
Press Release

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FREEHOLDERS DEDICATE NEW BURLINGTON COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

Ribbon Cutting Sets Stage For Wednesday, July 20th, Opening Day

With the large exhibitor tents pitched and ready, final landscaping touches completed, new walkways finished, and a Midway of colorful amusement rides in place, Burlington County Freeholders today assembled with other officials and guests to officially dedicate the new Burlington County Fairgrounds in Springfield Township.

The event was marked by two ribbon cuttings. Freeholder Director Bruce Garganio broke the first ribbon aboard a tractor, leading a parade of tractors onto the site. The cutting of a second ribbon – across the wide entry to the site – was joined in by all in attendance.

“I congratulate and thank all of you who are with us today, because you are sharing in what is truly a milestone in the history of Burlington County,” Director Garganio said in his ceremonial address.

“Years from now memories and photographs from today’s event will be circulated, and you will be able to say, with pride and satisfaction, that you were there,” he added.

For decades, the Farm Fair has been a regular happening on the Village Green in Lumberton, but has become “squeezed” in recent years by increasing population and traffic, not to mention its own offering of exhibits and activities.

Working with the Burlington County Farm Fair Association, freeholders identified the 640-acre sod farm off Route 206 (at Jacksonville-Jobstown Road) as an ideal replacement, and purchased the property, which had faced potential residential development, in 2004 for \$4.5 million.

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Garganio told those assembled for today's ceremony that the purchase was – and still is – the largest acquisition the County has ever made. Sixty acres have been earmarked for the fairgrounds, which will also host equestrian, 4-H and other events throughout the year.

The remaining major portion of the property will remain as open space, and is destined to feature an expansive network of trails sometime in the future.

The 2011 edition of the Farm Fair is expected to get underway this Wednesday, July 20th, and run through Saturday, July 23rd. The Farm Fair Association will hold its own ceremonial opening on Wednesday.

Fair organizers have clung to traditional agricultural displays, contests, and events over the years, but have also incorporated new and exciting attractions. This year, for the first time, a tractor pull competition, scheduled for Thursday, is expected to draw crowd attention.

Those wanting more farm fair information can call (609) 784-8369 or can go on-line to: <http://www.burlingtoncountyfarmfair.com/site/> The Farm Fair Manager is Jim Soden.

The field of 50 tractors that paraded onto the new fairgrounds today actually made a ceremonial trip that started around 10 AM in Springfield, rolled along back roads to the former home of the farm fair in Lumberton, and then returned to the new site four hours later.

"I extend thanks and congratulations to the good people of Lumberton, who for years, welcomed the farm fair to their community, even as it was growing and bursting at the seams," said Garganio.

"Many of us will have nostalgic memories, childhood memories, of our experiences there."

The freeholder director noted that Springfield, according to historical accounts, was actually the original home of the farm fair.

"So we are," he said, "no pun intended, returning to our roots."

ALSO CONTACT: Paul Shinn, President, Burlington County Farm Fair Assn.
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