

## Wyoming State Fair Budget Appropriation White Paper

**Issue:** *The appropriations for the 2018 and 2019 (as adopted in 2017 session) Wyoming State Fair are insufficient to host a safe, quality State Fair for Wyoming's FFA and 4-H members. The Governor's proposed FY 19-20 budget includes restoration of funding sufficient to host the State Fair. Funding available in the Wyoming State Fair enterprise accounts is not adequate to cover this budget shortfall. Without adequate funding the ability for the Department of Agriculture to host a safe and quality state fair is in jeopardy.*

1. Should Wyoming fail to hold a State Fair in Douglas on the State Fairgrounds for three consecutive years, the State must return the property to the heirs of the original donors and all facilities must be removed or forfeited, per Wyoming State Statute **11-10-103. Reversion of fairgrounds to donor.**
2. The Wyoming State Fair (State Fair) is the only major statewide culminating event for many 4-H and FFA projects. These projects represent the body of work members complete during each year of membership. Like state volleyball or track, the State Fair is the statewide championship of 4-H and FFA projects. **More than 800 4-H and FFA members** compete in the livestock competitions at State Fair. An additional 2,000-3,000 members compete with static exhibits.
3. For many students, their involvement in high school sports ends upon graduation. Wyoming FFA and 4-H members, however, continue to develop their products as careers and learn technical skills. Members take the skills built at State Fair and "go pro" in the agriculture, mining and extraction, family and consumer sciences, transportation or business industries.
4. The career and technical skills FFA and 4-H members develop are critical to Wyoming's efforts to diversify its economy and workforce in the coming decades.
5. WVATA believes in and supports the value of the State Fair as an educational event for members. Through participation in the State Fair, students learn and reinforce skills such as responsibility, decision-making, record-keeping, public speaking and leadership. Students exhibited 3,464 junior livestock, horses or other animals in 2017, and displayed more than 6,000 skill-based exhibits.
6. WVATA believes in the value of the State Fair as the only major statewide agriculture marketing effort. Agriculture is the third largest industry in Wyoming. It provides income to state and local economies, providing \$2.043 billion added value in 2015 as well as more than 15,500 jobs. Over the last five years, State Fair averaged more than 49,000 attendees annually.
7. Wyoming FFA chapters, 4-H clubs and families support the State Fair through existing participation fees such as daily gate admission, parking permits, campground and dorm fees, meal tickets, stalling and open class entry fees. In 2017, a family of four (2 parents and 2 active FFA/4-H members) spent approximately \$1,200 in fees and permits to eat, sleep and show one sheep and one steer in the junior livestock events. This does not include any optional entertainment, on-grounds shopping, etc.
8. Private citizens and organizations have provided substantial financial and In-kind contributions to the Wyoming State Fair for improvements to the grounds and hosting the annual event. Examples of improvement projects include new shelving built and installed by FFA chapters for the the FFA Exhibit Hall; the Pathway to Water Quality project sponsored by Cameco, Encana, the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, and USDA-NRCS; Living Legacy Tree Program sponsored in part by the Wyoming Natural Resources Foundation. Several hundred volunteers also help conduct each State Fair. Wyoming FFA staff, 4-H agents and adult leaders, Converse County residents and members of the statewide agriculture community are critical to the fair. They volunteer at shows and events, serve as chaperones and conduct the shows.

9. WVATA recognizes the need to identify new and diverse income streams through better utilization of the State Fair campus. We support efforts to connect the State Fair with leaders in agriculture, business, tourism, parks and cultural resources. By identifying and securing new revenue sources, the State Fair and campus can become more self-sustaining. WVATA, Wyoming FFA and 4-H support efforts to identify cost-saving and streamlining strategies, and we are open to new ideas or formats to make the State Fair more cost-efficient in the future.

**Contact:**

Stacy Broda  
Wyoming FFA State Advisor  
(307) 630-6094  
[sbroda@yahoo.com](mailto:sbroda@yahoo.com)

Lisa Johnson  
WVATA Legislative Coordinator  
(307) 534-5410  
[lisa@orbisleaders.com](mailto:lisa@orbisleaders.com)

Find more information at <http://wvata.wyffa.org>

*Supporting Organizations:* Wyoming Ag in the Classroom, Wyoming Association of Extension 4-H Agents, Wyoming FFA Association, Wyoming 4-H, Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts, Wyoming Association of Fairs, Wyoming Association of Vocational Agriculture Teachers, Wyoming Pork Producers Council, Wyoming Stockgrowers Association

## State Fair Appropriation Legislative Timeline

**December 1** – Governor Matt Mead released budget : The Governor’s budget includes restoration of funding sufficient to host the State Fair.

**December 4** – Governor presented his budget to the Joint Appropriations Committee .

**January 8** – Department of Agriculture presents budget to Joint Appropriations Committee. At this point, the Governor’s exception budget request for state fair will be presented and the Department will respond to questions.

Recommend that contacts from key individuals from the communities from appropriations committee members areas/legislative districts contact them prior to the January 8 timeframe. Remember that the Appropriations Committee starts meeting December 4 and will be fairly continuously. So whomever is contacting members should be cognizant of the Appropriations Committee schedule.

Members of the Joint Appropriations Committee can be found here:

<http://legisweb.state.wy.us/LegislatorSummary/CommitteeMembers.aspx?strCommitteeID=02>

The Committees schedule can be found here:

<http://legisweb.state.wy.us/LegislatorSummary/IntCommDetail.aspx?strType=N&strCommitteeID=02&Year=2017&strCommName=Appropriations%20Committee>

## Joint Agriculture Committee legislation timeline

Members of the Joint Agriculture, State and Public Lands & Water Resources Committee members can be found here:

<http://legisweb.state.wy.us/LegislatorSummary/CommitteeMembers.aspx?strCommitteeID=05>

Assuming the Committee does vote to sponsor, the bill will then be filed and a bill number assigned. The bill draft should appear on the LSO site here:

<http://legisweb.state.wy.us/LegislatorSummary/InterimComm.aspx?strCommitteeID=05&Year=2017>

The bill once a number is assigned and LSO starts publishing bills the bill will appear as House bills or Senate Files. Depending on which side the Chairmen determine the bill will start.

The 2018 Wyoming Legislative Session begins on February 12.

*Supporting Organizations:* Wyoming Ag in the Classroom, Wyoming Association of Extension 4-H Agents, Wyoming FFA Association, Wyoming 4-H, Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts, Wyoming Association of Fairs, Wyoming Association of Vocational Agriculture Teachers, Wyoming Pork Producers Council, Wyoming Stockgrowers Association