

# Ozark Empire Fair ~ Life & Arts

## 2026 Rules and Regulations

The following rules apply to all departments of Life & Arts exhibits. Special rules that apply to each department are listed at the beginning of that department.

1. **REGISTRATION DEADLINE** for all departments, except as noted in department rules: Registrations must be received or postmarked no later than midnight **JUNE 25, 2026**. (Flowers and Garden registration deadline is July 10, 2026.) Late entry: See Regulation 4 below.
2. **REGISTRATION:**
  - a. **On-line registration is available through our website [www.ozarkempirefair.com](http://www.ozarkempirefair.com).**
  - b. Registration Forms to mail in are available at [www.ozarkempirefair.com](http://www.ozarkempirefair.com) or at the Ozark Empire Fair Office. Mailing address: Life & Arts, Ozark Empire Fair, 3001 N. Grant, Springfield, MO 65803.
  - c. Submission of a completed Registration Form is deemed acceptance of all rules and includes permission to use your name, photograph and exhibit for the media.

3. **ENTRY FEE:**

***ADULTS: \$2.00 per entry***

(Maximum fee for any **adult** exhibitor = \$50 **IF** you mail or walk-in a PAPER Registration Form.  
**Total number of entries for mail or walk-in entries shall be limited to a total of 75.**  
If you register online, EVERY entry will be charged \$2.00 with no upper limit.)

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**SPECIAL EVENT ENTRY FEES:**  
***ADULTS and YOUTH: \$2.00 per entry***

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***YOUTH: \$1.00 per entry***

(Maximum fee for any **youth** exhibitor = \$25 **IF** you mail or walk-in a PAPER Registration Form.  
**Total number of entries for mail or walk-in entries shall be limited to a total of 75.**  
If you register online, EVERY entry will be charged \$1.00 with no upper limit.)

4. **LATE ENTRY:** Late entries **WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR FLOWERS OR GARDEN**. Late entries for other departments will be accepted through **JULY 10** over the phone or by USPS with a July 10 or earlier post-mark. Any entry received after June 25 and up to July 10 will be charged **DOUBLE** entry fees. \$4.00 for adult and special events. \$2.00 for youth.
  - a. Maximum fee limit **does NOT** apply to late entries.
  - b. Late entries are **NOT** subject to free tickets.
  - c. **No late entries will be taken on-line.**
  - d. **Late entries must pick up their exhibitor tags in the Life and Arts Office or get them on entry day to affix to items at check-in. Exhibitor tags will be at the ticket table in the East Hall.**

5. **NUMBER OF ENTRIES:** Exhibitor is limited to **(1)** exhibit per class unless otherwise specified.  
**All on-time mailed or walk-in entries are subject to a maximum limit of 75 entries with 25 total paid entries – all divisions (except Turning Artistry, Garden and Flowers) combined.**
6. **SIZE OF EXHIBITS** is limited to 48”x48” unless otherwise specified in department or division rules or exhibit size has been approved by the Life & Arts Exhibits Director.
7. **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS:** Competition in all open departments is open to the world unless otherwise specified. See rules in Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.
8. **NOTE:** No article may be exhibited that has been shown before in any class at the Ozark Empire Fair. Duplicate recipe entries in Foods and/or Special Events food contests are prohibited. Any exhibitor in violation shall forfeit any award or prize money received.  
  
Articles can be exhibited only by the maker, with the exception of the Heritage classes and Antiques. Exhibitors in YOUTH classes CANNOT enter the same type item in open adult classes.
9. **EXHIBITOR TAGS** will be mailed in July to the name and address on the on-line entry or the registration form. Tags should be attached to exhibit before arrival at the Fairgrounds on Check-In Day. Check department rules for how and where to attach the exhibitor tag. The lower part of the exhibitor tag serves as the claim check.
10. **EXHIBIT CHECK-IN** dates and times are listed at the beginning of each department.  
  
Exhibits sent by US Mail must be addressed to the **Life and Arts Office**, Ozark Empire Fair, 3001 N. Grant, Springfield, MO 65803. For exhibits sent by UPS, FedEx or other carriers, use delivery address Life and Arts Office, Ozark Empire Fair, Norton at Grant, Gate 4, Springfield, MO 65803. ALL such exhibits (mail, UPS, etc.) must be in our office by **Thursday, July 10, 2026**. A money order or check must be included to cover return postage and insurance of the exhibit. Claim check (lower part) should be left attached to exhibitor tag.
11. **SUITABILITY OF EXHIBITS** will be determined by Fair personnel. *All work must be suitable for family viewing.* In order for this exhibition to be of the highest quality, management reserves the right to reject all unsuitable exhibits, to determine that all rules and regulations have been followed, and that no identification of the exhibitor in any form is displayed during judging. Management reserves the right to reject any exhibit if it is objectionable in any way, requires an excessive amount of space, or the capacity of the department has been reached. **No exhibit will be accepted should the exhibitor describe conditions under which he/she will exhibit or in which the exhibit will be displayed.**
12. **DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL:** Each department of the Fair will be under the supervision of a superintendent who, along with assistants, will be charged with the responsibility of enforcing all rules and regulations pertaining to that department. Each article will be under the control of the superintendent, and every precaution will be taken to prevent damage, but in no event will the Fair be responsible for damage or loss that may occur. Location in exhibit building will be assigned by department superintendents. **Superintendents and assistant superintendents may not exhibit in the department under their supervision.**
13. **ERRONEOUS ENTRY:** Exhibits that have been erroneously entered and do not meet the specifications of the class can be transferred to a proper class or disqualified by the superintendent prior to judging. If proper class has been judged, it shall not be re-judged. Any misrepresentation of the exhibit shall be cause for disqualification. Exhibits that have been previously entered in the Fair will forfeit any ribbons and prize money for the current year. Exhibitor may not be allowed to enter same division and/or class in the future. **See Regulation 8.**

14. **JUDGES** have been selected by the management. All exhibitors making entry for the Fair accept these judges and agree to abide by their decisions. **The decision of the judges will be final in all cases.** If any exhibitor attempts to interfere with the judge in any matter during judging or publicly expresses disapproval of decisions made by the judge, that exhibitor may be excluded from further competition and any prize money previously won will be forfeited. Fair management may name a substitute judge should a regular judge fail to appear. **Exhibit building will not be open to the public during judging, except for those contests judged during the fair.**
15. **PROTESTS:** No protest based on the statement that the judge or judges were incompetent will be considered. Protest upon any other grounds must be presented in written form within 24 hours of the protested action and must be accompanied by a **deposit of \$50** to be made with the manager of the Fair or designated representative. Deposit will be forfeited in case protest is not sustained. All questions of dispute with interpretation of rules shall be referred to the Fair Board of Directors, whose decision shall be final.
16. **PRIZE MONEY AND AWARDS** will be made only to exhibits listed in classifications contained in the Exhibitor Handbook. Prize money will be paid to the number of places indicated for each class **if quality merits.** The judge may recommend no award, third, second, or first place according to the merit of the exhibit. Judges may award ribbons for additional placings, but no money will be paid for these additional ribbons.

Ribbons will not be used as basis for payment of prize money since they often become detached. Payments will be made only from the judging book after it has been checked and signed by the department superintendent and judge, then verified by the Life & Arts Exhibits Office.
17. **PAYMENT OF PRIZE MONEY:** Prize money (premiums) in Life and Arts Departments will be paid on Check-Out Day or as soon after that as possible. Life and Arts prize money not picked up by the **last day of August** will be forfeited. The Fair reserves the right to withhold payment of any award upon discovery of fraud, misrepresentation of description or dishonest practice in preparation or ownership of any exhibit or entry.
18. **RELEASES:** Exhibits will be released according to each department's regulations. **No exhibit will be released prior to the published time for release. No exhibit will be released without claim check.** Exhibitors are prohibited from helping remove exhibits until waited on by assistants appointed for this purpose. Gatekeepers and police will enforce this rule. **Any exhibitor violating rules will forfeit prize money.**
19. **UNCLAIMED EXHIBITS:** Competitive exhibits which have not been claimed by the exhibitor before **August 14** will be considered abandoned and will be disposed of as the management may see fit.
20. **INTERPRETATION AND VIOLATION OF RULES:** The Ozark Empire Fair reserves to its management the right to interpret all rules and regulations and determine all matters pertaining thereto; also the right to amend or add such rules as its judgment might determine. Violation of any of these regulations shall cause forfeiture of all privileges, deposits, prize money, contracts and rights to further participation by the violator. This shall apply to all departments of the Ozark Empire Fair.

21. **ADMISSION and PARKING:** Admission tickets are non-refundable.

Single admission at gate, 13 years of age and over .....	\$15.00
Single admission at gate, 6-12 years .....	\$6.00
Single admission at gate, under 6 years .....	FREE
Auto parking (per day) .....	\$5.00
<b>ADVANCED SALE:</b> (Purchased before Fair through the Life & Arts Office by a <i>registered exhibitor</i> )	
Advanced Admission Ticket, 13 years of age and over .....	\$7.00
Advanced Admission ticket, 6-12 years .....	\$3.00
Advance Auto parking (per day) .....	\$4.00

**Advanced sale tickets, free tickets, and advanced parking passes should be picked up by the exhibitor on entry days, July 18 or July 28. Those who are entered in Flowers and Special Events only will receive their tickets by mail. Additional tickets and parking passes will be available for purchase on entry days or in the Life and Arts Office between July 18 - July 29.**

22. **NO animal or pet** (including, but not limited to, dogs) shall be permitted on the grounds or within any buildings. The only exception shall be guide or service animals.

23. **SMOKING:** The Ozark Empire Fair Board has adopted a policy restricting smoking (including vapes) to designated areas during the Fair. These areas will be identified as such, with facilities to accommodate the patrons. Thank you for your cooperation!

24. **TRAFFIC REGULATIONS:** Any person obstructing any fire lane, drive or street with any vehicle will be requested to remove same immediately. Failure to do so will result in expulsion from the fairgrounds and/or arrest. **Parking in front of exhibit buildings, exhibits and midway concessions will not be tolerated.**

Anyone bringing exhibits, displays, or any other equipment or materials into the fairgrounds must unload same as soon as possible and move vehicles to designated parking areas immediately after unloading.

25. **LIABILITY:** All exhibits are entered and shown at the owner's risk. Reasonable care will be taken to prevent loss or damage to exhibits, but in no event will the Ozark Empire Fair or its staff be responsible for any injury or loss which may occur or for the actions of third parties. Insurance, if desired, should be obtained by the exhibitor at his/her own expense.

The Greene County Agricultural and Mechanical Society, Inc., dba The Ozark Empire Fair, expressly refuses to assume any liability for injuries to any person or damage to any property coming upon the grounds of the Ozark Empire Fair, and no claims for injury to any person or damage to property shall be asserted or suit instituted or maintained against the said Greene County Agricultural and Mechanical Society, Inc., its officers, agents, or employees for said cause by any person having privilege to exhibit or license to operate on the fairgrounds or occupying any space thereon, and it is a part of the consideration for each license or privilege granted by the Ozark Empire Fair that such claims for injury or damage are specifically waived.

If any damage or injury or loss to persons or property shall be caused by reason of neglect or willful act of any person, firm or corporation, or their agents, representatives or employees, having license or permit to exhibit or operate a business or occupy space on the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds (Greene County Agricultural and Mechanical Society, Inc.) shall in no manner be responsible therefore, and in no case will be subjected to any expense or liability. All persons causing same or liable therefore shall indemnify the said Greene County Agricultural and Mechanical Society, Inc., at Springfield, Missouri.

26. **CANCELLATION:** In the event of the fairgrounds or any part thereof shall be destroyed or damaged by fire or by any other cause, or if any other casualty, riot or civil disturbance, strike, act of God, or other unforeseen circumstance shall render the holding of the Fair impractical (in the sole discretion of the Ozark Empire Fair), the Ozark Empire Fair shall not in any case be liable or responsible to the exhibitor for any damage, direct or indirect, or loss caused thereby. If because of an emergency such as, but not limited to, an air raid, air raid warning, war (declared or undeclared), terrorism, curfews, riots, civil disorders or labor disorders, weather, or a proclaimed state of emergency, any performance or any public meeting schedules or in progress is canceled or terminated, the Ozark Empire Fair shall not be liable or responsible to the exhibitor for any loss or damage caused thereby, directly or indirectly, and the Ozark Empire fair shall not be liable for any refund of whatever kind or nature.

**\*\* Questions about classes or rules? Give us a call at 417.833.2660 ext 248 \*\***