



2026 Contest Information & Deadlines Update 4 of 5

Reference Key:

WAF = Wisconsin Association of Fairs

WI FOTF = Wisconsin Fairest of the Fairs

WSF = Wisconsin State Fair

Each contestant will receive an email as of the dates listed below, it is your responsibility to contact the WAF office at info@wifairs.com or 715-536-0246 if you do not receive them. Each update will add new information to prepare for the contest. Please reference all five updates. They are also posted on the WAF website, www.wifairs.com.

- Contest Information & Deadlines 1 of 5: Emailed October 15
- Contest Information & Deadlines 2 of 5: Emailed November 1
- Contest Information & Deadlines 3 of 5: Emailed December 1
- **Contest Information & Deadlines 4 of 5: Emailed December 15**
- Contest Information & Deadlines 5 of 5: Emailed January 3

Contest Deadline Reminders:

December 29 Auction Description Form Completed

January 11, 2026 Arrival At Hotel, Completed Medical Form, Auction Items

January 11-14, 2026 WI FOTF Contest & WAF Convention, Chula Vista Resort, WI Dells

1. **Cell Phone/Cameras:** Throughout the contest, the WI FOTF contestants will be asked to leave their cell phones in their rooms.
2. **Convention Photos:** The WI FOTF Committee will be taking photos throughout the contest and will share a link online to view the photos following the contest. A group photo of all contestants will be taken prior to the banquet by a professional photographer. Each contestant will receive a link for this photo as well.
3. **Tiara and Sash:** Please do not bring these with you. You will be furnished with a name badge and a sash at registration/orientation.
4. **Thank You Notes:** We will have time to work on thank you notes for all of our generous sponsors throughout the contest. Please bring along about 40 thank you cards.
5. **5x7 Photo:** This is the photo that was submitted with your official entry form. **DO NOT REMOVE** this from the display as this becomes the permanent property of WAF.

6. **Advice from Past Contestants:** Over the years we have received advice from past contestants about their experience as a contestant. We hope their comments will help as you prepare for and participate in the WI FOTF Contest.

- A. Live in the moment and don't take any part of this for granted. You should be so proud that you have this opportunity. So please, love every single second of it because it will fly by in a blink of an eye.
- B. Relax; it's not as scary as you think it is. In the end you will have so much fun! Be yourself, make friends and enjoy every minute.
- C. It seems like a lot on Sunday when you get here, but the time flies.
- D. Everyone is human. The judges, the coordinators, your fellow contestants. Your mistake, your goof-up, your nervousness is not unique. Just relax, don't stress and have fun.
- E. Make connections...you never know who you may sit next to at dinner and they could change your life!
- F. Make sure to have fun. Get up and dance and remember to always learn something new.
- G. Don't let your fear or nerves stop you from having fun, making friends and creating memories.
- H. Get out of your comfort zone, do something that scares you and you won't regret it! (Such as dancing at the showcase)
- I. Speak with confidence, have fun and make new friends.
- J. Come with an open mind about ideas to help change your program for the better.
- K. When in doubt, just ask!
- L. Nothing is done to trip you up. The judges don't try to stump you. They just want to get to know you and for you to be your best.
- M. It's ok to be nervous, but don't let it control you.
- N. Go to bed on time, you won't regret it.
- O. The committee has so much information to give you – listen to them!
- P. Enjoy the moments – it'll end soon enough so enjoy all the time you'll be spending with all the incredible fairest you are surrounded by.
- Q. Don't worry the hotel is confusing to everyone, you will make it! It is ok to ask.
- R. Don't let one bad speaking time get you down, shake it off and redeem yourself. You got this.
- S. Meet and speak to as many of the contestants as possible and really get to know them. You will be surprised how much you have in common.
- T. Learn as much as you can about each fair and take what you learned back to your fair.
- U. Go into this as a learning opportunity...not as a competition.
- V. Don't let the busy schedule scare you.
- W. If you get sick, the committee takes really good care of you.
- X. Be a "sponge". There are so many presenters that are passionate about their part of the fair industry.
- Y. In the end, you will not only be rooting for yourself, but your fellow competitors as well!
- Z. You need to show the judges who you are 365 days a year, not who you think the judges want you to be. Being you is the key to success!

7. **Emergency Contact During Contest:** If for any reason you have an emergency in route or during the contest please call/text Tonya Dvorak, WI FOTF Committee Chair, at **920-901-6089**.

8. **Contest Schedule:** **It is your responsibility to be present and on time for all scheduled events including meals as outlined in the contest schedule.** Allow for elevator waiting times. Punctuality is taken into consideration in the judging process. It is our hope that this contest will be a pleasant and rewarding experience, and we thank you for being a contestant. If you have any questions, problems or need more information please contact any member of the WI FOTF Committee listed below or a past Fairest from your county. A printed copy will be provided at orientation.

9. **Thursday Morning Meet & Greet:** Lastly, we are asking that the **contestant that is selected for the 2026 WI FOTF be available on Thursday, January 14, 2026 in the morning from 8:00 to 10:00 for a breakfast meeting.** The new WI FOTF will meet with Tonya Dvorak, WI FOTF Committee Chair; Jayme Buttke, WAF Executive Director; and Beth Pomije, WSF Executive Assistant to discuss the expectations for the year and answer questions.

We are looking forward to an exciting 2026 WI FOTF Contest. See you Sunday!

WI FOTF COMMITTEE:

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