



Kent County Agricultural Society

For immediate release

THE KENT COUNTY SHOW - A FESTIVAL OF FOOD & DRINK

A County Show isn't complete without food taking centre stage and the Kent County Show is no exception. There will be plenty of local produce from 'The Garden of England' when gates open on Friday 8th July for the three day celebration.

Over the past few years the team responsible for putting on the Kent County Show have taken notice of what visitors enjoy most about their day. Although only coming a close second to the stars of the Show; the animals, food is a top priority for attendees. Visitors can explore the large Food Marquee, Cheese and Wine Tent, a new Beer and Cider Festival and Produced in Kent area. The Show also boasts a large number of mobile street food caterers, the wonderful Why Farming Matters in Kent Cookery Theatre and a number of unusual local and international food producers that can be found all around the large Showground.

Lucy Hegarty Show Manager said, "Every year we look at what our visitors like to experience, and each year one of the most popular activities is to explore the food we offer. Last year we looked at expanding the catering court offer, and invited more local and artisan street food producers. This proved very popular and the number of people commenting on the wonderful selection and quality was heart-warming. This year we are incorporating a new 'Beer and Cider Festival'. Kent is such an important county when it comes to beer and cider, and it is only right that visitors to our Show can sample some of the best refreshments in the UK."

The Beer and Cider Festival is being co-organised by The Craft Beer Man, a business based in Orpington. Their intimate knowledge of the brewery and cider production in Kent means they are in a unique position to invite some of the finest brewers and cider makers for a truly Kentish experience.

Produced in Kent will have a large area dedicated to local artisan producers who not only sell their local goods, but are more than happy to chat to visitors about where they source ingredients, how they make the product and ultimately how wonderful it tastes. Cheese makers, meat producers and a host of homemade jams and chutneys will just be some of the wonderful products available to sample and buy.

Kent is well known for its fruit production and each year The Kent County Show hosts the National Cherry and Soft Fruit Show. Commercial growers from across the country enter fruit, which is judged by a panel of experts. Once judging has finished on the first day, visitors are welcome to visit the large marquee and see some of the best exhibits of fruit grown anywhere in the world. The standard of entries is outstanding, with the taste, colour and uniformity being critical to gain a high score from the exacting judges.

The competition fruit is available to purchase, apart from the winning entry of cherries which is always couriered to Buckingham Palace as a present for her Majesty The Queen.

The extensive 'Why Farming Matters in Kent' will show visitors the wonderful produce that Kent has to offer and will stage cookery demonstrations from local chefs. Farmers and growers will be on hand to talk about the advantages of buying local food, the wonderful varieties grown within in the UK and the role of the farmer in a modern world.

The Why Farmers Matters in Kent professional cookery theatre will also be home to the "Kent is Delicious' children's cookery competition, run by The Diocese of Canterbury and supported by the Kent County Agricultural Society.

Taking part will be primary school age children, who have been encouraged to cook with local, seasonal ingredients. Now in its fifth year, the competition has grown and grown, with many schools enjoying the opportunity the competition gives to develop their pupil's cookery, confidence and team building skills.

This year, the schools are being asked to create a trio of tasty after-school snacks, including one hot dish, which should be made using as many locally sourced, grown or produced ingredients as possible. Four finalist schools will then be chosen to cook their dishes at the Kent County Show on Friday 8th July where they will be judged by a panel of experienced local food and farming judges. Each finalist school will receive Kent Farmers' Market Association Vouchers, with the winners receiving free transport for Years 3 and 4 to the popular Living Land event at the Showground, hosted in May each year.

Rosie Gouldsworthy, Trade Stand Co-ordinator, said, "One of the most popular areas of the Kent County Show is the large International Food Marquee. We have over 40 stands from both around the world and here in Kent. Continental Cottage will have a range of authentic German salami's and Foxdenton Estate will be bringing their range of award winning English Gin liqueurs. Food Tent visitors will also be able to sample Nim's Fruit Crisps a local company producing healthy fruit snacks from their own factory in Kent. For visitors wanting a little more indulgence we have The Chocolate Hut, with gourmet brownies and American inspired tray bakes".

Elsewhere around the Showground, Thomas J Fudge, will be giving away samples of their tempting home baked products and BASC will be returning to showcase their game cooking demonstrations in the 'Country, Game and Canine' area. Shepherd Neame will have a number of pop-up pubs around the site and historic French Brewer, Leffe, will be have a small bar where they will be giving out samples and promoting the brand.

The online ticket system is now open to purchase discounted tickets for the 2016 Show. A family ticket will cost £43.20 in advance or £48 when bought at the gate. The family ticket entitles 2 adults and 2 children aged between 5 and 15 a full day entrance. Children under 5 go free and parking is free. Adult tickets are £19.80 in advance and £22 on the gate, a child ticket is £5.40 in advance and £6 on the gate. Multiday tickets cost £50 and are only available in advance.

The Kent County Show starts at 8am and stays open until 6pm although there is no rush to leave as some of the food stands stay open later. The Show has over 140 different activities, workshops, displays and competitions which run throughout the day and are often repeated daily.

For more information and images contact Lucy Hegarty, Show Manager

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Kent County Show – 8, 9, 10 July 2016

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