

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Brienna Schuette • Marketing and Communications Manager • (651) 288-4452 • brienna.schuette@mnstatefair.org

Nearly \$7 Million in Projects Approved for 2012 State Fair

January 18, 2012

MINNESOTA STATE FAIRGROUNDS – Nearly \$7 million in improvements and maintenance projects for the Minnesota State Fairgrounds were approved by the fair’s board of managers during the annual meeting of the Minnesota State Agricultural Society – governing body of the fair. The meeting was held Jan. 12-15 at the DoubleTree Bloomington Hotel as part of a joint convention of the Society, Minnesota Federation of County Fairs and Midwest Showmen’s Association.

Improvements and maintenance projects approved for 2012 include construction of the new AgStar Arena in the livestock complex; updates to the Education Building; adding lighting and other improvements to the Grandstand ramp; significant infrastructure work to the fairgrounds’ electric plant and other utilities systems; and hundreds of painting, maintenance and landscape jobs throughout the 320-acre State Fairgrounds. All projects are funded through State Fair operating income and grants from the Minnesota State Fair Foundation. The fair is financially self-supporting and receives no government aid of any kind.

The fair’s board of managers also approved admission prices for the 2012 Great Minnesota Get-Together, which will remain the same as last year. Adults (13-64) will be admitted for \$12; seniors (65 and over) and kids (5-12) for \$10; and children (under 5) for free. Pre-fair discount admission tickets will remain \$9. Parking fees will also stay the same at \$12 per vehicle.

In other business conducted during the meeting, **Jim Foss of Kenyon** was elected to a one-year term as president of the State Fair. Foss is a retired farmer and International Association of Fairs & Expositions Heritage Award winner, presented for his service to fairs and his community. He was also named Goodhue County’s Citizen of the Year in 2011. Foss has served on the State Fair board since 2002. **D. J. Leary of Minneapolis** was re-elected to a two-year term on the board as fifth district vice president. New board member **Gordy Toenges of Alden** was elected to a two-year term to fill the vacancy left by Foss in the first district. **Wally Wichmann of Balaton** and **Allen Paulson of Shevlin** were re-elected to three-year terms on the board, representing the Society’s seventh and ninth districts, respectively. **Denny Baker of Spicer**, the fair’s immediate past president, was elected to honorary life membership in the Society. Baker is the mayor of Spicer and a small business owner who served on the State Fair board of managers since 1998.

The Minnesota State Fair is one of the largest and best-attended expositions in the world, attracting nearly 1.8 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 2012 Minnesota State Fair runs Aug. 23 - Labor Day, Sept. 3.

-MSF-