



For Immediate Release
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Contact: Erin Thompson
(505) 480-9731

New Mexico State Fair Attendance Increases Almost 8% Compared to Last Year

The 2016 New Mexico State Fair came to a close on September 18, 2016 and saw an increased overall attendance of nearly 8% over last year's numbers. Preliminary numbers show this year's fair was attended by 497,036 people, as compared to last year's total attendance of 460,468. Paid attendance surpassed last year's total number with 423,095 attending as compared to 414,932 people in 2015.

The 2016 fair included very successful free days for public servants and other honored attendees, such as for law enforcement officers, firefighters and teachers, which were well attended special events. The fair offered numerous discounted days which drew big crowds. Several fairly significant weather events negatively impacted attendance early in the day on September 10, and late in the afternoon on September 11 and 12. Without those weather episodes, it is likely the New Mexico State Fair would have topped half a million people at this year's event.

This was the second year of Reithoffer Shows' multi-year contract as the state fair midway operator, and the partnership continues to be very beneficial for the New Mexico State Fair. This year the carnival offered all day ride wrist bands for purchase to include weekends, different from last year when wrist bands could only be purchased on weekdays. Improvements to the midway combined with a large variety of rides, including several new to this year's fair, resulted in high customer satisfaction.

This year the fair pursued new transportation initiatives through private/public and public/public partnerships, which also proved to be a sweeping success. The New Mexico State Fair was the first big local event in the state to establish a transportation partnership with Uber for access to the fair and other EXPO New Mexico events. Uber officials report that approximately 4,000 rides were purchased to and from the fair, representing thousands of people who utilized the convenient transportation option. Additionally, the fair operated trams from two free off-site parking locations, making it easier for folks to get to the event during the very traffic heavy weekends. Almost 65,000 people utilized the free tram rides both within the perimeter of the fairgrounds and as a means of transportation to and from the off-site parking. The state fair once again partnered with BikeABQ for a bike valet and an increasing number of fairgoers biked to this year's event. ABQ RIDE experienced strong ridership in transporting patrons to the fair. ABQ RIDE operated four bus routes, including two Rapid Rides which provided a direct ride to the fair.

"The New Mexico State Fair was recently ranked in the top 10 state fairs in the country due to our focus on providing affordable, quality entertainment," said New Mexico State Fair General Manager Dan Mourning. "The strong turnout by New Mexicans and visitors alike and the high satisfaction they are reporting with regard to their fair experience bears out that success, further solidifying our status as one of the top fairs in the nation."

The New Mexico State Fair is pleased to announce next year's fair dates, which will be September 7 – 17, 2017.