

Solano County Fair – July 27-31, 2016
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Solano County Fair Achieves Attendance and Revenue Increases for Second Year in a Row

Solano County, CA – “Play It Again, Solano!” proved to be the right theme as well as the right forecast for the 2016 Solano County Fair as the Fair repeated last year’s positive trend of increased attendance and revenue during its five day run from July 27-31. Total attendance for 2016 was 40,455, a 2.3% increase over the previous year and a cumulative increase of 4.3% over the last two years.

In addition to increased attendance, overall Fair revenues mirrored the attendance and were also up by a modest 2%, reflecting positive gains in paid attendance, food and beverage concessions, and carnival rides and games.

“The numbers show that the Solano community took our theme to heart,” said Fairgrounds General Manager Stephen Pierce in reference to the 2016 Fair theme of *Play It Again, Solano!* “People came back to support the attractions we added last year and the new ones we introduced this year.”

Community involvement in the Fair continues to be strong in multiple areas including the Blue Ribbon Competitions. Overall entries were up 6.8% with 2,379 entries and the total number of exhibitors was up 7.2% with 522 participants. In particular, Fine Arts (up 11.3%) and Youth Solano Living (up 10.2%) enjoyed a healthy increase in participation while Floriculture (down 4.8%) and Adult Solano Living (down 1.9%) had slight decreases.

The total number of market animals entered in the Livestock Competitions and sold at the auction on Saturday, July 30 was also up this year with 157 lots compared to 148 lots in 2015. This year the auction saw more small animal entries though and less large animal entries than last year. This may be the result of the lower cost and less risk to raise small animals, as well as the ability for the competitors to raise small animals in more urban areas that may not be zoned for large livestock. Despite the decrease in animal tonnage, the Junior Livestock Auction raised \$114,514, equating to 99.3% of the 2015 total.

“The Livestock and Blue Ribbon Competitions are the heart of the Fair and keep us grounded in the traditions of our agricultural roots. They continue to be an important part of the Fair’s annual celebration of what makes Solano County a great place to live, learn, work and play,” stated Solano County Fair Association President Marilyn Royse.



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The Fair's continued growth in attendance is being contributed to an increase in the diversity of entertainment and activities as well as an expansion in community involvement including:

- adding a Gospel Rocks Solano! event on opening day of the Fair featuring national, regional and local gospel artists and groups;
- partnering with existing successful events to incorporate their events into the Fair, including Vallejo Together's Youth Expo and Parent Summit, Vallejo PAL's annual amateur boxing tournament, and No Limit Fighting of Napa's amateur mixed martial arts tournament featuring two title fights;
- expanding the appearance of Vallejo's Mad Hatter Parade to a night-time route on Friday, Saturday and Sunday;
- relocating the Cultural Pavilion to be a centerpiece of the Family Fun Zone and expanding the number of cultural groups represented in exhibits and on the stage;
- continuing the Healthy Solano Health Fair in a new location to provide information and services from a variety of local healthcare organizations; and
- adding a video tribute to the movies filmed all or in part in Solano County.

It is anticipated that the Solano County Fair will be scheduled next year during the last week of July or first week of August for its traditional Wednesday through Sunday run. The 2017 dates will be finalized in conjunction with fair dates throughout the state and approved by the Solano County Fair Board of Directors in the coming months. The focus will continue to be on being the Fair of, by and for Solano County, and on being one of the best entertainment values of the summer.

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