



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **FAIR BREAKS 600,000 IN ATTENDANCE FOR ONLY THE SECOND TIME IN ITS 133-YEAR HISTORY AS A 12-DAY FAIR**

*New Fresno County Historical Museum exhibits and iconic neon signs drew large crowds as Fairgoers enjoyed four new attractions, big savings, new food, great entertainment and exciting live horse racing*

**Fresno, CA...October 19, 2016...** The Big Fresno Fair's Board of Directors, Management and staff are thrilled to announce the successful completion of the 2016 Big Fresno Fair, which ran October 5 - 16. During the 12-day run of the Fair, guests were treated to a wide variety of new attractions such as camel rides, Discover the Bayou, Extreme Creature Feature and GASCAR Crazy Animal Races, along with even more historical artifacts as part of the Fresno County Historical Museum, including the famed Hacienda Motel sign. That, coupled with an incredible entertainment line-up that included sold-out Cole Swindell, Gabriel Iglesias and Banda MS shows as part of the Table Mountain Concert Series, great discounts, exciting live horse racing, plus the strongest Jr. Livestock Auction in years made for a great 133<sup>rd</sup> edition of The Big Fresno Fair!

"Our team continues to work hard to put on a Fair that's a little bit bigger and better each year. New additions to the Museum, plus other new attractions throughout the Fair definitely helped us accomplish that," said John C. Alkire, CEO of The Big Fresno Fair. "The Fresno County Historical Museum is truly a treasure for our community to enjoy, learn from and celebrate the evolution of life in our Valley as represented by its unique people, innovations, professions, pastimes and so much more. To witness the stories shared by complete strangers in the Museum during the Fair was something so special."

For only the second time in the Fair's 133-year history, it broke 600,000 people in attendance as a 12-day event. Last year was the first year that milestone had been achieved. Final attendance for the 12 days of the 2016 Big Fresno Fair attendance was 605,870, only a 0.39% difference from last year's attendance total. Those big crowds that turned out really did enjoy the Fair to its fullest, resulting in a 9.37% increase in concessions. The Jr. Livestock Auctions (10/8 and 10/15) also experienced a record year thanks to the incredible support from the community for the young 4-H and FFA members who were showing animals. While add-ons are still being processed, total sales are estimated to be in excess of \$916,000, which is an increase from last year's total of \$910,000. Horse Racing numbers are still being calculated and will be available by the end of the week.



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“We consider this year’s Fair to be a great success and that is all possible because of the continued support of our community. I would like to sincerely thank everyone who took the time to come out and see us at the Fair this year,” continued Alkire.

The Fair Management team continued to stay focused on providing affordable ways for families to attend the Fair, providing deep discounts both pre-Fair and during the Fair. Popular pre-Fair discounts included the \$30 Season Passes; up to a \$10 discount for Unlimited Carnival Ride Wristbands; plus \$2 off admission when purchasing early at participating Save Mart & FoodMaxx locations. Then the new \$28 Season Passes through O’Reilly Auto Parts. Fair-time discounts included \$1 Wednesday (10/5); “Fans & Followers” Day & \$2 Carnival Rides (10/6); Seniors’ Day presented by Eye-Q and Humana (10/10); Special Interest Day (10/10); Les Schwab Tires \$2 Tuesday (10/11); Sun-Maid Kids’ Day & \$2 Carnival Ride Wednesday (10/12); and the Save Mart & FoodMaxx “Feed the Need” Food Drive (10/13). The Save Mart & FoodMaxx “Feed the Need” Food Drive effort resulted in 260,831 lbs. (130.4 tons) of food collected – bringing our eight year total to 1,419,077 lbs., which is nearly 710 tons of food! The overall Save Mart & FoodMaxx “Feed the Need” Food Drive effort is supported by Wells Fargo and Fresno State Food Security Project, plus media partners Univision Fresno and CBS 47.

Again this year, The Big Fresno Fair continued several programs that recognize the achievements of the community’s brightest scholars, agricultural leaders and talented individuals. This year the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual 4.0 & Above Program presented by Fresno County Office of Education, Friends of the Big Fresno Fair, EECU and Toyota, gave away a record number of scholarships to Fresno County students. All students grades 8-12 whose academic performance has awarded them a 4.0 or above grade point average as of their 2016 Spring semester were invited to the Fair for free on Opening Day (10/5) for the chance to win scholarships totaling \$81,000, (6) laptops, (3) Apple iPads, (6) \$100 Visa gift cards, as well as a new Toyota Corolla that was available exclusively to 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. The 2016 Toyota Corolla was proudly donated by Toyota, and a variety of community members and organizations stepped up to fund the scholarships. Hoover High School sophomore, Isaac Blanco was the lucky winner of the new car. Find a complete list of winners here: <http://www.fresnofair.com/4-0-above-program>.

Whether it was the attractions, competitive exhibits, free entertainment, live horse racing, carnival rides, Table Mountain Rancheria Park, Fair food or concerts that brought people out, there was no doubt that the community sure does love their Big Fresno Fair. Many families chose to stay local for their entertainment and the Fair provided them a family-friendly and affordable option. Planning is already underway for the 2017 Big Fresno Fair, which will run October 4 -15 and will mark the 134<sup>th</sup> year of this valued tradition.

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