



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
LANSING

DON KOIVISTO
DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

On behalf of Michigan's fair industry, welcome to your 2009 county fair!

Over 4 million people attend Michigan's county fairs each year, and this year's fair season promises to provide the sights, sounds and activities that have become an annual tradition for many of us.

Michigan's agriculture industry contributes nearly \$73.1 billion annually to the state's economy and employees over one million Michigan residents. Michigan produces more than 200 commodities on a commercial basis, second in diversity only to California. As other industries in our state suffer from a nationwide economic downturn, Michigan's agriculture industry is thriving and leading our state in economic growth.

Michigan fairs are an important part of our state's growing agriculture industry, helping to maintain a much-needed connection to rural traditions while highlighting modern agriculture practices. Our state's 86 local, county and state fairs provide safe, family-friendly entertainment and celebrate our communities and the bounty of our agricultural harvest.

Nearly 50,000 Michigan youth participate in livestock and community arts exhibitions each year, and many local businesses and families support the efforts of our young exhibitors' efforts through participation in youth livestock auctions held at each of our fairs. Last year, total auction sales were nearly \$15 million! Many of our exhibitors use the money raised during the auctions to help fund their college educations.

Whether you are here as a sponsor or exhibitor, or to enjoy the livestock shows, food, midway rides, entertainment or the many other activities awaiting you at the fair, I wish you great adventures during the 2009 fair season.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Koivisto".

Don Koivisto
Director