



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**THE MARYLAND STATE FAIR WILL BE ALL AFLUTTER WITH
THE NEW BUTTERFLY ENCOUNTER, AG PLANETARIUM AND OTHER NEW AG-MAZING EDUCATIONAL EVENTS**

Timonium, MD – Since 1879, agriculture education and thoroughbred horse racing have been key ingredients to the Maryland State Fair. This year, Maryland State Fair and Maryland 4-H Foundation education programs are growing through the generosity of DuPont Pioneer, Maryland Soy Bean Board, Maryland Grain Utilization Board, Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association, University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Maryland Department of Agriculture, Maryland Agriculture Education Foundation, Maryland Farm Bureau Young Farmers, and others. The Maryland State Fair buildings are open from Friday, August 25 through Monday, September 4, 2017 during the Fair. Note: Only Midway rides, food and games, and some livestock shows will be open on Thursday, August 24 Preview Night.

THE INNOVATION STATION...STEM Growing with You – The Farm & Garden Building North Room will be transformed by the Maryland State Fair, in partnership with the Maryland Grain Utilization Board and the Maryland Soy Bean Board, into a wonderland of exciting hands-on educational activities, among them: **The Butterfly Encounter, The Agriculture Planetarium, Ethanol Remote Car Race Track**, and more.

“Fairgoers, In addition to visiting thousands of farm & garden, home arts, livestock and horse entries exhibited by our Maryland community, will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of fun, hands-on agriculture education activities and events,” said Maryland State Fair Agriculture Education Director Robert W. Fogle. “We appreciate the support of the private and public industries and associations that acknowledge the importance of agriculture to our state, or country and the world.”

Other featured agriculture education activities available at the 136th unFAIRgettable MY Maryland State Fair. For a full schedule of events, go to www.marylandstatefair.com.

U-LEARN FARM –Count on U-Learn Farm to teach fairgoers of all ages, how agriculture impacts their daily lives. In addition to featuring a variety of fun and educational hands-on activities and exhibits like the **U-LEARN READ** Reading Nook in partnership with the Baltimore County Public Library System, **FARMER’S IN Q & A** session w/local farmers, and the **unveiling of the new Maryland Agriculture Education Foundation’s Showcase Trailer**. Numerous other U-Learn Farm activities and exhibits include: the **John Deere combine, Maryland-Grown Native Plant and Garden Hoop Greenhouse**, an **interactive milk carton and simulated milking cow, Oyster Recovery, Farming and Filtering in the Chesapeake Bay** exhibit, **Ages and Stages of Grain Crops; Field Corn Play Box; Touch and Feel Grain, Hay and Forage Boxes; Kids Growing with Grains**; and, while supplies last, participants will receive Farm Visitor ID Badges made from real animal ID ear tags. U-Learn Farm located daily in the south end of the **Cow Palace** is open Fridays - Sundays, 10 AM – 9 PM, and Monday-Thursday including Labor Day Monday, 10 AM – 8 PM.

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AG-MAZING THINGS ARE HAPPENING AT 2017 unFAIRgettable MY MARYLAND STATE FAIR - PAGE 2

U-LEARN FOOD & FIBER – in partnership with University of Maryland Extension, University of Maryland College Park and the Maryland State Fair, the U-LEARN Food & Fiber center will feature Farm to Table themed educational exhibits. **AG-Jeopardy** educational games will take place daily at 1 PM, 4 PM and 8 PM, across from the Cow Palace. “If we can better educate the general public about where our food and fiber comes from and its value to the community, that will build greater support and sustainability of Maryland’s agriculture industry,” added Fogle.

BIRTHING CENTER - Fairgoers will have the opportunity to witness the miracle of birth of calves and piglets under the supervision of veterinarians and students, daily, 10 AM – 10 PM, in the Cow Palace. The veterinarians, students and Birthing Center staffs will explain the birthing process and answer questions. And, three times a day, a lucky fairgoer will win the opportunity to help bottle feed the baby calves.

MY MARYLAND HORSELAND, located in the Horseland Tent near the Grandstand entrance, will provide the opportunity to learn about the Maryland horse industry and participate in hands-on horse experience including handling, grooming, saddling, learning about therapeutic riding and horse rescue organizations, building stick horses, racing stick horses over mini jumps, and other activities. Also, multiple equine events will take place on various evenings in the Horse Show Ring. And, the **U.S. Pony Races** non-wagering steeplechase races **with young jockeys ages 3-16**, at the Racetrack. Visit www.marylandstatfair.com for dates and times.

HORSES HEALING MARYLAND’S MILITARY (HHMM) RIDING SHOWCASE, a Horseland special event, on Friday, September 1, 1:30 PM – 8 PM, in the Horse Show Ring. The HHMM (a coalition of licensed Maryland stables offering therapeutic programs to veterans and their families) Military Riding Showcase will feature: a Military Tribute, the U.S. Army Caisson Platoon, 3rd Infantry Regiment with an Old Guard history presentation, Baltimore and other mounted Police units, **Freedom Hills Veterans Drill Team, Star Equestrian Center Veterans Drill Team**, and more.

NATURE PLAY SPACE, next to the MY Maryland Horseland Tent. This year’s Nature Play Space built BY Urban Gardens, Inc. utilizing the winning design of University of Maryland Landscape Architecture students will provide an opportunity for children to freely and safely play and explore sand, maze, nature art, gardening, balancing, building, listening, observing and other stations. Facilitators and volunteers from the University of Maryland Landscape Architecture program, as well as childcare professionals, will explain the benefits of each station to parents as their children play.

MY MARYLAND STATE FAIR OYSTER ALLEY – Maryland oyster aquaculture has increased 48% leading to a healthier Bay. Stroll down Oyster Alley on opening weekend to learn from Oyster Recovery Partnership and Coastal Conservation Association Maryland representatives, while sampling local oysters in front of the Cow Palace on Saturday, August 26 and Sunday, August 27, 5 PM – close.

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (MDA) CHILDREN’S EDUCATION STATIONS

MDA Exhibits in the Cow Palace, in addition to educating adults on how its programs ensure sound farmland, resource conservation practices, and the quality of life in Maryland, will provide a rotating education station each day for children. Among the displays, **“Track Down the Farm Animals” game; Candling Eggs Food Safety; and State Chemist Creation Lab**, where kids will learn how to make slime.

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MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR)

The DNR will provide a variety of interactive Exhibits in the Mosner-Miller Building. Building hours are Monday – Friday, 12 Noon – 8 PM and Saturdays, Sundays and Labor Day Monday, 10 AM – 8 PM.

Scales & Tales live reptile shows will be held at various times on Saturdays, Sundays and Labor Day Monday, on the Maryland State Fair Park Stage.

The 136th 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 24 with a Ridemania Preview night and runs through Monday, September 4, 2017. General Fair hours are Noon to 10 PM, Monday through Friday and 12 Noon to 10 PM on Saturdays, Sundays, and Labor Day Monday. See below for detailed Fair Hours.**

Hear **Live National and Local Entertainment** featuring **Halestorm** with opening act **Fatally Yours**; and, **Sabrina Carpenter** with opening artist **Alex Aiono**. 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, Nature Play Space** 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/DNR Building hours: Monday – Friday, 12 Noon – 8 PM and Saturdays, Sundays and Labor Day Monday, 10 AM – 8 PM. Main Midway and Kiddie Land rides, games and food stands area hours: Monday – Friday, 12 Noon – Close and Saturdays, Sundays and Labor Day Monday, 10AM – Close. Early risers are welcome to arrive early to attend livestock and horse shows in the various livestock barns, buildings and show rings. Go to www.marylandstatefair.com for schedule.

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.