

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

28 February 2022

SA Dairy Championships attracts more than 900 entries

More than 900 dairy products compete in the 2022 South African Dairy Championships, the largest and oldest dairy competition in Africa. This year, the championships is hosted for the 189th year by Agri-Expo. The judging took place on Thursday 24 and Friday 25 February at Elsenburg outside Stellenbosch.

Meticulous process endorsed by industry

"There are good reasons why 68 manufacturers entered as many as 920 dairy products for the championships this year," says Johan Ehlers, Chief Executive Officer of Agri-Expo.

"This competition is put together with great accuracy and transparency and is therefore fully endorsed by the industry," says Ehlers. Agri-Expo, as independent organiser since 1834, manages the process behind the scene – from the online entries, the class divisions, the cold chain of products entered from all over the country, the compilation of judging panels, the judging process and its audit component, to the final announcement of the winners."

According to Ehlers, the championships creates the national benchmark according to which large and small manufacturers, from international companies to small cheesemakers, measure themselves against each other every year: "Furthermore, certain manufacturers use the results as performance appraisal, which emphasises the value attached to the competition."

Improvement in quality positive for industry

A team of 30 judges a day, led by Chief Judge Alan Fourie, evaluates more than 100 classes for cheese, butter, yogurt, cottage cheese, ice cream, cultured and flavoured milk, dairy desserts, dairy dips and sauces, milk, and cream. The assessment involves three aspects of sensory evaluation, namely flavour and taste, appearance, as well as composition and texture.

Fourie says improvement in product quality was a highlight of this year's championships: "Only the best of the best from each manufacturer is entered and it is gratifying that the South African dairy industry is performing year after year."

According to Fourie, the championships is one of the only competitions in the world that use five judges per category. "This year, more than a quarter of the judges were a new team, which means that the championships is a learning experience where people from the industry are exposed to the full scope of dairy products. They find it educational and strategically valuable for product development and innovation."

Collaboration is the key to success

"The key to continued success in the South African dairy industry depends on our ability to adapt, innovate and collaborate," says Dr Tertius Cilliers, CEO of Synercore, platinum partner of the SA Dairy Championships.

“Whether you are a primary or secondary producer, supplier, wholesaler or retailer, more than ever before we will need to embrace and promote the benefits of dairy,” says Cilliers. “The SA Dairy Championships provides an excellent platform and opportunity where you will find this kind of collaboration and unity towards a common purpose – marketing and celebrating the value of excellence in the South African dairy industry.”

The 2022 SA Dairy Championships is made possible by the platinum partners Agri-Expo and Synercore, as well as other partners Chr.Hansen, AECI Food & Beverage, the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, Woolworths, IMCD SA, Condio, Hollard, Orchem, Mane, and Polyoak Packaging.

Winners announced at hybrid SA Dairy Awards

The winner in each class is crowned SA Champion, while products of exceptionally high quality also receive the Qualité award, which is recognised as the only mark of quality for dairy products in South Africa. A panel of five experts determines the Product of the Year. These winners will be announced at the South African Dairy Awards on Friday 26 March 2021 at Cavalli Estate in Stellenbosch. Those interested can join in at www.cheesesa.co.za/sa-dairy-awards for a hybrid ceremony.

For more information, visit www.cheesesa.co.za and www.agriexpo.co.za, or contact Agri-Expo on 021 975 4440 or cheese@agriexpo.co.za.

Social media

Join the conversation with #SADairyChamps #SADairyAwards #SACHampion #QualitéAward #ProductoftheYear @AgriExpo1

Photo 1

More than 900 dairy products compete in the 2022 SA Dairy Championships of which the judging took place on 24 and 25 February at Elsenburg.

Photo 2

From left are judges René Groenewald, product developer at Woolworths, and Clement October, cheesemaker at Klein River Cheese outside Stanford, who both judged for the first time this year, along with Dr Tertius Cilliers, CEO of Synercore, Johan Ehlers, Chief Executive Officer of Agri-Expo (organiser of the championships) and Dr Mohale Sebopetsa, Head of the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, during the judging of the 2022 SA Dairy Championships at Elsenburg.

ISSUED BY

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