

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

NEWS RELEASE

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Minnesota State Fair Announces New Attractions & Exhibits for 2023

July 25, 2023

St. Paul, Minn. – The Minnesota State Fair announces several new attractions, exhibits, vendors and programs for the 2023 Great Minnesota Get-Together. The following is a list of State Fair experiences being celebrated or debuting this year.

For Public Use: For more information on new attractions, visit: mnstatefair.org/new-this-year/attraction/

Photos for Media Use: A gallery of high-resolution, downloadable photos featuring a selection of the new attractions is available for media use at the following link: mnstatefair.org/get-involved/media/media-gallery-attraction/

Sweet & Selfie Experience

This fun, sugar-filled exhibit for all ages takes the fair guest on a journey through a fantastical world, where larger-than-life sweets (giant donuts, cookies, a candy mountain and more) create Instagram-worthy moments, and intriguing displays provide candy knowledge. It asks the questions: What's the best-selling Halloween candy? How many dried cocoa beans does it take to make one pound of chocolate? Peppermint is a hybrid of what two mints? Free with fair admission. Sweet & Selfie Experience was created by Stage Nine Design and is distributed by Exhibits Development Group.

Located in the North End Event Center, north of Murphy Avenue between Cooper and Cosgrove streets. Open daily, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. (8 p.m. Labor Day).

Sensory-Friendly Morning at Mighty Midway & Kidway

Sensory-Friendly Morning at Mighty Midway & Kidway is offered to better accommodate those with sensory sensitivities by reducing light brightness and sound volume on a fair day – Monday, Aug. 28. For more resources and information about attending the State Fair with sensory-processing challenges, please visit the Accessibility Guide website page at mnstatefair.org/general-info/accessibility-guide/#sensory.

Located at Mighty Midway & Kidway. Monday, Aug. 28: 9-11 a.m. at Kidway; 10 a.m. to noon at Mighty Midway.

Can Can Wonderland Mini Golf On-A-Stick

After its popular debut at the fair's Kickoff to Summer event in May, Can Can Wonderland Mini Golf On-A-Stick comes to the State Fair with fun for the whole family. This clever nine-hole course is made up entirely of famous State Fair landmarks – the Space Tower, Haunted House, DNR Park, Giant Slide, Ferris wheel and more. Cost: \$10 per person; children 3 and under are free with a paid adult

Located at the North End, north of Murphy Avenue and The Hangar, east of Underwood Street. Open daily, 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. (8 p.m. Labor Day; ticket sales close at 7:30 p.m.).

Pan-Latino Day at Dan Patch Park

La Raza 95.7 FM and 1400/1470 AM, Minnesota's top Latino radio stations, will host a festival of the diversity represented under the colorful panorama of Latin American cultures in Minnesota. Musicians, dancers and local artists, as well as organizations and community leaders, will be featured throughout the day.

Located at Dan Patch Park, south of the Grandstand and west of the Grandstand Ramp. Saturday, Sept. 2, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Universally Designed Changing Restroom with Hoist by Momentum Refresh

Momentum Refresh is the nation's first fully accessible, universally designed, mobile restroom equipped with a full-size adjustable changing table, a ceiling hoist and other amenities. By offering a safe and comfortable personal care space for those with mobility limitations and their caregivers, Momentum Refresh reduces barriers and promotes inclusivity, equity and understanding. In addition to a toilet, this groundbreaking vehicle is equipped with a height-adjustable universal changing table, an overhead ceiling hoist to facilitate easier transfer from wheelchair to changing table or toilet, a height-adjustable sink, enough room for an individual and caregiver, and a team of trained professionals available to inform guests about the amenities and to maintain and clean the space.

Located on the east side of Cosgrove Street, north of Lee Avenue. Open daily, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. (8 p.m. on Labor Day).

50th Annual Amateur Talent Contest

More than 17,000 singers, dancers, jugglers, acrobats, instrumentalists and others have auditioned over the past five decades for this popular showcase of Minnesota's most talented. This year's semifinals are Aug. 24-Sept. 2 at the Leinie Lodge Bandshell and the finals are Sept. 3 at the Grandstand – a free event. Performers are competing for a share of more than \$20,000 in cash prizes.

Located at the Leinie Lodge Bandshell Aug. 24-Sept. 2 (6 p.m.) and at the Grandstand Sept. 3 (7:30 p.m.).

Naturalization Ceremonies & Oaths of Allegiance

In the spirit of the Great Minnesota Get-Together, more than 50 citizenship candidates from more than a dozen countries will take the Oath of Allegiance – the final step in the naturalization process – and officially become citizens of the United States. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota will lead these special naturalization ceremonies at the State Fair.

Located at International Bazaar Stage. Monday & Wednesday, Aug. 28 & 30, 9 a.m.

Future Projections' Canopy/Calliope

This new imaginative and immersive public art installation presented by Future Projections is a fantasia of imagery and sound. It is designed to delight and enchant the senses through "light painting" and photo collages that light up the ground below and the leafy canopy above. Future Projections is a live animation and projection art company founded by Minneapolis visual and performing artist Paul Herwig. Free with fair admission.

Located just south of the Grandstand, east of the Grandstand Ramp. Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday, Aug. 28, 29 & 30, at dusk or approximately 9 p.m. for 1 hour (weather permitting).

Oink Booth – A New Look

The iconic Oink Booth has a new look and is designed to reflect a real modern-day pig barn. Thanks to a partnership with Minnesota Pork, the newly constructed Oink Booth has expanded with more educational games and interactive activities about pigs in Minnesota. Oink Booth favorites – including the famous pig ear headbands, the sow and piglets exhibit and the ever-popular largest boar – will continue to be a part of the exhibit.

Located at the Robert A. Christensen Pavilion, northeast corner. Check the website for hours.

Theater Day at Dan Patch Park: Madagascar – A Musical Adventure JR.

Everyone's favorite zoo crew sets out on a wild adventure in this upbeat musical based on the DreamWorks hit movie "Madagascar." ETC Productions, in partnership with Apple Valley High School, brings together performers and technicians ages 15-19, from throughout the Twin Cities, to present this lively one-hour show. Their stop is part of a 44-performance summer tour. Free with fair admission.

Located at Dan Patch Park, south of the Grandstand and west of the Grandstand Ramp. Performances are Wednesday, Aug. 30, at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. (1 hour); 1 p.m. performance is audio-described.

Two New Kidway Rides

Two new rides debut at the fair this year.

- Beach Shack: This adventurous ride spins, dips and tilts in a bright beach shack.
- Pump & Jump: Little tykes get a big adrenaline rush as they climb and drop and climb and drop.

Located at Kidway.

Gate 9 on Como Avenue – Redeveloped

Fair guests who enter the Great Minnesota Get-Together on the south side will experience a new welcoming Gate 9 area – wider, more accessible entrance and exit gates; expanded bike lot; added sidewalks; spacious wheelchair, scooter and stroller rental area; iconic OnlyInMN photo op; and benches and art sculptures. The popular free bike lot formerly located at Snelling and Como avenues will move west to the Gate 9 area and become larger to accommodate more bikes. The State Fairgrounds Ticket Office will continue to sell tickets at this gate area. Gate 9 will also continue to be the south drop-off and pick-up stop for Metro Mobility, taxis and the free Oscar Johnson Arena Park & Ride lot exclusively for those with valid disability parking certificates or license plates and their companions. The plaza area just inside Gate 9 will be the future home of a unique and stunning public art installation to recognize donors and greet fair guests. Stay tuned for details in the coming months; support provided by the Minnesota State Fair Foundation. *Located on Como Avenue, just east of the Lee & Rose Warner Coliseum.*

New Competition Themes

While competitions have been a part of the State Fair since the beginning, each year new themes capture the creativity, humor and talent of Minnesotans in a variety of categories from quilts on-a-stick and decorated cakes to flower shows and landscape design.

- Quilt On-A-Stick – “The Fair at First Light”: Quilters’ imaginations are captured on an 8” x 9” piece with a paint-stirring stick inserted.*
- Cake Decorating – “Roadside Attractions”: Let a favorite road trip be the inspiration and include a photo with the entry.*
- Decorated Cookies – “Shoes”: How will bakers interpret this theme on cookies no bigger than 4” in diameter?*
- Decorated Cupcakes – “Pets”: Paying homage to our best friends couldn’t be sweeter than on a cupcake!*
- Minnesota State Fair Flower Show – “Minnesota Loves Summer”: Our love affair with the seasons will be in full bloom Aug. 28 and 29.+
- Minnesota State Florists Association’s Floralpalooza – “Happily Ever After”: Floral designers and retail florists bring their “once upon a time” visions to life in the center rotunda of the Ag-Hort Building in a floral extravaganza that never ceases to “wow!”+
- FFA Landscape Design and Construction – “Landscape for Color”: Students from Minnesota FFA chapters construct up to 10 sites, each 14’ x 14’, using colorful plant materials and are judged on design, construction, correctly labeled plants, accessories/lighting and more.

*Entries in these categories will be on display in the *Creative Activities Building, the +Agriculture Horticulture Building or outside the ^CHS Miracle of Birth Center. Hours vary.*

New Livestock and Agriculture Competitions

This year’s State Fair will see the addition of new livestock and agriculture competitions:

- FFA Agricultural Mechanics Competitions: In the Small Engines Build Off timed contest, students in grades 10-12 must disassemble and reassemble a small engine (Friday, Sept. 1, 5 p.m.). The Wood Construction Build Off features two-person teams who build a wood bench in two hours and are judged on technique, craftsmanship, joints, fasteners and more (Saturday, Sept. 2 in two-hour slots.). In the Weld Off, individuals are given 90 minutes to complete a metal campfire grate and are judged on technique, craftsmanship, welds, how closely the components match the plan, and more (Sunday, Sept. 3 in 90-minute slots).
- FFA Vegetable & Potato: Open to FFA students in grades 7-12, new competition categories include beans, beets, eggplant, gourds, muskmelon, winter squash, tomatoes, miniature pumpkins, cabbage, kohlrabi, kale, turnips, horseradish, and white, russet and red potatoes, just to name a few. Entries will be displayed in the Agriculture Horticulture Building on Saturday & Sunday, Sept. 2 & 3.
- FFA Poultry: Chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys and other poultry breeds will be judged Saturday, Sept. 2, at 3 p.m., in the Poultry Barn.
- FFA Rabbits: Dozens of small and large rabbit breeds will be judged Sunday, Sept. 3, at 9 a.m., in the Poultry Barn.
- Open Class Sheep – All Other Hair Breeds: This exhibition features purebred pedigreed animals – such as the Dorper, White Dorper and Katahdin breeds – that do not qualify under other breed classifications. Judging takes place on Friday, Aug. 25, at 3 p.m., in the Sheep Barn.

Located in the Agriculture Horticulture Building and the Poultry and Sheep barns. Dates and times vary for specific competitions and exhibitions.

History Walking Tour: 5 New Stops

The History Walking Tour, a two-mile, 12-stop self-guided exploration of some of the State Fair's most historically significant spots, introduces five new additions to the tour: Bandshell, Farm Boys' Camp, Fairborne, Judging Arena (Compeer), and the Parade. The History Walking Tour is presented by the Minnesota State Fair Foundation and the Minnesota Historical Society. Brochures can be picked up at any tour stop on the fairgrounds, outside the J.V. Bailey House or at the History & Heritage Center. Free with fair admission. The new stops are:

- **Bandshell:** Small stages inside buildings were the norm before the 1960s. In 1971 the Bandshell was constructed – the largest of the State Fair stages offering free entertainment. In 2023, among dozens of shows on the Bandshell stage, catch the 50th Annual Amateur Talent Contest semifinals.
- **Farm Boys' Camp:** In 1912, farm boys submitted an essay to earn a trip to the State Fair. Girls were included in 1916. Renamed Youth Camp in 1975, it continued through 1993 and was turned into a scholarship program in 1994. This year, 22 scholarships of \$1,000 will be awarded to youth from greater Minnesota or those enrolled in an agriculture program.
- **Fairborne:** Happy 40th birthday, Fairborne! In 1983, Fairborne became the State Fair's second gopher mascot, joining Fairchild, the official mascot since 1966.
- **Judging Arena:** Added to the livestock area in 1964, this 15,000-square-foot structure was replaced in 2012 with a larger arena now known as Compeer Arena.
- **Parade:** Part of the State Fair since the beginning, parades historically were most often held at the Grandstand racetrack and featured industrial fair vendors or prize-winning livestock.

Located throughout the fairgrounds.

Little Farm Hands Celebrates 20 Years

Now in its 20th year, Little Farm Hands welcomes more than 150,000 guests each year. This popular exhibit is where little fair fans become farmhands and experience the agricultural process through activities especially for ages 3-10. The journey starts with putting on an apron to fire up the imagination and ends with using "earnings" from working on the farm to purchase an item at the grocery store. Free with fair admission. Kemps Little Farm Hands is sponsored by Kemps (Title Sponsor and Dairy Barn), Cub (Grocery Store), Cargill (Tractor Shed) and Minnesota Corn (Grain Bin). Additional support from Edling Farms (Potatoes) and Minnesota Apple Growers Association (Apples).

Located south of Lee Avenue on the west side of Cooper Street. Open daily, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Mighty Midway & Kidway Fun Card

New this year - Mighty Midway & Kidway ride & game tickets will be loaded onto a Fun Card rather than given as paper tickets. Every time you ride a ride or play a game, you'll scan your card and the appropriate number of tickets will be deducted from the card. If you'd like to add tickets to the card, stop by a ticket booth or self-serve kiosk at Mighty Midway or Kidway.

Located at Mighty Midway & Kidway.

Fair Food News

New food news:

- **The Perfect Pickle:** Fans of The Perfect Pickle, located on Liggett Street on the west end of the fairgrounds, will now be able to get their pickle fix at a brand-new northerly second location – on the west side of Underwood Street across from Lee Avenue. The Perfect Pickle's menu at both locations includes deep-fried pickles, pickles on-a-stick and soda.
- **SPAM:** SPAM returns after a short absence. This famed booth will be located under the Grandstand Ramp and will serve SPAM Burgers, SPAM Curds, SPAM Breakfast Sandwich, 15 flavors of canned SPAM, soda and bottled water.
- **Bandstand Concessions:** Grandstand concertgoers can treat themselves to a wide variety of brews, beverages, sandwiches, hot and cold snacks, and other amenities and fan experience opportunities at brand-new Grandstand concessionaire Bandstand Concessions. Order food and sips at five new structures on the plaza level and buy packaged food and drinks on the second floor of the Grandstand, and beer on the third floor. (Separate concert ticket required.)

Located throughout the fairgrounds.

PaintCare Promotional Exhibit

From buying and storing paint to using it efficiently, giving away unused paint and recycling the rest, PaintCare's exhibit showcases that need-to-know info. Play a fun game, meet costumed characters and more. Since 2014, PaintCare has collected 8.3 million gallons in our state alone.

Located at the southeast corner of Wright Avenue and Underwood Street. Friday, Aug. 25 only, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Sponsors for a Day: Mall of America (Aug. 24), Now Hiring (Aug. 29) and Nonprofit Showcase (Aug. 30)

Activities and information presented by companies and organizations with local connections.

- Mall of America (Aug. 24): Stop by for fun activities and prize giveaways.
- Metro-wide 911 Centers (Aug. 29): Explore the exciting, busy and fulfilling field of being a 911 telecommunicator. 911 professionals answer questions about what happens when you call 911 and the technology used to send help.
- Northstar Bus Lines (Aug. 29): Help transport students to school safely. Offering training, flexible scheduling, competitive pay and a sign-on bonus. Also hiring van drivers, paras and mechanics.
- Transportation Security Administration (Aug. 29): TSA is hiring full-time and part-time transportation security officers at MSP Airport and airports throughout the state. Learn about job opportunities and building a career with TSA.
- AuSM (Aug. 30): The Autism Society of Minnesota (AuSM) enhances the lives of individuals and families affected by autism with a fundamental commitment to advocacy, education, support, collaboration and community building.
- Can Do Canines (Aug. 30): Can Do Canines is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities by creating mutually beneficial partnerships with specially trained dogs. Enter to win a play session with puppies!
- Minnesota Alliance With Youth (Aug. 30): The Alliance works in partnership with youth, through initiatives including Minnesota Youth Council and AmeriCorps, to ensure that all young people have equitable educational opportunities that foster their individual assets, honor their voices and prepare them to reach their goals.
- People for PSEO (Aug. 30): Through policymaking, outreach and resources, this youth-led nonprofit promotes, defends and expands opportunities for high school students through the PSEO program.
- Save the Boundary Waters (Aug. 30): This ever-growing community works in a non-partisan way to advocate for the protection of wilderness and wild places, especially the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and the greater Quetico-Superior Ecosystem.

Located on the corner of Wright Avenue and Underwood Street.

In the Community – 12 New Vendors

Stop by these new booths – and dozens more at the fair – to learn more about their work: Air Force Recruiting, Animal Humane Society, Bethany Global University, Cultural Destinations, Medtronic, Minnesota Center for Prion Research and Outreach, Minnesota Department of Public Safety Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, Minnesota Genealogical Society, Octapharma Plasma Inc., Sendoff-Funerals Reimagined, Visting Angels and WDGY Radio.

Located throughout the fairgrounds.

Unique Gifts & Specialty Items – 10 New Vendors

Stop by these new booths, plus hundreds more, for an amazing array of unique, hard-to-find gifts:

Bobby & Steve's Auto World, The Funky Zebra Boutique, Held Companies, Lip Esteem, Origami by Kannika, Resurrected Journals, Rugged History Beard Co., Rust and Rose Boutique, Someplace Special and Stuff-n-Luv. Located throughout the fairgrounds.

Threads & Accessories – 6 New Vendors

Stop by these new booths for apparel and accessories: Always Northern Permanent Jewelry, Earth Clay, Fan Girl MN, Leon Leather Co. Inc., Pria Handmade Accessories and The Vermont Flannel Company.

Located throughout the fairgrounds.

Foodie Fun – 6 New Vendors

Stop by these new booths to shop for the foodie in your life: Black Tie Caramel, Classic City Candy Company, Hepp's Salt Co., K-Mama Sauce, Riffs Smokehouse and Whiskey in a Week.

Located throughout the fairgrounds.

Handcrafted Home & Garden Décor – 5 New Vendors

Stop by these new booths to shop for your home and garden: Jordan's Jungle Inc.; LoneTree Designs; Naomi Events; Roots, Shoots & Leaves; and Swinford Designs.

Located throughout the fairgrounds.

Sporting Goods & Pet Products – 2 New Vendors

Stop by these new booths: Bullseye Bow and Rufflect Dog Bandanas.

Located throughout the fairgrounds.

Home Solutions – 4 New Vendors

Stop by these new booths for home improvement help:

Leaf Home Water Solutions, Mickman Brothers Inc., Pump and Meter Inc. and Tuff Shed.

Located throughout the fairgrounds.

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, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok @mnstatefair for year-round Minnesota State Fair updates. The 2023 Minnesota State Fair will run Aug. 24 through Labor Day, Sept. 4. Visit mnstatefair.org for more information.

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