

Hopkinton State Fair 2026: Dates, Tickets & Travel Guide



The **Hopkinton State Fair 2026** returns to Contoocook, New Hampshire, from **September 3 through September 7, 2026**. Held over Labor Day weekend, this long-running New Hampshire tradition brings together agriculture, livestock, carnival rides, competitions, live entertainment, fair food, and family activities.

The Hopkinton State Fair is one of New Hampshire's premier annual fairs and offers much more than a typical carnival. Visitors can watch agricultural competitions, explore livestock barns, enjoy the Fiesta Shows Midway, see dog shows and extreme entertainment, and experience the energy of special events such as the Demolition Derby.

Whether you are visiting with family, traveling through New Hampshire, or looking for a classic New England fair experience, the Hopkinton State Fair offers plenty to fill a day or an entire Labor Day weekend.

What Is the Hopkinton State Fair?

The Hopkinton State Fair is a Labor Day weekend tradition with roots going back to **1915**.

The first fair began as a small agricultural event organized in Contoocook. Over the decades, it grew from a local fair with agricultural exhibits, livestock, food, games, and entertainment into one of New Hampshire's best-known annual events.

Agriculture remains at the center of the fair. Visitors can still experience livestock shows, 4-H competitions, horse and cattle events, pulling competitions, agricultural exhibits, and other traditions connected to New Hampshire's rural heritage.

At the same time, the modern fair offers carnival rides, family entertainment, food vendors, shopping, special performances, and high-energy Grandstand events.

Hopkinton State Fair 2026 Dates & Location

Here are the essential details for planning your visit.

- **Dates:** September 3-7, 2026
- **Venue:** Hopkinton State Fairgrounds
- **Location:** Contoocook, New Hampshire
- **Tickets:** Check Tickets

The 2026 fair runs for **five days**, beginning on Thursday and continuing through Labor Day Monday.

The fairgrounds are located in Contoocook, a village in the town of Hopkinton. The location is convenient for visitors from Concord and other parts of central New Hampshire, making the fair an easy addition to a wider New England trip.

What to Expect at the Hopkinton State Fair 2026

The fairgrounds offer a wide mix of attractions, so it is easy to spend several hours exploring different areas.

Agriculture and Livestock

Agriculture is one of the most important parts of the Hopkinton State Fair experience.

Visitors can explore livestock barns and watch competitions involving cattle, sheep, goats, horses, oxen, and other animals. The fair also features 4-H programs, agricultural demonstrations, youth competitions, and educational exhibits.

Other agricultural areas and exhibits include the Farmers Market and Home Arts Building, the Grange, giant pumpkins, the Maple Sugar House, and the Morrill Family Farm Museum.

For travelers interested in New Hampshire's agricultural traditions, these exhibits provide some of the most distinctive experiences at the fair.

Fiesta Shows Midway

The **Fiesta Shows Midway** brings the classic carnival experience to the fairgrounds.

Visitors can enjoy mechanical rides, carnival games, lights, and attractions for different ages. There are options for families with younger children as well as rides for visitors looking for more excitement.

The midway becomes especially lively in the evening when the rides and fairgrounds are illuminated.

Disc-Connected K9s

One of the popular family attractions is **Disc-Connected K9s**, featuring highly trained dogs performing athletic Frisbee routines.

The shows combine speed, jumping, and impressive tricks, making them a fun break from the rides and agricultural exhibits.

With multiple performances during the fair, visitors can usually find a show that fits their schedule.

DockDogs

DockDogs is another major animal attraction at the Hopkinton State Fair.

Visitors can watch dogs compete in jumping events as they launch from a dock into a pool. The competition is energetic and easy for visitors of all ages to enjoy.

DockDogs events are scheduled throughout the fair, so it is worth checking the daily program for performance times.

Thrill Extravaganza

The **Thrill Extravaganza Entertainment Show** is one of the major entertainment attractions at the 2026 fair.

The show adds high-energy action to the fair experience and is scheduled for multiple performances during the event.

It gives visitors another option beyond traditional agricultural competitions and carnival rides.

Axe Women Loggers of Maine

The **Axe Women Loggers of Maine** bring traditional timber sports to the fairgrounds.

The professional athletes demonstrate skills such as chopping, sawing, axe throwing, and other lumberjack-style competitions.

The show fits naturally with the outdoor traditions of New England and offers something different from the standard state fair entertainment lineup.

Agricultural Competitions and Pulling Events

The Hopkinton State Fair offers a strong schedule of agricultural competitions.

Visitors can watch horse pulling, cattle pulling, oxen events, livestock shows, 4-H competitions, and other contests throughout the weekend.

These events are an important part of what separates the Hopkinton State Fair from a typical amusement-focused festival.

Demolition Derby

The **Demolition Derby** is one of the fair's biggest and loudest attractions.

The 2026 event takes place on **Saturday and Sunday evenings**, with drivers competing in a crash-filled battle of endurance.

It is one of the best choices for visitors looking for a high-energy evening experience. Grandstand events may require separate tickets, so check the official event information before planning your visit.

Dialed Action Sports

The 2026 fair also features **Dialed Action Sports**, bringing BMX and action-sports entertainment to the Grandstand.

The show includes jumps, flips, and other high-energy stunts performed by professional riders and athletes.

It is a particularly good option for visitors who want something beyond traditional fair entertainment.

Family Entertainment

Families have plenty of options throughout the fairgrounds.

The 2026 schedule includes comedy and juggling performances, magic shows, music, interactive attractions, petting zoo experiences, wood carving, animal shows, and other family-friendly activities.

Because many performances take place at specific times, checking the daily schedule before your visit can help you make the most of your day.

Fair Food and Local Vendors

Fair food is an essential part of the Hopkinton State Fair experience.

Visitors can expect traditional favorites, snacks, desserts, drinks, and meals from vendors throughout the fairgrounds.

The fair also provides opportunities to explore local products, artisans, commercial exhibits, agricultural displays, and other vendors.

Take time to walk through the different areas of the grounds instead of limiting your visit to the midway.

Best Time to Visit the Hopkinton State Fair

The best time to visit depends on the type of experience you want.

For a More Relaxed Experience

Thursday evening can be a good choice if you prefer a shorter visit and want to experience the opening of the fair.

Earlier hours on Friday may also offer a more relaxed atmosphere before the busiest parts of Labor Day weekend.

For Families

Morning and early afternoon are good times for families to explore the livestock barns, agricultural exhibits, animal attractions, and entertainment.

Starting early also gives you more time to enjoy the midway later in the day.

For the Biggest Events

Saturday and Sunday offer a busy atmosphere with a full schedule of attractions, competitions, and evening entertainment.

These days are ideal if you want to experience the fair at its liveliest.

For Agricultural Events

Check the daily schedule before choosing your date.

Different days feature different livestock shows, horse events, pulling competitions, 4-H programs, and agricultural activities.

Travel Tips for the Hopkinton State Fair

A little planning can make your visit more enjoyable.

- **Check the daily schedule:** Attractions and competitions change throughout the five-day fair.
- **Wear comfortable shoes:** You will likely spend several hours walking around the fairgrounds.
- **Arrive early:** This gives you more time to explore livestock and agricultural exhibits.
- **Bring layers:** Early September weather in New Hampshire can change during the day and become cooler in the evening.
- **Prepare for rain:** Check the forecast and bring rain protection when needed.
- **Plan around special events:** The Demolition Derby and other Grandstand events can affect crowds and parking.
- **Stay hydrated:** You may spend long periods walking and standing outdoors.
- **Use the fair map:** Identify the midway, livestock barns, stages, food areas, and major attractions before exploring.
- **Allow extra time during Labor Day weekend:** Weekend traffic and larger crowds can make arrival slower.
- **Check current fair policies:** Event policies and schedules can change, so always review the latest official information before traveling.

Parking and Getting to the Hopkinton State Fair

The Hopkinton State Fairgrounds are located in **Contoocook, New Hampshire**.

The fair is easily accessible by car from Concord and other communities in central and southern New Hampshire.

Visitors should follow official traffic signs and parking directions when approaching the fairgrounds, particularly during busy weekend periods and major evening events.

Parking is available at the fairgrounds, but it is still wise to allow extra time during the busiest parts of Labor Day weekend.

Things to Do Near the Hopkinton State Fair

The fair's central New Hampshire location makes it easy to extend your trip.

Explore Concord

New Hampshire's capital city is a short drive from the fairgrounds.

Visitors can explore local restaurants, museums, historic sites, shops, and the New Hampshire State House.

Concord is also a convenient place to stay if you want more accommodation and dining options than are available near the fairgrounds.

Visit Canterbury Shaker Village

Canterbury Shaker Village is a historic destination where visitors can learn about the Shaker community and New Hampshire's cultural history.

The site includes historic buildings, exhibits, walking areas, and a peaceful setting that provides a contrast to the busy fairgrounds.

Explore the Contoocook Area

The surrounding area offers scenic New England landscapes, small-town character, and opportunities to slow down after a busy day at the fair.

Take some time to explore the countryside and local communities around Hopkinton and Contoocook.

Visit New Hampshire's Lakes and Outdoor Areas

Travelers extending their trip can explore more of central New Hampshire's lakes, hiking areas, scenic drives, and outdoor attractions.

Early September is also a pleasant time to experience New England before the busiest fall foliage season begins.

Where to Stay for the Hopkinton State Fair

Contoocook and Hopkinton have limited accommodation options compared with larger cities.

For more hotels, restaurants, and services, **Concord** is one of the most convenient places to stay.

Visitors traveling for Labor Day weekend should book accommodation early, especially if they plan to attend popular weekend events.

Staying near Concord can also make it easy to combine the Hopkinton State Fair with other central New Hampshire attractions.

Is the Hopkinton State Fair Worth Visiting?

The **Hopkinton State Fair 2026** is worth visiting if you want a traditional New England fair that still has a strong connection to agriculture.

The event combines livestock and agricultural competitions with carnival rides, family entertainment, dog shows, action sports, timber sports, fair food, shopping, and special events.

Its long history also gives the fair a stronger sense of local tradition than many modern festivals.

For families, agriculture enthusiasts, and travelers looking for a classic Labor Day weekend experience in New Hampshire, the Hopkinton State Fair offers plenty to see and do.

Conclusion

The **Hopkinton State Fair 2026** takes place from **September 3 through September 7, 2026**, in Contoocook, New Hampshire.

From livestock competitions and agricultural exhibits to carnival rides, DockDogs, Disc-Connected K9s, action sports, the Demolition Derby, fair food, and family entertainment, the fair offers a full Labor Day weekend experience.

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

Frequently Asked Questions

When is the Hopkinton State Fair 2026?

The **Hopkinton State Fair 2026** takes place from **September 3 through September 7, 2026**, over Labor Day weekend.

Where is the Hopkinton State Fair held?

The fair is held at the **Hopkinton State Fairgrounds in Contoocook, New Hampshire.**

How long does the Hopkinton State Fair last?

The 2026 fair runs for **five days**, beginning on Thursday, September 3, and ending on Labor Day, Monday, September 7.

What is the Hopkinton State Fair known for?

The fair is known for **agriculture, livestock competitions, 4-H events, carnival rides, animal shows, pulling competitions, live entertainment, fair food, and family activities.**

What are the biggest attractions at the Hopkinton State Fair 2026?

Major attractions include the **Fiesta Shows Midway, Disc-Connected K9s, DockDogs, agricultural competitions, Axe Women Loggers of Maine, Thrill Extravaganza, Dialed Action Sports, and the Demolition Derby.**

Is the Hopkinton State Fair family-friendly?

Yes. Families can enjoy carnival rides, livestock exhibits, agricultural displays, dog shows, entertainment, petting zoo experiences, food vendors, and activities designed for visitors of different ages.