



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FAIRGOERS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO WITNESS THE MIRACLE OF BIRTH! The 135th unFAIRgettable MY MARYLAND STATE FAIR BIRTHING CENTER DELIVERS AN EXCELLENT EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

TIMONIUM, MD – MY Maryland State Fair, presented by Toyota, *Birthing Center* will offer a great opportunity for fairgoers to ask questions and learn more about agriculture, one of the most important industries in Maryland, from Friday, August 26 through Monday, September 5, 2016.

The *Birthing Center*, features eye-level displays of litters of piglets and baby chicks as well as birthing areas where cows and sows (mother pigs) will give birth. Located in the **Cow Palace behind the Dairy Bar**, the Birthing Center will be open daily from 10 AM – 10 PM (or later if labor has already started) to provide opportunities for fairgoers to witness the miracle of birth of calves, litters of piglets and hatching chicks. In addition, live video cameras coupled with big screen televisions are in place to ensure that everyone has a good view. University of Maryland agriculture students along with the Maryland State Fair Veterinarian will be with the animals at all times to oversee and assist with the deliveries and narrate the birth events that occur during Fair hours. The Ag students will also use Twitter (#statefairbirths) and an answering machine, 410-561-5695, to communicate with interested fairgoers when labor has begun. Video presentations will also be available when live births are not taking place.

Between births, University of Maryland AG students, dressed in red coveralls, will be holding the chicks and piglets for an up close and personal look. They will also provide factual and fun answers to fairgoers' questions about all aspects of agriculture. If you have ever wondered what the difference is between a heifer and a steer or a goat and a sheep, but were too afraid to ask, fear not.

“While many people might understand the vital role of Maryland’s food and fiber industries to its economy, most folks don’t get a chance to see first hand what goes on at the farm,” said University of Maryland Associate Professor Emeritus Dr. Tom Hartsock. “We hope fairgoers, and especially children, walk away from the *Birthing Center* with a greater appreciation of the farm animals that provide so much of our nutritious food.”

“more”

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The 135th unFAIRgettable MY Maryland State Fair presented by Toyota is a fun and educational destination complete with daily exhibits, presentations and entertainment that are sure to captivate visitors of all ages. No other event provides so much food, fun, family entertainment and education for so little. The Maryland State Fair, located in Timonium in Baltimore County, opens **Thursday, August 25 and runs through Monday, September 5, 2016.**

Hear **Live National and Local Entertainment**; Enjoy **thrills & chills on the Midway or Kiddie Land tame rides.** Taste a **feast of Fair and farm foods.** Experience **Live Thoroughbred Horse Racing**; Explore the **4-H/Home Arts, Farm & Garden, Exhibition Hall and the Mosner/Miller Museum/DNR Buildings** for thousands of the best-of-the-best of Maryland creations and exhibits. See all kinds of **livestock and horses in the Cow Palace, Barns, Show Rings and Birthing Center.** Participate in **U-Learn Farm agriculture education activities,** and more.

The 4-H/Home Arts, Farm & Garden and Exhibition Hall hours: Monday – Friday, 12 Noon – 10 PM, Saturdays – Sundays, 10 AM – 10 PM, and Labor Day Monday 10 AM – 8 PM. Mosner-Miller Museum hours: Monday – Friday, 2 PM – 8 PM and Saturdays, Sundays and Labor Day Monday, 10 AM – 8 PM. Mosner-Miller DNR Building hours: Monday – Friday, 2 PM – 8 PM and Saturdays, Sundays and Labor Day Monday, 10 AM – 8 PM. Kiddie Land rides area hours: Monday – Friday, 12 Noon – 10 PM and Saturdays, Sundays and Labor Day Monday, 10AM - 10 PM. Main Midway rides, games and food stands hours: Monday – Friday, 2PM - close and Saturday, Sunday and Labor Day Monday, 10 AM - close. Early risers are welcome to attend livestock and horse shows in the various livestock buildings and show rings at 9 AM. **Admission to the Fair is \$8 for adults, \$6 for seniors (62 and older) and \$3 for children (6-11). Children five-years-old and younger are admitted free. Rides are individually priced. Limited parking on the Fairgrounds is available on a first-come, first-served basis for \$5.** Taking the **Light Rail** is recommended. Visit www.marylandstatefair.com.

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