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The 154th Oregon State Fair Celebrates Increased Revenues, Engagement

2019 shows a continued upward trend that began in 2014

SALEM, Ore. – Thousands found their fun this year at the 2019 [Oregon State Fair](#), thanks to programmatic changes and improvements in the fair layout. In fact, fair leadership cites an attendance revenue increase upwards of 10 percent, along with healthy gains in event participation, despite a 3.8 percent dip in attendance resulting from two very hot, mid-week days.

“We are thrilled at the success of the 2019 Fair and want to give a huge thank you to the innovative thinking and participation of our vendors, exhibitors, volunteers, employees, partners and sponsors,” said Dan Cox, Oregon State Fair spokesperson. “There are thousands of hours spent throughout the year, working to make things more accessible, interesting and fun for any age and every fairgoer. We are proud to say, it once again, paid off.”

Weekends in the Pavilion

In 2019, the fair instituted WEEKENDS IN THE PAVILION. The goal: to engage fairgoers in the Pavilion on weekends with attractions that were free with paid fair admission. These events performed well:

- Belt Buckle Battle (professional team rodeo)
- Jaripeo (Mexican bull riding)
- Monster Truck Northwest Championship
- Oregon State Fair Demolition Derby Championship
- The 5,000-seat Pavilion was a full house three out of four events, positioning these events for potential inclusion in future fairs.
- The Belt Buckle Battle drew enough attendance to keep it under consideration as a potential attraction going forward when 2020 planning begins.

Concert ticket sales hit a high note

- The Columbia Bank Concert Series saw a dramatic increase in the number of advanced, reserve seat tickets sold. The numbers rose: 19,467 in 2019 vs. 13,516 in 2018.

Fairgrounds layout

- The area adjoining the fair garden area was framed as The Wonderful World of Sawdust: A daily attraction featuring a lumberjack show, chainsaw carving, axe throwing, and more.

- The Artisans Village area, long a fairgoer favorite, was relocated to be near the Oregon Tap House, bringing talented artisans closer to the central traffic of the fair.
- STREAM attractions and activities were moved to a dedicated outdoor tent and an adjacent area in the center of fair, successfully attracting a steady flow of younger fairgoers.

Entries were up dramatically in 2019 versus 2018

- The Creative Living Department saw an increase of 31 percent in entries.
- The 60th edition of the Gerry Frank Chocolate Layer Cake Contest had 81 entries in 2019 – double the number in 2018.
- The livestock competition saw a sizeable increase in the number of entries, 2019 vs. 2018.

About the Oregon State Fair

The Oregon State Fair, began in the year 1861 in Oregon City during the Civil War. Since 1862, the Fair has called the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem home, hosting thousands of visitors from near and far with premier concerts, art, culture, rides, agricultural exhibits and livestock. In 2019, the Oregon State Fair celebrated the century mark of the Historic Horse Stadium. For more information, visit oregonstatefair.org.

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