

# MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

## NEWS RELEASE

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### The 2020 Minnesota State Fair is Canceled

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St. Paul, Minn. – The Great Minnesota Get-Together will not be held in 2020. This was announced today following a meeting of the board of managers of the Minnesota State Agricultural Society, which governs the Minnesota State Fair. The event was scheduled for Aug. 27 through Labor Day, Sept. 7.

In his full statement below, State Fair General Manager Jerry Hammer says, “This isn't a difficult decision. It's the only decision.” Navigating health risks is the most important piece in a very complex situation. In addition, the State Fair's vast and strong network of partners and thousands of people are facing challenges that seriously hamper their ability to fully participate in the State Fair.

In a normal year, preparing for an event the scale and scope of the Minnesota State Fair is a year-round operation and a mammoth undertaking; in the midst of a global pandemic, it is impossible.

While the State Fair is one of many celebrations to go quiet this year, we are looking forward to 2021. “We’re extremely grateful for the understanding and support of everyone who makes the State Fair possible – especially the millions of fair fans from around the globe,” Hammer says. “Your team of State Fair pros is working hard to come back bigger, better, stronger and smarter in ‘21.” The Great Minnesota Get-Back-Together is Aug. 26 - Labor Day, Sept. 6, 2021.

The full statement from General Manager Jerry Hammer:

*We’ve been working hard and doing our very best with preparations for the 2020 State Fair. The picture was cloudy in March, but things have cleared up considerably since then. Right now is the time of year when things need to really take off if we’re going to have a fair, but we can see that we’re out of runway and can’t get off the ground. There will be no State Fair this year.*

*Like everything during the past few months, it’s complex and difficult. The State Fair is built on a vast network of agriculturists, vendors, artists, entertainers, competitors, amusement operators, sponsors, State Fair staff and thousands more who always give their very best. They are the pillars of the fair, and almost all have been affected during the past two months. Some are doing okay, but many have eroded including some who provide our biggest and best programs. It’s a challenging time for our determined young people in youth agriculture programs. More and more livestock exhibitors, entertainers and attraction operators are concerned with going on the road this summer. Some commercial exhibitors are past their deadlines for getting products, and now there’s even a question of adequate supplies for food vendors. And many are having trouble finding people who are willing to work in crowds.*

*This will have a big impact on thousands of businesses and the tens of thousands of people whose talent, dedication and love bring the fair to life. We understand exactly what they’re going through because we’re going through the same thing.*

*We’ll face those challenges because the most important thing is your health. No one knows what things will be like at fair time, but we need to make decisions now based on what we know today, not how we hope things will be in August. And right now, all of the science says that if things go well, we’ll still be walking very carefully in three months. That’s far from ready to run a mass gathering marathon like the State Fair. Can you see social distancing on a Park & Ride bus, or at the Bandshell? One at a time on the Giant Slide? Can you imagine standing six feet apart in line for cookies? Me neither.*

*The State Fair needs to be a full-on celebration. That's what makes it very special for so many of us, including young fair fan Addie who is 5 years old. She starts kindergarten this fall and she said, "I love the fair. There are a hundred things to do there. And it's my birthday. It's my favorite time of year."*

*Millions of people love the fair just like Addie, even if it's not their birthday. And that's exactly why we can't have a fair this year. We owe it to you now, and we owe it to posterity to give you the very best that we possibly can in a safe environment. By taking the tough road today, we guarantee that the fair's future remains hopeful and bright.*

*A month ago, my good friend Carlos wrote, "If there's no fair this year, it's because they love us and want to see EVERYone next year." He's right. That's the heart of the matter. We want to see you all for many years to come, when we can celebrate in true State Fair style.*

*So this isn't a difficult decision. It's the only decision. It's the right thing to do. As we go through this strange summer, we're extremely grateful for the understanding and support of everyone who makes the State Fair possible – especially the millions of fair fans from around the globe. The best thing we can all do right now is to help the world recover and heal. In the meantime, your team of State Fair pros is working hard to come back bigger, better, stronger and smarter in '21. We'll see you next year at the Great Minnesota Get-Back-Together.*

For additional information, please visit the Updates page on the fair's website, which includes a link to extensive questions and answers regarding the cancellation, as well as a video message from Jerry

Hammer: <https://www.mnstatefair.org/updates/>

2020 gate admission tickets will be valid for the 2021 fair. No action is required. Fair guests can bring their tickets with them and get them scanned at the gate any one day of the 2021 Minnesota State Fair, Aug. 26 - Sept. 6. All of the 2020 Grandstand shows have been postponed to 2021. Concert tickets will be valid for the 2021 date, and seat locations will remain the same. No action is required. New show dates will be announced in the coming weeks and months. Learn more about ticketing and refunds: <https://www.mnstatefair.org/answers/>

Since its inception, the fair has been held every year with only five exceptions: in 1861 and 1862 due to the Civil War and U.S.-Dakota War, in 1893 because of scheduling conflicts with the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, in 1945 due to federal government travel restrictions during World War II, and in 1946 due to a polio epidemic.

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 12 Days of Fun Ending Labor Day. Visit [mnstatefair.org](http://mnstatefair.org) for more information. The 2021 Minnesota State Fair runs Aug. 26 - Labor Day, Sept. 6.

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