

Minnesota State Fair
News Release

January 26, 2009

Minnesota State Fairgrounds—Financial reports released during the State Fair's 150th Annual Meeting show the annual event realized a net operating gain of \$900,000 in 2008 based on gross revenues of \$36.2 million and gross operating expenses of \$35.3 million. Income is reinvested in maintaining and improving the 320-acre State Fairgrounds and producing the coming year's State Fair. The State Fair is a financially self-sufficient quasi-state agency that does not receive federal, state or local funding.

More than \$4.2 million in maintenance and improvement projects for the State Fairgrounds were approved by the fair's board of managers during the meeting. Projects approved for 2009 include a major new \$1 million educational dairy exhibit in the Cattle Barn; shade structures; additions to the recycling center; spiff-up of the Grandstand for its 100th birthday this year; and hundreds of painting, maintenance and landscape jobs across the historic fairgrounds. All capital projects are funded through State Fair operating income and grants from the Minnesota State Fair Foundation.

In other business conducted during the meeting, **Robert Lake of Aitkin** was re-elected to a one-year term as president of the State Fair. **Joe Fox of Maplewood** was re-elected to a two-year term on the board as fourth district vice-president. New members **Paul Merkins of Stewart** and **Ron Oleheiser of Grand Rapids** were elected to serve on the board of managers representing the Society's second and eighth districts, respectively. **Dennis Baker of Spicer**, and **Al Paulson of Shevlin** were both re-elected to three-year terms on the board, representing the seventh and ninth districts, respectively. **Jim Grass of Owatonna**, a long-time State Fair swine exhibitor and 4-H Purple Ribbon Auction Committee chair, was elected to honorary life membership in the Society. The late **Gale C. Frost**, official State Fair historian and museum curator, was inducted into the Hall of Fame, the fair's highest honor.

The Annual Meeting, held Jan. 16-18 at the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel, was attended by hundreds of agricultural society delegates from throughout the state as part of a joint convention of the Minnesota State Agricultural Society (governing body of the State Fair), Minnesota Federation of County Fairs and Midwest Showmen's Association.

The Minnesota State Fair is one of the largest and best-attended expositions in the world, attracting nearly 1.7 million visitors annually. Showcasing Minnesota's finest agriculture, art and industry, the Great Minnesota Get-Together is always 12 Days of Fun Ending Labor Day. Visit www.mnstatefair.org for more information.

The 2009 fair runs Aug. 27 through Labor Day, Sept. 7.