



June 6-10, 2018
The Biggest Show In Town
35th District Agricultural Association

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE 2018 MERCED COUNTY FAIR DEEMED A SUCCESS, BRINGING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER FOR FIVE DAYS OF TRADITION AND FAMILY FUN

MERCED, CALIFORNIA – June 14, 2018: The Merced County Fair’s Board of Directors, Management and staff are thrilled to announce the successful completion of the 2018 Merced County Fair, which ran June 6-10. The community truly came together to enjoy the “Biggest Show in Town” – the Merced County Fair – with five days of delicious food, incredible entertainment, carnival rides, new and returning exhibits and attractions, plus so much more! The 2018 Merced County Fair unaudited attendance total during the five days was 71,201 people, a slight decrease of 1.5% from last year’s record-breaking total of 72,338 people. This year the Merced County Fair fell on graduation week that included nearly 10 graduations in Merced alone

“We had a great run this year and brought in even more entertainment for the community to enjoy,” said Teresa Burrola, CEO of the Merced County Fair. “This year marked the return of Sunday entertainment in the Grandstand with a packed crowd for the Gran Jaripeo. We also had some great new attractions such as the Baseball Throw Zone and Soccer Kick Station, as well as Chase and Skye from Paw Patrol, which was a big hit! We also added the new Discovering Science exhibit that educated and entertained Fairgoers. All in all it was a wonderful Fair thanks to the continued support of our wonderful community!”

Affordability continued to be a big focus for Fair Management with plenty of early and Fair-time discounts. Prior to the Fair, people could save \$2 on Adult Admission and \$5 on Unlimited Carnival Ride Wristbands when purchased at participating Rancho San Miguel Markets and O’Reilly Auto Parts. Additionally, the Fair offered a \$10 discount on a 5-pack of Adult Admission tickets that was available for purchase online or at the Merced County Fair Administration Office. All pre-Fair savings were available through June 5. The savings continued as the Fair opened with the return of Mercy Medical Center’s “We Care Wednesday” which helped people save and give back! On Wednesday, June 6 from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. people could get into the Fair for free when they brought five or more cans of food to donate. This was part of the Community Food Drive effort, presented by University Industrial Park, and supported by UC Merced. A total of 6,640 lbs. of food was collected, dipping slightly below last year’s total of 7,088 lbs. but helping the Fair continue its mission to give back. All food was donated to the Merced County Food Bank to aid in their fight against hunger. Additionally, opening day was Seniors’ Day where seniors 62 and better got into the Fair for free. Then Thursday, June 7 was Kids’ Day presented by Emanuel Medical Center, where kids 12 and under got into the Fair for free!

Another great service provided to Fairgoers by The Bus was the free rides to the Fair from all of the 26 stops in Merced area. A total of 642 passengers took advantage of these free rides to and from the Fair, and more than 10,269 free trips were taken system-wide during the "Free Fares to the Fair" promotion. Additionally, Fairgoers who used The Bus were able to buy discounted Fair admission tickets on their ride to the Fair!



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The Grandstand shows were busy all five days with the return of Sunday entertainment – each day met with a packed show! This year’s Grandstand entertainment featured Merced Speedway Auto Racing (6/6), WGAS Motorsports’ Monster Trucks (6/7), Valley Tractor Pullers’ Tractor Pull (6/8), Humpz & Hornz “Bad to the Bone” Bull Riding (6/9) and the Gran Jaripeo (6/10) – all made possible thanks to sponsors Table Mountain Casino, Coors Light, O’Reilly Auto Parts and Rancho San Miguel. Fairgoers also enjoyed free live music and entertainment on the Coors Light Stage and Prime Shine Car Wash Stage, not to mention the Outdoor Theatre where an incredible array of musical acts played as part of the Table Mountain Free Concert Series presented by Coors Light. The diverse line-up included Uptown Funk – Bruno Mars Tribute (6/6), Mark Chesnutt (6/7), Sheila E. (6/8), Moonshine Bandits (6/9) and Selena – The Ultimate Tribute (6/10).

Fairgoers also enjoyed thrilling carnival rides provided by Butler Amusements, which had 37 rides in total. Favorites were the stomach-turning Turbo and Vertigo rides, then of course the classic Fair-favorite Ferris wheel – and for the kids it was definitely the Wacky Worm rollercoaster and the Balloon Samba. The Sunshine Lane Family Area was packed with Fairgoers enjoying everything from the Pony and Camel Rides to the Petting Zoo and All-Alaskan Racing Pigs to the Euro Bungee and Walk on Water Balls! Food was most definitely a big topic at the Fair which featured five new vendors – 5 Star Margaritas, Merced Elk’s Lodge, Log Cabin Lemonade, Ben & Jerry Chicken Wings, Negrette’s Soft Rolled Tacos and Rubia’s Churros, along with a long list of Fair food favorites enjoyed by many!

As always, livestock was a big draw at the Fair with a variety of shows taking place over the course of the week of the Fair. The Rabbit Auction on Friday, June 8 at 6:30 p.m. in the Hilmar Cheese Barn saw the sale of 132 rabbits generating \$28,025 in sales. Then that same day in the Les McCabe Arena presented by American Ag Credit, the Dairy Replacement Heifer Sale generated \$184,300 from 55 heifers sold. On Saturday, June 9, the Junior Livestock Auction, sponsored by American Ag Credit, also held in the Hilmar Cheese Barn was a resounding success generating \$659,599 in sales by 4-H, FFA and Independent Exhibitors, a 6.7% increase over last year’s record sales totals. A total of 630 goats, pigs, lambs and beef were sold this year, compared to 618 animals in 2017. The Merced County Fair Board of Directors served 650 dinners for the Junior Livestock Auction buyers and their families in the new Central Valley Concrete & Central Valley Trucking picnic area to show the Fair’s appreciation for the buyers’ continued support of the Fair’s livestock program, and most importantly the hardworking 4-H, FFA and Independent exhibitors.

The Merced County Fair would also like to recognize these top buyers from 2018, who received the following awards at this year’s Fair:

- Buyer of the Year Fat Stock Sale – Joseph Gallo Farms, Mike and Lori Gallo
- Buyer of the Year Dairy Heifer Replacement Sale – Five H Farms, Case Vyfhuizen
- Buyer of the Year Small Animal Sale – Taylor Backhoe Service, Andy and Janet Taylor
- Outstanding Service Award Winner – Bob Correia, Guest Services Superintendent
- WFA Blue Ribbon Award Winner – John Pedrozo

More than 5,630 entries were received and displayed in the four competitive exhibit buildings - Jr. Ag Mechanics, Floriculture, the new expanded Merced Arts Pavilion (Kids’, Fine and Home Arts) and Ag Exhibits



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presented by MID Water & Power - this does not include the 1,713 animals on display in Livestock. The Fair is pleased with the overall increase in entries, which provides the opportunity to showcase all of the talent and hard work of Merced County residents.

“We are incredibly proud of the quality of this year’s Fair – providing a safe, affordable and family-friendly entertainment option for our community,” said Burrola. “We want to thank everyone who came out to enjoy the Fair this year, as well as the wide array of people who played a role in putting on the ‘Biggest Show in Town!’”

The 2019 Merced County Fair will run June 5-9. Be sure to sign up for the Merced County Fair’s free email newsletter to stay up-to-date on information or connect with the Fair on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

About The Merced County Fair:

The Merced County Fair, first founded in 1891, represents the 35th District Agricultural Association and celebrated its 127th anniversary this year. More than 70,000 people from throughout Merced County and beyond attend the five-day Merced County Fair each June. Members of the Board of Directors include: Emily Haden, President; Lori Gallo, First Vice President; Carol Sartori-Silva, Second Vice President; Vicky Banaga; Mark Erreca; Flip Hassett; Lee Lor and Kim Rogina. Teresa Burrola heads up the daily operations in her role as CEO. The 2019 Merced County Fair will run June 5-9. For more information about the Merced County Fair, please visit www.MercedCountyFair.com. Connect with the Fair on Facebook (@mercedfair), Twitter (@Merced_CA_Fair) and Instagram (@mercedcountyfair).