



# AUSTRALIAN GRAND DAIRY AWARDS

## 2025 Award Entry Schedule

# About the Australian Grand Dairy Awards

The Australian Grand Dairy Awards began in 1999 to recognise and reward excellence and innovation in Australian dairy produce and to acknowledge the achievements of the highly skilled, pioneering people who produce those products.

The Australian Grand Dairy Awards recognise the 'best of the best' cheese and dairy produce in the country. As the 'grand final' of Australian dairy awards – only manufacturers of gold medal-winning products that are made from Australian milk and have already been through a rigorous judging process at Australian qualifying competitions are invited to enter the prestigious annual Australian Grand Dairy Awards.

In 2023, Dairy Australia and the Royal Agricultural Shows Australia established a partnership to deliver the Australian Grand Dairy Awards. The Royal Agricultural Society of NSW and Royal National and Industrial Association QLD manage the judging of the awards and Dairy Australia manages the event and promotion of the awards with support from Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria.

Key Benefits for winning manufacturers and finalists:\*

- Benchmark your success – Only gold medallists from approved qualifying competitions are eligible to enter, meaning that the calibre of entrants is extremely high and diverse, the perfect arena to see where your product sits against other state-based gold winners.
- Industry recognition – Champions will receive industry recognition at the annual awards event as a manufacturer of high quality and excellence in Australian dairy produce.
- Promotional support – AGDA promotional campaign support, through traditional media advertising, radio, blogger engagement, events, and social media.
- Retail awareness – Manufacturers may use the Award medal for a three-year period from the announcement date in marketing, advertising, promotions and on packaging of the winning product. This clearly creates a point of difference for your product on shelf, positioning it as the 'best of the best' in the Australian dairy industry and providing consumers with an incentive to purchase.

\*Some benefits may only apply to Champion/Grand Champion winning manufacturers.

# Is my product eligible to enter?

As the Australian Grand Dairy Awards represent the “best of the best” not all products will be eligible for entry. Please read below to see if your product is eligible.

## Eligibility for Award of Champion

Manufacturers that meet the following criteria will be eligible to enter their product and receive the award of Champion:

### **Eligibility:**

- a. All entered products must be produced in Australia from 100% Australian milk.
- b. Products must be entered by their manufacturer. No re-branded products (including, without limitation, supermarket own brand or home brand products) shall be eligible to enter the Competition in their re-branded forms by third party product retailers or distributors.
- c. All products must be available to be purchased in a retail capacity (e.g. a supermarket, food store or food market) in branded retail packaging acknowledging the manufacturer and available for the consumer to take home, except where otherwise stipulated in section 4.
- d. Product must be sold commercially within the Australian retail market; foodservice/bulk products are ineligible.
- e. The product must have won a gold medal in the current year at one of the approved qualifying competitions during that year. See section 3 for details of approved competitions.
- f. Dairy products must be made in licensed and/or registered dairy premises. See food safety regulations below.
- g. Trial or experimental batches not yet on the market are ineligible.
- h. Meets criteria set out for the class that it is entered into, detailed in section 4.
- i. Cheese exhibits should be provided whole if possible.
- j. All exhibits entered will remain the property of the Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland (RNA).
- k. All products must clearly bear the exhibitors commercial label, including the products nutritional panel, ingredients list and the use by date.
- l. After entries have closed exhibitors will receive labels issued by the RNA via email, which must be adhered to each entry prior to delivery. Please adhere to packaging carton also.

\*Please Note: Whilst every effort has been made to ensure product eligibility is correct, the Chief Judge retains the right to transfer product to a more suitable class or withdraw product if deemed unsuitable for entry at any time.

## Food safety

All entries must comply with the requirements of the Australian Food Standard Code for both product and packaging and must include the products nutritional panel, ingredients list and a clearly stated use by date.

For information on the Australian Food Standard Code, go to:  
[foodstandards.gov.au/](http://foodstandards.gov.au/)

All food products are to be delivered via a suitable and appropriate Food Transport Vehicle. Food articles that require temperature control must be delivered in a vehicle that can maintain temperature at 5°C or below for fresh products or in accordance with the manufacturers' specifications.

## Eligibility of Award for Grand Champion

There will be two Grand Champions presented at the Australian Grand Dairy Awards:

1. Grand Champion Cheese (overall winner across all cheese classes).
2. Grand Champion Dairy Product (overall winner across dairy product classes i.e. yoghurt, ice cream, dairy gelato, milk, cream, and butter classes).

\* Products entered into Class 10 and 11 (Goat's, Sheep's, Buffalo and Camel Milk Products and Cheeses) are ineligible to win Grand Champion.

# Qualifying competitions

Please see below a list of our approved qualifying competitions:

## **State Royal Agricultural Shows**

- 2025 Sydney Royal Cheese and Dairy Produce Show
- 2025 Royal Queensland Cheese and Dairy Awards
- 2025 Perth Royal Dairy Awards
- 2025 Royal Adelaide Dairy Products Competition
- 2025 Royal Tasmanian Fine Food Awards (DIAA Tasmanian Dairy and Ice Cream Awards)
- 2025 Melbourne Royal Australian Food Awards

## **Dairy Industry Association of Australia Awards**

- 2025 Dairy Industry Association of Australia Dairy Product Competition (WA)
- 2025 Dairy Industry Association of Australia Dairy Product Competition (National and VIC)
- 2025 Dairy Industry Association of Australia Dairy Product Competition (QLD)
- 2025 Dairy Industry Association of Australia Dairy Product Competition (NSW)

\*Please note: Competitions which could not run or occurred outside of the Australian Grand Dairy Awards dates were unable to be considered this year.

# Class definitions and entry fees

Please use this table below as a guide for what category your product will be judged, if you are unsure, please contact our office for more information.

## Natural cheese class definitions

- Processed cheeses are NOT eligible.
- Class 10 and 11 are the only classes that non-cow's milk cheese can enter (goat, sheep and buffalo milk cheese).
- In the case where two or more categories of cheese are combined in manufacturing e.g. Washed Rind Tilsit, Blue Brie etc, the key predominant feature of the cheese defaults the cheese to that particular class.

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- Example 1 – A washed rind blue vein cheese in which the blue vein character is the dominant feature defaults the cheese to the Blue Cheese class.
- Example 2 – A cheese such as Raclette which has a washed rind surface that does not significantly change the semi hard body of the cheese will default to the Semi-Hard/ Eye class.

| Class  | Definition   |
|--|--|
| <b>Class 1 – Fresh unripened cheese</b>      | Cheese that is sold fresh and does not require maturation. Includes Cottage, Feta, Cream Cheese, Quark, Mascarpone, Neufchatel, Ricotta, Fresh Stretched Curd Cheeses. Labna is eligible but must not have oil or flavourings added. Cheese dips/spreads do not qualify. No flavoured products allowed. This includes oils, sweet or savoury flavours, herbs, and spices.  |
| <b>Class 2 – Fresh stretched curd cheese</b> | Includes all fresh, Stretched Curd Cheeses. No flavoured products allowed. This includes oils, sweet or savoury flavours, herbs and spices.  |
| <b>Class 3 – White mould cheese</b>          | Brie and Camembert types, including double and triple cream versions. Cheese that has as its principal surface growth a white mould, for example: <i>Penicillium candidum</i> . Cheese submitted in this class with a significant washed rind component which alters the cheese from being principally a white mould cheese is not permitted. White mould cheese with a washed rind character being a very minor component of the surface are permitted. |
| <b>Class 4 – Semi-hard/eye-cheese</b>        | Includes cheese made with eye formation such as Edam, Gouda and Swiss types. Includes other semi-hard cheese not included in other classes. The moisture levels must be between 39 –48%. No flavoured products allowed.  |
| <b>Class 5 – Cheddar cheese</b>              | Includes all Cheddar, Red Leicester, Double Gloucester, Cheshire. No flavoured products are eligible. Club cheese and bulk cheese is not eligible.   |
| <b>Class 6 – Hard Cheese</b>                 | Includes Parmesan, Romano and Pecorino types. Other hard cheese not included in other classes, with moisture levels below 35%. No flavoured products are eligible.   |
| <b>Class 7 – Blue Cheese</b>                 | Cheese where the principal ripening agent determining the character of the cheese is the blue mould <i>Penicillium Roqueforti</i> . This class may include cheeses with a washed surface or a white mould surface, however these should not be the principal determinants of the cheese character.   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Class 8 – Washed Rind/<br/>Mixed Rind</b>                                | Cheese where the principal determining factor in the flavour character is as a result of the washing of the surface with microbial ripening organisms. Also known as smear ripened cheese.  |
| <b>Class 9 – Flavoured Cheese</b>   | Flavoured cheeses made from cow's milk are eligible. Eligible products include pepato, natural cheeses marinated in oil, flavoured club cheese, cheese with added ingredients such as peppercorns, chilli, chives, garlic, onions, herbs, spices, dried fruits etc. Cheese sauces, dips and spreads are not eligible. |
| <b>Class 10 – Goat/ Sheep/<br/>Buffalo and Camel Milk<br/>Cheese</b>        | Eligible products include all-natural goat, sheep, and buffalo milk cheese. Marinated and flavoured cheeses are eligible.   |
| <b>Class 11 – Other Goat/<br/>Sheep/Buffalo and Camel<br/>Milk Products</b> | Eligible products include all-natural goat, sheep, buffalo and camel milks, yoghurts and other dairy products that are not covered in class 10.   |
| <b>Class 12 – Natural Yoghurt</b>   | Yoghurt type may be set or soured in, natural yoghurt. The term "Natural" refers to non-flavoured yoghurts. Yoghurt must not have any added sugar or sweeteners (natural or not) that are used to purposely enhance sweetness in natural yoghurt.   |
| <b>Class 13 – Flavoured<br/>Yoghurt</b>                                     | Yoghurts with flavourings, set or soured in, qualify. Natural yoghurt set on top or beneath fruit or flavourings qualify. Includes cultured dairy beverages, full fat, reduced fat and non-fat with a minimum 50% dairy content.  |
| <b>Class 14 – Ice Cream</b>   | Premium, regular, low fat, reduced fat ice cream and frozen yoghurts are eligible to enter. Novelty items are ineligible.   |
| <b>Class 15 – Novelty Ice<br/>Cream</b>                                     | Eligible products include ice creams on a stick or cone or novelties, including ice cream sandwiches.   |
| <b>Class 16 – Dairy Gelato</b>  | Solids must be dairy based for all Gelato entries. Novelty items are ineligible. Cannot be a dairy dessert e.g. tartufo.  |
| <b>Class 17 – Milk</b>  | Eligible products include all regular white cow milk including UHT. No modified, reduced fat or flavoured products are eligible. Milk may be homogenized or non-homogenized.  |
| <b>Class 18 – Modified milk</b>   | Eligible products include white cow milk with functional benefits including: fortification, modification, reduced fat, low fat and no fat.  |
| <b>Class 19 – Flavoured milk</b>  | Flavoured dairy drinks (non-cultured) may be regular, reduced fat, non-fat or modified.   |
| <b>Class 20 – Cream</b>   | Includes thickened cream, pure cream, sour cream, crème fraiche and their reduced fat versions. May be cultured or sweet cream. Fat percentage content not required to qualify but is for judge's information.  |
| <b>Class 21 – Butter</b>  | Butter, Flavoured Butter or Butter Blend. Butter, Flavoured Butters, and Dairy Blends are eligible. The products must contain a minimum of 80% fat.   |

*Please note: The Australian Grand Dairy Awards reserves the right to alter slightly or cancel classes if insufficient entries are eligible or submitted into the competition.*

*Manufacturers are responsible for the submission of products and the costs associated with their delivery (full delivery details will be mailed upon entry).*

**The entry fee for the Australian Grand Dairy competition is \$95 per entry, this is a necessary contribution to support the operation of the competition each year.**

# Entry timeline

All eligible manufacturers will be sent an invitation to enter by August 2025, once all details have been collated from qualifying state competitions. The invitation will prompt you to enter products which have won a gold medal at any of our approved qualifying shows.

Once we have received your entry, we will send you an entry kit with accompanying materials that are needed to send your products to the competition judging, including a delivery "how to", class and product ID labels which you will need to adhere to the products you are submitting for entry.

**Please note, products that do not arrive on delivery days will not be eligible to be judged.**

## Key entry dates

**Wednesday 3 September 2025** - Entries close for all Qualifying Competitions.

If your entries are not received by the 3 September from the eligible competitions your gold medal entries will be eligible for the 2026 Australian Grand Dairy Awards.

# Judging dates

Judging will take place at the  
RNA Showgrounds, Bowen Hills QLD 4006:

**Tuesday 21 October 2025**

First round of Ice Cream, Gelato and Sorbet.

**Wednesday 22 October 2025**

All Dairy Products.

**Friday 24 October 2025**

All cheese products.

## Elimination of Possible Bias

It is expected that the integrity and independence of the judging panel will be beyond question; however some competitors may question their product being judged by a commercial rival. To overcome possible bias the following measures will be adopted:

- a. The panel of a minimum of 10 judges will score the products, with the highest and lowest scoring points being eliminated.
- b. Products will be removed from any identifiable packaging prior to judging or have labels covered.

# How much product do I supply?

## Key criteria for sending cheese entries:

- Any one cheese may be submitted in one class only e.g. a cheese with both blue mould and washed rind may be submitted in one class only.
- Cheese must be submitted as offered for commercial sale and must be submitted in the package size that won at the qualifying competition.
- Yoghurt, butter, cream, milk, ice cream and gelato must be submitted as offered for commercial sale.
- Products that do not arrive on delivery days will not be eligible to be judged.

### Cheese Classes

| Pack Size/ Weight | Units Required |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Under 250g        | 4              |
| 250 - 1.9kg       | 2              |
| 2kg - 3kg         | 1              |
| Over 3kg          | 0.5-1          |

### Pack Size/ Weight

### Units Required

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Under 200ml | 6 |
| 200 – 500ml | 5 |
| Over 500ml  | 2 |
| Over 1L     | 1 |

### Pack Size/ Weight

### Units Required

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Under 200g | 2 |
| 200 – 600g | 2 |
| Over 600g  | 1 |

### Ice Cream, Dairy & Gelato Classes

| Pack Size/ Weight | Units Required |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Under 500ml       | 4              |
| 500ml – 2.5L      | 2              |
| Over 2.5L – 4L    | 2              |
| 4L+               | 1              |

### Milk, Specialty White Dairy Drink & Flavoured Dairy Drink Classes

| Pack Size/ Weight | Units Required |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Under 200ml       | 6              |
| 200 – 600ml       | 4              |
| Over 600ml        | 3              |

### Cream Classes

| Pack Size/ Weight | Units Required |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Under 200ml       | 4              |
| 200 – 600ml       | 3              |
| Over 600ml        | 2              |

## What will I receive in my entry kit?

Shortly after the close of entry date you will receive an email including all relevant details regarding product delivery instructions, product quantities and labels which are to be attached to each product being submitted. Each eligible product you have entered will receive labels to be attached, along with a guide on how to use the labels. When entries arrive, the Chief Steward will be marking each product off and organising the product into the appropriate class for judging, please ensure all labels are attached in order for your product to be judged.

## When can I share the good news?

The Australian Grand Dairy Award winners will be announced at a presentation event in Melbourne on 13 November 2025. Tickets will be available in September, and all entrants are warmly encouraged to join us for this special evening of celebration, connection, and industry recognition.

We invite you to share the journey, promoting your entry being sent off to judging, the anticipation of waiting for the news and of course the eventual outcome! Please reach out to [coordinator@granddairyawards.com.au](mailto:coordinator@granddairyawards.com.au).



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