



Officer's and Board of Director's Response to COVID-19

May 4, 2020

The health and wellbeing of our members, community and Fair family is important to us. As of today, the Deerfield Fair Association, Inc. is planning to proceed with our 144th Deerfield Fair.

As Officer's and members of the Board of Director's we are closely monitoring the current events regarding COVID-19 and will fully comply with all governmental guidelines from local and state officials as well as the Center for Disease Control. Using this information, we will determine in the best interest of public health to make an official decision in early August whether to proceed with our 144th Fair this year. Planning is essential to the success of the Fair and we believe that this will allow for the full evaluation of information and possible amendments to current planning. It is our goal to host a safe and traditional Deerfield Fair experience for our valued guests in 2020. We understand that the Fair is an event that is anticipated with enthusiasm each year; therefore, we hope to see you at the Fair October 1st-4th.

Please stay safe and be well.

Deerfield Fair Officer's and Board of Director's

Agricultural Business Spotlight

One of the unique qualities of the Deerfield Fair is our extensive displays of agricultural equipment. We take great pride in having more equipment on our grounds during the Fair for our visitors to look at than available at many other fairs. This aspect builds on our farm and country feel as well as giving visitors young and old fantasies of buying a farm tractor of their very own.

One of the reasons we can display the multitude of equipment that we do is because of the continued support of companies such as James R. Rosencrantz & Sons, Inc.

James R. Rosencrantz & Sons is a longtime supporter of the Deerfield Fair. They have been bringing equipment to the Fair since the '50s. The company is celebrating 72 years of family-owned and operated business. The company generously donates equipment for the Fair to use each year and allows for our daily operations to run smoothly. You may see their equipment across the fairgrounds helping with different tasks or at their display areas. Stop in and speak with them at the Fair or contact them at one of their locations!

We are extremely grateful for the longstanding support of James R. Rosencrantz & Sons, Inc., at the Deerfield Fair. Thank you!

Kensington
184 South Rd
Kensington, NH 03833
(603) 772-4414

Derry
212 Rockingham Rd
Derry, NH 03038
(603) 437-5155

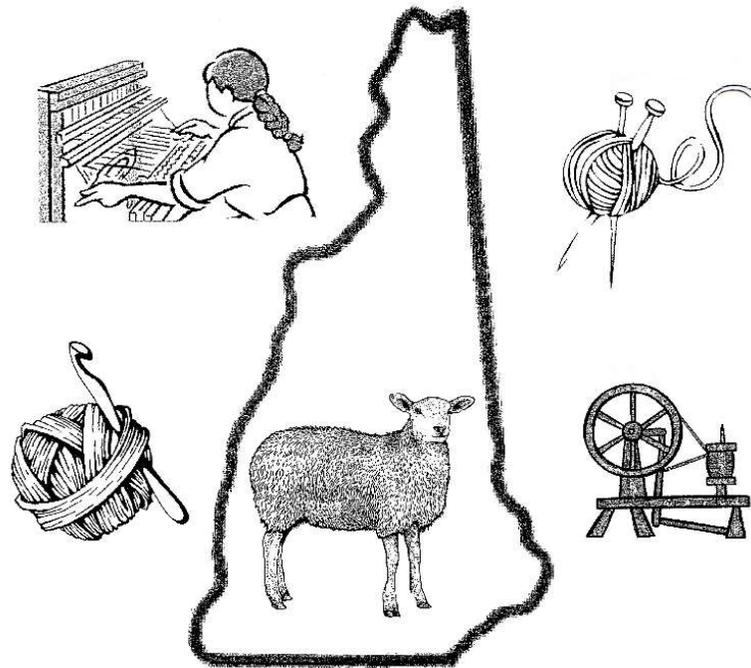
Story of the Week

New Hampshire Sheep and Wool Festival

The NH Sheep and Wool Growers Festival (NHSWGA) takes place each spring on the Deerfield Fairgrounds. Unfortunately, the Festival, which was scheduled for May 8, 9 & 10, was cancelled due to COVID-19. The cancellation will not stop old and new fans of the event from being able to purchase the sheep and wool products that they look forward to each year.

The NH Sheep and Wool Growers Association holds the NH Sheep and Wool Festival yearly. The groups' mission is to "teach sheep management skills, educate the public and provide a forum for shepherds to meet and exchange ideas," explained Association Secretary, Ammy Rice.

The Association brings together sheep enthusiasts from far and wide who all have different backgrounds. Rice stated that "we have roughly 100 or more members at any given time that could range from farmers to teachers to supporters of the sheep and fiber arts industry. Our membership is wide and diverse." In addition to spanning the state of New Hampshire, the Association also has members from Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont, and even as far away as Wisconsin.



J. Whitaker 2019

Photo provided by Ammy Rice.

There is also a strong focus on youth in the Association as they award an annual scholarship, sponsor 4-H Sheep Camp and the NH 4-H Livestock Auction. They also award blankets at four local fairs for the best wool sheep at the fair. The Association has made donations to 4-H clubs who want to travel to bigger shows for competition with their sheep, such as the All-American Sheep Show or the North American International Livestock Expo. This focus comes from the belief that youth are the future of agriculture, "a significant portion of our budget is dedicated to supporting the young shepherds in the state," said Rice.

The Sheep and Wool Festival is one of the Associations' biggest events of the year, but they also provide other events for their members such as clinics and workshops. There have been some changes to these events this year; however, due to COVID-19. "This year, we got lucky and were able to pull together our lambing clinic, and the following weekend was the shearing clinic. We did see a decline in the number of participants who chose to come out and learn, but we all practiced social distancing and took proper measures to keep everyone safe," stated Rice.

Rice has a long history with the Festival and has spent many years attending. “The Festival is a yearly Mother’s Day weekend tradition here in the state. Growing up as a kid, I spent many weekends at the Sheep and Wool Festival. Being a child of a vendor, the Festival began at the New Boston Fairgrounds and now is held at the Deerfield Fairgrounds.”

The event draws quite the crowd with over 2,500 people in attendance last year and just above 100 vendors. The Festival provides its attendees a look into all things wool by hosting a wide array of events. There are a large variety of clinics, classes and demonstrations, a sheep show, an alpaca show, and sheep herding demonstrations. There is also an opportunity to watch the Australian Shepherd Club of New England’s Farm Trials.

This year was set to be the 44th year for the Festival with 110 vendors scheduled and hopefully, an even larger crowd. The event, however, will not be able to run this year due to the current circumstances. The decision to cancel the event was not an easy one, but Rice explained the reasoning behind it. “The decision to cancel the Festival came in March; with the uncertainty of how COVID-19 was going to affect life for the next few months, we chose to keep everyone safe and cancel the Festival. We appreciate the Deerfield Fair Board’s support of our decision and are genuinely looking forward to being at the Fair this fall, and back in 2021 for the Festival.”

Fortunately, there is still an opportunity to purchase the lovely sheep and wool products from vendors that would have been in attendance. The NHSWGA Facebook and Instagram will be active with vendors posting online sales and promotions. The Association’s website also has a complete list of vendors and their respective websites. The NHSWGA and Festival Committee encourages everyone to look into their list of amazing vendors and support local agricultural businesses!

Contact Information

List of Vendors

<https://www.nhswga.org/vendors>

NH Sheep and Wool Growers Association Website

<https://www.nhswga.org/membership>

NH Sheep and Wool Growers Association Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/NewHampshireSWGA/>

Event News

NEAR-Fest – May 1 & 2 – Cancelled

New Hampshire Sheep and Wool Festival – May 8 - 10 – Cancelled

Stratham Fair – July 16 - 19 – Cancelled

Cheshire Fair – July 30 - August 2 – Cancelled

Lancaster Fair – September 3 - 7 – Cancelled

The Sandwich Fair – October 10 - 12 – Cancelled

Additional Resources

Local Harvest

<https://www.localharvest.org/exeter-nh>

UNH Extension: Agriculture COVID-19 Q&A

<https://extension.unh.edu/resource/faqs-about-covid-19-and-nh-agriculture-updated-daily>

New Hampshire Agriculture Map

<https://www.agriculture.nh.gov/publications-forms/documents/agricultural-map.pdf>