



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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Commissioner Andy Gipson Announces Details of the 161st Mississippi State Fair

JACKSON, Miss. — Today, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson announced the details of the 161st Mississippi State Fair, which runs Wednesday, October 7, through Saturday, October 18. The Fair, an agricultural event featuring Mississippi's youth livestock exhibitions, will officially begin with a ceremonial ribbon cutting at 5:00 p.m. on October 7.

"The show must go on," said Commissioner Gipson, "but for the show to go on in 2020, we're going to have to do it social distance style. The State Fair is a tradition for many families, and we have gone to great lengths to make sure this year's fair provides fun-filled activities, while keeping our visitors safe. We are implementing CDC guidelines by limiting the number of attendees as well as observing mask and social distancing requirements. I am looking forward to welcoming everyone to this year's 161st Mississippi State Fair."

It is advised that any guests who feel unwell or may have underlying medical conditions stay home. The entire complex has limited the number of guests, and each indoor building has posted building limits. Face masks will be required for entry to the Mississippi State Fairgrounds and social distancing is encouraged in accordance with state guidelines for outdoor events. In addition, fair rides will be sanitized between each ride and hand sanitizing stations will be available throughout the grounds.

"The safety and security of our guests is our top priority, and our staff has worked tirelessly to implement safety precautions with that goal in mind," said Michael Lasseter, Acting Director of the Mississippi Fairgrounds Complex. "The Mississippi State Fair is a family event that we all look forward to each year. I remember coming to the State Fair myself as a young man and the wonderful memories that I made with my family. I am excited and grateful to give that same opportunity to other families."

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS TO NOTE:

- First Responders Appreciation Day will be held on Wednesday, October 7, and as a special thank you, the Mississippi Fairgrounds will be offering free admission to all law enforcement officers, first responders, firefighters, healthcare workers and medical professionals. Identification will be required at the gate.
- For the first time ever, the Fairgrounds will host the Genuine MS® Store, which will be open to the public and exhibit a variety of Genuine MS® items for purchase.
- Musical acts performing on the Budweiser Stage located on the Midway include Mustache the Band, Roots and Boots 90's Electric Throwdown with Sammy Kershaw, Aaron Tippin and Collin

Raye, Epic Funk Brass Band, Dirt Road Cadillac, Paul Porter and the Christianaires, U.S., Great White/Slaughter, Big Blues Explosion, Sean Kingston, Southern Komfort Brass Band, 601 Live and the Topher Brown Band. In addition, local acts will perform at the State Fair on the Trustmark Stage located on the Midway. All musical entertainment is free with regular fair admission.

- The 2020 State Fair will include the annual Horse, Mule and Pony Pulls in the Kirk Fordice Equine Center. The Horse Pull will begin at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 17, with the Mule Pull immediately following. The Pony Pull will begin at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 18.
- All American Day will be held on Wednesday, October 14, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and will include musical entertainment by Jared Vardaman and Ed Meadows, as well as a speech by Commissioner Andy Gipson. As a special thank you to the military for their service, the Mississippi Fairgrounds will be offering free admission on All American Day to any active military. Identification will be required at the gate.
- This year, a new feature of the mile-long Midway will be the Timberworks Lumberjack Show featuring axe throwing, underhand and chopping, cross cut and hot sawing along with chainsaw carving. The Lumberjack Shows will take place daily throughout the duration of the Fair.
- Daily activities will take place throughout the 105 acres of the Mississippi Fairgrounds Complex. Children, and adults alike, will enjoy the Farm Bureau Petting Zoo Area and Pig Races, the 4-H and FFA Livestock Shows and will be wowed by the circus performers of the Great American Thrill Show brought to you by Clarion Ledger located at the Kid Zone. LOCALiQ's Fetch-N-Fish will perform and dozens of vendors and exhibits will be available to the public, including an arts & crafts competition, food preservation, floral exhibits and an antique tractor show.

Commissioner Gipson continued, "The Fair is essentially an outdoor, transitory event which helps mitigate the risk of the coronavirus transmission. But the risk is still there. I encourage everyone to use the sanitizing stations, respect the social distancing guidelines, and when unable to be socially distant to wear a mask, which will be required at entry. Also, I ask for patience, we've changed where the lines go to rides to take them away from midway walkers and will have six-foot space markers for those in line. It won't be the normal Fair but using our safety plan and with the cooperation of our guests, the show will go on!"

The safe fair plan was created using CDC guidelines, guidance from State Health Officer Dr. Thomas Dobbs and best practices from other similar events. The plan has been reviewed by Governor Tate Reeves.

The Mississippi State Fair runs Wednesday, October 7, through Sunday, October 18, with a gate admission price of \$5.00 per person and parking \$5.00 per car. Children under the age of 6 are admitted free of charge. Enjoy free admission weekdays 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

For more information, download the Mississippi State Fair mobile app, visit www.MsStateFair.com online or follow the Mississippi State Fairgrounds page on Facebook.

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