

BUILDING A NEW EQUINE AND LIVESTOCK ARENA MINNESOTA STATE FAIRGROUNDS

Presented by the Minnesota State Fair Foundation

With contributions at many levels, the Minnesota State Fair Foundation 501(c)(3) and the Minnesota State Fair intend to build a new arena for equine and livestock shows on the fairgrounds. Named AgStar Arena, with generous leadership support from Agstar Financial Services, this new agricultural facility is scheduled for construction starting in October 2011. It will be used by 4-H, FFA and State Fair open class participants and be available for extended seasonal use by equine and livestock exhibitions.

We are asking you to consider making a contribution, ideally with a commitment in 2011 that may include a multi-year pledge through 2013. Recognition will be given at all levels including entryways that can be named, and a Star Plaza with recognition pavers.

Project Background

Built in the 1960s, the existing Judging Arena and Stall Annex have been on the Minnesota State Fair's capital improvement list for nearly a decade. Both the Agricultural Society Board of Managers and the Minnesota State Fair Foundation Board of Directors have confirmed that it is time to bring this project to the top of the capital improvement list.

The current facility is in dire need of replacement. This open-sided, wooden structure has withstood several rounds of storm damage with the fair annually investing in repairs and maintenance to keep the facility usable. In addition, the complex no longer meets necessary show requirements for horses, cattle, llamas, goats and sheep. The State Fair has growing and dynamic programs in 4-H, FFA, open class producers and breeders. With the new facility, we anticipate extended use throughout the year for equine and livestock exhibitions.

Description of New Arena

Replacing the existing facility with a new arena continues the overall improvements of the agricultural area of the fairgrounds. Use of this new facility will complement activities held at the State Fair's Lee and Rose Warner Coliseum, the Horse Barn and the Cattle Barn, where thousands of exhibitors participate, representing dozens of livestock breeds and equine disciplines such as Arabian, Morgan, Saddle bred and Draft horses.

Project plans were developed with input from program participants, State Fair leadership, TKDA Architects and Engineers and Lester Buildings Systems. Features include:

- Overall 27,000 square foot structure with an arena floor of layered footing of sand/clay mix with clay base
- Multiple exits and entrances for exhibitors, animals and the public for improved access
- Extended seasonal use for horse shows, animal clinics, cattle sales and other events
- Enclosed, insulated structure with a combination of wood, metal and brick
- Exhibitor features that include wash racks and portable, high-quality stalls
- Spectator area with up to 600 seats

- Expansive 15,000 square foot show ring for flexible show schedules, meeting desired requirements of exhibitors from multiple disciplines
- Greenery and landscaping, including a new perimeter re-route to improve access, safety and traffic flow for vehicle and public traffic
- Enhanced lighting, public hand wash stations and fire suppression system
- Desired additional enhancement, contingent upon funding, include architectural details, a new sound and audio visual system, bleachers and signage boards.

Arena Programs

Agricultural education is at the very heart of the State Fair where with 1.8 million State Fair visitors such education is at the forefront. Foundation projects revolve around educational programming. For example, the new arena is where thousands of 4-H and FFA youth gain leadership skills and showcase their accomplishments. It is also where consumers see and hear about the life of livestock producers and equine exhibitions. Having quality facilities for the public, the producer and animals is important to providing effective agricultural education.

Campaign Plan

The Campaign for a new arena is being coordinated by the State Fair Foundation. The project cost is estimated at \$3 million. Starting with leadership gifts, the Campaign will also be proposed to a broad base of potential donors giving at all levels including livestock associations, equine associations, individuals and companies. Some in-kind contributions will also be considered. Pledges may be made over several years through 2013.

Recognition will be given within the following structure:

- Leadership gift from AgStar Financial Services, naming the facility AgStar Arena
- Top tier contributors (\$100,000 +) with several entryways available for name and logo
- Tier three contributors (\$10,000+) with recognition on exterior and interior donor walls, including logos
- Tier four contributors (\$1,000+) with recognition on donor walls
- Gifts starting at \$300 will be recognized in Star Plaza with a tribute paver
- All gifts recognized in the Foundation Annual Report and on the Bailey House donor wall in the year that the gift was given

Recognition is for a minimum of five years, with recognition including all that is noted at and below the gift amounts. Other additional recognition opportunities may arise at major gift levels.

Our History

The Minnesota State Fair has a history that is older than the state of Minnesota. In 1885, the fair came to the current location in the heart of the Twin Cities. Today, the organization is responsible for State Fair program and capital improvements, including the maintenance of 144 permanent structures on the 320-acre fairgrounds. In addition to the successful 12-day State Fair, more than 100 other organizations use the fairgrounds throughout the year. The State Fair is independently funded, receiving no government appropriations.

Just a decade ago, leadership formed the Minnesota State Fair Foundation as the nonprofit fundraising entity to help the State Fair keep pace with a growing need to make capital and program improvements. To date, the foundation has granted more than \$4 million to the State Fair including funds for the CHS Miracle of Birth Center, the Lee and Rose Warner Coliseum, the J.V. Bailey House and the Moo Booth. In looking ahead, plans call for completing the new arena and launching endowment funds for agricultural education, arts and culture, environmental projects and history and heritage.

The Arena Project and Campaign are within the mission of the Minnesota State Fair Foundation to improve State Fair buildings, grounds and educational experiences, specifically in agriculture.

Your Contact

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