is anything to go by.



After the excitement of the Olympic announcement on Tuesday, it was only fitting that David Janetzki MP, member for Toowoomba South and Treasurer of Queensland officially opened the show. DJ, the boy from Brymaroo was a driving force in our success with being named the Equestrian Venue for 2032 alongside both our local members Pat Weir and Trevor Watts, Mayor Geoff McDonald, Federal MP Garth Hamilton, John McVeigh and Mark Mason from TSBE, Briston Toft from Equestrian Queensland and the Toowoomba Equestrian Centre steering Committee chaired by RASQ Deputy Chairman Mark Freeman.

The Official Opening also gave us the opportunity to recognise over 20 of our long serving stewards. Without their commitment we would not be able to stage our show.

The show would not operate without the support and contribution of our volunteers. All our committee are volunteers and give up their time to ensure the show is a success. Similarly, all our judges and stewards are the same.

There are literally hundreds of people who make the show happen. Cleaners, traffic and parking control, gate and turnstile attendants, bars and dance groups. All volunteering together to put on the best show possible for our community.



There were over 13 000 competitive entries at this year's show. All our livestock competitors prepare for months getting their exhibits ready knowing that a Blue Ribbon at the Toowoomba Royal signifies the best of the best. Across all our pavilion exhibits there were significant entries in all competitions particularly cooking, handicraft, fine art, photography, leatherwork and schoolwork.

Additionally, almost 300 sponsors contribute to what is our regions largest community event through the donation of cash, product and prizes. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank all our sponsors for the contribution they make particularly People First Bank.



Although the first two days of the show were a washout, it was great to see Toowoomba community support the show on the Saturday.

The RASQ is committed to staging an entertaining, educational and competitive event for the Darling Downs community. Through the support we receive from competitors, exhibitors, site holders, sponsors, Showmen, committee, volunteers and media we are able to achieve this.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. We are looking forward to your involvement next year when the weather will be fine, our agricultural industries will be punching above their weight, our economy will have righted itself and we can join together to celebrate everything that is great about our fantastic region.



PEOPLE FIRST BANK
TOOWOOMBA ROYAL SHOW
BY THE NUMBERS

- 17 000 Visitors. A significant decrease on 2024 due to over 65 mm of rain and 50kpm winds over the first two days
- 55% Female & 45% Male Visitation
- 79% of patrons located within the Toowoomba Region
- 18% Under 17 years of age
- 39% 18-34 Years
- 34% 35-55 Years
- 9% Over 55 Years
- 37% of patrons heard about the show via word of mouth, with 26% from social media platforms
- 4 hours was the length of stay
- Animal Nursery, competitions, small animals, Bluey & Bingo, rodeo and fireworks the main reason for attending the show by 85% of respondents
- Over \$30 000 worth of complimentary tickets and donations to community organisations
- Over 13 000 competitive entries
- More than 5.5km of ribbons presented
- The 160th Toowoomba Royal Show
- 40 Years since the showgrounds relocated to the current site from it's inner city location