



**California  
State Fair**

**AUG. 12 - SEPT. 5, 2005**

**BIG FUN!**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

**California State Fair Expands Schedule to 22 Days**

*Everyone's Invited to the State Fair's 'Beach Party' in 2005*

**SACRAMENTO, CA** (December 9, 2004) -- California residents will now have four additional days to experience everything the California State Fair has to offer. In a move that represents a growing trend in the Fair industry, the California Exposition & State Fair today announced it will be expanding its Fair operating schedule to a 22-day format, beginning in August 2005.

For the last 21 years, the California State Fair has run for 18 consecutive days beginning in August and ending on Labor Day. Starting in 2005, the State Fair will adopt a new four week, 22-day schedule with Mondays closed, except Labor Day. The new dates for the 2005 California State Fair are **Friday, August 12 through Monday, September 5**. The Cal Expo horse racing schedule during fairtime will remain unchanged – it will open on Wednesday, August 24 with a dark day on Tuesday, August 30.

The decision to expand the State Fair operating schedule was made final on Friday, December 3 when the Cal Expo Board of Directors unanimously agreed that the additional dates would give more people greater opportunity to enjoy the State Fair, while also increasing the Fair's overall potential for revenue from ticket sales and concessions.

"The State Fair is all about BIG FUN for families. By adding four extra days, including an extra weekend, we're making it even easier for parents and kids to enjoy everything the State Fair has to offer in a timeframe that works better for them," said Rex Hime, Chair of the Cal Expo Board of Directors.

According to the Cal Expo CEO Norb Bartosik, the decision to expand the State Fair operating schedule was a strategic one. "Schools have been starting earlier each year and we wanted to take proactive measures to address that trend once and for all." The new dates will give many Northern California families three additional days, including a weekend, before most local K-12 schools begin their fall semester.

(more)

Research shows that in the last five years, Northern California K-12 schools in particular have been starting and ending earlier each year.

“With families making up a large percentage of State Fair attendees, it’s important to accommodate their busy schedules,” Bartosik continued.

Cal Expo is the third fair in the Western Region to recently revise its Fair schedule to address the variety of factors that impact overall attendance. Fair managers have found that in most instances, Fair attendance increased each year after the schedule change.

The State Fair is a statewide event that attracts people from every single county in California as well as other states and countries. More than 918,000 people came through the Cal Expo gates during State Fair 2004. Officials are confident that number can be increased with the new schedule.

“We’re planning an amazing program for 2005 and we want as many people as possible to have the opportunity to enjoy it,” Bartosik said.

### **Life’s a Beach at State Fair 2005**

In conjunction with the expansion of its Fair schedule, State Fair organizers also today unveiled an official theme for 2005 -- California’s Beaches and Oceans -- which will highlight the significance of the environment, tourism, international trade and the impact of California’s coastline culture.

2005 marks the first time in recent years that State Fair organizers have chosen a single theme to guide their programming and entertainment lineup. Fair officials are currently planning to host a number of beach-related State Fair activities, exhibits and entertainment for 2005, including a high dive show, beach volleyball, surfer music and a shark show.

“The State Fair has and always will be about BIG FUN; adding the theme element will really help get our creative juices flowing. We even bought a custom made extra-large pair of surf shorts for our State Fair mascot Poppy,” said Bartosik.

For more information, please contact Erica Manuel, Public Relations Manager, at 916-263-3237 or 916-825-0646.