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FAIR NEWS



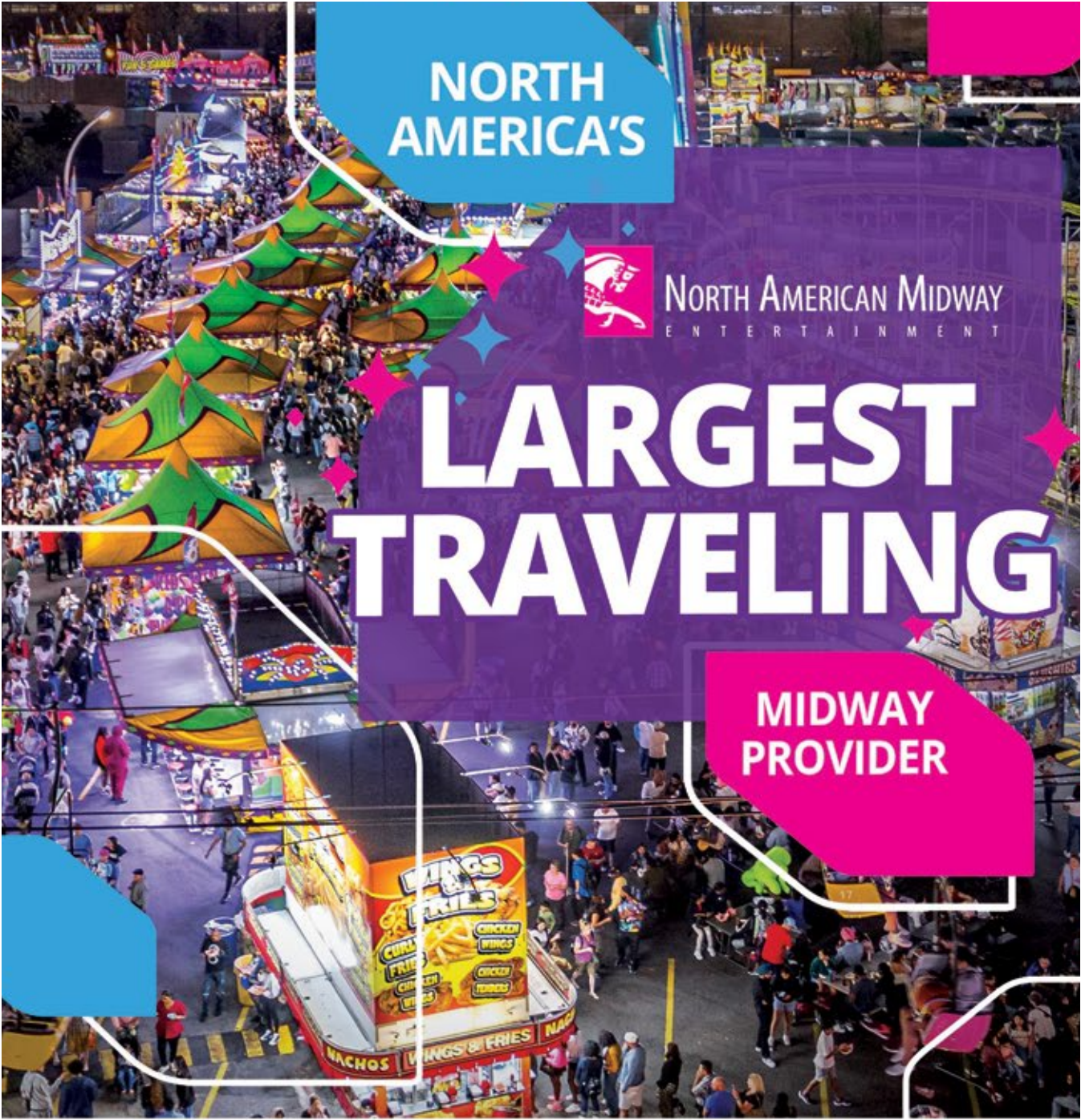
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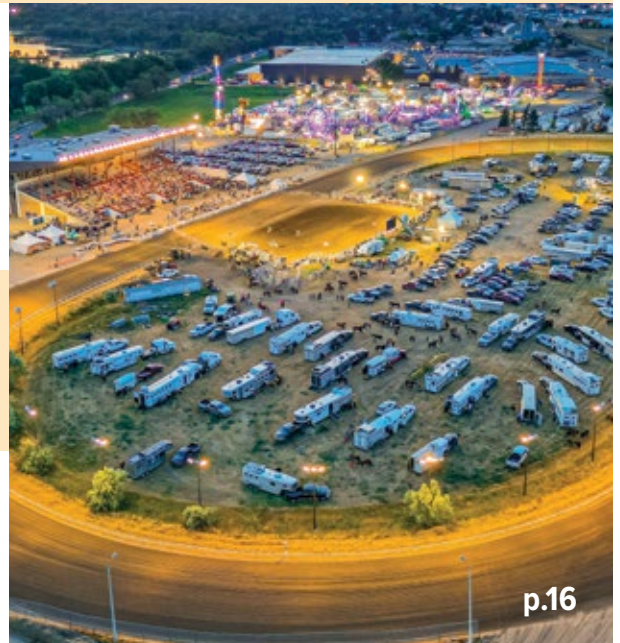
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President's Message

Allison Wright, President
Canadian Association of Fairs & Exhibitions

convention [kuhn-ven-shuhn]

noun a large formal meeting or assembly, as of members, representatives, or delegates, for discussion of and action on particular matters of common concern.

The 2025 fair season is winding down and, as always, was full of fun and smiles, wins and challenges, sun and a little rain keeping us on our toes as we built amazing experiences and memories for our guests. Fall gives us a moment to pause and reflect on this past season all while 2026 ideas and plans simmer in the background of our thoughts. The CAFE Convention is well positioned to add to your knowledge bank and provide new enthusiasm and energy to your planning cycle. I am very excited that the 2025 Convention will be held in Calgary and it is a very fitting host site as the City itself emulates so many of the same thoughts and emotions that our fair community shares.

Calgary is undergoing significant change thanks to growth and demand for services. A new hockey arena, underpasses, ring roads and new communities are changing how residents engage with each other and move through the city. Calgary is becoming increasingly urban yet still nods to its agriculture and western roots at every turn. Residents have busy lifestyles and engage with their neighbors and communities differently than they used to. Now doesn't this sound familiar and eerily similar to the challenge we face in our organizations and businesses? It certainly does to me! Yet, it also reminds me that from this change comes great opportunities to try new ideas, provide parameters to frame investments and engage new audiences while keeping the brand at the heart of decisions.

And we don't have to solve it alone. As an association we share not only our passion but also our intelligence, our successes, failures and solutions that reach from one end of the country to the other. This expertise exists all the way from the staff and the Board to the association members and it is what makes our connections so valuable.

Coming through a widely successful fair season, our industry is on solid footing and the Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions is your place to connect with your industry colleagues, learn and support one another, and activate ideas to make a difference to your event and business. We are excited for the 2025 CAFE Convention in Calgary! Saddle up!

Until next time,

Allison Wright

"There exist limitless opportunities in every industry.
Where there is an open mind, there will always be a frontier."
– Charles Kettering

Message de la présidente

Allison Wright, présidente
Canadian Association of Fairs & Exhibitions



convention [kon-van-syon]

nom Une grande réunion ou assemblée formelle de membres, de représentants ou de délégués qui discutent d'une action sur des questions particulières d'intérêt commun.

La saison des foires 2025 tire à sa fin et, comme toujours, a été remplie de plaisir et de sourires, de victoires et de défis, de soleil et un peu de pluie, nous tenant en haleine tout en créant des expériences et des souvenirs incroyables pour nos invités. L'automne nous permet de prendre un moment pour réfléchir à la dernière saison. Les idées et les plans pour 2026 mijotent dans nos pensées. La convention de l'ACFE est bien placée pour enrichir vos banques de connaissances ainsi que d'apporter un nouvel enthousiasme et une nouvelle énergie à votre cycle de planification. Je suis très heureuse que la convention de 2025 aura lieu à Calgary, un site d'accueil très approprié puisque la ville elle-même partage plusieurs des idées et émotions ressenties par notre communauté de foires.

Calgary connaît des changements importants en matière de croissance et de demande de services. Une nouvelle arène de hockey, des passages souterrains, des rocades et de nouvelles communautés modifiant la façon dont les résidents interagissent entre eux et se déplacent dans la ville. Calgary devient de plus en plus urbaine mais fait toujours un clin d'œil à son agriculture aux racines ouest canadiennes à chaque tournant. Les résidents ont un rythme de vie effréné et interagissent différemment avec leurs voisins et leur communauté qu'autrefois. Cela ne vous rappelle-t-il pas, et ne ressemble-t-il pas étrangement aux défis auxquels nous sommes confrontés dans nos organisations et nos entreprises? Pour moi, c'est tout à fait le cas! Pourtant, cela me rappelle aussi que ce changement offre des occasions pour essayer de nouvelles idées, de fournir des paramètres pour encadrer les investissements et, d'engager de nouveaux publics, tout en gardant la marque au cœur des décisions.

Nous n'avons pas à tout résoudre seuls. En tant qu'association, nous partageons non seulement notre passion mais aussi notre intelligence, nos réussites, nos échecs et nos solutions, d'un bout à l'autre du pays. Cette expertise, s'étalant du personnel et le conseil d'administration jusqu'aux membres de l'association, est ce qui rend nos relations si précieuses.

Après une saison de foires largement réussie, notre industrie demeure sur des bases solides. L'Association Canadienne des Foires et des Exhibitions est votre lieu pour connecter avec vos collègues de l'industrie, apprendre davantage et vous soutenir mutuellement pour activer des idées afin de faire une différence dans votre événement et votre entreprise. Nous sommes impatients d'assister à la convention de 2025 à Calgary! En selle!

A la prochaine,
Allison Wright

« Les opportunités sont infinies dans tous les secteurs.
L'ouverture d'esprit ouvre toujours de nouvelles perspectives. »
– Charles Kettering



Executive Director's Message

Linda Sicoli, Executive Director
Canadian Association of Fairs & Exhibitions

Across Canada, fairs and exhibitions continue to show why they matter, as places of connection, celebration, and renewal. Whether in rural towns or urban centres, these events reflect the character of their communities while adapting to the realities of today's economy and society.

The stories in this issue highlight some of the most pressing themes for our sector. We are paying greater attention to mental health and wellbeing, both for those who deliver fairs and for the communities we serve. We are looking more closely at safety and security, not only to protect visitors but to reinforce the trust that is the foundation of our work. We are strengthening livestock and agricultural programming with new resources and tools that ensure agricultural fairs remain relevant to producers and the public alike. And we are rethinking approaches to sponsorship and governance, recognizing that strong partnerships and inclusive leadership are critical for long-term sustainability.

What stands out to me in all of this is that fairs are not static. They are evolving with intention, balancing the preservation of tradition with the need to innovate. Volunteers are stepping into leadership roles, youth are finding new pathways to contribute, and communities are seeing the value of fairs not only as entertainment but as vital cultural and economic drivers.

At CAFE, our role is to amplify these efforts, to advocate nationally for the recognition our sector deserves, and to provide the tools, training, and networks that help fairs succeed. Together, we are building a sector that honours its heritage while preparing for the future.

Thank you for your dedication, creativity, and commitment. The strength of Canada's fairs lies in the people who make them possible and in the stories we continue to share.

Let's go, CAFE Convention 2025!

Linda Sicoli

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.”

– Henry Ford

Message de la Directrice Exécutive

Linda Sicoli, Directrice Exécutive
Canadian Association of Fairs & Exhibitions



Partout au Canada, les expositions continuent à démontrer à quel point elles sont importantes en tant que lieux de connexion, de célébration et de renouveau. Que ce soit dans des milieux ruraux ou urbains, ces événements reflètent le caractère de leurs communautés tout en s'adaptant à la réalité de l'économie et de la société d'aujourd'hui.

Les articles dans ce numéro mettent en lumière les thèmes prioritaires de notre secteur. Nous prêtons une plus grande attention à la santé mentale et le bien-être des gens qui organisent les foires et les expositions dans les communautés que nous servons. Nous accordons une attention accrue à la sûreté et la sécurité, non seulement pour protéger les visiteurs mais aussi pour renforcer la confiance, le fondement de notre travail. Nous renforçons la programmation de l'agriculture et du bétail avec de nouvelles ressources et outils afin d'assurer que les foires demeurent pertinentes pour les producteurs ainsi que le public. Nous repensons les approches du parrainage de la gouvernance, reconnaissant que des partenariats solides et un leadership inclusif sont essentiels à la durabilité à long terme.

Ce qui me frappe le plus c'est que les foires ne sont pas toujours statiques. Elles évoluent avec intention, en équilibrant la préservation de la tradition avec le besoin d'innover. Les bénévoles assument des rôles de leadership, les jeunes découvrent de nouvelles façons de contribuer et les communautés reconnaissent la valeur des foires, non seulement comme divertissement, mais aussi comme moteurs culturels et économiques essentiels.

Au sein de l'ACFE, notre rôle est de renforcer ces efforts afin de plaider à l'échelle nationale pour la reconnaissance que notre secteur mérite et, de fournir les outils, la formation et les réseaux qui aident les foires à prospérer. Ensemble, nous construisons un secteur qui honore son héritage tout en se préparant pour l'avenir.

Merci pour votre dévouement, votre créativité et votre engagement. La force des foires canadiennes réside dans les individus qui les rendent possibles et dans les histoires que nous continuons à partager.

Convention ACFE 2025! Allons-y!

Linda Sicoli

« Se réunir est un commencement, demeurer ensemble est un progrès, travailler ensemble est un succès. »

– Henry Ford



WESTERNER DAYS

Keeps Red Deer's Rural Roots Alive Through Agriculture and Community

By: Marla Lowe

When Red Deer's first fair opened in 1892, it was a place for farmers and ranchers to showcase their livestock, crops, and innovations.

More than 130 years later, that same agricultural spirit continues to anchor Westerner Days. Even as the event has grown into one of Red Deer's largest summer celebrations, agriculture remains at its heartbeat, grounding the fair in authenticity and connecting generations to the land that built Central Alberta.

Every year, visitors can step into an entire pavilion dedicated to celebrating Central Alberta's farming heritage. Families meet animals, explore hands-on exhibits, and discover how agriculture continues to feed, support, and

inspire the community. "Westerner Days is more than a fair, it is a celebration of community," says Shelly Flint, CEO of Westerner Park. "Our agricultural roots remind us of where we came from, and they continue to shape who we are today."

From the excitement of the North American Pony Chuckwagon and Chariot Races—now in their 25th year—to displays of historic and modern farm machinery, Westerner Days helps keep Red Deer's rural identity alive. Livestock shows, blacksmithing demonstrations, and interactive farm-life exhibits allow visitors to experience both tradition and innovation up close. These living displays honor the practices that shaped Central Alberta while showing how they remain vital today.

One of the most meaningful parts of Westerner Days is the connection children make with agriculture. The joy on their faces when they pet a cow, sheep, or horse for the first time is unforgettable. The fair's popular tractor maze lets children pedal through a miniature farm, "collecting" produce and

eggs as they go, sparking hours of imaginative play. In 2025, the return of the petting zoo—after requests from the community—proved an instant success, introducing many children to farm animals up close for the very first time.

“For me, the best part of Westerner Days is watching kids discover agriculture firsthand,” says Christine Aldous, Event Coordinator – Agriculture. “When they plant a seed, pet a sheep, or climb onto a little tractor, you can see the wonder in their eyes. Those moments spark a connection that can last a lifetime.”

The fair’s agricultural showcases are made possible through partnerships with local farmers, ranchers, and organizations. Livestock, from donkeys to yaks, are provided by Central Alberta producers, while exhibitors like Brandt Tractor highlight cutting-edge farm equipment. Sunnybrook Farm Museum brings history to life with antique machinery, Nixon Honey demonstrates the art of beekeeping, and Red Deer County’s Know Where Your Food Comes From display teaches families about food production. With contributions from NeerAlta Manufacturing, Twisted Steel, and many others, these partnerships bridge the gap between past and future, rural and urban.

At a time when many urban audiences are increasingly disconnected from farming, Westerner Days offers a vital reminder: food doesn’t just appear on grocery store shelves. It’s planted, nurtured, and harvested through the dedication of farmers. By creating engaging and interactive opportunities for city dwellers to connect with agriculture, the fair fosters appreciation for the people and practices that sustain us all.

Agriculture isn’t just part of Westerner Days; it is Westerner Days. From petting zoos and pony chuckwagons to interactive exhibits and hands-on learning, the fair preserves Red Deer’s rural roots while inspiring the next generation to value and carry on that legacy. In doing so, it ensures Central Alberta’s agricultural spirit remains alive and thriving for years to come.

**Catch Westerner Park’s
Shayla Flanagan on Thursday
afternoon in our Panel for
Booking Entertainment/
Food Vendor Contracts &
Understanding Contracts/
Negotiating contracts.**



“For me, the best part of Westerner Days is watching kids discover agriculture firsthand.”

Westerner Days
FAIR & EXPOSITION





SERVICE MEMBER
SPOTLIGHT



Building Bridges Between Artists and Communities Across Canada

By: Angie Morris

W

hen music begins and rhythm takes over the stage, authentic talent comes alive in spaces where art, culture, and community intersect.

That's what moves Sirroma Entertainment to build a bridge between creative expression and public engagement, curating unforgettable experiences that help artists expand their reach and impact. This focus reflects Sirroma's commitment to celebrating creativity in vibrant, accessible, and culturally rich environments.

To provide artists with meaningful exposure beyond traditional venues, they work closely with event organizers to grasp their vision, then match it with performers whose style, energy, and message align seamlessly with that atmosphere. The process includes evaluating talent based on performance quality, versatility, crowd engagement, and professionalism. Whether it's a family-friendly fair, a cultural celebration, or an arts-focused exhibition, Sirroma strives to curate lineups that not only entertain but also elevate the overall experience, creating moments that resonate with diverse audiences.

One of the main challenges of coordinating artists for fairs across Canada is the geographic distance and travel logistics, managing different time zones, and unpredictable weather. We tackle this by planning well in advance, working with reliable travel partners, and building flexibility into schedules to handle delays or last-minute changes.

The regional regulations and permits are also something to have in mind, because each province and municipality may have different rules around performances, insurance, and permits. Our team stays up to date with local requirements and handles the paperwork to ensure full compliance.

To keep the diverse audiences and cultural sensitivity, we curate performers who not only entertain but also respect and reflect the local culture and values. This helps create a more inclusive and engaging experience for attendees.

On the other side, coordinating multiple performers across various events can lead to overlapping schedules. We maintain strong relationships with our talent roster and use detailed scheduling systems to avoid conflicts and keep everything running smoothly. By staying organized, adaptable, and proactive, Sirroma ensures each performance is delivered professionally, no matter where in Canada the event takes place.

Building long-term relationships with both performers and fairs with trust, communication, and consistency is at the heart of what we do, and it's also one of our priorities. For performers, we prioritize clear communication, fair compensation, and professional support throughout every stage of the booking process. We take the time to

understand their goals, respect their artistry, and advocate for their needs. By consistently delivering well-organized events and positive experiences, we create an environment where artists feel valued and want to return.

For fairs and event organizers, we focus on reliability, customization, and results. We listen closely to their vision and provide tailored entertainment that aligns with their audience and objectives. Our team goes the extra mile to ensure smooth execution, which builds confidence and fosters long-term collaboration. Ultimately, we treat every partnership, whether with an artist or an organizer, as a relationship, not just a transaction. That respect and dedication is what keeps people coming back to Sirroma year after year.

A standout example of this success was featuring Drew Gregory and Quinton Blair at two separate events, each uniquely showcasing their individual strengths and styles while perfectly aligning with the spirit of the fairs they performed at.

At a major Alberta fair, Drew Gregory delivered an electric performance that had the crowd on their feet from start to finish. His high-energy set, combined with his natural ability to connect with the audience, made for an unforgettable night. Drew's professionalism and stage presence elevated the entire entertainment lineup, and the fair organizers praised it as one of their most successful evenings.

Separately, at a Manitoba agricultural fair, Quinton Blair brought a more intimate, storytelling driven performance that deeply resonated with the rural audience. His authentic country roots and genuine connection to the community created a warm, engaging atmosphere that left a lasting impact on both attendees and organizers.

Both events reflected Sirroma's core strength: understanding the unique needs of each fair and matching them with the right artist. These partnerships with Drew and Quinton are ones the company is especially proud of, not just for the outstanding performances, but for the lasting relationships and community engagement they helped foster.





Keeping Agriculture & Community at the Heart of London

By: Reg Ash



Western Fair has been part of London's identity since 1867.



What began as a traditional regional fair has evolved into a year-round destination that draws millions of visitors annually, contributes more than \$100 million to the local economy, and supports agriculture, small business, sports, entertainment, and community life. Today, Western Fair District is more than an event, it's the heartbeat of London and a champion for both rural and urban communities.

Despite its growth, Western Fair Association (WFA) remains firmly rooted in agriculture. From the annual September fair with its livestock displays, ag-education exhibits, and school tour program, to the award-winning Farmers & Artisans Market, National Poultry Show, and the London Farm Show, WFA continues to support agri-business, showcase local producers, and promote food literacy. Through initiatives like The Grove—a hub for innovation, incubation, and education in agriculture—Western Fair is also nurturing the next generation of producers and entrepreneurs.

“Our role as a modern agricultural society is to bridge rural and urban communities,” says WFA leadership. “We honor our traditions while remaining progressive and meaningful, collaborating with organizations across the region to support the agricultural industry and improve community life.”

For generations of Londoners, the annual Western Fair marks the transition from summer to fall. With its midway rides, music, and agricultural displays, the event blends nostalgia with innovation. The fair will celebrate its 150th edition in 2027, and organizers are working hard to ensure the tradition continues for another 150 years.

“Western Fair is more than just entertainment,” notes the team. “It’s about memory-making—families coming together to celebrate the season, their community, and the culture that has shaped London for a century and a half.”

Over the decades, Western Fair has transformed into a multi-faceted District. Beyond the annual fair, visitors enjoy horse racing at the Raceway, gaming, expos, sporting events at the Sports Centre, and one of London's most vibrant community hubs: the Farmers & Artisans Market.

The Market has had a profound impact—bringing fresh food into a neighborhood once considered a food desert, supporting small businesses, and launching countless local vendors. Alongside it, the J-AAR Expo Centre has hosted everything from national trade shows to serving as a field hospital and vaccination centre during the pandemic, while the Sports Centre has attracted national and international tournaments that put London on the sports tourism map.

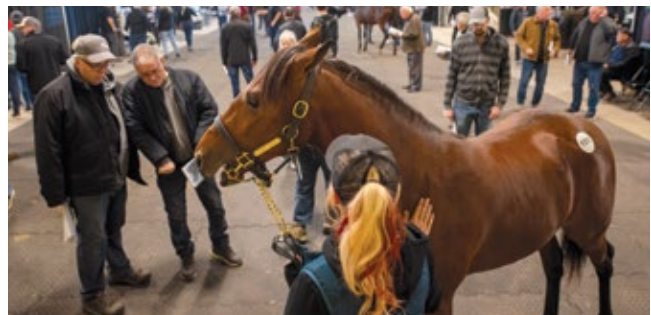
Each element of the District plays a vital role. As WFA leaders put it, “Every business unit could make the case for being the most impactful. Together, they form an ecosystem that strengthens London's economy, culture, and sense of community.”

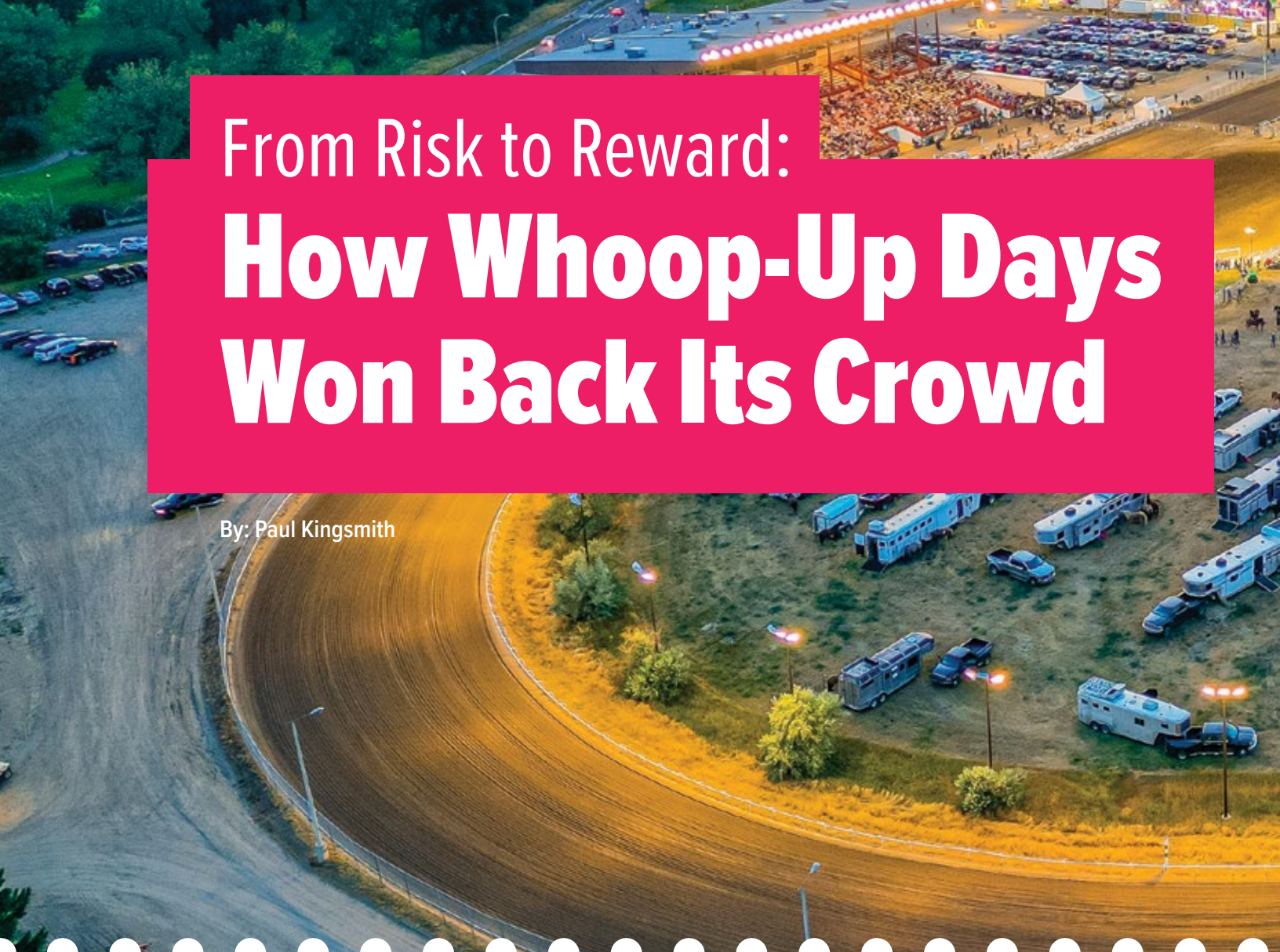
The Western Fair District is inseparable from its neighborhood, Old East Village. By drawing millions of visitors each year with many innovative, vibrant, events and experiences, and maintaining green spaces like Queen's Park, WFA has helped fuel the area's revitalization as an arts and culture district. The Market, in particular, is a community hub, connecting residents with fresh, local food and artisans week after week.

With a new strategic plan in motion, Western Fair Association is entering what leaders call a “renaissance.” The focus for the next five years will be on strengthening its agricultural legacy, optimizing its site, deepening community ties, and ensuring the District remains a vibrant, essential part of London's future.

If that mission could be summed up in just a few words, WFA's purpose statement says it best: “Heartbeat of Community.” Just as a steady heartbeat sustains life, Western Fair District sustains London—through agriculture, innovation, entertainment, and the traditions that keep the community connected.

CEO Reg Ash joins our Friday afternoon panel on Alternative Revenue Streams: Beyond Ticket Sales.





From Risk to Reward: How Whoop-Up Days Won Back Its Crowd

By: Paul Kingsmith

A hushed, somewhat awkward all-staff meeting was stumped by a somewhat basic question: what do we do with Whoop-Up Days?

The annual summer fair in Lethbridge, Alta. had been hit hard coming out of COVID, with a plummeting attendance and disappointing public perception scores. Attendance had been remarkably consistent through the first two decades of the 2000s, but now the message from the public was now clear: the same old show wasn't good enough anymore. With profitability a long way off, the question was asked, "is Whoop-Up Days worth saving?"

Less than three years after that meeting, Whoop-Up Days has now produced back-to-back modern-day attendance records, smashing previous recorded highs. The public is once again excited for the show and no one is questioning its future anymore.

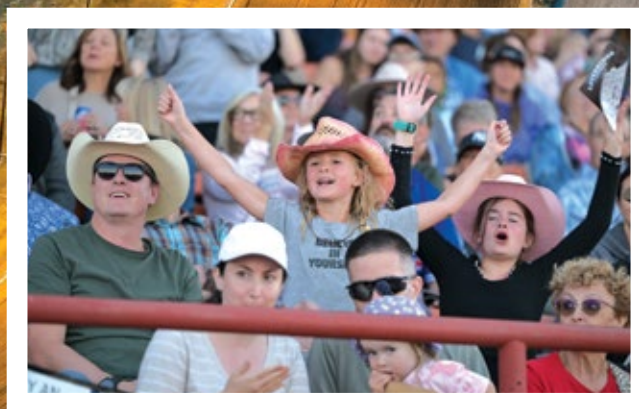
What happened to right the ship and get things back on track? It's a matter of taking one big, risky swing, combined with a methodical and measured evaluation of what the show was offering. At that staff meeting in early 2023 it was decided to make that year's Whoop-Up Days a free event.

The financial risks were severe, but the thought was that it would give people a reason to return to the event and hopefully re-ignite their passion for the show.

However, the flip side of that equation was just as important. The show had to be good. It's one thing to lure an audience back, it's another to actually impress them with what you're offering.

The team at what was then Lethbridge & District Exhibition (now known as Excite Lethbridge), took the show back to its basics. The first full post-COVID show in 2022 tried introducing a wide variety of new attractions, but the effect was disappointing, with guests feeling like they didn't get the experience they had come to know. So, tasked with rebuilding the show and trying to re-engage the audience, the team evaluated what really resonated with the public. The show would offer less, but do it better. Build a base for future shows to build off.

With free attendance luring in the crowd, the show focused on promoting the West Coast Amusements midway, building up the popular marketplace, offering popular traveling animal shows both inside and outside, returning the live outdoor music stage (which had been removed the previous year), creating a new food truck experience, and other quick-win initiatives that resonated with the public. The combination worked as attendance boomed



to a new modern-day record of more than 77,000 – over 53,000 more than the previous year. And more encouraging, the show satisfaction numbers grew along with it.

The other key was allowing two signature events within the show the space to grow. The Lethbridge & District Pro Rodeo and the Siksikaitsitapi Powwow and Princess Pageant were introduced in 2022, but extra effort was put into marketing those two events, knowing they had the potential to contribute to the fair's attendance.

With the first test passed, the next test was seeing if the crowd would return the next year when admission was re-instated. To help ease the transition and acknowledging the role accessibility plays in bringing people to the show, the team instituted "Free 'Til 3" admission on the first three days of the show. Building off the program elements of the year before, attendance came back extremely strong, with more than 40,000 guests, which was a new modern-day paid attendance record and a 40 percent increase over the average from the previous decade.

In 2025, the team just kept on building, increasing the investment in headliner musical entertainment, and putting effort into building the rodeo and powwow, which both set new attendance records and have gained reputations as must-attend events, drawing visitors from out-of-town.

With more than 54,000 guests this year, Whoop-Up Days is now seeing numbers far surpassing anything else previously seen this century.

Knowing its audience, building on the events that are proven successes, and not being afraid to take calculated risks means that less than three years after questioning its existence, the future for Whoop-Up Days is now brighter than ever. Whoop-Up Days 2026 runs from Aug. 18-22 in Lethbridge, Alta.

**Paul Kingsmith is one of our delegates this week.
Be sure to say hi when you see him.**



The Role of **Strategic Communications** in Turning Gatherings into **Growth Engines**

By: Amanda Richardson, MCM, APR
Managing Director, Winston Wilmont
www.winstonwilmont.ca

Exhibitions and fairs are more than gatherings - they're marketplaces of ideas, entertainment, products, and connection. For organizers, the challenge isn't only building the infrastructure and logistics. It's ensuring that the right people show up, stay engaged, and walk away feeling like they were part of something bigger than themselves.

That's where strategic communications leading up, during, and after the event comes in.

Too often, communications is treated as a side function - promoting dates, sending reminders, and pushing out post-event highlights. But for an event to grow its reputation, impact, and bottom line, communications must sit at the center of the strategy. It's the connective tissue between organizers, exhibitors, sponsors, and audiences. Done well, it transforms an event from a physical venue into an ecosystem of visibility, credibility, and opportunity.

While marketing has the critical task of bringing people to the gate, strategic communications ensures that what happens inside those gates resonates far beyond them. Consider the ripple effects.

For exhibitors, visibility in the event's communication platforms and through media attending the event reinforces the value of their investment. For sponsors, storytelling and features tied to their role within the event builds brand equity and demonstrates the value of their investment. For attendees, curated media, content, and coverage deepen engagement and amplify takeaways.

Communications doesn't just describe the event, it multiplies its impact and lays the groundwork for customers to return year after year.

When I led multi-channel marketing and communications for Ag in Motion, Western Canada's largest outdoor farm expo, communications and public relations was a strategic growth engine to attract attendees, increase the number of exhibitors, and retain and attract sponsors.

From the third to the fifth year of the event, attendance scaled from 11,000 to nearly 30,000, the result of a deliberate, integrated communications strategy.

Sponsors and partners were positioned as innovators. Instead of being names on a map, they were featured in pre-event media stories, social media campaigns, and interviews that tied their presence to real farming innovations, challenges, and solutions.

Farmers were the main character. Every message connected back to what mattered most to them, which based on customer research, was the latest technology and equipment in action, in a real field, solving real problems.

Regional and trade media were given VIP treatment and access. Reporters were briefed in advance, supported during the event, and given access to a media room. They were invited to experience the event, meet innovators, and share stories with their audiences. Their coverage extended the reach far beyond those who could attend in person.

A multi-channel strategy was leveraged. Earned, shared, paid, and owned media channels amplified each other, giving exhibitors and sponsors proof that their investment was working.

The result? Exhibitor growth, stronger sponsor partnerships, and a reputation as a "can't-miss" destination on the Canadian agriculture event calendar. Ag in Motion became a platform for influence, learning, and progress for farming in Canada.

This experience illustrates that events succeed when they're seen as more than transactions. Communications reframes them as opportunities to build reputation and lasting relationships.

That means moving beyond one-off announcements to create a continuous narrative. Leading up to the event, spotlight who's coming, what's new, and why it matters to the attendees. Build anticipation for what guests will see, experience, and the connections they will make there. During the event, activate on-site storytelling through media kits, live coverage, and behind-the-scenes access. When the event is done, the communications work continues. Keep the story alive – and start to fill your marketing funnel for next year's event – by sharing outcomes, celebrating stakeholders, and positioning the event as a driver of progress in the industry or community it serves.

Marketing and logistics may get people in the door, but experience is what gets them to return year after year, bring colleagues, and spread the word. Communications is the strategic function that shapes and amplifies experience.

Events bring people together and create connection. The question for organizers isn't how do we run this event? It's how do we turn this event into a moment that people remember, share, and mark on their calendars year after year?

The answer lies in treating communications not as a task, but as a growth strategy.



Caring for the **Mental Health** of Fair Employees and Volunteers

By: Laura Neira Marciales

Hope you get to meet CAFE's
Laura Neira Marciales
while you're here!

Mental health has become one of the most pressing issues for Canadians today. According to the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), the mental health of Canadians has declined by 300% since the pandemic, with stressors like economic uncertainty, social isolation, and ongoing recovery creating what experts call a “perfect storm.” For those who power community fairs and exhibitions, both employees and volunteers, these challenges are magnified.



Fairs are at the heart of rural and urban communities alike. They bring together farmers, businesses, organizations, and residents for a few days of celebration and connection. “Fairs and exhibitions are a great way to bring a little bit of everybody in the community together in one weekend,” explains Jackie Ralph, Youth & Adult Awareness & Education Supervisor at CMHA Grey Bruce Mental Health and Addictions Services. “That’s why it’s so important to integrate mental health into this space.”

Why mental health matters for fairs

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 12 billion working days are lost annually to depression and anxiety, costing the global economy US\$ 1 trillion each year in lost productivity. In the context of fairs, often driven by volunteers balancing jobs, farms, and family responsibilities, mental health challenges can quickly escalate. “If you want something done, ask a busy person,” Ralph says. “Volunteers already have full plates outside of the fair, and then they take on even more.”

This combination of high workload, seasonal intensity, and limited downtime makes it essential for organizers to support the well-being of their teams.

Supporting mental health before, during, and after the fair

Ralph emphasizes the importance of connection and communication throughout the year. Before the fair, even simple gestures like regular check-in emails or committee updates can strengthen ties and remind volunteers why they joined in the first place.

During the fair, visibility of resources is key. At the Erin Fall Fair, Ralph hosted a display table highlighting the Farmers Wellness Initiative and other supports, ensuring both community members and volunteers had easy access to help if needed. “When we know what resources are out there, we’re more likely to reach out to them,” she notes.

After the fair, gratitude goes a long way. Ralph recalls how small gestures, like distributing hand-painted plant pots donated by a local community group, had a lasting impact. “Thank-you doesn’t have to be a huge dinner or event,” she says. “They can be small but meaningful.”

Building a culture of openness

Leadership plays a critical role in creating a safe and supportive environment. “The role is role modeling,” Ralph explains. Sharing personal stories, expressing gratitude, and openly discussing self-care normalizes mental health conversations. The U.S. Surgeon General echoes this, stating that a healthy workplace not only prevents harm but actively creates the conditions for workers to thrive.

Ralph encourages organizers to incorporate small moments of joy and reflection into meetings, asking volunteers what makes them laugh, what brings them joy, or what they love most about themselves.

These seemingly light-hearted practices help foster deeper connection and normalize conversations about well-being.

Learning from successful examples

The Owen Sound Fall Fair offers a powerful example of integrating mental health into community traditions. During the pandemic, organizers adapted by hosting a drive-thru barbecue where every car received not only a meal but also a package of local mental health resources. More recently, the fair launched a “50 Farmers Who Care” initiative, pooling contributions to sponsor youth education in agriculture, linking community support directly with mental well-being.

Other fairs have used social media to highlight both their events and mental health awareness campaigns. Sharing posts during Farmers Mental Health Week or Thank a Farmer Day provides a dual benefit: promoting the fair while amplifying important wellness messages.

Practical steps for new fairs

For fairs just beginning their journey, Ralph recommends focusing on three essentials:

- 1 Resources:** Ensure everyone knows about local, provincial, and national support, including virtual options.
- 2 Communication:** Stay connected throughout the year, whether through newsletters, social media, or informal check-ins.
- 3 Culture:** Model openness, express gratitude, and create safe spaces for honest conversations.

And, perhaps most importantly, Ralph reminds organizers not to forget themselves: “Every message you give to somebody else, we need to turn it back to ourselves too. We are worthy of care, of time spent on our mental health, and of using the resources we share with others.”

Fairs and exhibitions showcase the best of community spirit—but that spirit is sustained only when the people behind the scenes feel supported. By prioritizing mental health through communication, visibility of resources, and small acts of care, organizers can ensure employees and volunteers not only contribute their best work, but also thrive personally.

As Ralph puts it: “The reason you’re writing this article is because this is important. We need to talk about this, and just the fact that we’re talking about it is a sign that it matters.”

“When we know what resources are out there, we’re more likely to reach out to them.”

Farmfair International Launches



**to Strengthen Biosecurity
and Animal Care**

By: Abbey Wright

Abbey will be here
all week with her Explore
Edmonton colleagues.



livestock have always been at the heart of agricultural fairs and exhibitions. They not only showcase the best of Canadian farming but also serve as a bridge between producers and the public.

Yet bringing animals, exhibitors, and visitors together in one space creates unique challenges. Concerns around biosecurity, animal welfare, and public safety are more pressing than ever.

To address these issues, Farmfair International has introduced the Livestock Safety Toolkit, a first-of-its-kind resource designed to help fairs and exhibitions implement consistent, practical biosecurity and animal care practices.

While Canada has long focused on-farm biosecurity, few resources have been tailored to the specific risks that arise at public events. “The Toolkit was created to address a critical gap in biosecurity awareness at livestock events,” Farmfair International explains. “There are no aggregated documents that bring together animal care, biosecurity, and consumer protection, which we believe go hand-in-hand.”

By providing clear, accessible resources, the Toolkit supports not only animal health but also public trust in Canada’s food system. With threats like Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) capable of disrupting both local communities and national agriculture, the Toolkit strengthens preparedness through education and collaboration.

One of the Toolkit’s greatest strengths is its adaptability. Whether a small 4-H show or a major international fair, organizers can use its templates and guidance as-is or customize them to fit their event.



This flexibility ensures that fairs of all sizes can maintain high standards of care while keeping operations practical and manageable.

Recognizing that experience levels vary widely, the Toolkit also places a strong emphasis on education. Fair staff receive accessible training tools such as PowerPoint presentations, icon-based visuals, and step-by-step templates. Exhibitors are provided with tailored materials, including biosecurity maps, communication channels, and clear protocols.

“The goal is to keep exhibitors informed and empowered,” Farmfair International notes. “Not just to protect animals at the fair, but also to help safeguard their farms when they return home.”

Animal care has always been central to the success of agricultural fairs, but today it carries heightened importance. Healthy, well-cared-for



animals are essential not only for showcasing farming but also for ensuring public confidence in the industry.

“Fairs represent a unique biosecurity risk,” Farmfair International emphasizes. “Exhibitors and livestock travel from across provinces—and sometimes internationally. Without strong practices, the risk of spreading high-impact diseases like FMD is significant.”

The Toolkit reinforces humane handling and stress reduction, drawing on national Codes of Practice. By embedding these principles into event planning, fairs protect both animals and people while promoting agriculture literacy.

The Livestock Toolkit promotes a culture of care by engaging the public through signage, education, and youth outreach, helping visitors understand their role in animal health. By prioritizing welfare and safety, fairs can build consumer trust and strengthen ties between farmers and communities. Farmfair International aims for the Toolkit to become a trusted industry resource, influencing how fairs nationwide approach biosecurity and animal care.

“By equipping organizers with tools for biosecurity, animal welfare, and public education, the Toolkit supports agriculture literacy, strengthens consumer trust, and reinforces the critical role fairs play in connecting people with Canada’s livestock sector.”

Through collaboration, consistency, and a shared commitment to care, the Livestock Toolkit offers a pathway to safer, stronger, and more resilient agricultural events for years to come.

Key Resources Include:

- 1 **Species-Specific Guidance** on handling, identification, and transport.
- 2 **Risk Assessment Checklists** for pre, during, and post event planning.
- 3 **Emergency Response Templates**, including zoning maps and communication strategies.
- 4 **Public-Facing Materials**, such as signage and campaigns like Buddy the Biosecurity Bull, designed to engage families and young audiences.
- 5 **Staff Training Tools**, including presentations and visual guides for consistent implementation.

Visit: www.farmfairinternational.com/ag-resources/animal-welfare

**BUILDING A
STRONGER
VOICE
FOR FAIRS AND
EXHIBITIONS**

By Linda Sicoli, Executive Director, CAFE

Government Relations Update



Government relations has always been a cornerstone of CAFE's work, but never has it been more important than now. Fairs and exhibitions are deeply embedded in the fabric of rural and urban Canada, driving tourism, supporting local agriculture, creating seasonal jobs, and providing spaces for community celebration. Yet, the challenges our sector faces today demand stronger advocacy, strategic partnerships, and a unified voice.

CAFE has made government relations a top priority in the last year, with a focus on ensuring the policies and programs shaping Canada's future also reflect the needs of our sector. We are always working to advance key issues on labour, tourism, and rural economic development, striving for long-term recognition of fairs and exhibitions as essential contributors to Canada's economy and cultural identity.

Labour: Progress on the Temporary Foreign Worker Exemption

One of the most urgent issues for many fairs and concessionaires has been access to seasonal labour through the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Program. After months of consultation, outreach, and partnership with Temple Scott Associates, we secured recognition of the unique nature of fair-related work. This includes the ongoing development of an exemption that better reflects the realities of our sector.

The ability to attract and retain skilled, temporary workers is not simply a logistical matter; it is a question of survival for many mid-sized and large fairs. Our advocacy has ensured this issue is being heard at the highest levels of government. While there is more work to be done, momentum is on our side — and members' stories have been critical in demonstrating the economic and cultural stakes.

“CAFE has made government relations a top priority.”

Fiscal Policy: Pre-Budget Submissions and Key Asks

In August, CAFE prepared two pre-budget submissions to the federal government, positioning fairs and exhibitions as essential engines of rural economic development, tourism growth, and agricultural education.

Our recommendations emphasized:

- **Infrastructure investments to help fairs modernize facilities.**
- **Targeted funding streams to sustain agricultural programming and youth engagement.**
- **Recognition of fairs as tourism anchors that attract millions of visitors annually.**

These submissions are critical tools to enable the fairs and exhibitions sector to be recognized in Canada's broader economic strategy. They reflect the sector's alignment with national priorities such as rural vitality, cultural heritage, and sustainable tourism. CAFE then met with Members of Parliament, Senators, and senior officials in Ottawa to reiterate these key message and advocate for the long-term potential of the industry as catalysts for community and economic development. This was also an opportunity to deepen relationships. Advocacy is not a one-time effort; it is about building trust, educating decision-makers, and showing them the impact of fairs in their own ridings.

Moving Forward Together

Government relations is not about short-term wins. It is about ensuring that fairs and exhibitions are recognized as part of Canada's long-term economic, cultural, and social framework. The steps we have taken this year, from advancing the TFW exemption, to submitting fiscal recommendations, to planning one on one conversations, can strategically position our sector for sustained success.

Member support and engagement fuel our national efforts. Together, we are ensuring that the fairs and exhibitions sector is not only heard but respected, supported, and valued.

The road ahead will bring new challenges, but also new opportunities. With a strong, united voice, we will continue to be the voice for the sector's vital role in Canada's future.

Temporary Foreign Worker Program

Comprehensive programs protecting your Temporary Foreign Workforce in Canada



Building Authentic Sponsorships: Strategy, Alignment & Community

By: Martha MacKay,
Director Sponsorship, The Calgary Stampede





inding a sponsor is like finding a partner. You have to know who they are, understand their needs, and determine if they align with your values and goals.

At the Stampede, sponsorship isn't an add-on at the end of planning, it is built into the organizational model alongside programming, marketing, guest experience, and revenue strategy. When sponsorship becomes part of the mission instead of just a transaction, relationships are more authentic and sustainable.

Sponsorship is not only about securing funding, but also generating added value for our guests. This means evaluating how our sponsors fit into our annual celebration's overall experience, what value the activation or brand alignment offers to our guests, and what impact the sponsorship would have on the community or could leverage the partnership in the community.

For example, Tim Hortons was the natural partner for Family Day during Stampede, because of their alignment with early mornings, coffee, and Canadian identity. Similarly, Freedom Mobile was chosen for the Grandstand Show because its bold personality matches the spectacle of the show.

One of our most successful cases of sponsorship is the Monster Energy Compound, which is a high-octane motocross show that

integrates the Monster brand throughout the entirety of the experience—from the venue, to the experiential activations to the actual show itself. By co-creating the program, we ensured authenticity for both the partner and our guests. Seven years of evolution later, it remains one of the most visible and loudest activations on Stampede Park. It works because it is tailored, experience-driven, and aligns with both partner and audience expectations.

If you're building your sponsorship program or you want to enhance the one you already have, you have to start with your community. Ask what role your event plays locally and how sponsors can authentically connect to it.

After that, lead with innovation and build the best experience for guests first, and then the sponsors will follow. This will also help you find brands that fit more with your values and interests. A smaller but well-aligned sponsor is more valuable than a large but misaligned one.

Once you have a relationship with a brand, don't forget to think long-term—relationships are built over time! Another key piece is ensuring that you measure and share results, stay flexible, and keep communication open with sponsors so both parties take advantage of the partnership.

Leaning into data, measurement, and co-creation has really worked for us. Audience insights and 3rd party lead valuations of our property are used not just as stats but as tools to build meaning for brands and to really demonstrate impact and ROI.

Sponsorship should also be viewed as a collaboration, not just a transaction. Hustle, customize, and find creative ways to deliver value.

It is also important to recognize that sponsorship is both global in reach and local in identity. National and international brands benefit from exposure that extends across Canada and beyond. Others ground us in Calgary's identity and demonstrate authentic local engagement. The balance comes from ensuring each partner, whether the brand is global or local, finds value in connecting with our 1.6 million residents, 1.47 million festival attendees and the 220,000 tourists who join us annually.

Sponsorship thrives when it is rooted in authenticity, community and shared values. It's not just about filling logos on a banner, it's about creating experiences that resonate with audiences while giving partners meaningful connections to the event and its identity. By treating sponsorship as collaboration rather than transaction, and by focusing on innovation, alignment, and long-term relationships, you build partnerships that not only sustain your event but also elevate it for years to come.



**Don't miss Martha on our
Panel: Sponsorship 2.0
Attracting Big Name Partners
in a Changing Economy.**



IAFE Economic Impact



David Grindle, President and CEO of IAFE, is an accomplished executive whose career spans live entertainment, education, and global association leadership. Through his leadership, IAFE was able to complete the first national economic impact study of U.S. fairs and fairgrounds.

The IAFE has released its first high-level economic impact survey for fairs in the United States. This study provides a floor upon which fairs can share the economic portion of their local impact with community groups, politicians, and tourism authorities.

The study revealed that fairs and fairgrounds of all sizes have an important economic impact in their communities. Notably, the smallest county fairs which see a few thousand attendees generate 3 to 5 million USD of economic impact in their run, which averages 5 days.

For many communities this is not an insignificant number. Taking that amount of money from the local economy would be noticed, which helps express the value of fairs and why we need to support them.

It should be noted that the tax structures in the US are such that high level studies like this don't begin to capture the full extent of things. With local tax rates varying greatly from community to community, this study captures the impact of State taxes, but not local, so the impact is even larger than we could capture.

What the study does show is that fairgrounds and their annual usage have an even greater impact, generating 52 billion USD nationally. That's larger than the GDP of two of our states.

We also are not capturing the money raised by non-profit organizations at our fairs, food donated to food pantries, scholarships given, or other secondary impacts like these that have an impact on our community, as the fair is more than money, it is about community.

Looking at the Northeast and Ohio Valley regions which border on the most densely populated areas of Canada, we can fairly safely assume similar economic impact, particularly in Ontario.

In the Northeast, there are 205 fairs which have fewer than 100K visitors. These fairs have a total economic impact of \$1.3 billion USD or an average of \$6.44 million per fair. By looking at it from an attendance basis, we can surmise that similar impacts could be found in Canada in fairs of similar attendance as it creates an equalizer offsetting the population difference between the two nations.

All of that said, IAFE is committed to working with CAFE to do a similar study of fairs in Canada as we need to have the data to make our case at the county, provincial, and federal levels about the return on investment fairs and fairgrounds bring. Pairing economics with the community impact, we can as both associations and an industry, express our value to people who may have an outdated vision of fairs and who they serve.

I urge you all to share the work of your fairs with the MP's in your area. While a fair may sit in one riding or electoral district, the staff and volunteers of the fair sit and vote in many. It is up to us to make sure that our leaders see that fairs have value across our communities, both rural and urban. Part of that is getting MP's to see their constituents valuing the fair, even if they themselves don't represent a fair.

As noted, this study looks at our fairs by attendance numbers which helps make a possible correlation between fairs in Canada and the US, especially close to the border. I hope we can point to these numbers until such time as we have Canadian specific numbers to rest upon.





Convention Preview



Brent Butt

Day: November 19, 2025

Time: 8:30 – 9:30 am

Location: Crystal Ballroom

Laughter has always been a powerful way to bring people together, and no one understands that better than Brent Butt, one of Canada's most beloved comedians and creators. Born and raised in Tisdale, Saskatchewan, Brent honed his comedic voice in coffee shop conversations before rising to national and international acclaim, performing at Montreal's Just for Laughs and headlining around the world.

Best known as the creator and star of *Corner Gas*, the most-watched Canadian sitcom of its time, Brent spent decades blending sharp observational humour that celebrates small-town life and human connection. His work spans television, film, animation, and literature, with his debut novel *Huge* becoming a #1 Canadian bestseller.

Brent has earned numerous honours, including multiple Canadian Comedy Awards and the Sir Peter Ustinov Award for comedy at the Banff World Media Festival. His humour resonates as both personal and universal. Shared laughter builds stronger communities.

Brent brings his signature mix of storytelling, wit, and heartfelt perspective to this year's gathering. Enjoy his humour, reflection, and a reminder of how laughter connects us.



Jody Carrington

Day: November 21, 2025

Time: 9:50 – 10:50 am

Location: Crystal Ballroom

Burnout and disconnection are defining challenges of our time. From strained workplaces to fatigued communities, leaders and organizations are trying to rebuild energy and strengthen trust. Dr. Jody Carrington, renowned psychologist, bestselling author, and human connection expert, offers a roadmap for revitalizing purpose while fostering authentic relationships that endure.

Dr. Carrington's career has helped people navigate trauma, repair ruptures, and rediscover their capacity for connection. As Founder and Principal Psychologist at Carrington & Company, and through her bestselling books and podcast *Unlonely*, she has inspired audiences worldwide with her sharp clinical insight, practical strategies, and humor. Her message: resilience is not built alone, it is sustained through relationships.

With world wide experience with high profile clients, Jody's ability to translate complex human dynamics into actionable tools makes her one of the most sought-after speakers. This session will share how to counter burnout by reigniting passion, embracing vulnerability, and prioritizing reconnection, leaving attendees will leave with renewed energy and practices for environments that thrive even in the face of change.



Kelly Culver

Day: November 21, 2025

Time: 3:00 – 4:30 pm

Location: Crystal Ballroom

Fairs and exhibitions have long shaped the childhoods of Canadians—from first rides and roller coasters to moments shared with friends and family. This cherished tradition, passed down through generations, has evolved through challenges like the pandemic and rapid technological change, deepening our appreciation for community and resilience.

Dr. Kelly Culver, global thought leader, CEO, and expert in strategic resilience, innovation, and transformative leadership, will share her insights in "Building Resilience in Times of Change: Lessons for Fairs and Exhibitions."

Kelly's connection to Canada's fairs runs deep. Her grandfather, father, and brother all served with the Norfolk County Agricultural Society, and her early memories of the Norfolk County Fair & Horse Show inspired a lifelong respect for how fairs anchor communities and adapt to change.

As Co-Founder and Director of The Resilience Nexus, with 34 years of global experience, she helps leaders navigate disruption and build resilient, forward-looking organizations.



Showcase Listings



Performance Dates, Times, and Locations

Wednesday, Nov 19 (Off-site Tour)

Canine Circus

Rescue dogs steal the spotlight with jaw-dropping tricks, comedy, and heartwarming moments that celebrate the bond between people and pets.

Abygale Durie Music

Pure country spirit — heartfelt lyrics, authentic vocals, and a sound that captures rural life.

Wednesday, Nov 19 at Dinner in the Crystal Ballroom

Three Hat Circus

Juggling, theatre, and comedy collide in a hilarious, high-energy show for all ages.

Ten02 Band

A pop-rock band from Red Deer delivering catchy, upbeat tunes that light up the room.

Travis Dolter Music

Traditional country meets modern storytelling with humor, energy, and a big voice.

Thursday, Nov 20 at Lunch in the Crystal Ballroom

Fizzlewit's Fairy Finding Tours / Select Entertainment

A magical, interactive fairy adventure for kids and families filled with wonder and play.

JoJo's Magic Circus / Select Entertainment

Comedy, juggling, and a flying chicken—JoJo's circus magic delights every crowd.

Alan Jackson Experience

An authentic tribute to a country legend, capturing Alan's sound and soul on stage.

Thursday, Nov 20 Cocktail Hour

Dan the One Man Band

A strolling crowd favorite for 30+ years, bringing classic tunes and fun everywhere he goes.

Spandy Andy

The ultimate hype man—dance, color, and contagious energy that makes everyone smile.

Thursday, Nov 20 at Dinner in the Crystal Ballroom

Kendra Kay /

Fame Group Agency

7X MCMA winner with powerhouse vocals and unstoppable prairie country energy.

Brad Sims / Sirroma Entertainment

Award-nominated singer-songwriter blending traditional and modern country with heart.

Martina Dawn /

Fame Group Agency

A rising star with powerhouse vocals and catchy hits lighting up big festival stages.

Friday, Nov 21 at Lunch in the Crystal Ballroom

Sam King

A world-traveled stunt rider showcasing thrilling motorcycle skills and showmanship.

JJordanMagic

Award-winning comedy magic with juggling, illusions, and fast-paced fun for all ages.

Janna Leduc

Rock grit meets country soul in an electrifying, 100% live performance that gets the crowd moving.



Sam King



Janna Leduc



Brad Sims



Dan the
One Man
Band



Andy Spandy

Thanks to Our Sponsors

Platinum Sponsors



Calgary Stampede
www.calgarystampede.com

Known as “The Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth,” the Calgary Stampede celebrates Western heritage, culture, and community with world-class rodeo, music, and entertainment. With 3,000 volunteers, youth programs, world-class performances, and a \$540M annual economic impact, it brings western heritage to life while strengthening community, culture, and agriculture.



Canadian National Exhibition
www.theex.com

Canada’s largest annual fair and one of North America’s top agricultural exhibitions, the CNE welcomes over 1.5 million visitors each year. From thrilling rides to cultural showcases and cutting-edge exhibits, it remains Toronto’s beloved end-of-summer tradition since 1879.



Encore
www.encore-can.com

Encore Canada is the leading provider of event technology and production in the country, with 2,100 team members. We are the largest employer of audio-visual professionals in Canada. Our services are deeply rooted in Canada. Encore is proud to support CAFE and fairs and exhibitions nationwide with their services.



Showpass
www.showpass.com

Showpass is redefining live event ticketing with tools that make every stage of the fan journey smoother, from purchase to showtime. Driven by creativity, collaboration, and innovation, they empower organizers and reignite the joy of live experiences across North America. Visit the Tech Lounge in the Alberta Foyer!

Gold Sponsors



North American Midway Entertainment
www.namidway.com

As the largest traveling amusement company in the world, NAME brings excitement to the biggest fairs and festivals in North America. With a strong focus on safety, professionalism, and showmanship, they deliver unforgettable midway experiences.



Explore Edmonton
exploreedmonton.com

Edmonton’s Destination Marketing and Management Organization, Explore Edmonton connects the city to the world. Hosting signature events like K-Days, FarmFair International, and the Canadian Finals Rodeo, they showcase Edmonton’s vibrancy, innovation, and hospitality.



West Coast Amusements
westcoastamusements.com

The largest Canadian midway operation in Western Canada, West Coast Amusements has been family-run for four generations. With more than 100 fairs and rodeos annually, they combine thrilling rides with a strong commitment to community and charitable giving.



Western Fair District
westernfairdistrict.com

Based in London, Ontario, the Western Fair District is a year-round hub for agriculture, entertainment, and community events. Anchored by its signature fair, it fosters education, inclusion, and innovation while bringing people together to create lasting memories.

Silver Sponsors



Acera Insurance
acera.ca

Proudly 100% Canadian-owned, Acera Insurance offers tailored coverage, impartial advice, and 60 years of expertise. Their deep local roots and national strength make them a trusted partner for individuals, families, and businesses.



AuthentiGATE
authentigate.ca

Since 2010, AuthentiGATE has delivered cutting-edge ticketing and access control solutions for events of all sizes. With real-time admissions, guest management, and live reporting, they ensure safe, seamless, and professional event experiences.



Eventim
www.eventim.com

Part of global leader CTS EVENTIM, Eventim connects Canadian audiences to world-class entertainment through ticketing and live events. With EMC Presents, See Tickets, and decades of expertise, they bring international artists and unforgettable experiences to fans nationwide.



EventPro
www.eventpro.net

EventPro Software is a comprehensive, scalable system for venues, catering, and event planning. Trusted worldwide, it helps professionals streamline operations and create exceptional events all in one platform.



Kidomo
www.kidomo.com

Kidomo is Canada's leader in family entertainment, creating live experiences that connect top children's brands with audiences nationwide. With 50+ tours since 2000, they bring creativity and unforgettable moments to fairs and festivals across the country.



Prairieland
prairielandpark.com

Rooted in history since 1886, Prairieland is Saskatoon's premier event destination, hosting more than 400 gatherings annually. From trade shows to fairs, it connects communities with authentic Saskatchewan spirit and world-class hospitality.



SuperDogs
superdogs.com

For over 40 years, SuperDogs have dazzled audiences with fast-paced, heartwarming shows featuring rescue pups, marvelous mixes, and family pets. Beloved across Canada, they continue to inspire and entertain on stage, online, and beyond.

Bronze Sponsors



Carp Fair
www.carpfair.ca

Since 1863, Carp Fair has celebrated agriculture and community pride. As one of Canada's largest country fairs, it draws visitors from across North America to enjoy exhibitions, competitions, and timeless traditions.



Milord
www.milordentertainment.com

Founded by world champion diver Yves Milord, Milord Entertainment brings breathtaking acrobatics and diving performances to audiences worldwide. With decades of global experience, they continue to inspire wonder and push artistic boundaries.



Quasep
quasep.ecps.ca

QUASEP is a trusted purchasing program for the hospitality industry, helping restaurants, hotels, camps, and catering companies thrive. Through strong supplier partnerships and tailored resources, they empower members to grow more efficiently and effectively.

In-Kind Sponsors



Fusion Talent Group
www.fusiontalentgroup.com

Fusion Talent Group delivers unforgettable live entertainment experiences across North America. With deep expertise in performance and event production, they bring world-class talent, innovation, and energy to every stage.



Select Entertainment
select-entertainment.com

Select Entertainment partners with fairs and events nationwide to bring energy, talent, and excitement to every crowd — from high-flying stunt shows to interactive performances that keep audiences smiling all day long.



Tradeshow Listings



Campbell & Co Insurance Consultants

Protecting the Temporary Foreign Workers who keep fairs and exhibitions running with tailored coverage and 40+ years of trusted expertise.



Daytime Enterprises Limited

Bringing beloved children's characters like Bluey, Peppa Pig, and Cocomelon to life. Visit their booth for giveaways and 2026 event ideas.



Encore global

A trusted production partner with 85+ years of experience turning ideas into unforgettable live, hybrid, and virtual events.



Eventim

Ticketing experts with 25+ years of experience supporting everything from local fairs to the Olympic Games. Visit their booth to learn more.



EventPro

A Canadian company offering powerful venue booking and event management solutions designed for year-round success.



Farco Enterprises Ltd/Canine Circus

Dazzling dog performances, illusionists, and acrobats bring circus magic to events big and small.



FrontDoor+

Modern ticketing made simple. Trusted by 100+ Agricultural Societies to power payments, reporting, and smooth event experiences.



Fusion Talent Group

Pushing creative boundaries with world-class live entertainment and performance expertise across North America.



Kidomo

Kidomo delivers fun, family-focused experiences nationwide. With top brand partners and 20+ years of expertise, they create lasting memories.



PAL Insurance Brokers Canada

100% Canadian and family-owned, PAL has provided trusted event insurance for over 36 years, protecting what matters most.



Quasep

Smart supplier partnerships and innovative solutions help hospitality businesses operate more efficiently and profitably.



Redd Swing Productions

Bringing quality entertainment to fairs with fan favorites like the Juniors Firefighter Challenge and Little Rodeo Pro.



Select Entertainment

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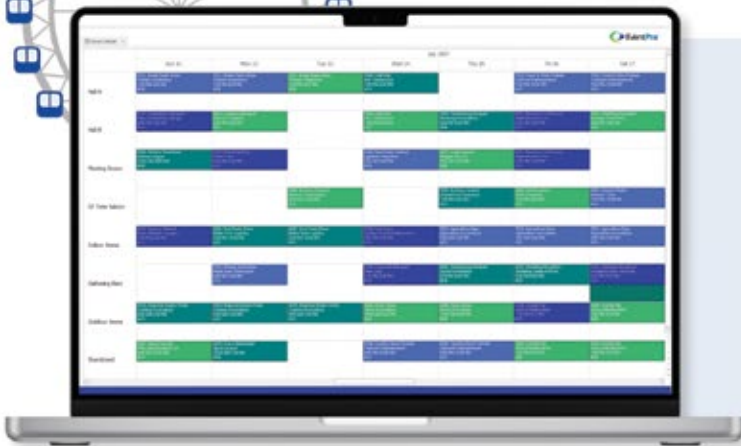
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Thrilling, high-energy acts designed to captivate and elevate fairs and festivals across the nation.



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Why Halifax?

- A stunning waterfront venue at the Halifax Marriott Harbourfront, steps from the city's bustling boardwalk.
- Maritime hospitality and unforgettable Atlantic flavours.
- A chance to connect with peers from across Canada in a city that blends history, charm, and forward thinking.

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