



MARYLAND STATE FAIR

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ALPACAS ARE FUN AT THE MARYLAND STATE FAIR

The Maryland Alpaca Breeders Association (MABA) will host a variety of informational activities and farm booths (featuring both breeds of Alpacas) to highlight the increasing popularity of Alpaca farming in Maryland, Tuesday, August 28 through Thursday, August 30, from 10 a.m. - 10 p.m., in the Maryland State Fair Cow Palace.

The MABA will begin their presentations by showcasing garments and products made with alpaca fibers in the *4-H Fashion Revue*, Tuesday, August 28 at 7 P.M. The *Alpacas are Fun* mock agility show and games (with Alpacas handled by 4-H members) will be held on Wednesday, August 29 from 6 p.m. And, a *Breeders Panel Presentation* including general information about Alpacas, their care and breeding will take place on Thursday, August 30 at 6 p.m.

"More and more Maryland farmers are becoming interested in breeding Alpacas because of the minimal space required to raise and maintain them, the versatility, warmth and softness of Alpaca fiber as well as its hypoallergenic and other natural qualities," said the first Alpaca Breeder in Maryland and one of MABA's founding members Tilly Dorsey. "We hope that our presence at the Maryland State Fair will increase interest in further growing this industry in Maryland.

The Maryland Alpaca Breeders Association (MABA) was established one winter evening in 1996 when a group of five Alpaca Breeders gathered at an Ellicott City restaurant to discuss the development and promotion of a dynamic, growing and profitable alpaca industry in Maryland. Currently, MABA has grown to more than 60 member farms and is a vibrant organization whose activities include regular quarterly meetings, hosting of an educational website, seminars, and the upcoming November 2008 1st Annual Certified Alpaca Show. For more information about Alpaca Farming, go to www.marylandalpacas.org.

The 2007 Maryland State Fair is a sure bet for summer food, fun and festivities. In celebration of its 126th year, the 11-day festival will feature thousands of home arts and agricultural exhibits, daily livestock and horse shows, a wide variety of midway rides and games, thoroughbred horse racing and national entertainment. The Maryland State Fair opens **Friday, August 24 and runs through Monday, September 3, 2007**, 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. at the Timonium Fairgrounds in Baltimore County. Early risers are welcome to attend livestock and horse shows at 9 a.m., gates and exhibit halls open from 10 a.m.- 10 p.m., and the Midway opens at 10 a.m. on weekends, 12 noon on weekdays, and stays open late on selected nights. No other event provides so much food, fun and family entertainment for so little. **Admission is only \$6.00 for adults, \$3.00 for children 6-11 years old. Children five-years-old and younger are admitted free. Rides and concerts are individually priced.**

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The Maryland State Fair annually recognizes the talents of Marylanders of all ages as well as the hard work of thousands of 4-H and Future Farmers of America (FFA) members who compete in shows and demonstrations throughout the 11 days of the Fair. Over the years, MD State Fair facilities and competitions have been expanded and modernized allowing for more and better exhibits. **The order of livestock shows has changed this year** with Open Class Livestock Shows from Fri., Aug. 24 to Wed., Aug. 29 and 4-H/FFA Livestock Shows from Fri., Aug. 31 to Labor Day Mon., Sept. 3. 4-H will host the **4-H Fashion Revue**, Tues., Aug. 28, 7:00 p.m. in the Cow Palace and the popular **Costume Animal Contest** on Fri., Aug. 31, 7:30 p.m. in the Horse Show Arena. The **4-H/FFA Livestock Sale** will take place Sun., Sept. 2 at 7:30 p.m. in the Cow Palace.

The MD State Fair is a fun and educational resource complete with daily exhibits and presentations that are sure to captivate visitors of all ages. Keep an eye on www.marylandstatefair.com for announcements of national bands performing in the *MD State Fair Concert Series*. Prices vary. Lawn Seating in the Racetrack Infield is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. **Back by popular demand:** *The J Bar W Ranch Battle of the Beasts professional bull riding* in the Horse Show Arena on Mon., Aug. 27 at 7 p.m.; the *Swiftly Swine Pig Racing and Swimming Show* featuring a Piggie University (PU) class on the Midway; the *Univ. of MD Agriculture Fair Tours* starting at the Cow Palace; the **Birthing Center**, where fairgoers may witness the miracle of birth of calves and piglets under the supervision of veterinarians and students and the **Cow Milking Clinic** in the Cow Palace; the **Antique Vehicle Display**, Sun., Sept. 2, at the Racetrack Grandstand, and more.

Thoroughbred horseracing begins daily, Fri., August 24 at 1 p.m. with live and/or simulcast races except Tuesday, August 28 when the track will be completely dark. Admission to the racetrack is included in the admission price of the Fair.

Fairgoers are invited to **explore** the Farm & Garden, 4-H/Home Arts Buildings, the Cow Palace, Horse Show Ring, and other agricultural buildings and displays as well as the Exhibition Hall. For nature lovers, join the **Department of Natural Resources** near the State Fair Park to learn about conservation, recreation, stewardship and protection of Maryland's natural resources.

The Midway will provide thrills and chills for the entire family with over 40 rides. "Kiddie Land" will offer tame but exciting rides, while the Midway promises to thrill even the bravest fairgoers. In addition, a wide selection of food will satisfy the spirit as well as the palate. Fairgoers will have the opportunity to enjoy the delightful taste of corn dogs and cotton candy on the Midway, or the traditional flavor of crab cakes, mouth-watering sandwiches, corn-on-the-cob, fruit, ice cream and many other products fresh from Maryland farms at the **MD State Fair Foods Pavilion**. **Parking** on the Fairgrounds for a minimal fee and free parking at the Park and Ride location on Deereco Road are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The Fairgrounds encourages use of the **Light Rail** with an easily accessible Light Rail stop at the Fairgrounds' Cow Palace Gate. For fairgoers' convenience, **ATM Machines** will be located in front of the 4-H Building and Exhibition Hall and in the Cow Palace and the Grandstand.

The 126th MD State Fair has something for everyone, the young and the young at heart. **Proud sponsors** of The MD State Fair include: Winner Distributing Company/Budweiser; BG&E; Food Lion; Frito-Lay; Vacation Village; Kitchen Craft; Maryland State Lottery; Maryland Transit Administration; Party Perfect; Pepsi; Schmidt's Baking Company; Baltimore Sun Papers; Toyota; WMAR-TV2; among others. For general information, call 410-252-0200, ext. 227 or visit the Maryland State Fair web site at marylandstatefair.com.

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