



Saginaw County Agricultural Society

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June 2, 2020

Dear Saginaw County Fair Supporters,

The Saginaw Fair has been an important part of this county and community for 107 years allowing youth and adults alike the opportunity to showcase various projects from sewing to livestock. The Fair brings over 25,000 visitors to our fairgrounds each year and is the highlight of the summer for many.

After yesterday's address from Governor Whitmer only allowing 100 people to gather coupled with news of our carnival company not having enough business to warrant coming to Michigan due to numerous cancellations, the Board of Directors and Superintendents met June 1st, 2020 and unanimously voted to not move forward with a physical Fair for 2020.

The safety and health of our entire community, guests, volunteers, and exhibitors is always our priority when making our decisions. At every step in our decision process, we considered not only the time and effort that goes into planning the Fair, but also the impact on the exhibitors and our financial future. Given the uncertainty of these times, lack of liability insurance coverage and the overall cost of hosting the event, we are unable to be fully confident in the fact that it will be safe to gather and that our event will be allowed to take place the first week of August 2020.

Our insurance company confirmed that there is not liability insurance coverage available to insure our event for communicable diseases such as COVID-19, leaving us open to lawsuits. The cost of fighting legal actions could lead to bankruptcy very quickly if someone made claim of contracting the virus at our event. The cost of hosting the Fair is over \$60,000 which does not include the Midway or Grandstand events. The idea of investing thousands of dollars for an event that most likely would not be allowed to take place would be financially devastating. Additionally, cost of maintaining the CDC recommended risk prevention guidelines would be approximately \$10,000 and enforcing the safeguards to be compliant with the county, state, and federal agencies is outside our scope of abilities.

We have been asked why we cannot "just" have the Fair. There are other very severe consequences if we were to continue to plan and hold Fair besides the financial risk. We would face losing our business license and lose any ability to apply for future grant money. We want to keep setting a good example for our young exhibitors by following the law. We are currently in Phase 4 of the Governor's Michigan Safe Start Plan. Large gatherings like ours are not allowed until Phase 6. Phase 6 encompasses 30 days with no new COVID-19 cases, a vaccine and treatment medication. Knowing all these facts it is evident, everything is stacked against us.

After the decision was made, we put our youth livestock exhibitors in the forefront. Our Livestock Committee will be hosting an online sale and processing appointments if we have 100 animals registered to take part. All youth that have turned in affidavits to date, please pay attention to your email. There will be a SurveyMonkey and a link to register your animal(s) in the very near future. This process will be the deciding factor in how the Livestock Committee moves forward in helping our youth livestock exhibitors sell their animals. If you are a youth livestock exhibitor, please be sure to participate. Your voice needs to be heard.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Along with the Livestock Committee, our Superintendents researched the possibility of virtual shows and unanimously agreed that our Fair does not have the staff nor technical ability to conduct our entire fair book in a virtual format. BUT... they are planning for a “Fair Facebook Fun Challenge” each week until Fair in lieu of actual shows- prizes included.

Fair week will still encompass some Fair fun- including Fair Food! We are still planning activities to keep the spirit alive. We are not going away; and we need your support now more than ever. Please follow our events and join in the fun.

The Fair is a beloved tradition and a key economic driver for the Fairground’s operations. We have a due diligence to preserve it for the future. While it is disappointing to many, we know that it is the correct decision for our organization to ensure the celebration of the Saginaw County Fair for the next 100 years.

In these unprecedented times, it is for all these reasons, and with heavy hearts, the decision has been made to cancel the 2020 Saginaw County Fair and come back strong and with confidence next year, August 3-7, 2021.

For all up to date information follow us on Facebook or go to our website www.saginawfair.org.

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Copes

Board President

Saginaw County Fair