

Missouri State Fair 2026: Dates, Tickets & Travel Guide



The **Missouri State Fair 2026** returns to Sedalia from **August 13 through August 23, 2026**. This annual celebration brings together Missouri agriculture, livestock, carnival rides, live entertainment, fair food, competitions, shopping, and family activities.

The 2026 fair is especially notable because it celebrates **America's 250th anniversary** with patriotic exhibits, special events, contests, and decorations throughout the fairgrounds.

What Is the Missouri State Fair?

The Missouri State Fair is one of the state's biggest annual celebrations of agriculture, community, entertainment, and Missouri traditions.

Agriculture remains at the heart of the event, with livestock shows, competitive exhibits, youth agriculture programs, agricultural displays, horse events, and other competitions.

At the same time, visitors can enjoy a large carnival midway, concerts, fair food, shopping, special attractions, and family entertainment.

The 2026 theme is “**Show-Me Stars & Stripes,**” connecting the fair with America’s 250th anniversary celebrations.

Missouri State Fair 2026 Dates & Location

Here are the essential details for planning your visit.

- **Dates:** August 13-23, 2026
- **Venue:** Missouri State Fairgrounds
- **Location:** 2503 W. 16th Street, Sedalia, Missouri
- **Tickets:** [Check Tickets](#)

The fair runs for **11 days** and takes place at the historic Missouri State Fairgrounds in Sedalia.

The fairgrounds are located at the intersection of **U.S. Highway 65 and 16th Street**, making the event accessible by car from Kansas City, Columbia, St. Louis, and other Missouri destinations.

What to Expect at the Missouri State Fair 2026

The fair offers a wide variety of experiences, so you can easily spend an entire day exploring the grounds.

Agriculture and Livestock

Agriculture is one of the most important parts of the Missouri State Fair. Visitors can see livestock competitions, agricultural exhibits, youth competitions, home economics displays, horse events, and other programs celebrating Missouri's farming communities.

The 2026 fair also introduces several patriotic agriculture displays as part of the America 250 celebration. Special livestock contests include patriotic ribbons, livestock patriotic spirit awards, and decorated livestock stalls and pens.

Carnival Rides and Midway

The carnival midway provides the traditional state fair experience with rides, games, lights, and attractions. Families can find rides for younger children, while larger attractions provide options for visitors looking for more excitement.

Carnival operating hours can vary depending on the day, weather, crowds, and the carnival operator's schedule, so check the official daily information before visiting.

Grandstand Entertainment

The Missouri State Fair Grandstand hosts major concerts and special events throughout the fair. The 2026 entertainment lineup includes country, rock, and other live performances, giving music fans another reason to plan their visit around a particular day.

Concert tickets are separate from regular fair admission, so check the official schedule when planning your trip.

Governor Michael L. Parson Arena

One of the biggest new additions for 2026 is the **Governor Michael L. Parson Arena**. The new indoor arena is scheduled to be completed in time for the 2026 fair and will provide a modern venue for a variety of events.

The 2026 schedule includes:

- International Pro Rodeo

- Military Appreciation Day exhibits
- Zebra, camel, ostrich, emu, and duck races
- Knights of Valour jousting
- Professional bull riding
- Other special events

The arena is also open to fairgoers during selected daytime hours for free, family-friendly access.

Budweiser Clydesdales

The famous **Budweiser Clydesdales** are scheduled to appear at the 2026 Missouri State Fair. The eight-horse hitch will be stationed near the Mathewson Exhibition Center and will make appearances around the fairgrounds throughout the event.

A complete schedule is expected closer to the fair, so visitors interested in seeing the Clydesdales should check the official fair updates.

Opening Day Parade

The Missouri State Fair begins with its traditional opening-day festivities. The **2026 Opening Day Parade** is scheduled for Thursday, August 13, with the parade beginning at **6 PM**.

The 2026 parade theme is “**Show-Me Stars & Stripes,**” matching the fair's America 250 celebration. Visitors arriving on opening day can combine the parade with the fair's other attractions and entertainment.

America 250 Celebrations

The 2026 Missouri State Fair is incorporating **America's 250th anniversary** into the fair experience.

Visitors can expect patriotic decorations, exhibits, contests, military-related activities, special displays, and other programming throughout the grounds.

The fair will also feature military flag retreat ceremonies, patriotic photo opportunities, and the national anthem played each day.

Family Activities

Families have plenty to explore beyond the midway. Children can experience livestock exhibits, agricultural displays, animal events, contests, entertainment, racing animals, and other attractions throughout the fairgrounds.

The new Governor Michael L. Parson Arena also adds several family-friendly events to the 2026 lineup.

Fair Food

Food is an important part of the Missouri State Fair experience. Visitors can expect classic carnival favorites, fried foods, barbecue, sandwiches, desserts, drinks, snacks, and other fairground specialties.

With vendors located throughout the grounds, it is worth taking some time to explore different food areas rather than stopping at the first stand you see.

Shopping and Exhibits

The fair also features commercial buildings, vendors, crafts, merchandise, agricultural products, demonstrations, and competitive exhibits.

Building exhibits provide a break from the outdoor midway and give visitors another way to experience Missouri businesses, agriculture, arts, and community traditions.

Best Time to Visit the Missouri State Fair

The best time to visit depends on what you want to experience.

For Smaller Crowds

Weekdays can be a good choice if you prefer a more relaxed atmosphere. Early mornings are also useful for visitors who want to explore livestock and agricultural exhibits before spending time on the midway.

For Families

Families may prefer visiting earlier in the day when there is more time to explore the grounds, exhibits, animal areas, and family attractions.

For Live Entertainment

If concerts are important to you, choose your visit around the official Grandstand schedule.

For Special Events

Check the daily schedule before choosing your date. Different days feature special themes and events, including Military Appreciation Day, Youth in Agriculture Day, and Family Preparedness Half Price Day.

Missouri State Fair 2026 Daily Highlights

Each day of the 2026 fair has a different focus, making the daily schedule useful when planning your visit.

- **August 13:** Mizzou Day
- **August 14:** Missouri Department of Conservation Day
- **August 15:** Law Enforcement/Firefighter Appreciation Day
- **August 16:** Military Appreciation Day
- **August 17:** Missouri Farm Bureau/Farm Family Day
- **August 18:** Missouri Farmers Care Food Drive \$2 Tuesday
- **August 19:** Senior Appreciation Day
- **August 20:** Governor's, Legislators' & Judges Day
- **August 21:** Missouri Electric Cooperatives Day
- **August 22:** Youth in Agriculture Day
- **August 23:** Family Preparedness Half Price Day

If one of these events is important to you, plan your visit around that specific date.

Travel Tips for Attending the Missouri State Fair

A little planning can make your fair visit much easier.

- **Check the official schedule:** Attractions and special events vary by day.
- **Wear comfortable shoes:** The fairgrounds are large and you will likely do plenty of walking.
- **Arrive early:** Mornings are useful for exploring livestock, agriculture, and exhibits.
- **Plan around concerts:** Major Grandstand performances can attract larger crowds.
- **Stay hydrated:** August temperatures in Missouri can be hot.
- **Bring sun protection:** Sunscreen, sunglasses, and a hat can make outdoor time more comfortable.
- **Carry a light rain layer:** Summer storms can develop quickly.
- **Use the fair map:** Identify major attractions before walking across the grounds.
- **Allow extra time for parking:** Busy days can take longer to enter and leave.
- **Check transportation options:** Sedalia is served by Amtrak, making train travel another option for some visitors.
- **Check event policies:** Special events may have separate admission requirements.

Parking and Getting to the Missouri State Fair

The Missouri State Fairgrounds are located at **2503 W. 16th Street in Sedalia**, near the intersection of Highway 65 and 16th Street.

Several entrances provide access to the fairgrounds, including the Centennial Gate, Main Gate, Gate 11, and Gate 6.

Visitors traveling by car should follow the official signs and parking directions when arriving.

For travelers without a car, **Amtrak** provides service to Sedalia, with trains connecting the city with Kansas City and St. Louis.

Things to Do Near the Missouri State Fair

Sedalia has several attractions that can complement a Missouri State Fair trip.

Explore Downtown Sedalia

Downtown Sedalia offers historic buildings, local restaurants, shops, and cultural attractions. It is a good place to explore when you want a break from the fairgrounds.

Visit the Daum Museum of Contemporary Art

The **Daum Museum of Contemporary Art** at State Fair Community College features contemporary artwork and rotating exhibitions. It is a good indoor attraction to add to your Sedalia itinerary.

Explore the Katy Trail

The nearby **Katy Trail State Park** is one of Missouri's best-known outdoor destinations. The trail follows the former Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad corridor and provides opportunities for walking and cycling.

Visit the Missouri State Capitol

Travelers extending their trip can continue toward Jefferson City to visit the **Missouri State Capitol** and explore Missouri's state government district.

Explore Kansas City

Sedalia is also within driving distance of Kansas City, making it possible to combine the state fair with a larger Missouri getaway. Visitors can explore museums, barbecue restaurants, sports venues, shopping districts, and other Kansas City attractions.

Where to Stay for the Missouri State Fair

Sedalia is the most convenient place to stay for visitors attending the Missouri State Fair.

Staying near the fairgrounds reduces driving time and makes it easier to return to your hotel during a long day. Travelers can also look at accommodations in nearby communities if Sedalia hotels are full.

Because the fair attracts visitors throughout its 11-day run, booking your accommodation early is especially useful for popular weekends and major concert dates.

Is the Missouri State Fair Worth Visiting?

The **Missouri State Fair 2026** is worth considering if you enjoy traditional American state fairs with a strong agricultural identity.

The event combines livestock and agriculture with carnival rides, live concerts, food, shopping, competitions, family attractions, and special events.

The 2026 edition also offers several experiences that make this year's fair particularly interesting, including the new Governor Michael L. Parson Arena, Budweiser Clydesdale appearances, and America 250 celebrations.

For travelers visiting Missouri in August, the fair can also be combined with a wider Sedalia or central Missouri itinerary.

Conclusion

The **Missouri State Fair 2026** takes place from **August 13 through August 23, 2026**, in Sedalia, Missouri.

With agriculture, livestock, carnival rides, live entertainment, fair food, competitions, family activities, the new Governor Michael L. Parson Arena, and special America 250 programming, the fair offers plenty of experience over its 11-day run.

Before traveling, check the official Missouri State Fair website for the latest **tickets, daily schedules, entertainment, special events, parking information, and visitor policies.**

Frequently Asked Questions

When is the Missouri State Fair 2026?

The **Missouri State Fair 2026** takes place from **August 13 through August 23, 2026**, in Sedalia, Missouri.

Where is the Missouri State Fair held?

The fair is held at the **Missouri State Fairgrounds at 2503 W. 16th Street in Sedalia, Missouri.**

How long does the Missouri State Fair last?

The 2026 Missouri State Fair runs for **11 days**, from August 13 through August 23.

What is the Missouri State Fair known for?

The fair is known for **agriculture, livestock shows, carnival rides, live entertainment, fair food, competitions, shopping, and family activities.**

What is new at the Missouri State Fair in 2026?

The 2026 fair introduces the new **Governor Michael L. Parson Arena**, which hosts rodeo, bull riding, jousting, animal races, military exhibits, and other events.

The fair also features **Budweiser Clydesdale appearances** and special programming celebrating America's 250th anniversary.

What can I do near the Missouri State Fair?

Visitors can explore **downtown Sedalia, the Daum Museum of Contemporary Art, Katy Trail State Park, nearby central Missouri attractions, and Kansas City** during a longer Missouri trip.