

# MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

## NEWS RELEASE

Contacts: Lara Hughes • MSF Marketing & Communications Supervisor • Media Hotline: 651-288-4321 • Media Email: [media@mnstatefair.org](mailto:media@mnstatefair.org) • Media Twitter: @MSFmedia  
Amber Portner • Communications Manager at Christensen Farms • 507-794-8616 • [aportner@christensenfarms.com](mailto:aportner@christensenfarms.com)

### Minnesota State Fair's Swine Barn Is Named Robert A. Christensen Pavilion

February 5, 2019

St. Paul, Minn. – The Minnesota State Fair and State Fair Foundation honored an innovator and leader in the swine industry today at a luncheon by officially naming the fair's swine barn the Robert A. Christensen Pavilion.

Recognizing the critical role that an improved and updated swine facility at the State Fair would play in advancing the swine industry, Minnesota's own Christensen Farms recently made the lead gift to the State Fair Foundation's Swine Barn Improvement Project to honor the legacy of the late Bob Christensen. Christensen, a visionary master of the swine industry, was an early adopter of technologies to improve biosecurity and herd health, contract production arrangements, and artificial insemination and genetic advancements. Praised for striving to make improvements throughout the entire pork production chain, he built one of the largest hog production companies in the U.S. and one of the largest family-owned hog production companies in the world.

"The State Fair's historic swine barn has played a huge role in advancing the swine industry," said Jerry Hammer, State Fair general manager. "Generations of 4-H, FFA and open class exhibitors have shown their very best while joining with industry leaders to educate millions of fair visitors. We are grateful for Christensen Farms' continued partnership and dedication to the education and exhibition tradition at the swine barn."

"We are extremely honored to have the opportunity to make the lead gift to the Swine Barn Improvement Project in tribute to the late Bob Christensen and the Christensen Family," Glenn Stolt, Christensen Farms Chief Executive Officer commented. "The Swine Barn will be renamed the Robert A. Christensen Pavilion in the family's honor, to help build upon the legacy for generations to come, and ultimately demonstrate and re-emphasize the importance of Minnesota agriculture and its role in producing safe, nutritional and affordable food."

Over the last three years, the Minnesota State Fair has invested in significant capital improvements to the swine facility which was built more than 80 years ago. Improvements have included:

- Removed the annex on the barn's west side enabling the opening of windows and garage doors to improve air quality, sanitation and ventilation
- Built new wash racks outside the building that help with biosecurity
- Installed new windows and garage doors on the east side of the barn
- Replaced decades-old pens with moveable, easy-to-sanitize stalling in half of the building
- Purchased two new livestock scales

More work needs to be done, and moving forward, the State Fair Foundation will continue to raise funds to:

- Purchase and install new stalling in the remaining half of the building
- Purchase new show rings and expanded bleacher seating
- Create wider livestock entrances
- Improve lighting and ventilation
- Repair the brick exterior
- Upgrade the sound system, technology equipment and fire escape

#### About Robert A. Christensen and Christensen Farms:

Christensen Farms is one of the largest, family-owned pork producers in the United States, marketing approximately 3 million hogs per year. Headquartered in Sleepy Eye, Minn., the company operates throughout the Midwest with facilities in Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Illinois and South Dakota. Christensen Farms owns four feed mills, manages 143,000 sows on 44 farms, and oversees more than 350 nurseries and grow finish sites. The company employs nearly 1,000 people and maintains 1,500 contract partnerships.

The company is vertically integrated with a strong presence across the pork value chain – from farm to fork. Christensen Farms is the largest shareholder of Triumph Foods, LLC, a producer-owned primary pork processing plant in St. Joseph, MO. In turn, Triumph Foods own 50 percent of Daily's Premium Meats, a specialty pork processor of bacon and other premium pork products. Triumph Foods also holds a 50 percent partnership in Seaboard Triumph Foods, LLC of Sioux City, Iowa, a primary pork processing plant. Visit [christensenfarms.com](http://christensenfarms.com) for more information.

About the Minnesota State Fair Foundation: The Minnesota State Fair Foundation's nonprofit mission is to preserve and improve State Fair buildings, the fairgrounds and educational programs. Based on the historic 1911 Minnesota State Agricultural Society creed, the Foundation believes that the Minnesota State Fair is: “a mirror of Minnesota greatness, a school for her citizens, and a place where all are welcome, entertained and experience the results of the best thought and effort in all lines of endeavor.” Foundation funds benefit the fair in the areas of agricultural education, arts and culture, education, fairgrounds environment, and history and heritage. Visit [msffoundation.org](http://msffoundation.org) for more information.

About the Minnesota State Fair: The Minnesota State Fair is one of the largest and best-attended expositions in the world, attracting more than 2 million visitors annually. Showcasing Minnesota's finest agriculture, art and industry, the Great Minnesota Get-Together is always 12 Days of Fun Ending Labor Day. Visit [mnstatefair.org](http://mnstatefair.org) for more information. The 2019 Minnesota State Fair runs Aug. 22 - Labor Day, Sept. 2.

**-MSF-**