

MISSOURI NEWS SCENE



It's Show Time!

THE Missouri State Fair has been the premier showcase of state agriculture for more than a century. The 2007 fair promises even more exhibits, educational activities and fun events for the public. This year's theme, "It's Show Time," reflects the exciting atmosphere of the annual celebration of Missouri's rural background.

Everyone is invited to view the best of Missouri — from agriculture to fine art. Highlighting the fair will be concerts from today's top artists, rodeos, harness racing, tractor pulls, the Super Farmer contest, pig races, prize livestock and crops, cook-offs, and more.

The American Idols Live tour will make a stop in Sedalia Saturday evening, Aug. 18, to entertain the state fair crowd and "Idol" fans.

Top country artists

Billboard magazine reports six of the 2007 Missouri State Fair Pepsi Grandstand artists in its top ratings, and ticket sales are reflecting this achievement.

On the country charts in *Billboard* magazine, Big and Rich was recently rated No. 1 with their album "Between Raising Hell and Amazing Grace." The band will perform at the fair Thursday, Aug. 16, along with Cowboy Troy.

Key Points

- Missouri State Fair showcases agriculture Aug. 9-19.
- State fair features good music, carnival rides, food and fun.
- Fair has variety of activities and exhibits for young and old.



Jason Aldean is following the duo closely with "Relentless" at the No. 2 rating, according to the magazine. He will perform Thursday, Aug. 9.

"The Jason Aldean concert has already sold out of track seating, along with American Idol and Dierks Bentley," says Missouri State Fair Director Marion Lucas. "The seats are going fast due to the amount

of audience appeal and popularity each of these artists has with their fans."

Gary Allan with special guest Eric Church is performing Wednesday, Aug. 15. Allan and Church also are on the country chart in *Billboard* magazine.

Family-friendly concert

Corbin Bleu will take the stage Tuesday, Aug. 14, along with Drake Bell and Jordan Pruitt. "This concert should definitely be on the list to attend by families. These up-and-coming artists provide music that is upbeat and especially appealing to young people," Lucas says.

The state fair offers other great concerts this year, according to Lucas. Counting Crows will perform Friday, Aug. 10. Alice Cooper, with special guest Blue Oyster Cult, will be on the Pepsi Grandstand stage Saturday, Aug. 11.

Dierks Bentley with special guest Chris Cagle will perform Sunday, Aug. 12, and Switchfoot with Cartel will be at the fair Friday, Aug. 17.

"Not only are we going to see a great group of concerts, we are also going to have a truck and tractor pull at the Pepsi Grandstand," Lucas says. "The truck and tractor pull will be Monday, Aug. 13; it will include



JASON ALDEAN

pro stock four-by-four trucks, super stock tractors and modified four-wheel-drive trucks."

Rodeo fans will enjoy the Missouri Rodeo Cowboys Association State Finals Rodeo, with shows Aug. 9, 10 and 11 at 7 p.m. at the Dodge Arena. The Missouri Team Penning Championship will be held Aug. 18-19 at 8 a.m. at the Mathewson Exhibition Center.

■ For more details on Missouri State Fair entertainment and events, call 660-827-8150, or visit www.mostatefair.com.

Youths in ag are the future

MISSOURI State Fair Director Marion Lucas strongly believes that the success of tomorrow's fair is dependent on the involvement of today's youths. "Missouri is fortunate to have a group of leaders, the Youth in Agriculture Committee, that supports our young people by rewarding them for their agriculture-related achievements through a scholarship program," he says.

The 2007 Missouri State Fair marks the 15th year of the Youth in Agriculture Committee providing scholarships and activities for 4-H and FFA members who participate in the fair.

The committee has awarded nearly 250 scholarships and a total of \$166,000 to ag youths since its beginning in 1992, according to Wayne Yokley, committee chairman. He adds that 65% of the counties in Missouri have been represented by scholarship recipients.

Scholarships are funded by the fair's annual Sale of Champions, where 30% of the champion and reserve champion animals' auction price goes to the Missouri State Fair Youth in Agriculture Fund. In 2006, 25 scholarships of \$1,000 and one supreme scholarship of \$2,500 were awarded to high school seniors.

The Sale of Champions is Saturday, Aug. 18. It will be held in conjunction with Youth in Agriculture Day. On this day at the fair, 4-H and FFA members receive special discounts on admission and carnival rides.

More than scholarships

While scholarships are the main focus for the committee, it also provides activities for 4-H and FFA members during the fair. "We sponsor a youth dance for 4-H and FFA exhibitors," Yokley says. "There are new exhibitors every year, and this is a great opportunity for new and old to meet."

The dance is Friday, Aug. 10, from 8 p.m. to midnight on the Touchstone Energy Stage. The committee will chaperone the event, and security will be present to ensure a safe and fun dance.

In addition to the dance, the committee works in conjunction with the Missouri Cattlemen's Association and the Beef Industry Council to sponsor a beef display competition for 4-H and FFA exhibitors.

Anyone can help support the Youth in Agriculture program through a monetary donation. Pledge cards for donating are available at www.mostatefair.com under the link "Premium Guide."