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Elevate Your Taste Buds at the Ekka

Visitors to the Brisbane Ekka will have the chance to take their taste buds on a regional tour when the country comes to the city this month.

The Granite Belt's food and wine producers are descending the 1000 metres and setting down a public challenge to "**elevate your taste buds**".

Their produce will be showcased on three stages each day during the Ekka: the first combines food and wine, the other two featuring the Granite Belt's iconic Strange Bird wines.

- Location 1 – Celebrity Kitchen - Woolworths Fresh Food Pavilion
- Location 2 - International Stage - International Food Village
- Location 3 - John Reid Wool Pavilion Stage - John Reid Pavilion

Location 1: This marks the first time the demonstration kitchen in the Woolworths Fresh Food Pavilion has been dedicated to one Queensland region. Celebrity kitchen hosts Alison Alexander and Peter Howard have been working with the Granite Belt's food and wine talent to showcase what their region has to offer each day at 1pm. The Granite Belt's line-up of cooking talent at 1pm each day includes:

- Thursday 7 & Friday 8: Queensland College of Wine Tourism's Andrew Simpson and Josh Dimitrios
- Saturday 9 & Sunday 10: Ian Henderson, LiraH (artisan vinegars)
- Monday 11 & Tuesday 12: Alec Piovesan, Cooks, Gluttons & Gourmet
- Wednesday 13 & Thursday 14: Nat & Michelle Burton, Bella Rosa's
- Friday 15: Sandra Miller, Sandmill
- Saturday 16: Michele Cozzi from Granite Belt Wine & Tourism

Complementing the food will be wines matched from Ballandean Estate, Granite Ridge, Jester Hill, Golden Grove, Sirromet and Summit Estate, all Granite Belt producers who are exhibiting at this year's Ekka.

Peter Howard said he and Alison Alexander were thrilled to promote a true Queensland food and wine producing region like the Granite Belt. "This is really what the Ekka is all about. We are proud of what we produce in Queensland and the Ekka is a terrific place to spread the word by putting the product into people's mouths."

Location 2: International Stage - in International Food Village hosted by Samantha Lovejoy

- Thursday 7th Aug 2:15 - 2:30pm (15 mins)
- Monday 11th Aug 2:15 - 2:30pm (15 mins)
- Tuesday 12th Aug 4:00 - 4:30pm (30 mins)
- Wednesday 13th Aug 2:15 - 2:30pm (15 mins)
- Thursday 14th Aug 2:15 - 2:30pm (15 mins)

Location 3: John Reid Wool Pavilion Stage - in John Reid Pavilion hosted by Leigh Muirhead

- Thursday 7th Aug 3:40 - 4:00pm (20 mins)
- Friday 8th Aug 3:40 - 4:00pm (20 mins)
- Tuesday 12th Aug 3:40 - 4:00pm (20 mins)
- Thursday 14th Aug 3:40 - 4:00pm (20 mins)
- Friday 15th Aug 3:40 - 4:00pm (20 mins)

The wine and food showcased at the Ekka is part of a promotion by Granite Belt Wine & Tourism for its new Spring campaign. Under the title Primavera: *Granite Belt Spring Style*, the campaign showcases the food, wine, natural and cultural attractions on the Granite Belt during September, October and November.

Activities during Primavera include a range of major events at wineries as well as more informal functions and self-paced tours and walks through the Queensland wine capital. **To learn more visit www.granitebeltwinecountry.com.au and click on the Primavera icon on the home page.**

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To learn more about Queensland's premier wine region visit www.granitebeltwinecountry.com.au or phone 1800 SO COOL and experience **ELEVATED TASTE!**

EDITOR'S NOTES

1. **Wine** The history of the Queensland wine industry dates back to the 1860s - and like all good wines it has developed with age. Of Queensland's current 1100 hectares planted to wine grapes, approximately half of these are on the Granite Belt. The Granite Belt is Queensland's premier wine region and one of ten wine regions in the state, of which only two have official GI status. The Granite Belt is home to approximately 50 wine cellar doors, the state's most awarded winemakers, plus the Queensland College of Wine Tourism - the first of its type in the world.
2. **Food** The Granite Belt is the only area in Queensland to produce apples: creating a gross value of approximately \$35m per annum (DPI&F 2006). Agriculture is the largest employer in the area, which boasts a vibrant and diverse horticultural sector. In this part of Queensland, the food production sector is expected to experience an average annual growth rate of approximately 8.0% per annum, despite the drought. Over the 10 years to 2017, growth in the sector is expected to result in a 12.7% increase in the regional economy's turnover (source Darling Downs & South West Queensland Centre of Enterprise and AEC Group 2007.)

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