

# STATE FAIR PARK & Event Center



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024



[statefairpark.org](http://statefairpark.org)

# Our Mission

**Central Washington Fair Association's** mission is to facilitate commerce, education, and leisure activities through production and promotion of the annual Central Washington State Fair and public events throughout the calendar year at State Fair Park & Event Center.

**State Fair Park & Event Center** is operated by the Central Washington Fair Association, a self-funded 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

## Central Washington Fair Association

**Foundation's** mission is to raise funds to preserve and improve our agricultural programming, youth education, and State Fair Park buildings & fairgrounds. We are committed to helping State Fair Park continue to thrive as a leading cultural and educational organization.



## Become a Member of the Central Washington Fair Association

By becoming a member, you will become part of an agricultural, educational, cultural, historical, and entertainment pillar of the Yakima Valley. You will have a voice in shaping, preserving, and enhancing our grounds.

Learn more at: [statefairpark.org](http://statefairpark.org)

# 2024-2025 Board of Directors

**LaVonne Orth**, Chair  
**Ignacio Marquez**, Vice Chair  
**Vicki Baker**, Secretary  
**Scott Wagner**, Treasurer  
**Tom Stokes**, Director  
**Halley Newhouse**, Director  
**Don Whitehouse**, Director  
**Oscar Zapien**, Director  
**Adam Dolsen**, Director  
**Representative Chris Corry**, Director  
**Kathy Kramer**, President/CEO  
**Commissioner Kyle Curtis**, Ex-Officio  
**Congressman Dan Newhouse**, Federal Ex-Officio  
**Senator Curtis King**, Honorary



# A Note From Our President



Fairs across the country play a vital role in providing agricultural education to their communities. They serve as a bridge between farmers and consumers, preserving the legacy of agriculture while fostering a deeper understanding of where our food comes from. As the disconnect between producers and consumers continues to widen, fairs are stepping up to close this gap—offering hands-on learning experiences, interactive exhibits, and opportunities to "learn by doing."

At the Central Washington State Fair, agricultural education is at the heart of our mission. While we are uniquely situated in one of the most fertile and agriculturally rich regions in the country, we recognize the growing need to provide meaningful educational opportunities for our fairgoers. Today's consumers are more curious than ever about their food—where it comes from, how it's grown, and the people behind it. We are also witnessing a resurgence of interest in home gardening, food preservation, and sustainable living. I am incredibly proud of the many programs our team has developed to make learning about agriculture engaging, accessible, and fun. Through interactive displays, live demonstrations, and innovative hands-on activities, we bring the story of agriculture to life—helping fairgoers of all ages gain a deeper appreciation for the industry that sustains us all. Our goal is not only to educate but to inspire the next generation of farmers, food producers, and agricultural advocates.

I am also incredibly proud that many of our agricultural education programs have received industry recognition and prestigious awards from our fair-trade associations, highlighting our commitment to bridge the gap between consumers and agriculture.

It only takes one voice to remind us that these programs are truly making a difference in educating our youth. This past fair, we launched a brand-new hands-on cooking experience designed specifically for kids, allowing them to create "kid-friendly" nutritious recipes using locally sourced ingredients. The program was an instant success, with every class filling up quickly as children eagerly participated in the experience.

One moment that truly resonated with us came at the conclusion of one of these sessions. A young boy, beaming with excitement after making his food items, turned to the instructor and said, "I hope you'll have some new recipes next year because I'll be back and don't want to make the same things again!" His enthusiasm and curiosity exemplify exactly why we do what we do, fostering a connection to food, nutrition, and agriculture in a fun and interactive way.

And yes, we will be back next year—with new recipes, fresh experiences, and even more exciting ways to engage and inspire fairgoers through the story of agriculture at our Fair.

## 2024 Community Impact

### SUNDOME ATTENDANCE



2023	2024
102,091	125,423

### STATE FAIR PARK ATTENDANCE



2023	2024
470,347	526,636

### LODGING ROOM NIGHTS GENERATED



2023	2024
22,139	26,906

### VISITORS OUTSIDE 50+ MILE RADIUS



2023	2024
35,534	33,308

### ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT



2023	2024
\$23.7 MILLION	\$28.4 MILLION

# 2024 New Team Members



**Lindsee Curfman**  
*Event Manager*

Born and raised in Sunnyside, Lindsee brings 20 years of experience in event planning, ranging from intimate gatherings to large-scale productions. Before joining State Fair Park, she served as the Director of the Prosser Chamber of Commerce, where she specialized in organizing fundraising events and community initiatives.

Passionate about bringing people together, Lindsee has been a longtime attendee of events at the fairgrounds, from sporting events to the annual fair. In fact, she attended her very first concert - Amy Grant-right here in the SunDome. Now, she looks forward to shaping the future of events at State Fair Park.

"I have attended many sporting events, plus the fair, for about 30 years here at State Fair Park & I look forward to continuing the long-standing traditions of events here while also introducing new ideas."



**Tina Bond**  
*Sponsorship Manager*

Tina Bond joined State Fair Park as Sponsorship Manager in November 2024. She has spent decades working across Central Washington, covering 26 cities and six counties for major corporations. Her experience includes roles in sales, marketing, advertising, and multimedia consulting, with previous positions at Central Washington Home Builders Association, Townsquare Media, GANZ USA, Butterfield Broadcasting, and Costco Wholesale. She has also owned businesses and pursued certifications in aesthetics, insurance, and real estate investment.

With a long history of involvement at State Fair Park, Tina is excited to contribute to its growth. She values building lasting relationships and believes in treating clients with kindness, support, and integrity.



**Angela Orozco**  
*Executive Assistant  
to the President & CEO*

Angela Orozco joined the Central Washington Fair Association team in September 2024, just in time for her first fair run as the Executive Assistant to our CEO, Kathy Kramer.

Growing up in the Lower Valley, she fondly remembers the excitement building up as she and her family counted down the days to the Fair. Some of her favorites were rollercoasters, corndogs, and curly fries. She is thrilled to be part of making our mission happen, which is to make the Fair a place where memories are made and the future is cultivated.



# 2024 Highlights



## 2024 POW-WOW AND STICK GAMES

State Fair Park had the privilege of hosting one of the most important cultural events for the Yakama Nation Tribe this past year - Pow Wow and Stick Games 2024. This event has historically been held on site at Legends but due to construction impacting their grounds, they relocated to State Fair Park. This event drew more than 10,000 spectators for the three-day event. The Pow Wow performances took place in the SunDome and were live streamed by 820,000 people from 67 countries. At the conclusion of the event, we received feedback from Legends staff that this was one of their most successful and well-run events due to the amenities and great staff at State Fair Park. We are happy to announce that Legends has re-booked Pow Wow and Stick Games 2025.

## RV PARK OPENS AT STATE FAIR PARK

The State Fair Park RV Park renovation project was completed just in time to welcome the Fair's vendors who call it home for 10 plus days during the Fair. While the basic footprint of the RV Park is the same size as the previous RV Park, the number of stalls was reduced from 187 to 168. The updated layout was designed to accommodate larger, more modern RVs with multiple slide-outs and upgraded equipment. Other improvements included adding an asphalt entrance into the park as well as asphalted roads throughout the rows of RV stalls and each stall. Most spots are full service with 50-amp power, water, and sewer with some spots around the perimeter with water and sewer only. The RV Park's restroom and shower facility was also renovated. This portion of the renovation was paid for with funds the Association received from a Capital Improvement Grant from the Washington State Department of Agriculture. Upgrades included lighting, shower stalls, new fixtures, interior wall repairs, and making it ADA accessible.



## VINTIQUES 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Vintiques of Yakima Car Club celebrated their 50th anniversary "Hot Rod Show and Rod Run" at State Fair Park in 2024. Club President Art Reis said, "this has been a great partnership with State Fair Park and staff over the past 50 years and the grounds are ideal for our event." Guests from all over the Country, including former members, came to celebrate the Club's 50th Anniversary and they had 765 cars registered; a record for recent years. The Club's enthusiasm over the years for old cars has turned into a way to give back to the community. Proceeds from the event have been donated to such organizations as Rod's House, YWCA, helping veteran organizations as well as providing needed funds to area pet rescue organizations. The club was recognized for their longstanding activities by being inducted into the Washington State Hot Rod Association Hall of Fame honoring the club for outstanding contributions to both the Community and Hot Rodding enthusiasts.

# 2024 Fair Highlights



## FUN FAIR FACTS:

- **35,500** guests enjoyed the new carnival ride - "Khaos"
- The SunDola provided a bird's-eye view of the Fair for over **28,000** guests
- The new Margarita Bar sold **4,449** blended margaritas
- **15,513** Kurly Frys sold
- **15,742** Corn Dogs sold
- **New food** item top sellers:
  - Mac n Cheese Dogs
  - Curly Fries with Hot Cheetos
  - Chorizo Dog
  - Deep Fried Twisted Pickles
- **1,404** fairgoers received Free Fair Admission by donating school supplies
- **1,462** students participated in the Fair's school tour days
- **2,750** free books were distributed through school tours and ESD days in STEM Building

## Inaugural Apple Pie Baking Contest

The Central Washington State Fair proudly hosted its inaugural Apple Pie Baking Contest, attracting an impressive 64 entries across both youth and adult categories. This exciting new competition gave bakers from across the region the chance to showcase their skills and compete for a share of \$2,500 in prizes—along with the coveted Best in Class Blue Ribbon Award.

Adding to the excitement, we were thrilled to welcome Tomás Guzmán, host of the popular show WA Grown, and his crew as they joined in on the festivities. Later in the day, they explored the Fair, capturing all the fun and excitement for an upcoming episode of WA Grown. We couldn't be more excited to share our Fair's rich agricultural story with their audience!



CEO, Kathy Kramer,  
1st Place Winner Anita Zapien,  
Washington Grown's  
Tomás Guzmán, and  
CWFA Board Chair LaVonne Orth

New Carnival Ride - "Khaos"



# 2024 Agriculture Highlights

## New Interactive Programming, Educational Exhibits, and FFA Took Center Stage!

### Kids in the Kitchen

Our commitment to agricultural education remains a cornerstone of the Fair experience. This year, we introduced Nana Kate's "Kids in the Kitchen," an exciting new program that allowed children to participate in hands-on cooking demonstrations using locally sourced ingredients. Through guided activities, young attendees learned about food preparation, nutrition, and the farm-to-table journey. The program was met with enthusiastic participation, reinforcing the Fair's role in connecting future generations with agriculture.



### "The Farmer's Garden" Featured Ag Exhibit

One of the standout additions to this year's Fair was "The Farmer's Garden," an exhibit that took visitors on a journey through the rich history of apple farming in the Yakima Valley. This display highlighted the evolution of apple cultivation, showcasing traditional methods alongside modern advancements in orchard technology. Guests had the opportunity to explore different apple varieties, learn about their unique characteristics, and gain insight into the economic impact of the region's apple industry. "The Farmer's Garden" served as an educational and visually engaging space, furthering the Fair's mission to celebrate and educate about local agriculture.



### Livestock Barns

In 2024, we welcomed over 670 FFA members – a significant increase in participation compared to previous years. These future agricultural leaders gathered to judge, evaluate, and score market livestock classes based on current market trends, while also learning essential Ag mechanic skills through a hands-on tractor driving class.

Youth livestock judging contests play a pivotal role in developing well-rounded agricultural leaders. These contests offer far more than just animal evaluation; they cultivate invaluable life skills and deepen participants' understanding of agriculture.

# 1876

individuals volunteered at this year's Fair donating **6109** hours of their time.

# 6422

items were entered and displayed in the Modern Living Building and Ag Building. **\$23,131** was paid out in awards.

# 871

youth showed **1722** animals and received **\$11,164** In Cash Awards.

# 670

Future Farmers of America participated in the FFA Livestock Judging Competitions.

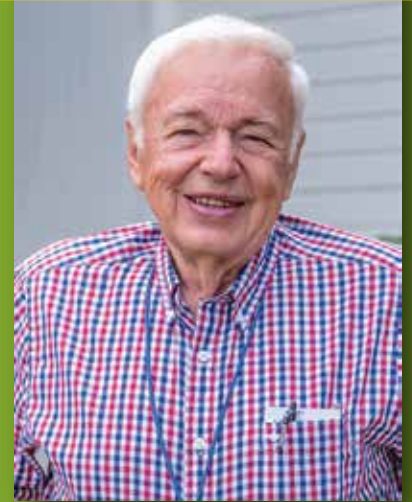
# 228

adults showed **3081** animals and received **\$119,448** in Cash Awards.

# Foundation

As we look back on 2024, we reflect on the incredible progress the Foundation has made in our agriculture education outreach and youth engagement initiative. These have been made possible by the generosity of supporters like you.

**The Sid Morrison Ag Education Fund** was established to provide philanthropic funding from the Community to support the Foundation's mission of promoting agricultural education through activities during the Central Washington State Fair and year-round at State Fair Park.



## YOUR DONATION DOLLARS AT WORK IN OUR COMMUNITY

### Fourth Grade "Perfect Plate" Program

1,800 students from across the Valley learned about nutrition and the importance of Washington-grown commodities. Guided by lesson plans developed by the Central Washington Fair Association, these young learners created their own "Perfect Plate," combining knowledge of healthy eating with pride in local agriculture.

Materials were provided at no cost to the schools, and the students' colorful, creative plates were displayed proudly in the Ag Building during the annual Fair for the community to see.

*"Perfect Plate" program increased 38% from 2023.*



### Central Washington State Fair "School Fair Field Trips"

For many children, participating in the Fair Field Trips is their first real connection to the wonders of agriculture. This past year, 1,700 students enjoyed two immersive days of agricultural education and hands-on learning.

They explored interactive learning stations, engaged with farm animals, and even launched rockets. These experiences were made possible thanks to supporters like you.

The Foundation provides the supplies, staff, and program content to make these field trips possible. The budget for the School Fair Field Trips is \$45k. In addition, we awarded two bus scholarships totaling \$905.76 to underserved schools, ensuring students across the Valley could participate in these transformational experiences.



Learn more about the Sid Morrison Agricultural Education Fund at [statefairpark.org](http://statefairpark.org)

