Ohio State Fair, Division 4

Category 1: Sponsor Innovation

IAFE INNOVATION IN SPONSORSHIP AWARDS 2021

Market and Breeding Grand Drives brought to you by Nationwide® and Ohio Farm Bureau

Every year, thousands of youth come to the Ohio State Fair from all over Ohio to exhibit and show their livestock animals. The youth exhibitors work year-round with their animals in hopes of winning at the Ohio State Fair. Throughout the Fair, there are several livestock shows where winners from each species are selected to participate in the final drive events. This year, the Ohio State Fair wanted to amplify the final drive experience for the youth exhibitors. The Grand Drives came to fruition with the support of Nationwide® and Ohio Farm Bureau, co-title sponsors of the Grand Drives.

Both Nationwide® and the Ohio Farm Bureau have been integral and invested companies in the agriculture business for decades. Both were formed in the early to mid-1900s. Ever since their inception, both Nationwide® and Ohio Farm Bureau have worked collaboratively to provide valuable resources to meet needs of Ohio farmers and those within the agriculture community. Additionally, they also value and take pride in meeting the needs of Ohio's youth, focusing on helping them grow into future agriculture leaders.

When our Fair shifted to an agricultural focus, showcasing livestock and educational competitions only, we reached out to all our sponsors right away. Typically, Nationwide® and Ohio Farm Bureau work together to create an educational space for fairgoers that highlights Ohio's agriculture through hands-on learning activities. Knowing the dynamic shift of the fair, Nationwide® and Ohio Farm Bureau decided to shift their focus over to the youth exhibitors. Through several conversations, the two entities, along with the Ohio State Fair, came together to ultimately show their support of Ohio's youth in agriculture through an innovative and creative sponsorship.

The 2021 Ohio State Fair, in collaboration with title sponsors, Nationwide® and Ohio Farm Bureau, brought to life two grand drive events for the youth exhibitors – the Breeding Grand Drive presented by Nationwide® and Ohio Farm Bureau, which took place on Saturday, July 31st and the Market Grand Drive presented by Nationwide® and Ohio Farm Bureau, which was

hosted the following Saturday on August 7th – to the tune of an **$85,000 sponsor commitment.**

What was once hosted in the livestock barns took shape in magnificent ways in 2021. The Grand Drives became a multi-species event and were therefore moved to our largest arena, the Ag-Pro Companies Taft Coliseum. It was like a Taylor Swift concert … but, for livestock … and without custom Louboutin's (maybe next year 😉😉). There was sound, large screens, upbeat music, spark fountains, gobo swirling lights, glitter, awards, photos, media and more! Each Grand Drive consisted of five different livestock species and showcased nearly **300 exhibitors** and between **1,500 to 3,000 people were in attendance** respectively with nearly **10,000 watching via livestream.** Kids entered the show ring through a tunnel accompanied by upbeat music, lights, fog, and sparks!

Through the sponsorship, Nationwide® and Ohio Farm Bureau made it possible to showcase our youth livestock exhibitors in this unique and fun way. Beyond providing valuable insight throughout the planning of the events, the sponsors continued to enhance the experience with a laser focus on the kids. Each exhibitor that won best-in-class received a complimentary professional photo courtesy of Nationwide® and Ohio Farm Bureau.

Additionally, the sponsors had a space setup in the lobby to greet people as they came into the coliseum where they provided co-branded cooling towels to each person. A total of **1,400 towels** were distributed. Nationwide® and the Ohio Farm Bureau provided commercials that were played during the change out between the species. One featured Dale Earnhardt Jr. with a message geared toward the youth. The partnership allowed them to have signage and naming rights to the events that were evident not only during the Grand Drives but throughout the 21-day event.

Without Nationwide® and Ohio Farm Bureau's partnership, we would not have been able to host such extravagant Grand Drive events. Their support allowed us to create an immersive and memorable experience for Ohio's youth in agriculture and livestock. Check out the livestream: Ohio State Fair Grand Drives.

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