

# Schedule of Events for 2026 IAAF Convention

## “Celebrate Agriculture 2026”

**115th Annual Convention**  
**Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs**  
 Crowne Plaza and Holiday Inn Express  
 Springfield Illinois

### —Schedule of Events for 2026 Convention—

All events open only to registered guests with a convention badge.

#### Thursday, January 15, 2026

8:30-11 AM Queen Registration— *Plaza Lobby*  
 1-4:00 PM Registration Desk Open  
 1:00 PM Queen Pageant Rehearsal—*Ballroom*  
 7:00 PM IAAF Board Meeting—*Lincoln Board Room, 3rd*  
 8-11 PM **“Let’s Have Fun”** Pre-convention hospitality and fun—*Capital View —12th floor*  
 Sponsored by the Northern, Central and Southern Zones

#### Friday, January 16, 2026

8:00 AM Registration Desk Opens —*Plaza Lobby*  
 8:30 AM Queen Pageant Rehearsal – *Ballroom*  
 10:00 AM Carnival Amusement Safety Board Mtg. — *Winter Garden, 14th floor*

1:30 PM Opening Session  
**“Making A Difference”**  
*Special Guest Ian Hill*  
 You Can Make A Difference  
 Dustin Galyon, Keynote Speaker  
 Remarks by Illinois FFA President  
**“What did your fair do differently in 2025?”**  
 Moderated by Mary Liz Wright, IAAF Director  
 — *Plaza FG — 1st Floor*

3:00 PM **Trade Show opens with a reception. Skinners Amusements Host of Trade Show and Sponsors of Trade Show Snacks — Plaza A-E**  
 6:00 PM Trade Show closes for the day

4:00 PM Fairs and Exposition Fund Meeting — *Capital VI - 3rd floor — Jeannette Watkins, IDOA*  
 5:30 PM Audit Committee Meeting —*Turquoise—2nd floor*

7:00 PM **Showcasing—Plaza H-J**  
**Drinks and Snacks Sponsored by Burnham & Flower Insurance, Illinois Wine by Tom & Pam Schahrer, Ice Cream by Rent One, Kris Lowe**  
  
**MC: Kent Casson of Central Illinois Farm Network.**  
**Bands: Eclipse - A Pink loyd Tribue Band - Togo Talent**  
**Big Guns - Lisa Hoag**  
**Next Thing Somkin - No Agency**  
**Neon Rodeo - Grandstand Entertainment**  
**Dustin Devine - SSM Agency**  
**Rubber Biscuit - The Ultimate Blues Brothers Tribute Band**  
**Alex Miller, headliner**

Associates who have hospitality rooms may be hosting during other hours than those listed for the trade show.

8:00 PM Registration Desk Closes

#### Saturday, January 17, 2026

7:00 AM Registration Desk Opens—*Plaza Lobby*

7:30 AM Looking to the Future” Breakfast doors open. — *Plaza F&G*  
 Tickets Required  
 Sponsored by Luehrs Ideal Rides  
 Special door prize for breakfast participants — \$50 Cash

7:45 AM Opening remarks:  
 IAAF President Dave Hake  
 Color Gurd: Abraham Lincoln Council Scout Troop  
 Pledge of Allegiance:  
 Queen Johnna Fulcher  
 Invocation  
 8:15 AM **All non-ticket fair members and associates are welcome to join the meeting after breakfast.**  
 8:30 AM Welcome  
 David Hake, IAAF President  
 8:45 AM Presentation of “Friend of Illinois County Fair” Awards, Ron Meyer  
 Drawing for “Early Bird” door prize  
 9:00 AM Remarks: Illinois Department of Agriculture  
 9:30 AM **Dustin Galyon, Keynote Speaker,** presented by Luehrs Ideal Rides.  
 10:30 AM **Drawing**—All door prize winners must be present to win at the time of each drawing.  
 10:45 AM Secretaries and Treasurers Meeting —*Jeannette Watkins, IDOA—Plaza F&G*

### Please Visit the Associate Member Rooms or Trade Show Booths

8:30 AM Queen Pageant Rehearsal—*Ballroom*  
 11:00 AM Trade Show and Associate Rooms open — *Plaza A-E*  
**Skinners Amusements, Shelter Equipment Host of Trade Show and Sponsors of Trade Show Lunch.**  
 1:00 PM Afternoon Queen Pageant Preliminaries—*Ballroom*  
 1:30 PM Jr. Talent Competition—*Plaza H-J*  
 2:00 PM Past Presidents Meeting—*Capital View, 12 floor*  
 3:00 PM All Zones Meeting - *Capital View 12th Floor*  
 4:00 PM Trade Show closes  
 5:00 PM Forever State Queen Reception —*Capital View - 12th Floor*  
 6:00 PM Sr. Talent Competition—*Plaza H-J*  
 6:00 PM Catholic Mass —*Winter Garden, 14th floor*  
 7:00 PM Evening Queen Pageant Preliminaries —*Ballroom*  
 7:00 PM Registration Desk Closes

Associates who have hospitality rooms may host during other hours than those listed for the trade show.

#### Sunday, January 18, 2026

8:15 AM Protestant Worship - —*Winter Garden-14th floor*

8:50 AM Enjoy a Breakfast Sandwich & Coffee —sponsored by A Fantasy Amusements  
 Convene for Round Tables—*Plaza F-G* — Moderated by David Hake & Todd Cotter  
 9:15 AM Roundtables: First Session  
 • Off Season Income  
 • Nuts & Bolts of Running a Fair  
 • Securing Sponsorships  
 • You Can Make a Difference  
 • Weather Insurance  
 • What Computer Program Works for You  
 • Successful Marketing of Your Fair  
 10:00 AM Roundtables: Second Session (Same Agenda as First Session)

11:00 AM Annual Business Meeting —*Plaza F-G*

### Please Register for Door Prizes

A Crowne Plaza Package for the 2027 IAAF Convention will be awarded.

Welcome — Dave Hake, IAAF President  
 Minutes

Introduction of Directors

### Committee Reports:

- Secretary-Treasurer report - Charlyn Fargo Ware
- Audit Committee report - Gary Mielke
- Grievance Committee - Tom Moore
- Advocacy Report - Bridget Dougherty
- Legislative Committee - Tom Moore
- Election of Officers

Drawing for prizes donated by **Crowne Plaza** and \$100 from the IAAF and other prizes. All door prize winners must be present to win.

4:00 PM Doors Open for Banquet—*Plaza A-J*  
 5:00 PM Banquet Served  
 6:30 PM Queen Pageant Finals —*Ballroom*  
 9:30 PM Reception for the new Queen —*Lobby and Rosewood Dining Room*

#### Monday, January 19, 2026

8:00 AM IAAF Directors And Spouses  
 Breakfast — *Ruby Room*  
 9:00 AM IAAF Directors Meeting—*Ruby Room*

## Nominate a Volunteer

Does your fair have a dedicated volunteer or a community person who is a true county fair booster?

The “Friends of Illinois County Fairs” awards program will honor a group of recipients at the 115th Annual IAAF convention to be held next January. Your fair may nominate an individual to be recognized at the 2026 IAAF Convention.

A nominee must be a supporter in some manner of Illinois county fairs. They need not be an officer, a board member or a superintendent of your fair. However, they must be dedicated to the support, promotion, and innovative operation of a fair or fairs. This is a way to recognize the unsung stars of county fairs.

All Illinois fairs should consider nominating a candidate. The nomination form was included in the summer IAAF packet mailed to each fair near the end of May. A fair may submit more than one worthy candidate for consideration. Only one person from any fair may receive the award in 2026. Any unselected candidates will be reconsidered in 2027 without reapplying.

The IAAF “Friend of County Fair Award” program is sponsored by Jeff Blomsness of North American Midway Entertainment.

Note: Please do not confuse this award with the “Illinois County Fair Person” Award presented by the Illinois Department of Agriculture at the State Fair’s County Fair Day.