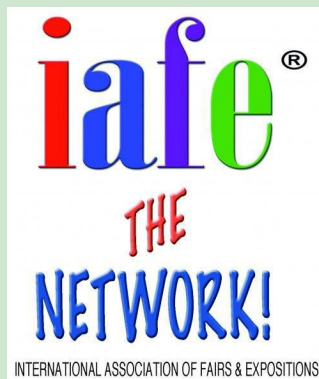




MAAF NEWSLETTER

MARCH
2025
ISSUE #2



NEWS FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BARRY NORRIS

Congratulations to the MAAF conference committee, along with the other members of our board, for putting together what many have stated as the “best conference to date.” Attendance records for both the conference and banquet far exceeded our expectations, especially the 550 fair members who attended the MAAF banquet. Again, this year thank you to the hotel staff for doing an outstanding job.

Congratulations to Hope Ricker, a past MAAF president, on being the 2024 Catherine L. Damren Award Winner! Congratulations to Madison Chadbourne (Harmony Free Fair) who was chosen as the 2024 Rising Star. Thanks to Rachel Andrews Damon & Joe Shaw (Fryeburg Fair) for once again capturing so many great photos of the conference.



The Zone 1 meeting is fast approaching - May 1-3 in Concord, New Hampshire. We’re co-hosting with New Hampshire, and hope to see many of you there. It’s going to be an exciting educational event. Please go to the Zone 1 link for further information. Additionally [MAAF Foundation](#) has funding to assist with the registration.

I’m really excited that the IAFE has undertaken a nation wide impact study for the fair industry. Please go to www.fairsexpose.com/economic-impact to learn more about the study. I’ve asked all the Maine fairs to participate in the survey and will assist them in the process as needed.

Legislative Update - MAAF has submitted a few bills regarding fair dates and stipend requirements. More to follow when I have the LD#’s. We’re also keeping a watchful eye out for any bills that are proposed regarding the various cascades that affect the industry.

I’d like to welcome our newly elected MAAF Officers: President-Garrett Lambert (Skowhegan Fair), 1st Vice President-Darcy Winslow (Waterford World Fair) and 2nd Vice President-Jeff Chadbourne (Harmony Free Fair) along with two new board members, Elizabeth (Liz) A. Tarantino (Cumberland Fair) and Caleb Chessie (Acton Fair). In closing, on behalf of our MAAF Board, I would like to thank Neil Yeaton (Farmington Fair) for his many years of service as a director on the MAAF board.

Until next time be Fair Friendly and have a great spring. Barry

CONFERENCE PHOTOS

SEE THEM ALL - [CLICK HERE!](#)



2024 AG CHALLENGE WINNERS

"MEET OUR FARMERS"

“Meet Our Farmers” was the Ag Challenge theme for the 2024 fair season. So many fairs chose to reach out and invite Maine farmers to be their guests at the fair. Farmers, farm families, young and old - all who farmed the land and the sea were front and center. Fair goers met oyster and lobster farmers, fruit farmers, organic and grass fed farmers, beef, hog and poultry farmers, flower farmers, maple farmers, the list is endless. Videos were on display, Q and A sessions were available, special buildings were constructed to house the farmers and everyone was invited to hear what exactly all these hard working men, women and children actually did in their farm life.

Thank you so much for the creativity displayed through buttons, stickers, signs, displays and community interaction. It was our pleasure to partner with a team of judges representing Hannaford. We all notice how Hannaford stores highlight the names of local farms who sell their produce to Hannaford. It seemed perfect to invite them to see how much our fairs were focusing on farmers this summer.

Windsor Fair was selected as the winner in the large fair (5 days or more) category. Harmony Free Fair was selected as the winner in the small fair (4 days or less) category. There were no entries that focused primarily on programs for children. Fairs selected as winners receive an engraved plaque and a \$250.00 award. Photos below.





2025 MAAF RISING STAR AWARD GOES TO MADISON CHADBOURNE HARMONY FREE FAIR

Madison's journey began on her family's farm in Harmony, Maine, where she learned about hard work, responsibility and raising animals ethically. Madison began volunteering at the Harmony Free Fair as soon as she was able, assisting with everything from carrying piglets for the pig scramble to selling 50/50 tickets to working in the Patriarch's food booth. Word has it that Madison has helped sell 50/50 tickets since she was old enough to hold a roll of tickets and climb into the bleachers.

Madison has made a positive impact on the fair community through her efforts to recruit and engage young people as volunteers. When she reached high school, she actively reached out to her schoolmates and they eagerly volunteered. Her ability to reach out and bring in new energy and talent is ensuring the fair's sustainability.



When WABI-TV Channel 5 visited the fair, Madison gave a thoughtful and enthusiastic interview, providing positive publicity for the fair and demonstrating its welcoming, family-oriented spirit. A project near and dear to her heart is the Children's Area which came to life following the COVID-19 pandemic. Madison took the lead in reinventing the fair experience for children. She filled this section of the fairgrounds with engaging agriculture-focused activities, such as cow-milking demonstrations, butter making, muddy pig art, homemade piggy banks and other interactive activities which are educational and fun for all ages. Madison hand painted farm animals and farm scenes on tote bags, and each child

received a unique bag to take home. To fund these activities, Madison secured a \$1,000. grant from WalMart, and also obtained sponsors for some of the events, such as the ice cream eating contest.

Madison's dedication to the fair continued through her college years, when Madison became involved in *Harmony Cares*, a food pantry serving Harmony, and *Harmony Cares Closet*, which provides free clothing and household items for those in need. Madison serves as a member of the Patriarch's Club Board of Trustees and brings a fresh perspective to the board. More recently Madison participated in MAAF annual conferences, and the 2024 IAFE convention in Phoenix, AZ. Congratulations to our newest Rising Star, from Harmony Free Fair - Madison Chadbourne.

2025 CATHERINE L. DAMREN SERVICE AWARD GOES TO HOPE RICKER



Hope Ricker was raised in a farming family and grew up helping her cousins show their Ayrshire cattle at the local fairs. She truly enjoyed being at Maine fairs as a child. As an adult, she became more involved with her local fair and the world of draft horses, eventually becoming the secretary of the Farmers Draft Horse, Mule and Pony Club. Outside of her hometown fair, Hope became the manager of the draft horse and steer shows at Topsham, Skowhegan, Windsor, Fryeburg and Litchfield fairs. In 2006 Hope was elected to the MAAF board of directors and rose quickly through the organization. She was elected MAAF president serving from 2012-2014 and worked tirelessly with Roger Hoffses and Katie

Damren to grow the MAAF Scholarship program. Hope has also traveled to represent Maine and participate in several IAFE conventions Hope currently serves as the president of the MAAF Foundation, which has taken on the responsibilities of the MAAF scholarship program. The Foundation provides educational opportunities to Maine fair youth and Maine agricultural fairs. Hope was inducted into the Skowhegan Fair Agricultural Hall of Fame in 2016. Congratulations to Hope Ricker, 2024 recipient of the Catherine L. Damren Distinguished Service Award.

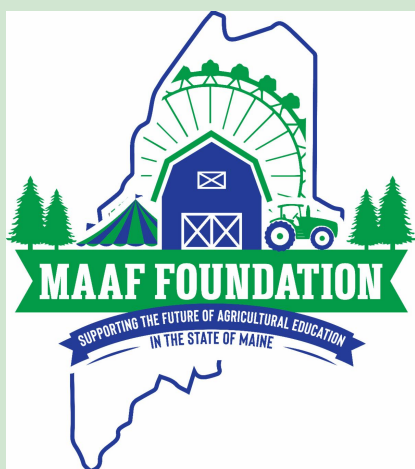
MAAF QUEENS

Thank you so much to our 2024 MAAF agricultural fairs queens, their chaperones and especially to our amazing queen coordinator, Liz Chaisson, from Pittston. Liz is a former Rising Star who has coordinated the Pittston Strawberry Queen program for several years. She was delighted to take her skills to the next level, and work with all our agricultural queens last year. Her work has included contacting all fairs that offer a queen event, make sure that they were able and willing to attend our MAAF conference, and then welcome them to our Saturday evening banquet. The most anticipated event of

the weekend has been “Breakfast With The Queens” which allows our fair folks to meet and chat with all our queens, princesses and other “royalty” as everyone enjoyed Sunday morning breakfast at the Sable Oaks Sheraton. Thanks so much to Liz for all her hard work!



MAAF FOUNDATION NEWS



Fundraising for the MAAF Foundation was a great success at the MAAF Annual Conference in January. Over \$10,000 was raised in 2 days at the Friday night Auction, the Chair auction at the Banquet on Saturday night and the 50/50, through the generosity of the Maine Agricultural Fair Community. A huge thank you to all who donated items for the auctions, bidders at the auctions and those that purchased 50/50 tickets and made donations throughout the weekend. Thanks also go out to all that helped with these events.

Tom Foster, the MAAF Foundation Treasurer and one of the original Board members resigned at the end of his 3 year term. Thank you, Tom for your dedication and work for the Foundation – you will be missed.

We welcome two new members to the MAAF Foundation Board: Jessica Benner and Sarah Littlefield. You can read all about them on our [website](#) along with other valuable information about the Foundation.

Reminder that applications for the IAFE Zone 1 Grants are due soon – applications can be found on the Foundation website. Three (3) \$250 grants will be awarded to offset

registration expenses. Guidelines, eligibility and procedures are listed on the application.

2025 scholarship applications for graduating high school seniors are due April 15th. The application can be found on the Foundation [website](#).

MAINE FAIR STICKER PROJECT 2025

Work with your fair team and design a sticker that shows a special part of your fair. Work with a designer or on your own. Bring your stickers to our 2026 MAAF conference and show them off. Any questions can be directed to [Lilly Bagley](#) or [Sadee Mehuren](#)

NEWS FROM KAYLA JONES MAINE DEPT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY

We are looking for volunteers to provide livestock. Our goal is to have the following classes: Beef Cattle–Market & Breeding, Sheep–Market & Breeding, Swine–Market & Breeding and Boer Goats–Market & Breeding.

We are looking for volunteers to lead youth groups, help with scoring, general organization, check-in, set up, tear down, and more.

Thank you - Kayla Jones, Agricultural Promotional Coordinator, Maine Dept of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, 90 Blossom Lane, 28 SHS, Augusta, ME 04333-0028, Direct Line: 207-592-2126





MAINE FFA

GENERAL LIVESTOCK JUDGING CONTEST

MARK YOUR CALENDARS



**MORE
INFORMATION
COMING
SOON**

This is a general livestock judging contest. The Maine FFA Association is putting it on in conjunction with the State FFA Convention. There will be an online pre - registration if you are interested in more information please call or email the General Livestock Judging Superintendent - Kayla Jones

 kaylaajones2018@gmail.com

 **1.207.592.2126**

-  **May 9th 8am**
-  **Open to any Maine FFA Member**
-  **Open to any Maine Youth Grades 6-12**
-  **Teams & Individuals**
-  **FFA & Non - FFA Awards**

**ANNOUNCING:
2025 MAAF AGRICULTURAL**

AWARD CONTEST: "CREATING AN EXPERIENCE YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE"

Category 1 – Agricultural experiences designed for children and by children. These experiences will include information, demonstrations, and appropriate hands on activities which introduce children to the role of youth in Maine agriculture. *

*Please indicate if your fair has a pre-existing hands-on ag education program designed for children.

Category 2 - Agricultural experiences for ALL fairgoers that educate fairgoers about the role of youth in Maine's agriculture community . This can be a one day program or on going throughout your fair.

Division 1: Fairs operating for four concurrent days or less.

Division 2: Fairs operating for five concurrent days or more.

MAAF Award Application:

Please include the following five elements:

1. A brief description of your event(s) and the connection to Maine agriculture. *Specifically, Youth In Agriculture.

2. Who was involved in the planning/funding process? – i.e. individuals, community organizations, agencies, businesses, educators, youth, sponsors, etc. – and the roles they played.

3. What challenges did you face and how did you address them?

4. How did the public react to your event? – i.e. personal feedback, hits on your website, survey monkey results, photos of interaction during your event.

5. How was your event promoted? – i.e. print and social media, posters, school, local radio and promotional programs prior to the event, etc.

*Each element will be evaluated on a scale of 1 – 5

1 = No evidence presented

2 = Minimal evidence of involvement presented

3 = Evidence of involvement is presented

4 = Evidence of involvement is thorough and comprehensive

5 = Evidence of in person community involvement during the fair dates – demonstrations , discussions/interviews, hands-on food preparation, availability of farmers, youth and farmers market vendors, etc.

*Applications may be submitted in digital form, as well as traditional pen and paper.

Mail applications to - MAAF, P.O. Box 3, Union, ME 04862

Applications must be received by Friday, October 31, 2025.

*For further information, contact [Junia Norris](#), Contest coordinator or [Barry W. Norris](#)

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