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The Centennial Year Comes to a Close at the 2016 Pennsylvania Farm Show

Read the wrap-up report on the 100th Anniversary of the nation's largest indoor agricultural event.



Harrisburg, PA (Jan. 16, 2016) – Exhibitors and visitors from all corners of the Mid-Atlantic arrived to Pennsylvania's capital city to experience the largest indoor agricultural event in the United States, the Pennsylvania Farm Show, for its centennial year. More than 10,000 competitive exhibits and nearly 300 commercial exhibitors were on display within the 24 acres spread throughout the complex's 11 halls and three arenas.

With the unusual warm January weather, the family-oriented atmosphere and low prices continued to bring in spectators all week, with more than 62,197 vehicles parked from Saturday through Friday.

The show kicked off with the traditional unveiling of the more than 1,000-pound butter sculpture crafted by Jim Victor of Conshohocken, Montgomery County. To honor the centennial year of the Farm Show, the sculpture was based on the show's theme of "Our Commonwealth's Blue Ribbon Experience", portraying everything from an FFA member showing her cow to a quilt and spinning wheel. This project was sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association and Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program.

Besides the normal vanilla and chocolate flavors, this year marked the coming of a new flavor of Farm Show milkshake – strawberries and cream. This flavor was created to honor the Pennsylvania Farm Show for its centennial year. It was unveiled on Friday, January 8, 2016 at the opening of the Food Court, kicking off the start of the 2016 show.

For the celebration of the 100th Pennsylvania Farm Show, exhibitors and visitors had the chance to buy the book "Hold Your Horses! The Pennsylvania Farm Show at 100", which commemorates the history of the show throughout the past century. Written by Mary Klaus, this book contains hundreds of stories from participants throughout the years, a background of the nation's largest indoor agricultural exposition, and a profile of Pennsylvania's 67 counties and their county fairs.

Several new additions were unveiled at this year's Farm Show, including the "Make It & Take It" exhibits that allowed children of all ages to personalize various items throughout the complex, ranging from birdhouses to bookmarks. In addition, the Weis Markets' Farm-To-Shelf display connected the consumer to the supply chain journey agricultural products take, bringing it to life. Lastly, the first "Veterans and Active Military Service Members Day" was established to honor those who have served for our country.

New menu items hit the PA Preferred™ Food Court counters this year: fish nachos, fish sliders, chicken bites, oversized cookies, breakfast pretzel rolls, and chocolate-covered bacon from the PennAg Industries and the Pennsylvania Pork Producers Council; the blended mushroom burger from the Pennsylvania Mushroom Grower's Cooperative; a carrot cake funnel cake from the

Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers; goat tacos and ribs from the Pennsylvania Livestock Association; and a BBQ Beef Bowl from the Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association.

Scholarships of \$3,500 were awarded to 28 students from across the state, each courtesy of the Pennsylvania Farm Show Scholarship Foundation, which has awarded 472 scholarships (more than \$1.3 million) to junior Farm Show exhibitors since the program began in 1993. Additionally, those who were full-time students of Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences received an extra \$2,000.

Vendors at the Food Court kept busy providing visitors Farm Show favorites.

As of Saturday morning, the following products were sold or consumed:

- The Pennsylvania's Cattlemen's Association Booth whipped up more than 2,250 burgers and used more than 3,220 pounds of prime rib and more than 4,640 pounds of beef for cheesesteaks;
- The Pennsylvania Livestock Association sold more than 10,000 roast beef sandwiches, 3,000 meatball subs, 10,000 barbeque pork sandwiches, 4,000 hot sausages, 5,000 Italian sausages, 4,200 goat tacos, 2,000 servings of lamb stew and 850 servings of steak salad;
- PennAg Industries Association sold more than 12,600 pounds of pulled pork, 14,000 hot dogs, 7,000 pieces of chocolate covered bacon, 5,000 fish nachos, and 105 gallons PennAg Farm Show BBQ Sauce;
- Pennsylvania Maple Syrup Producers sold more than 6,500 bags of maple cotton candy, 500 gallons of maple syrup and 250 gallons of Mapleade;
- The Pennsylvania State Horticulture Association sold more than 6000 apple dumplings, 7,500 quarts of apple cider, and 25 bushels of apples.
- Pennsylvania Mushroom Grower's Cooperative sold more than 12,400 pounds of mushrooms;
- Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers sold 7,000 servings of batter-dipped vegetables, 6,000 blooming onions, and 3,000 funnel cakes, 5,255 bowls of soup, 1,600 bowls of salad, 1,500 pickles, 850 pieces of pie, 700 vegetable wraps, 7,300 strawberry surprises and 2,475 raspberry lemonades.
- Pennsylvania Dairymen's Association used more than 19,000 gallons of milkshake mix, 75 pounds of American cheese and 260 loaves of bread for grilled cheese sandwiches, 450 gallons of ice cream and 4.1 tons of mozzarella cheese.
- Pennsylvania Beekeepers Association sold more than 1,400 gallons of honey ice cream and used more than 700 pounds of waffle mix.

Culinary Connection, sponsored by PA Preferred, had:

- Nearly 60 cooking demonstrations and specialty crop presentations,
- Nearly 100 bottles of Pennsylvania wines used in preparation and pairings,
- 6 Thermador ranges working on full power to produce more than 16,000 food samples,
- Nearly 12,000 PA Preferred 2015 Recipe books distributed,
- Approximately 10 hours a day of prep work in the back kitchen,
- Nearly 9,000 people watching the Culinary Connection demonstrations, and
- Used 300 pounds of mushrooms, 300 pounds of apples, 180 pounds of potatoes, 100 pounds of flour, and 180 pounds of butter.

The Pennsylvania Farm Show is the nation's largest indoor agricultural event, featuring 6,000 animals, 10,000 competitive exhibits, and 300 commercial exhibitors. According to a report issued by the Hershey Harrisburg Regional Visitors Bureau, the 2015 show had an estimated economic impact of \$95 million to the south-central Pennsylvania region, supporting more than 18,000 jobs over the course of the week-long event.

The show runs January 9-15 from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. and January 16 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free and parking is \$15 in Farm Show lots. The Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex and Expo Center is easily accessible from nearby Interstate 81.

For more information about the 2016 show, visit www.farmshow.state.pa.us.