



Winston-Salem

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NEWS RELEASE

Fairgrounds

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Winston-Salem Cancels the Carolina Classic Fair

Due to the rising trend in positive COVID-19 cases in Forsyth County and the on-going restrictions for mass gatherings statewide, the city of Winston-Salem is canceling the Carolina Classic Fair. The ten-day event had been scheduled to take place October 2-11.

City management has determined that the likelihood of holding the fair is minimal in light of continued community transmission of the COVID-19 virus in North Carolina. The city's top priority is to ensure the public's safety during the pandemic, and with annual attendance close to 300,000, city leaders are concerned there is no way to eliminate the risk of spreading the virus.

Additionally, the state's current Phase 2 restrictions limit mass outdoor gathering to no more than 25. Although Phase 2 is currently scheduled to end Aug. 7, Gov. Roy Cooper has the option to extend Phase 2, as he has already done once.

City staff project that canceling the fair will result in a loss of \$670,000 for the year.

Mayor Allen Joines stated that not holding the fair is the correct course of action given the increasing number of positive COVID-19 cases in Forsyth County and statewide. "Unfortunately, the numbers are not trending in our favor," Joines said. "We will look forward to celebrating the new name of the Carolina Classic Fair and putting on a fair second to none in 2021. We want our citizens and visitors to Forsyth County to be safe and healthy so that we can look forward to this great event next fall."

City leaders were looking forward to holding the regional fair under its new name — the Carolina Classic Fair — and unveiling the rebranding of the fairgrounds facilities, including the grandstand, livestock barn, gateways, ticket booths and signs.

The fairgrounds staff will explore ways to hold certain aspects of the Carolina Classic Fair virtually. More information about these opportunities will be posted on the Carolina Classic Fair's website, carolinaclassicfair.com.

The fair is one of many events that have been called off due to the pandemic. Also in Winston-Salem, the Bowman Gray Racing season and the fall season for WSSU football have been canceled. Elsewhere, the N.C. Department of Agriculture recently announced cancellation of the North Carolina Mountain State Fair in Asheville, scheduled for Sept. 11-20, and officials with the Lexington Barbecue Festival canceled the 2020 event, scheduled for October 24.

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