

NEWS RELEASE

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Minnesota State Fair Wraps Up the 2023 Great Minnesota Get-Together

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St. Paul, Minn. – The 2023 Minnesota State Fair brought people together from across the state of Minnesota to celebrate. Labor Day attendance of 119,731 brought this year’s cumulative total to 1,835,826, making it the sixth best-attended fair ever. Visit mnstatefair.org/about-the-fair/attendance for 2023 attendance numbers.

“This was my first fair as CEO, and I was more awe-inspired by the dedication of so many than I could have imagined – the dedication of fair fans, staff, volunteers, vendors, livestock exhibitors, competitors, safety and security partners and so many others who went above and beyond to be a part of an amazing fair experience despite some challenging temperatures,” said the fair’s CEO Renee Alexander. “All of us across the state came together to celebrate one of the best Great Minnesota Get-Togethers.”

The Minnesota State Fair’s agricultural and creative competitions drew more than 33,000 entries this year, with competitors vying for a share of ribbons, trophies and special awards and nearly \$2 million in prize money. Competitions included events for livestock, horses, school projects, dog trials, baked and canned goods, fruit, vegetables, crafts, bee and honey products, fine arts, farm crops, flowers, butter, cheese and more.

The State Fair’s Fine Arts Exhibition featured the largest juried art show in Minnesota. The 2023 People’s Choice Award – Adults’ Choice went to “Everlasting,” an oil on canvas piece by Madelynn Hughes of Blaine, Minn. Brian Berle of Shakopee, Minn., won the Kids’ Choice Award for “Bulldog,” a welded metal sculpture.

The Purple Ribbon Auction on Saturday, Aug. 26, set 14 new record prices and raised more than \$1,220,000 for the 115 4-H members who participated in the auction. In addition, the auction awarded \$140,000 in scholarships to 58 4-H youth participants.

In open class livestock competitions, supreme champion titles were awarded to the best grand champions out of all beef cattle, dairy cattle, boer goats, dairy goats, breeding sheep and swine grand champions and were exhibited by:

- Open Class Supreme Champion Dairy Female: Janell Koch, Three JK-Koch Family, Winsted, Minn.
- Open Class Supreme Champion Dairy Junior Female: Brea Kieffer, Kiefland Holsteins, Utica, Minn.
- Open Class Supreme Champion Beef Female: Kylie Garner, Almond, Wis.
- Open Class Supreme Champion Beef Bull: Cale Jensen, Jensen Angus Farm, Plainfield, Iowa
- Open Class Supreme Champion Beef Cow Calf: Paige Gunsolus, Gunsolus Angus, Pemberton, Minn.
- Open Class Supreme Champion Boar: Mike Patterson, Country Girls Show Pigs, Kenyon, Minn.
- Open Class Supreme Champion Gilt: Lauren McCosh, Granite Falls, Minn.
- Open Class Supreme Champion Ram, Wool Breeds: Isaiah Bauck, Dew Drop Farms, New York Mills, Minn.
- Open Class Supreme Champion Ewe, Wool Breeds: Dylan Nohner, Pines End Natural Coloreds, Erwin, S.D.
- Open Class Supreme Champion Ram, Meat Breeds: Charles Bobendrier, Bobendrier Hampshires, Pipestone, Minn.
- Open Class Supreme Champion Ewe, Meat Breeds: Randy Dombek, Dombek Family, Ivanhoe, Minn.
- Open Class Supreme Champion Dairy Goat Herd: Mary Adamson, Marran, Milton, Wis.
- Open Class Supreme Champion Boer Goat: Alexa Quam, North Star Boer Goats, Kasson, Minn.

FFA Supreme Champion honors were also awarded:

Breeding Beef: Hannah Wetzel, Faribault FFA

Dairy: Evelyn Scheffler, Kenyon-Wanamingo FFA

Breeding Sheep: Elijah Geiser, New York Mills FFA

Breeding Swine: Noah Schaefer, Zumbrota-Mazeppa FFA

Supreme and Signature winners in the Minnesota State Fair Horse Show were:
Supreme Champion Stallion Draft Horse: Country Classic Clydesdales, Winthrop, Minn.
Supreme Champion Mare Draft Horse: Hanson Percherons, Minneapolis, Minn.
Supreme Champion Gelding Draft Horse: Ames Percheron Farm, Inc., Jordan, Minn.
Draft Horse Supreme Six-Horse Hitch: Ames Percheron Farm Inc., Jordan, Minn.
Draft Horse Supreme Cart Classic Series: Shining Stars Percherons, Altoona, Iowa
Youth Cart Classic Series: Kroy Steffan driving for Steffan Belgians, Plainview, Minn.
Signature Tandem Bareback Champion Team: Victoria Mailand, Isanti, Minn., and Lydia Jones, Isanti, Minn.
Signature Mounted Costume: Katelin Flack, Lake Crystal, Minn.
Four-In-Line Barrels Champion Team: Rancho Costa Plente Saddle Club (Jan Deile, Madison Deile, Ginny Olson and Stephanie Oachs)

The Douglas K. Baldwin Award for FFA livestock show participation and leadership went to Isabella Patterson of Kenyon-Wanamingo FFA.

Emma Kuball of Waterville, Minn., representing Rice County, was crowned the 70th Princess Kay of the Milky Way and will serve as the official goodwill ambassador for nearly 2,500 Minnesota dairy farm families this year.

The award-winning CHS Miracle of Birth Center welcomed 156 newborn animals, including 122 piglets, 10 calves and 24 lambs.

For competition results in Ag-Hort Bee, Creative Activities and K-12 competitions visit: mnstatefair.org/competitions/

Total Grandstand attendance was 110,543 (not including the free MSF Amateur Talent Contest Finals). The Black Keys: Dropout Boogie Tour with special guest The Velvetears (Aug. 24); THE CHICKS: World Tour 2023 with special guest Wild Rivers (Aug. 25); Keith Urban with special guest Lindsay Ell (Aug. 26), Boyz II Men and Chaka Khan with special guest NUNNABOVE (Aug. 27); Happy Together Tour 2023 featuring The Turtles, Little Anthony, Gary Puckett & The Union Gap, The Vogues, The Classics IV and The Cowsills (Aug. 28); Brandi Carlile with special guest Wynonna Judd (Aug. 29); Yung Gravy with special guest bbnø\$ (Aug. 30); DURAN DURAN: FUTURE PAST with special guests Bastille and Nile Rodgers & CHIC (Aug. 31); Jonas Brothers with special guest Lawrence (Sept. 1); The Current's Music On-A-Stick featuring The Hold Steady with special guests Bob Mould Band and Dillinger Four (Sept. 2); and Blippi: The Wonderful World Tour (Sept. 4).

Nearly 4,000 fans cheered on the best amateur talent in the state at the 50th Annual MSF Amateur Talent Contest Finals held Sept. 3, at the Grandstand. Contestants were competing for nearly \$20,000 in prize money. Winners were:

Open Division

First place: Roland Hawkins II of Minneapolis, Minn., vocal solo, "Nessun Dorma"

Second place: Emma Taggart of Blaine, Minn., piano solo, "Jazz Improv on Rachmaninoff's Prelude"

Third place: Cypher Side Dance School of St. Paul, Minn., dance group, "Hip Hop Mix"

Teen Division

First place: Caleb & Laci from Woodbury, Minn., dance duet, "How Do I Say Goodbye?"

Second place: CiCi Xie of Eden Prairie, Minn., piano solo, "Liszt Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2"

Third place: Charlie Taylor of Arden Hills, Minn., vocal solo with piano accompaniment, "Listen"

Preteen Division

First place: Sophie Taggart of Blaine, Minn., piano solo, "Doctor Gradus ad Parnassum"

Second place: Miriam Gilbertson of Chanhassen, Minn., vocal solo, "Show Yourself"

Third place: Teo Massa Winger of Mountain Lake, Minn., juggling, "Juggling Mix"

New additions and highlights for 2023 included: Sweet & Selfie Experience at the North End Event Center; Sensory-Friendly Morning at Mighty Midway and Kidway; Can Can Wonderland Mini Golf On-A-Stick; Pan-Latino Day at Dan Patch Park; Universally Designed Changing Restroom with Hoist by Momentum Refresh; 50th Annual Amateur Talent Contest; Naturalization Ceremonies & Oaths of Allegiance; Future Projections' Canopy/Calliope; Oink Booth – A New Look; Theater Day at Dan Patch Park: "Madagascar – A Musical Adventure JR."; Two new Kidway rides; Gate 9 on Como Avenue - Redeveloped; New competition themes; New livestock and agriculture competitions; History Walking Tour: 5 New Stops; Little Farm Hands Celebrates 20 Years; and more.

The State Fair's 2023 Best Awards recognized outstanding vendors, attractions and commercial exhibits. Winners were: Afro Deli, Aria Handmade, Bamboo Switch, Downdraft by Family Entertainment, Jammy Sammies by BRIM, Long-Range Basketball by Oren Concessions, The Minnesotan, Must be Ruff, O'Gara's at the Fair, Raiders by Wanderlust Amusements, Union Hmong Kitchen, and Visit Bemidji.

The 2023 fair featured 34 new foods: Al Taco Baba; Ba-Sants in Two Varieties – Everything Cream Cheese and Sweet Corn; Bacon-Wrapped Waffle Dog; Basil Hummus With Spicy Walnut Topping; Bee Sting Sundae; Birthday Cake Mini Donuts; Cheese Curd Stuffed Pizza Pretzel; Cheesecake Curds; Chicken Momo With Tomato Chutney; Cloud Coolers in Three Flavors - Summer Strawberry, Happy Huckleberry, and Flower Power; Crispy Lutefisk Steam Bun; Crunchy Balboa; Dill Pickle Cheese Curd Taco; Donut Delights; Fried Butternut Squash Ravioli; Fried Green Tomato Sandwich in Two Varieties - BLT and Vegetarian; Fruity Cereal Milk Biscuit; Galabao; Holey Hamloaf Breakfast Sandwich; Hot Honey Cheese Sticks; Irish Butter Ice Cream Over Brown Sugar Cinnamon Toast; Italian Duo Dunkers; Jam'nades in Two Varieties - Blueberry Mint and Strawberry Jalapeño; "Kind of a Big Dill" Pickle Lemonade; Lemonade Sorbet; Loaded Lobster Fries; Maui - Sota Sticky Ribs; Miami Mango Pickles; MinneCookieDough Pie; Paletas in Two Flavors - Dill Pickle Lemonade and Mini Donut; Pickle Fries; Smoked Beef Arepa; Sota-cuterie Board; and Walleye Fritter Pops

Seven new food vendors included: Afro Deli, Bandstand Concessions, Churros & Aguas Fresca, MomoDosa, Peachey's Baking Company, Tasti Whip and Wow Fudge.

The Minnesota State Fair is one of the largest and best-attended expositions in the world. Showcasing Minnesota's finest agriculture, art and industry, the Great Minnesota Get-Together is 12 Days of Fun Ending Labor Day. Follow along on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok @mnstatefair for year-round Minnesota State Fair updates. The 2024 Minnesota State Fair will run Aug. 22 through Labor Day, Sept. 2. Visit mnstatefair.org for more information.

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