

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Dutchess Fair Showcases Agriculture**

Rhinebeck, NY... On August 22<sup>nd</sup> at 10am, the Dutchess County Fair will open its gates to the fair going public. “178 years later, the mission of showcasing agriculture is still our priority and driving force”, said President/CEO, Andy Imperati. Year after year visitors both near and far make the annual trek to see the best of Dutchess County livestock.

More than 335 dairy cows, 74 beef cows, 242 sheep, 180 goats and 300 poultry class birds will join rabbits, hogs, llamas, alpacas and horses on livestock hill August 22 – 27.

Cattle entries include dairy breeds such as Holsteins, Jerseys, Guernsey, Brown Swiss and Ayrshires and beef cattle types such as Aberdeen Angus and Hereford.

Judges consider the overall conformation of an animal, as well as condition of the coats, proportion of fat to muscle, and showmanship when awarding prizes.

It is still considered quite prestigious in the Northeast and nationally for livestock to do well at the Dutchess County Fair, and many champions go on to the state fairs and beyond for additional awards.

Sheep are judged according to similar criteria, with special attention paid to the condition and quality of wool. Southdown, Dorset, Montadale, Oxford, Hampshire, Suffolk and Tunis are just some of the breeds represented in the Sheep Pavilion. Volunteers also gather in the Wool Work Room and offer continuous spinning, weaving and dyeing demonstrations.

Over the years 4-H has been an integral part of the Fair’s Livestock shows. Their shows continue to include sheep, goats, cows and hogs. Young exhibitors also compete in the popular Costume classes. Both owner and animal dress up in coordinated outfits and the amusing results have entertained fairgoers for years.

The fair also hosts the Dutchess County Youth Livestock Sale starting at 4pm on Saturday in the Livestock arena. **Animals will be sold according to weight and only Dutchess County residents can sell animals in the sale.**

While the open- poultry show is held on Wednesday, the cackling, crowing and exotic birds are on view all week in the Poultry Barn along with 4-H rabbits and cavies.

Weeklong activities on Livestock Hill culminate with the Master Showmanship Contest on Sunday at 10am. Afterwards the Livestock Pavilion turns into some serious fun with the ever-popular Stick Pony Rodeo at 3pm.

Livestock Hill, while offering all the beauty, vitality and scientific knowledge of the area's best farms, is not the only place fairgoers can enjoy outstanding animals. The infield offers the Salute to Agriculture and Dairy Birthing Center where agriculture is promoted and fairgoers, if Mother Nature cooperates, may see a calf being born.

The infield also hosts a myriad of horse shows including a youth horse show and the Horse Pull Contest on Tuesday (8/22). The English horse shows take place Wednesday through Friday. New this year is the Donkey & Mule Show on Friday. Saturday hosts the Open Driving Show and the NYS Pony Pull; Sunday hosts the Western Show featuring Gymkhana and the Blacksmith Contest.

The Dutchess County Fair opens each day, August 22 – 27 at 10am. For information on admission and a daily schedule go to [www.dutchessfair.com](http://www.dutchessfair.com).

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