



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, OCT. 23, 2023**

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926,425 people attended the 2023 N.C. State Fair

RALEIGH – The 2023 N.C. State Fair ended its 11-day run with a strong final weekend that pushed total attendance to 926,425. Other fair highlights included a new auction record for the Livestock Sale of Champions and strong participation for Smithfield Foods Hunger Relief Day and competitive entries.

“I am grateful for our fairgoers, vendors and businesses that support the fair,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “It is a celebration of the best of North Carolina and feels like an annual reunion that brings together everything that makes North Carolina a great place to live. It is also a celebration of our state’s \$103.2 billion agriculture industry, from the daily farm families highlighted, the mock tobacco auction, livestock competitions and horse shows to the horticultural displays, Got to Be N.C. Agriculture Pavilion and soil and forestry exhibits.”

The N.C. State Fair Livestock Sale of Champions drew a record \$217,850 in bids, breaking the previous record by \$5,350. Monies from the sale go into a scholarship fund that all

competitors are eligible to apply for and to the grand and reserve grand champion exhibitors.

Smithfield Foods Hunger Relief Day saw fairgoers donate 253,000 pounds of canned goods this year compared to 214,000 last year combined with 500,000 servings of protein from Smithfield Foods for the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina. More than 6.3 million pounds of food have been collected since the hunger relief partnership started in 1993.

This year's fair had 21,626 entries in general competitions and 2,819 entries into livestock competitions. This year's giant pumpkin and watermelon competitions by weight were the largest competitions of this type the fair has had. The competitions included a 308-pound watermelon, which was the largest grown in the world so far this year and a 2,124-pound pumpkin.

“While numbers help us tell the story of a successful N.C. State Fair it isn't the only measure,” said Troxler. “We also gauge success from the happy and smiling faces we see on the fairgrounds as people enjoyed what we hope was their Best.Day.Ever! Mark your calendars now for Oct. 17-27, 2024.”