Pennsylvania County and Local Agricultural Fairs

The Economic Impact and Benefits of Pennsylvania's Agricultural Fair Industry

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ESI ECONSULT SOLUTIONS INC.
economics | strategy | insight

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County and Local Agricultural Fairs

The Economic Impact and Benefits of the Agricultural Fair Industry in Pennsylvania

ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

$1.14 BILLION

10,700 JOBS SUPPORTED

ECONOMIC IMPACT BY CATEGORY

DIRECT	INDIRECT & INDUCED	EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION
$585 MILLION	**$560 MILLION**	**$398 MILLION**

TAX REVENUE IMPACT TO PENNSYLVANIA

$21.2 MILLION



There are 107 county and local fairs held in communities across Pennsylvania every year, each with its own unique character and traditions.

2024 Economic Impact Analysis prepared by

ESI ECONSULT SOLUTIONS INC.

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Anchors of Economic Activity within Farming Communities

Local Agricultural Fairs as Economic and Cultural Drivers

LOCAL FAIR ORGANIZATIONAL & CAPITAL SPENDING

$40.1M	$94M	410	$0.9M
Direct Operating Footprint	Statewide Economic Impact	Jobs Supported Statewide	State Tax Revenue

ANNUAL IMPACTS FROM FAIR VISITORS

$673M	$1.05B	10,300	$20.3M
Visitor Spending	Statewide Economic Impact	Jobs Supported Statewide	State Tax Revenue

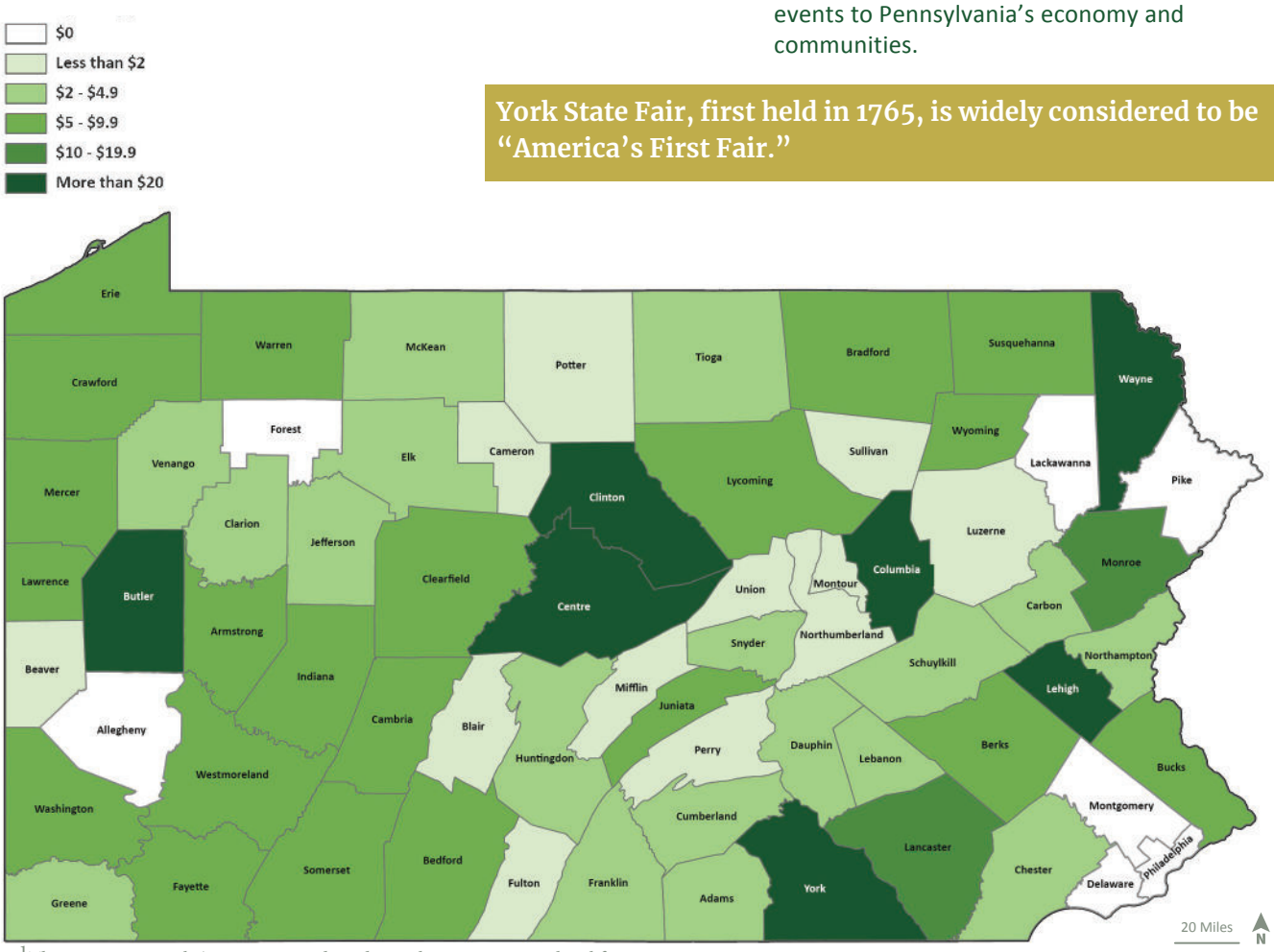
Fairs in Pennsylvania serve as economic engines that generate revenue, create jobs, and promote regional development across the state. The fairs attract thousands of visitors, boosting local tourism and generating revenue for nearby businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and shops. Fairs create temporary employment opportunities for local residents, from event staff to vendors and performers. Farmers and agricultural producers benefit from the chance to showcase and sell their products directly to consumers, while also competing for prizes that can enhance their reputation and market value.

For every dollar invested by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in the state's county and local agricultural fairs, the Commonwealth sees $286 in economic impact and $5 in state fiscal returns. This investment drives significant benefits, showcasing the immense value of these events to Pennsylvania's economy and communities.

York State Fair, first held in 1765, is widely considered to be "America's First Fair."

VISITOR SPENDING BY COUNTY

2024 ($MILLIONS)[1]



[1]Those counties with $0 visitor spending do not host a county or local fair.

Building Destination Awareness in Pennsylvania Communities

Beyond their economic impact, agricultural fairs serve to preserve rural and cultural heritage, educate visitors about farming practices, and foster a connection between urban visitors and rural life.

ECONOMIC FOOTPRINT OF LOCAL AND COUNTY FAIRS

Pennsylvania's agricultural fairs play a crucial role in building destination awareness and promoting agritourism. These events, which include festivals, competitive exhibitions, and shows, showcase local agricultural products, traditions, and innovations, attracting tourists and contributing significantly to local economies.

The growth of agritourism is evident, with revenue more than tripling between 2002 and 2017. The fairs offer diverse activities that appeal to a wide range of visitors, generating media attention and word-of-mouth promotion. These fairs draw tourists from within and outside the state, boosting local businesses through increased spending on accommodations, food, and local products.

THE RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE OF FAIRS IN PENNSYLVANIA

County and local fairs are cherished annual events in communities throughout the Commonwealth that showcase the state's rich agricultural heritage and community spirit. These fairs offer a diverse array of attractions, including livestock exhibitions, agricultural contests, craft displays, food stalls, and carnival rides. They serve multiple purposes: celebrating agricultural achievements, providing a platform for farmers and artisans to showcase their work, offering educational opportunities about farming and sustainability, and fostering community bonds. Organizations such as 4-H and FFA use these fairs to engage youth in agricultural projects.

ANCHORS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY WITHIN FARMING COMMUNITIES

The fairs provide a revenue base for local farmers. Fairs serve as a vibrant marketplace for local farmers, artisans, and entrepreneurs to showcase and sell their products. This direct-to-consumer platform is invaluable for small businesses and agricultural producers, offering them an opportunity to reach a broader audience, increase sales, and build brand recognition. From fresh produce and handmade crafts, to innovative agricultural tools and technologies, these fairs facilitate a significant exchange of goods and services, stimulating local economic activity.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SOCIAL COHESION

Agricultural fairs in Pennsylvania serve as vital hubs for community building, and cultural preservation. These events bring together people from diverse backgrounds to celebrate local agriculture, share experiences, and support local businesses. Fairs embody the values and traditions of their communities, offering more than just entertainment; they provide opportunities for youth development through programs like 4-H and FFA, teaching valuable life skills such as work ethic, leadership, and responsibility. The nostalgic appeal of fairs draws visitors annually, creating a sense of continuity and shared experience. For local residents, fairs become places of reunion and connection. Fairs foster networking, partnerships, and educational opportunities that strengthen the fabric of rural communities and promote Pennsylvania's agricultural sector as a key component of the state's economy and cultural identity. And agricultural fairs are venues for competition where locals vie for bragging rights to claim best dairy cow or apple pie.

Agricultural fairs in Pennsylvania are known for interesting local foods, such as funnel cakes, apple dumplings, and whoopie pies.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Report Purpose

Pennsylvania's agricultural fairs play a crucial role in both stimulating local economies and fostering a sense of community across the state. These events not only attract visitors who contribute to local businesses, such as hotels, restaurants, and vendors, but also provide opportunities for agricultural education and promotion, supporting the state's vital farming sector. The influx of tourists during fair seasons boosts small businesses, generates tax revenue, and creates jobs, making fairs a significant economic driver for rural and suburban regions alike.



Beyond the economic benefits, fairs are central to community cohesion. They serve as platforms for social interaction, cultural exchange, and the celebration of local traditions, helping to preserve Pennsylvania's rich heritage. By bringing together residents, farmers, artisans, and visitors, fairs enhance civic pride and strengthen bonds within communities, making them an invaluable part of both the economic and social fabric of the state.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) commissioned Econsult Solutions, Inc. (ESI) to evaluate the economic impact of the 107 county and local fairs that occur annually in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This report contains the results of quantitative and qualitative analyses that measure the direct, indirect, and induced economic and fiscal impacts generated by the fair industry and exploring the industry's broader contributions to Pennsylvania in terms of preserving cultural heritage and enhancing community cohesion.

1.2. About Pennsylvania's Agricultural Fairs

The fair industry in Pennsylvania is a rich blend of tradition and innovation, hosting a wide array of events from agricultural showcases to entertainment extravaganzas, all of which serve as crucial platforms for local businesses, artisans, and farmers. These local and county-based Agricultural Fairs not only celebrate the state's agricultural heritage but also act as catalysts for economic activity, drawing in visitors from various origins, thus injecting vital revenue into local communities. Outside of the

immediate economic contributions that these events have within local communities, the fairs have broader implications for the state's economy, including the support of the agriculture industry, the creation of seasonal employment opportunities, and the promotion of tourism.

In 1986 the General Assembly declared agricultural fairs are a part of Pennsylvania's rich heritage and created the Fair Fund as a way to ensure the Commonwealth would continually invest in Pennsylvania's agricultural fairs, agricultural youth programs, and agricultural organizations that further those causes. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through the PA Department of Agriculture (PDA) provides funding for agricultural fairs via the PA Fair Fund. Some of the funds available for county and local fairs include:

- Capital Improvement Matching Grants - assists agricultural fairs with resources to build new and maintain existing physical structures on their fairgrounds. Fairs are eligible to receive grants up to $25,000; and
- Agricultural Fair Operating and Premium Reimbursement - helps support PA's county and community fairs with annual operating and premium costs.

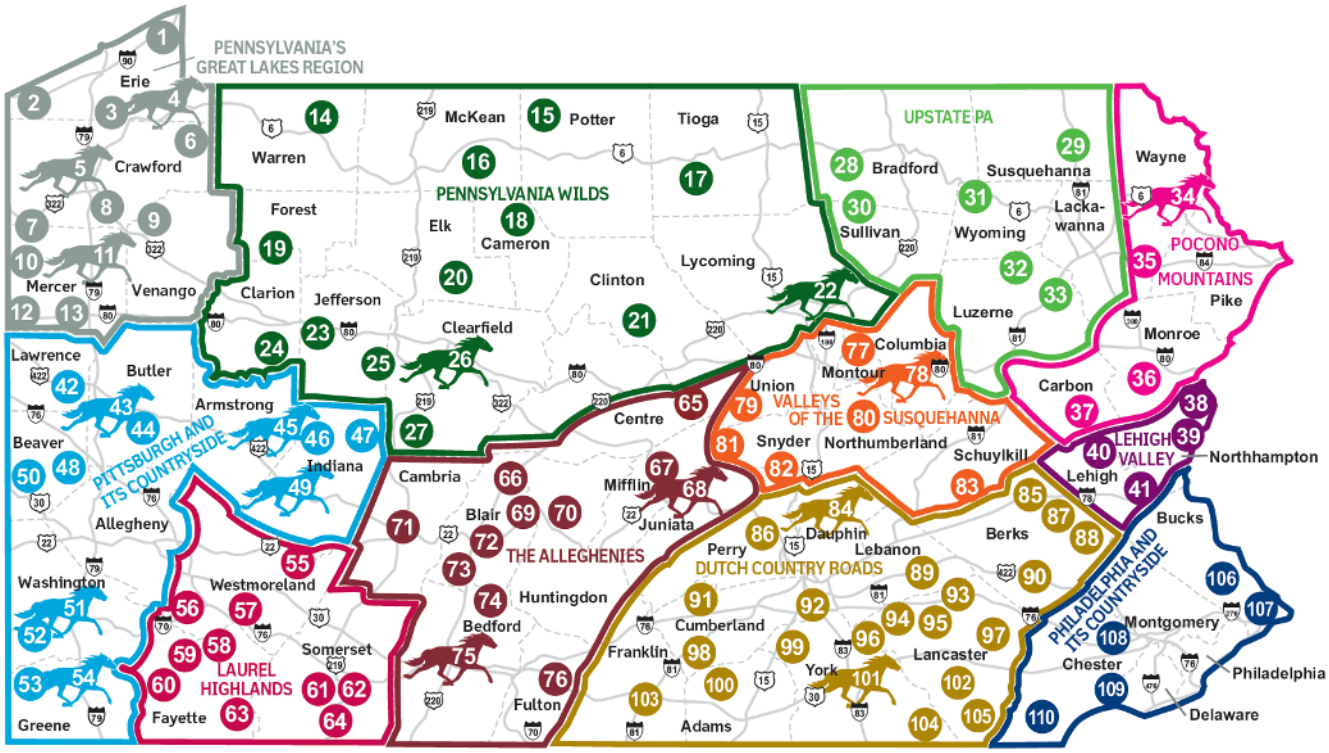
Additionally, the following funds provided by the PA Department of Agriculture are granted directly to the agriculture educational groups, including 67 4-H groups, 13 Statewide agricultural organizations, and 43 Future Farmers of America chapters:

- State Agricultural Organization Funds Reimbursement - helps support organizations conducting annual events with an agricultural mission. The funds help reimburse organizations for expenses including administrative costs, utilities, and planning and preparation.
- County FFA Funds Reimbursement - helps support county FFA organizations[1] with annual expenses for activities that promote leadership development like public speaking, judging contests, scholarships, administration costs and more.
- County 4-H Funds Reimbursement - helps support county 4-H organizations with annual expenses for activities that promote leadership development like public speaking, judging contests, scholarships, administration costs and more.

There are 107 county and local fairs that occur annually throughout Pennsylvania. Each fair is given a distinctive classification based on features of the fair, including its acreage, the premiums it pays out to winners of agricultural or agribusiness contests or exhibits, duration of the fair, and operational expenses. The fair classifications range from Class A to Class E, with Class A as the largest, and Class E as the smallest. Distinctions for Class A fairs include annual events operating on 40 acres or more, paying $10,000 or more in premiums to winners, and operating for at least five days. Almost three quarters of Pennsylvania's 107 fairs[2] (76) are categorized as Class A. Currently, there are no fairs within the Class E classification, the smallest designation available.

[1] FFA was created in 1928 as the Future Farmers of America; the name was changed in 1988 to the National FFA Organization to represent the growing diversity of agriculture. Student success remains the primary mission of FFA. Today, over 13,000 students are members of the Pennsylvania FFA Association..
[2] The annual PA Farm Show is the 108th fair in the Commonwealth each year; however, was not included in the economic impact study.

Figure 1.1: Map of Pennsylvania County and Local Fairs[3]



Source: Pennsylvania State Association of County Fairs

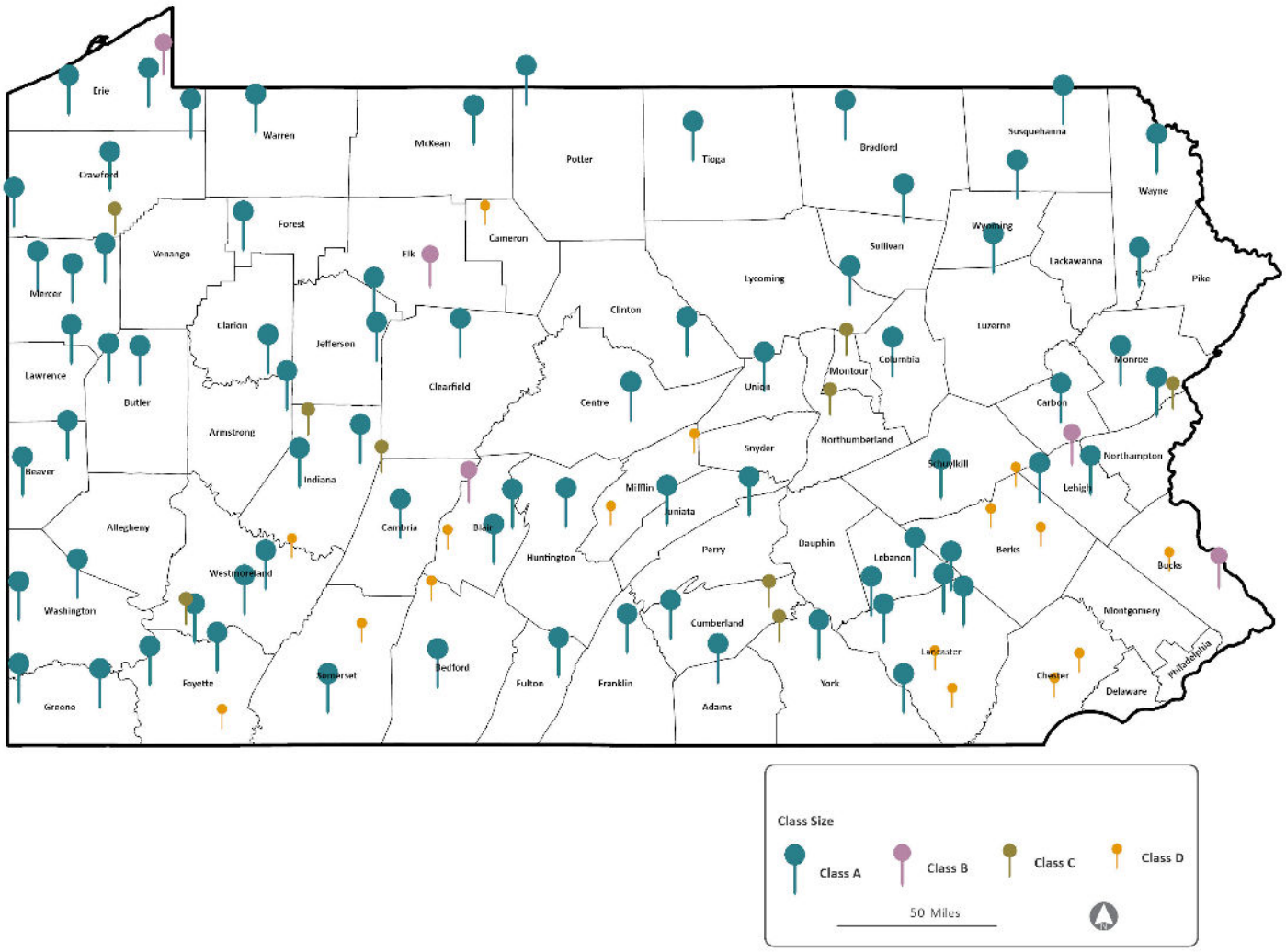
Figure 1.2: Pennsylvania Fair Class Descriptions

Fair Class	Description	Minimum # of Activity Days/Class	# of Fairs in Class	Maximum Operational Expense
Class A	An annual agricultural event which operates on 40 acres or more of land and pays $10,000 or more in premiums to winners of agricultural or agribusiness contests or exhibits.	5 Days	76	$14,000
Class B	An annual agricultural event which operates on 30 acres or more of land and pays $7,500 to $9,999 in premiums to winners of agricultural or agribusiness contests or exhibits.	5 Days	5	$12,000
Class C	An annual agricultural event which operates on 20 acres or more of land and pays $5,000 to $7,499 in premiums to winners of agricultural or agribusiness contests or exhibits.	5 Days	10	$9,500
Class D	An annual agricultural event which operates on 10 acres or more of land and pays $2,500 to $4,999 in premiums to winners of agricultural or agribusiness contests or exhibits.	3 Days	16	$7,000
Class E	An annual agricultural event which operates on fewer than 10 acres of land and pays less than $2,500 in premiums to winners of agricultural or agribusiness contests or exhibits.	3 Days	0	$2,500

Source: PA Department of Agriculture; Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

[3] Fairs identified with horse icons host harness racing events.

Figure 1.3: Map of Pennsylvania County and Local Fairs by Class Description



Source: PA Department of Agriculture (2024); ArcGIS Pro (2024); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

1.3. Scope and Methodology

Econsult Solutions, Inc. (ESI) employed industry-standard economic modeling techniques to estimate the direct economic activity generated by the 2024 Pennsylvania county and local fairs, and to translate that activity into total economic output, employment, and earnings, as well as tax revenue impact within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Economic impact is measured as the sum of direct activity attributable to the 2024 Pennsylvania county and local fairs, which includes spending drawn into the area by visitors, as well as operational expenditures—and the spillover impacts of that direct activity (Figure 1.4). Within an interconnected economy, each dollar of direct expenditures generates multiple waves of spillover impacts through spending on goods and services purchased within a given region ("indirect impacts") as well as spending resulting from the labor income generated by the initial activity that ripples through the region ("induced impacts"). ESI used IMPLAN modeling software to estimate indirect and induced impacts and sums them with the direct activity to produce total economic impact. IMPLAN also estimates the number of jobs that are supported by the spillover impacts (indirect and induced impacts). For ease of comprehension, ESI converts these jobs into Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs, and all jobs expressed in this report are FTE jobs. Throughout this analysis, the combined economic impacts are estimated for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. ESI also created a custom fiscal impact model to translate economic impacts into their commensurate effect on the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania tax base, in order to develop estimates of state tax revenues generated by the 2024 Pennsylvania county and local fairs.

Figure 1.4: Economic Impact Methodology



Source: Econsult Solutions, Inc.(2024)

Data represented on fair expenditures were provided by The Pennsylvania State Association of County Fairs. ESI created surveys which were distributed to fair visitors by fair organizers, to determine visitor trip details and spending patterns, as well as geography of origin. ESI created separate surveys which were distributed to fair organizers to determine revenue and sources of revenue by category.

Additionally, ESI hosted interviews with organizers of six major fairs that take place across Pennsylvania, which include the Allentown, Bloomsburg, West End, Washington County, Warren County, and Westmoreland Fairs. These interviews were utilized and combined with operational expenditures and visitor spending data for more comprehensive case studies of these featured fairs.

1.4. Organization of the Report

The report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2: Pennsylvania's Local Agricultural Fairs as an Economic and Cultural Driver** provides an in-depth look at the qualitative features of Pennsylvania's local agricultural fairs, underscoring their importance as both economic catalysts and cultural keystones.
- **Section 3: Annual Impacts from Fair Visitation**, the focus shifts to the economic benefits stemming from fair visitors, who contribute to the demand for local hospitality, food, and retail services. This section offers an estimation of the economic impact derived from such additional spending related to the fairs.
- **Section 4: Annual Economic Impacts of Organizational Spending** examines how the Fairs act as economic engines through their operational expenditures and the employment they create. It details the economic activities and jobs that are both directly and indirectly supported by these expenditures.
- **Section 5: Localized Impacts: Case Studies from Across Pennsylvania** examines the specific economic effects on local communities through case studies, providing insights into the varied impacts across Pennsylvania.
- Concluding the analysis, **Section 6: Aggregate Economic and Fiscal Impacts** compiles the significant fiscal and economic advantages that agricultural fairs bring to both the counties and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, summarizing these broad impacts.

2. Pennsylvania's Agricultural Fairs as Economic and Cultural Drivers



An economic impact analysis provides a comprehensive view of how certain sectors or events contribute to the overall economy, highlighting their direct, indirect, and induced effects. Local and county agricultural fairs throughout Pennsylvania function as crucial anchors of economic activity within farming communities. They are key drivers of economic growth, offering a multifaceted platform for local economies to flourish through the promotion of agriculture, tourism, and small businesses. These fairs provide a vital infusion of economic activity, supporting not only the farmers and producers directly involved but also a wide array of local enterprises and community initiatives.

Beyond those impacts, local and county fairs present broader cultural and societal impacts. They provide farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs with a platform to exhibit their products, share knowledge, and engage in competitions that highlight the state's agricultural advancements. This focus on agriculture not only underscores the sector's significance to Pennsylvania's economy but also encourages investment in sustainable practices and technological advancements, driving forward the agricultural industry.

2.1. History of Pennsylvania's Agricultural Fairs

Agricultural fairs in Pennsylvania, like those in many parts of the United States, began as a way for farmers to come together to share information, showcase the fruits of their labor, and compete in various agricultural contests. The tradition of agricultural fairs has roots going back to the earliest days of American settlement, with influences from European traditions of seasonal markets and fairs.

The first agricultural fair in Pennsylvania is often credited to the York State Fair,[4] which is widely viewed to be "America's First Fair." The York State Fair was first held in 1765, initially as a two-day event organized by the York County Agricultural Society to promote agriculture and industry. The fair provided a venue for farmers to exhibit their products, share techniques, and engage in friendly competition. The success of early fairs like the York State Fair inspired the creation of other agricultural fairs across the state. By the 19th century, agricultural societies were formed in various counties, and these societies often took the lead in organizing fairs. The Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society, founded in 1851,

[4] International Association of Fairs & Expositions, "*History of Fairs*" Retrieved from: https://fairsandexpos.com/History-of-Fairs/

played a significant role in promoting agriculture and organizing fairs at the state level, including the Pennsylvania State Fair.

The Pennsylvania State Association of County Fairs (PSACF) was established in 1912, initially comprising only 13 members. PSACF's goal is to inform the public and promote careers in agriculture, horticulture, tourism, and more. The organization supports the state's county and agricultural fairs, serving as a resource to exchange knowledge and best practices among its membership and providing opportunities to engage and communicate with the general public and state agencies about the advancement of the fair industry.

Over time, agricultural fairs in Pennsylvania and elsewhere evolved to include a wider range of activities and exhibits, including industrial and craft exhibits, entertainment acts, and food vendors, making them important community events in addition to their agricultural significance. Despite these changes, the core mission of promoting agriculture and community engagement remains central to the spirit of these fairs.

2.2. Economic Footprint of Local and County Fairs

Pennsylvania's fairs serve as economic engines that generate revenue, create jobs, and promote regional development across the state. The fairs attract thousands of visitors, boosting local tourism and generating revenue for nearby businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and shops. Fairs create temporary employment opportunities for local residents, from event staff to vendors and performers. Agricultural producers benefit from the chance to showcase and sell their products directly to consumers, while also competing for prizes that can enhance their reputation and market value. The fairs often feature carnival rides, games, and food vendors, all of which contribute to the local economy through licensing fees and taxes. Additionally, the fairs can stimulate long-term economic growth by promoting the region's cultural heritage and agricultural products to a wider audience, potentially attracting new businesses and residents to the area. The economic ripple effect extends beyond the fairgrounds, as increased activity during fair season can lead to higher sales for local suppliers.

The fairs provide a revenue base for local farmers as well as the fair organizers, providing funding for the following year's fair. Inflow of spending is generated through livestock sales, exhibit entry fees, concessions and entertainment, amongst others.

Figure 2.1: Major Revenue Sources for Local and County Fairs



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (2024); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

Econsult Solutions, Inc. (ESI) created and distributed a survey to fair organizers to determine fair revenues by category. Of 107 fairs surveyed, 45 completed the survey. Of the respondents, most (35 fairs) fall into Class A. While the sample sizes represented in classes B (2 fairs), C (3 fairs), and D (5 fairs) are relatively small, the results provide insights as to the revenues generated by those fairs (Figures 2.2 and 2.3). The revenues represented in the survey do not include individual vendor or farm sales, which add an additional layer of impact to the local community.

Figure 2.2: Average Fair Revenue by Category and Class, in Thousands

Class	Total Average Revenue	Commercial and Entry Fees	Sponsorships	Livestock Sales	Entertainment, Rental Activities, Concessions	Parking	Other
A	$726	$93	$67	$191	$337	$17	$22
B	$242	$27	$17	-	$46	$122	$30
C	$31	$9	$10	-	$3	$4	$5
D	$221	$13	$17	$152	$28	$8	$1

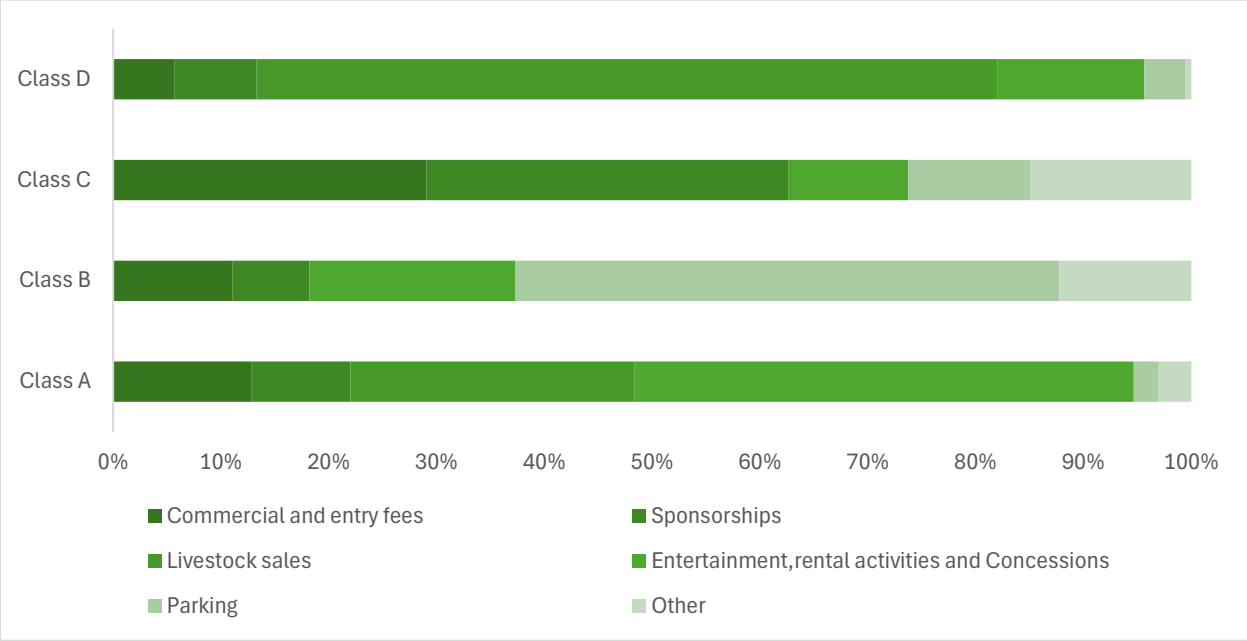
Source: Various PA Fairs, self-reported via survey (2023); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)



While the sample sizes for Class B, C, and D fairs are too small to draw definitive conclusions, we can still glean valuable insights—particularly regarding Class A fairs—from the data in the table. Notably, livestock sales account for about one-quarter of the total revenue for Class A fairs, highlighting the importance of these sales not just as an entertainment feature, but as a critical revenue stream.

Additionally, entertainment and rental activities significantly influence the financial success of Class A fairs. Many of these fairs attract high-profile performers; for instance, the Allentown Fair opened with a performance by Cheap Trick, with ticket prices ranging from $32 to $52. This ability to feature well-known talent not only enhances attendance but also boosts overall revenue, making entertainment a key component of the fairs' economic impact. These revenue streams help to sustain the fairs' operations and serve as seed money for future events, contributing to their long-term stability and success.

Figure 2.2: Local Fairs Revenue Breakdown by Category and Class, by Percentage of Total



Source: Various PA Fairs, self-reported via survey (2024); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

2.3. Pennsylvania's Rich Cultural Heritage of Fairs

Pennsylvania's county and local fairs are well-known tourist attractions that, to visitors and residents alike, encapsulate the spirit of the communities in which they are located. These fairs serve as a showcase for Pennsylvania's deep-rooted agricultural history. Each year, fairs are held across the state, offering a unique blend of entertainment, competition, education, and community fellowship. Visitors are treated to an array of activities ranging from livestock exhibitions, agricultural contests, and horse shows to craft fairs, food stalls, and carnival rides. These events not only celebrate the agricultural achievements and innovations of the state but also provide a platform for farmers, artisans, and young people to showcase their skills and hard work.

For example, the PA Maple Festival is renowned for its celebration of all things maple, one of Pennsylvania's sweetest commodities. It highlights the art of maple syrup production and offers demonstrations on the making of sugar cakes and spotza treats. The festival features competitive exhibits and is home to live entertainment, food and craft vendors. It draws tourists to the region, further benefiting local artisans, vendors, and businesses.

Agricultural fairs have long been a staple in rural communities, serving not only as a celebration of local agriculture and craftsmanship but also as an important social event. Traditionally, these fairs provide a platform for participants, particularly youth involved in 4-H Youth Development and Future Farmers of



America (FFA) programs[5], to exhibit their agricultural projects and livestock, culminating after a year of preparation. They offer opportunities for learning, competition, and recognition, with the potential to advance to higher levels like the PA Farm Show. These events also serve educational purposes, promoting agricultural practices and sustainability among community members. For many, the fair is a time of reunion, an annual occasion to reconnect with friends and family and share in the community's triumphs and challenges. The economic accessibility of these fairs makes them a valuable cultural and educational experience, representing a vital part of America's rural heritage.[6]

Furthermore, Pennsylvania's agricultural fairs provide educational opportunities for visitors. These gatherings are pivotal in fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the agricultural industry among attendees of all ages. Through hands-on experiences, demonstrations, and interactive exhibits, fairgoers gain insights into the importance of agriculture in their daily lives and the challenges faced by farmers and farm workers to feed and support communities. The PA Department of Agriculture awards grants for agribusiness educational activities and demonstrations, and awarding premiums to contest and exhibit winners at the agricultural fair.

2.4. Anchors of Economic Activity within Farming Communities

Fairs provide farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs with a platform to exhibit their products, share knowledge, and engage in competitions that highlight the state's agricultural advancements. This focus on agriculture not only underscores the sector's significance to Pennsylvania's economy but also encourages investment in sustainable practices and technological advancements, driving forward the agricultural industry.

[5] 4-H and FFA are both organizations in the United States that focus on youth development in agriculture. 4-H projects can be quite diverse, ranging from animal husbandry to robotics or sewing. FFA projects tend to be more agriculture-specific, focusing on areas like raising livestock, agricultural mechanics, or public speaking related to agriculture.
[6] Lawrence, Marytina 18 Aug. "Celebrating the culture of the county fair", *Ag Week. 11 Aug 2018.* Retrieved from https://www.agweek.com/opinion/celebrating-the-culture-of-the-county-fair



The fairs provide a revenue base for local farmers. Fairs serve as a vibrant marketplace for local farmers, artisans, and entrepreneurs to showcase and sell their products. This direct-to-consumer platform is invaluable for small businesses and agricultural producers, offering them an opportunity to reach a broader audience, increase sales, and build brand recognition. From fresh produce and handmade crafts to innovative agricultural tools and technologies, these fairs facilitate a significant exchange of goods and services, stimulating local economic activity.

2.5. Building Destination Awareness

Special events that help build destination awareness encompass a wide variety of formats, including festivals, fairs, exhibitions, and shows[7]. Agricultural fairs, in particular, are vital in drawing significant attention to a destination by showcasing local agricultural products, traditions, and innovations. These fairs can effectively build destination awareness and attract tourists, contributing to the local economy.

Agritourism has seen remarkable growth, with revenue more than tripling between 2002 and 2017. Adjusted for inflation, U.S. agritourism revenue grew from $704 million in 2012 to almost $950 million in



[7]Dimanche, F. (2002). The contribution of special events to destination brand equity. In K. W. Wöber (Ed.), *City Tourism 2002: Proceedings of European Cities Tourism's International Conference (pp. 73-80)*. Vienna: Springer. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267925161

2017,[8] according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service and data from the Census of Agriculture. This growth underscores the increasing popularity and economic importance of agritourism.

The Bloomsburg Fair, one of the largest agricultural fairs in Pennsylvania, features live music, amusement rides, and competitive exhibits, ensuring a memorable visit for attendees. The diverse range of activities boosts destination awareness through word-of-mouth and social media posts. Similarly, the York State Fair garners significant media attention every year, highlighting the fair's events and attracting visitors from neighboring states.[9]

Pennsylvania's county and local fairs draw visitors from within and outside the state, significantly boosting local tourism. These events provide a unique blend of agricultural displays, competitions, entertainment, and food, appealing to tourists seeking environments away from urban congestion. Agricultural fairs also align with increasing emphasis on food standards and sustainable farming practices. Tourism to fairs contributes to the local economy through accommodation bookings, restaurant spending, and purchases from local farmers and vendors. Tourists are warmly welcomed by the community, engaging with locals and reinforcing the destination as a place worth revisiting.

Agritourism, specifically at county and local fairs, bolsters and preserves local, rural, and cultural heritage. Originally conceived as places for farmers to learn and share agricultural knowledge, these fairs now serve to attract visitors and connect them with agrarian life[10]. County and local fairs continue to bring people closer to agriculture, fostering an appreciation for its heritage and rural life.

2.6. Community Engagement and Social Cohesion

Pennsylvania's agricultural fairs are a cornerstone for community building and social cohesion. These events offer a chance for people from diverse backgrounds to come together, share experiences, and celebrate the harvest and achievements of the agricultural community. Furthermore, the fairs play a pivotal role in bolstering local economies, providing a boost through promotion of local products and businesses.

Beyond viewing fairs as an annual event to bolster local economies, they also epitomize the values and principles that are upheld of their respective communities. While many visitors view fairs as a fun activity, for many, fairs are presented as an extension of their culture and livelihoods. Exhibitors, staff, and local volunteers work year-round to ensure the fairs' success. Programming such as 4-H and FFA showcases the talents of the youth through education, exhibitions, and competitions.[11] Fairs present the

[8] Whitt, Christine Low, Sarah and Van Sandt Anders 19 Nov. *"Agritourism Allows Farms To Diversify and Has Potential Benefits for Rural Communities" USRDA Amber Waves*, 04 Nov 2019. Retrieved from https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2019/november/agritourism-allows-farms-to-diversify-and-has-potential-benefits-for-rural-communities/

[9] Bonatesta, Lara 23 Jul. *"National Merry-Go-Round Day: 4 things to know about the York State Fair Carousel"*, 25 Jul 2023. Retrieved from https://www.abc27.com/york-fair/national-merry-go-round-day-4-things-to-know-about-the-york-state-fair-carousel/

[10] Roberts, Hayden, "Place-Identities and the Geographies of Contemporary County Fairs in Oklahoma", *University of Oklahoma*. Aug 2015. Retrieved from: https://hdl.handle.net/11244/15492

[11] Marsden, Michael T., "The County Fair as Celebration and Cultural Text" *The Journal of American Culture*. March 2010. Retrieved from: https://www.proquest.com/openview/d94d2a521f69f48356ca79996b696cb4/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=29587

opportunity for community members and people of all walks of life to learn valuable life skills like work ethic, leadership, service, and responsibility.[12]



Fairs serve as community hubs that bring people together annually. Attendance to a fair is a relatively commonly shared experience for many Americans, making nostalgia a key component that draws in visitors.[13] Fairs display an image of the past, one rooted in agriculture and community. For people living within a fair town, fairs become places of reunion for friends, families, and neighbors to come together. Community organizations and businesses enjoy fairs as a way of connecting with their customer and constituent base. For many local organizations and small businesses, fairs are crucial pathways for raising funds that will support their efforts until next year's fair.

County and local fairs in Pennsylvania are not just annual gatherings but pivotal events that stimulate economic activity, support local businesses, and promote the agricultural sector as a cornerstone of the Commonwealth's economy. Apart from economic gain, they also provide a unique setting for networking, partnership formation, and educational opportunities, fostering a sense of community and cooperation among participants.

[12] Krosnicki, Betty Jo, "What impact does the county fair have on American communities?" *Michigan State University.* 6 Aug 2015. Retrieved from: https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/what_impact_does_the_county_fair_have_on_american_communities
[13] Lochetto, Stephen, "Love, Loss, and Blue Ribbons: An Ethnographic Study of 4-H Animal Projects in Rural Community Fairs" *Penn State Harrisburg*. 30 Apr 2023. Retrieved from: https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/cfr/article/view/36167/39126

3. Annual Impacts from Fair Visitation

Pennsylvania Fairs Visitor Spending Impact by the Numbers

Visitors	Visitor Spending	Economic Impact	Jobs	Compensation	PA Tax Revenue
4M	$673M	$1B+	10,000 FTE	$377M	$20M+

Visitor spending has a significant impact on the local, broader regional, and state economies, as visitors from outside the county travel to the region. This spending then generates further indirect and induced impacts as restaurants, hotels, stores, and other businesses pay resident employees and purchase goods.

Visitor spending refers to the expenditures made by fairgoers outside and inside the fairgrounds, including lodging, transportation, food and drinks, shopping, and other recreational activities—and including ticket sales, parking, entertainment, and games.

It is estimated that the 2024 Pennsylvania county and local fair visitors spent approximately $673 million within the Pennsylvania economy. This spending increase creates an annual economic impact of more than $1 billion within Pennsylvania and supports more than 10,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs within the Commonwealth. As a point of reference for the magnitude of the fairs, the Pennsylvania tourism industry generates $76 billion in economic impact for Pennsylvania's economy[14]. Thus, the fairs constitute almost 1% of Pennsylvania's annual tourism economic impact. In consideration of the seasonal restrictions of the fairs—primarily summer season events—this order of magnitude demonstrates the incredible impact of the Pennsylvania county and local fairs on the economy of the Commonwealth.

Attendee spending estimates are based upon the survey and assumptions are anchored by research. Where possible, a conservative approach is taken to arrive at these estimates to avoid overstating these amounts.

[14] Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development. "New Report Reveals That Tourism Generates Over $76 Billion for Pennsylvania's Economy and Supports 485,000 Jobs." DCED, 17 Oct. 2023, dced.pa.gov/newsroom/new-report-reveals-that-tourism-generates-over-76-billion-for-pennsylvanias-economy-and-supports-485000-jobs/. Accessed 2 Oct. 2024.

3.1. Measuring Visitation and Tourism from Local Fairs

The county and local fairs visitor spending analysis involves a detailed multi-step process, which is explained in both the following sections and the report's appendix. This approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the fairs' broader economic impact, capturing how these events generate additional revenue for local businesses and the regional economy. The PA Department of Agriculture provided attendance figures for the fairs, as self-reported by each fair's organizing group—as well as geographic origin data of visitors via ticket purchases, or in some cases, via estimates. Spending profiles were then developed by attendee type based on this information—as well as survey data and tourism industry benchmarks—to reflect the variation in spending levels and composition for day and overnight visitors.

About the Visitor Survey

Econsult Solutions, Inc. (ESI) designed and facilitated a comprehensive visitor survey, utilizing Microsoft Forms as the platform, targeting attendees of the 2024 Pennsylvania county and local fairs. The survey was administered at each fair by the fair organizers, primarily via QR code and mobile links. The questionnaire consisted of twelve questions, requesting information from attendees such as fair visited, state and county of origin, party size, age, duration of the trip, and estimated spending by expenditure category. These responses were instrumental in assessing the economic impacts of the fairs due to visitor spending. Visitors self-reported spending associated with parking, food and beverage, retail purchases (souvenirs, crafts, gifts), entertainment, lodging, and transportation; and the results were analyzed within each spending category.

Survey Results: Pennsylvania County and Local Fairs Visitors Expenditures

A visitor spend profile is a detailed analysis of the spending patterns and behaviors of tourists or visitors in a particular destination or region. It provides valuable insights into how visitors allocate their money during their stay, which helps local businesses, tourism authorities, and policymakers make informed decisions and develop strategies to enhance the tourism industry. The key components typically incorporated in a visitor spend profile include:

- **Spending categories** such as accommodation, food and dining, entertainment, shopping, and activities.
- **Average daily spending** which calculates the average amount of money spent by a visitor per trip.
- **Length of stay** which includes information about the average length of stay for visitors.
- **Geographic origin** to discover from where visitors arrive.
- **Demographic information** for data about visitors, such as age and number of travel companions.

Visitor spend profiles are valuable tools because they provide data-driven insights that can inform infrastructure development and tourism policies. This information helps destinations optimize their

tourism offerings and maximize the economic benefits of tourism while ensuring a positive experience for visitors. For this study, ESI developed fair visitor spend profiles based upon the results of the visitor survey.

Additionally, the wide variance in reported visitor spending by trip type informed the development of two distinct categories of visitor spending profiles, and determined via self-identification within the survey:

- **Day trip visitors**, attending a fair and returning to the location of origin in the same day; and
- **Overnight visitors**, staying in the fair region 1 or more nights

Figure 3.1 shows visitor spending profiles for both day trip and overnight visitors.

- **Overnight visitors** reported the highest per-capita spend with an average spending amount of $185 per trip. The increased delta from day trip visitors is due to increased spending on food and beverages, transportation/travel costs, and lodging.
- **Day trip visitors** reported the lowest per-capita spend with an average spending amount of $160 per trip. Interestingly, parking costs were higher for this category of visitors.

Figure 3.1: Estimated Visitor Spend Profiles for Fair Attendees, Per Person

Spending Category	Day Trip	Overnight[15]
Fair admission tickets	$14	$14
Parking	$14	$7
Food and beverages	$41	$50
Fair purchases (e.g., souvenirs, crafts, gifts)	$14	$14
Transportation/travel costs	$19	$21
Shopping	$17	$20
Other attractions and entertainment	$16	$16
Lodging and accommodations	$0	$12
Rides	$8	$9
Entertainment (Fair Concert Ticket Fees, Games, etc.)	$9	$10
Other	$9	$13
Total	**$160**	**$185**

Source: Self-reported by visitors via survey (2024); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

[15] It is worth noting that the self-reported parking costs for overnight visitors were less than day trip visitors. However, one can estimate that the delta is due to overnight guests parking at the location of accommodation (campground, hotel, or short term rental). A second observation regarding the inexpensive value of lodging for overnight visitors: Many fair organizers report that guests stay overnight at on-site campgrounds, thus bringing down the per person cost of overnight accommodations.

Visitation

To extrapolate total spending associated with the Pennsylvania county and local fairs from the visitor spend profiles, it was necessary to have estimates of total attendance at the fairs. These estimates were provided by the event organizers of the 107 fairs, and are based on 2023 fair visitation. **Overall, the 2023 Pennsylvania county and local fairs hosted almost 4 million visitors.** The York State Fair received the largest number of visitors with almost 400,000 estimated guests. The Bloomsburg Fair hosted almost 351,000 visitors, and the Centre County Grange Encampment & Fair and the Ephrata Fair almost tied for third highest attendance, hosting 202,000 and 201,000 visitors, respectively.

3.2. Modeling Visitor Spending

Aggregate Fair Visitor Spending

Attendance estimates for Pennsylvania's county and local fairs were then adjusted by multiplying them by the proportion of survey respondents who identified as either day trip visitors or overnight visitors, as shown in Figure 3.2. These percentages were derived from survey data, and for parties with multiple attendees, each additional visitor was included in the analysis. This approach allowed for a more accurate estimate of the total number of attendees falling into each trip category, providing a clearer picture of visitor demographics and their potential economic impact.

Figure 3.2: Share of Survey Responses by Trip Category

Visitor Spend Profile	Percent of Total Attendance
Day trip visitor	65%
Overnight visitor	35%

Source: PA Department of Agriculture (as reported by the PA fairs, 2023); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

The estimated total number of attendees falling within each visitor spend profile category—day trip and overnight visitor—was then determined by multiplying the 2023 attendee estimates by the percent of total attendance for each category, yielding total estimated attendance, and attendance by visitor spend profile (Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3: Estimated Total Fair Attendees by Visitor Spend Category

Visitor Spend Profile	Total Attendance
Day trip visitor	2,600,000
Overnight visitor	1,400,000
Total	**4,000,000**

Source: PA Department of Agriculture (as reported by the PA fairs, 2023); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)



By multiplying the estimated per-capita spend numbers from the survey (seen in Figure 3.1) by the attendance estimates for each trip category, it was possible to attain an estimate of total visitor spending for the Pennsylvania county and local fairs. Figure 3.4 shows the aggregation of these spending totals. Within both visitor spend profile categories—day trip and overnight visitor—food & beverage was the largest spending category at $108 million for day trip visitors, and $69 million for overnight visitors. Transportation and travel costs was the second largest spending category at $48 million for day trip visitors, and $29 million for overnight visitors. **The total visitor spending attributable to the 2024 Pennsylvania county and local fairs is $673 million.**

Figure 3.4: Estimated Total Spending by Fairs Attendees by Visitor Spend Profile, in Millions[16]

Spending Category	Day Trip	Overnight
Fair admission tickets	$36	$20
Parking	$36	$9
Food and beverages	$108	$69
Fair purchases (e.g., souvenirs, crafts, gifts)	$36	$20
Transportation/travel costs	$48	$29
Shopping	$44	$28
Other attractions and entertainment	$41	$22
Lodging and accommodations	$0	$16
Rides	$21	$12
Entertainment (Fair Concert Ticket Fees, Games, etc.)	$23	$14
Other	$22	$18
Total	**$417**	**$256**

Source: Self-reported by visitors via survey (2024); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

[16] Due to rounding, numbers presented in tables throughout this study may not add up precisely to the totals provided.

3.3. Annual Economic Impact from Local and County Fair Visitors

Modeling Approach

As mentioned in section 3.1, visitor spending is calculated based upon estimated spending data gathered through attendee surveys. Attendance figures were then gathered, reported by the organizers of the Pennsylvania county and local fairs. As previously noted, the average visitor spending is then multiplied by the estimated event attendance, which results in total direct spending.

Direct spending estimates serve as an input for the modelled economic impact calculations. The economic impact of the Pennsylvania county and local fairs is the sum of the direct spending by attendees of the events, plus the effects that those dollars have on the Commonwealth's economy.

- Each direct dollar spent in the Commonwealth produces "spillover" impacts throughout the supply chain (termed "indirect impacts") as those dollars are recirculated in the form of household spending (termed "induced impacts").
- Impacts include the total economic activity attributable to visitor spending as well as the employment and earnings that this activity supports.
- The total economic impact is calculated as the sum of these direct and spillover impacts.
- Section 3.5 below reviews the tax revenues associated with this direct and spillover activity.

Input-Output Modeling

Input-output modeling is used to estimate the spillover impacts of direct spending within the Commonwealth economy, using the industry standard IMPLAN framework. This framework is also used to translate direct and spillover economic output into associated employment and labor earnings.

Modeling is undertaken within Pennsylvania, with direct and spillover expenditures modeled at the state level. These models estimate job creation, tax revenue generation, and overall economic output resulting from the Pennsylvania county and local fairs.

Pennsylvania County and Local Fairs Economic Impact due to Visitor Spending

Figure 3.5 shows the economic, employment and earnings impact, plus direct and spillover activity attributable to the fairs' visitor spending in Pennsylvania.

- **The statewide economic impact of visitor spending is more than $1 billion for the 2024 Pennsylvania county and local fairs.**
- **The 2024 fairs events supported more than 10,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs with approximately $377 million in earnings (including wages and benefits) across the Commonwealth.** In the context of this predominantly summer season-limited series of fairs, this means that the labor income supported by the economic activity associated with the fairs was equivalent to supporting more than 10,000 full-time positions over the course of an entire year, providing large impacts to Pennsylvania workers.

- Day trip visitors had an economic impact of nearly $650 million within Pennsylvania, supporting approximately 6,500 jobs with $232 million in compensation.
- Overnight visitors had an economic impact of more than $400 million within Pennsylvania, supporting approximately 3,800 jobs with $145 million in compensation.

Figure 3.5: Economic Impact of Pennsylvania County and Local Fairs Visitor Spending, 2024

	Day Trip Visitors	Overnight Visitors	Total
Direct Output ($M)[17]	$336	$209	$545
Indirect and Induced Output ($M)	$312	$193	$506
Total Output ($M)	**$648**	**$402**	**$1,050**
Employment Supported (FTE)	6,500	3,800	10,300
Employee Compensation ($M)	$232	$145	$377

Source: IMPLAN (2022); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

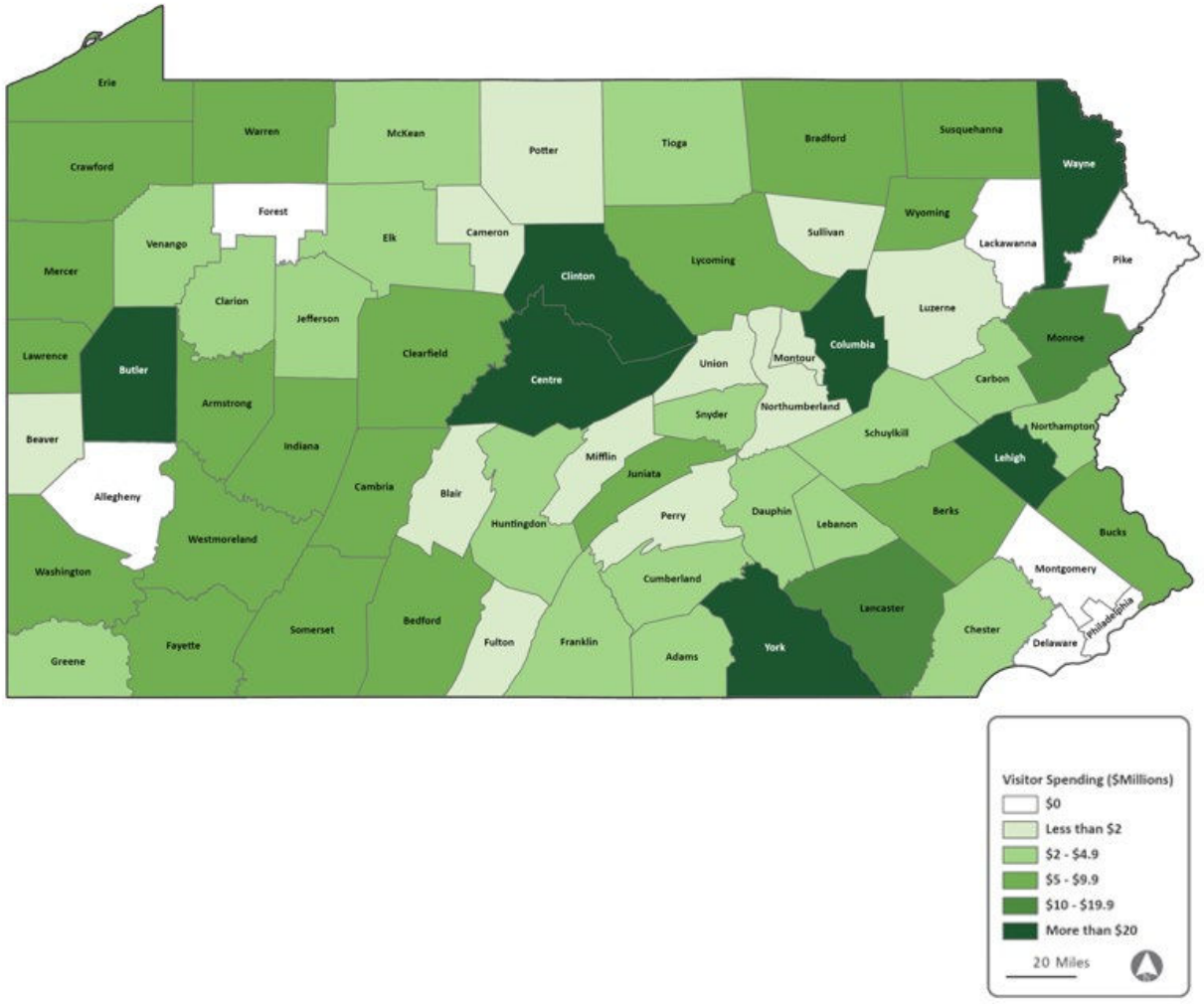
3.4. Countywide Distribution of Fair Spending

The economic benefits of the Pennsylvania state and local fairs are not uniformly distributed across all counties. Variations in fair size, attendance, and regional attractions lead to disparities in economic impact. Larger fairs, such as the York State Fair, attract more visitors and generate greater revenue, providing a more substantial boost to their local economies. In contrast, smaller county fairs may experience more modest economic benefits due to limited attendance and fewer attractions. This uneven distribution underscores the need for targeted support and investment to help smaller fairs expand their reach and enhance their economic contributions.

As expected, York, Butler, and Lehigh Counties are among the counties with the highest visitor revenue amounts, with more than $20 million each in visitor spending (Figure 3.6).

[17] The total direct output of approximately $545 million due to visitor spending is less than the total visitor spending of $673 million, due to leakage of funds. Not all of the money spent at the fairs stays within the state economy. Some of the spending goes to vendors or suppliers who operate outside the Commonwealth. For example, if a fair purchases goods or services from companies based in another state or country, that portion of spending "leaks" out of the local economy, reducing the direct impact on the region.

Figure 3.6 : Pennsylvania County and Local Fair Visitor Spending by County



Source: ESRI (2024); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

3.5. Tax Revenue Generated by Local and County Fair Visitors

Tourism is a major source of revenue for government jurisdictions, with spending by out-of-town visitors supporting public services for residents. Tax revenues generated by tourism activity include both generalized taxes (income, business, etc.) supported by the direct and indirect activity from visitor spending, and consumption taxes (such as sales tax) that are applied directly to the point-of-sale purchases made by visitors.

Modeling Approach

Tax revenue impacts from direct and spillover activity are estimated based on custom fiscal analysis (of incomes and business taxes) as well as a custom visitor-specific sales tax model developed by ESI that is

applied to direct visitor spending. This model relies on the analysis of relationships between economic activity and tax collections of various types.

Specific calculations are made of consumption taxes that affect visitors. Collections attributable to visitor activity are benchmarked against overall collection data for these specific tax types, to ensure that estimates are reasonable, and to illustrate the contribution of visitors to local tax bases.

Tax revenue estimates in this analysis are produced for the State of Pennsylvania only. In addition to these state taxes, tourism activity generates revenue for local municipalities and school districts, primarily through its long-term impact on property values. These generalized impacts cannot reliably be attributed to the economic activity or visitor spending associated with a specific event.

Pennsylvania County and Local Fairs Tax Revenue Generated by Visitor Spending

Figure 3.7 shows the estimated tax revenues from the 2024 Pennsylvania county and local fairs visitor spending by tax type and jurisdiction. These tax revenues are based upon direct and indirect tourism, which is the reason income and business tax is produced, in addition to sales tax. As mentioned earlier, indirect economic impact often results in the creation of jobs and the payment of wages to workers in various sectors.

The economic activity from the 2024 Pennsylvania county and local fairs visitor spending generated more than $20 million of tax revenue for Pennsylvania.

- Day trip visitor spending generated more than $12 million in tax revenue for the Commonwealth.
- Overnight visitor spending generated almost $8 million in tax revenue for the State of Pennsylvania.

Figure 3.7: Annual State Tax Revenue Impacts from Pennsylvania County and Local Fair Visitor Spending

Tax Type	Day Trip Visitors	Overnight Visitors	Total
Income ($M)	$4.1	$2.6	$6.6
Sales ($M)	$6.1	$3.8	$9.8
Business ($M)	$2.4	$1.5	$3.9
Total ($M)	**$12.5**	**$7.8**	**$20.3**

Source: IMPLAN (2022); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

4. Annual Economic Impacts from Organizational Spending

Pennsylvania Fairs Organizational and Capital Spending Impacts by the Numbers

Operations Spending	Capital Spending	Economic Impact	Jobs	Compensation	PA Tax Revenue
$37.8M	$3.6M	~$94M	400+ FTE	$21M	$900K+

As discussed in the previous section, the influx of visitors travelling to the Pennsylvania county and local fairs injects substantial economic activity into the local economy, bolstering local, regional and statewide economies. Beyond the visitor spending impact, the operational spending of the fairs in Pennsylvania creates numerous employment opportunities, both temporary and permanent. From planning and construction to staffing booths and managing events, the fairs generate jobs for locals, providing an important source of income and professional experience in rural communities.

The organizational spending by Pennsylvania's county and local fairs generates additional income for local businesses; and in turn, generates tax revenues to the Commonwealth. In addition, county and local fairs spend a considerable amount on capital improvements, directed towards infrastructure enhancements, innovative attractions, and improved facilities. These facility and amenity upgrades offer participants and visitors a more immersive experience, amplifying the fair's appeal and ensuring its relevance in today's competitive entertainment landscape.

Operating and capital expenditures are both important aspects of fair spending, each affecting the economy in different ways. Due to the involvement of different industries, these expenditures generate different economic multipliers, leading to varying impacts. As such, this section distinguishes between operating and capital expenditures to provide a clear articulation of their respective direct, indirect, and induced impacts.

4.1. Direct Annual Operating Expenditures

In 2023, Pennsylvania county and local fairs spent $37.8 million on office expenses, maintenance of grounds and buildings, wages, and equipment, among others. Figure 4.1 outlines the total expenditures by fair.

Figure 4.1: Operating Expenditures by Fair[18]

County Fair	Spend
Centre County Grange Fair	$3,541,000
York State Fair	$3,287,000
Bloomsburg Fair	$2,664,000
Allentown Fair	$1,770,000
Wayne County Fair	$1,475,000
Clinton County Fair	$1,362,000
Butler Fair	$1,136,000
West End Fair	$1,123,000
Wyoming County Fair	$927,000
Harford Fair	$820,000
Washington County Fair	$726,000
Crawford County Fair	$667,000
Lawrence County Fair	$648,000
Fayette County Fair	$643,000
Butler Farm Show	$596,000
Cambria County/American Legion Fair	$562,000
Middletown Grange Fair	$544,000
Stoneboro Fair	$530,000
Westmoreland County Fair	$519,000
Hookstown Fair	$487,000
Dayton Fair	$482,000
Troy Fair	$452,000
Lycoming County Fair	$412,000
Warren County Fair	$411,000
Juniata County Fair	$409,000
Bedford County Fair	$394,000
Kutztown Fair	$392,000
Clearfield County Fair	$389,000
Huntingdon County Fair	$335,000
Southern Lancaster County Fair	$334,000
Lebanon Area Fair	$302,000
Erie County Fair at Wattsburg	$295,000
Greene Dreher Sterling Fair	$294,000
Schuykill County Fair	$290,000
Waterford Community Fair	$283,000
Somerset County Fair	$276,000
Indiana County Fair	$261,000

[18] Expenditure amounts include tax expenses.

Carbon County Fair	$260,000
Jefferson County Fair	$251,000
Franklin County Fair	$234,000
Gratz Fair	$233,000
Bullskin Township Community Fair	$232,000
Ephrata Fair	$229,000
Shippensburg Community Fair	$225,000
Mckean County Fair	$224,000
West Alexander Fair	$212,000
Albion Area Fair	$194,000
Tioga County Fair	$186,000
Oley Valley Community Fair	$181,000
Elk County Fair	$173,000
Beaver Community Fair	$165,000
Venango County Fair	$163,000
South Mountain Community Fair	$160,000
Denver Fair	$152,000
Green Township/ Cookport Fair	$151,000
Elizabethtown Fair	$151,000
West Lampeter Fair	$143,000
New Holland Farmers Fair	$142,000
Big Knob Grange Fair	$142,000
Mason Dixon Fair	$140,000
Greene County Fair	$138,000
Manheim Community Farm Show	$133,000
Sullivan County Fair	$131,000
Luzerne County Fair	$130,000
PA Maple Festival	$129,000
Montour Delong Community Fair	$128,000
Fulton County Fair	$120,000
Schnecksville Fair	$118,000
Harmony Grange Fair	$117,000
Clarion County Fair	$112,000
Spartansburg Community Fair	$108,000
Richhill Agricultural Society/ Jacktown Fair	$105,000
Ox Hill Community Fair	$102,000
Plainfield Farmers Fair	$96,000
Jamestown Community Fair	$91,000
Jefferson Township Fair	$91,000

Goshen Country Fair	$89,000
Derry Township Agricultural Fair	$84,000
Union County West End Fair	$79,000
Unionville Community Fair	$77,000
Delaware Valley College A Day	$75,000
Williamsburg Community Farm Show	$74,000
Perry County Community Fair	$74,000
Kimberton Community Fair	$70,000
Mifflin County Youth Fair	$69,000
Blue Valley Farm Show	$62,000
Berks County Fair	$62,000
Potter County Fair	$61,000
McClure Bean Soup Festival	$57,000
Sykesville Agricultural and Youth Fair	$56,000
Dawson Grange Fair	$53,000
Transfer Harvest Home Fair	$51,000
Wolf's Corner Community Fair	$47,000
Sewickley Township Community Fair	$45,000
Dillsburg Fair	$45,000
Morrison's Cove Dairy Show	$39,000
Cochranton Community Fair	$37,000
Northumberland County Fair	$36,000
Mercer County Grange Fair	$36,000
Mountain Area Fair	$27,000
Cameron County Fair	$23,000
Berlin Brothers Valley Fair	$21,000
Cumberland Agricultural Expo	$20,000
Kempton Community Fair	$19,000
Hollidaysburg Community Fair	$11,000
Claysburg Farm Show	$10,000
Total	**$37,739,000**

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (2023)

Of the almost $38 million spent by the fairs, not all spending recirculates within the Commonwealth economy, and thus is excluded from the input-output model. For instance, expenditures on local taxes, fees, and permits represent tax revenue impacts that support local government. While these spending impacts are significant for those jurisdictions, they are classified as non-modeled expenditures in this analysis. This exclusion ensures a more accurate representation of the economic effects of the fair operational expenditures.

Figure 4.2: Expenditure Breakdown of Operating Expenditures

	Total Spend ($M)
Modelable Expenditures	$36.4
Non-Modelable Expenditures	$1.4
Total	**$37.8**

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (2023)

Using standard input-output modeling techniques, we estimate the full range of economic, employment, and labor income impacts associated with the direct activity attributable to the Pennsylvania county and local fairs.

4.2. Economic Impact from County and Local Fair Organizational Spending

The annual economic impact of operating expenditures by the county and local fairs reaches almost $87 million, supporting 370 FTE jobs with earnings of more than $19 million (Figure 4.3). This activity stimulates and grows the Commonwealth economic activity and broadly supports statewide labor markets, as well as other major industries.

Figure 4.3: Economic Impact from Pennsylvania County and Local Fair Operational Spending

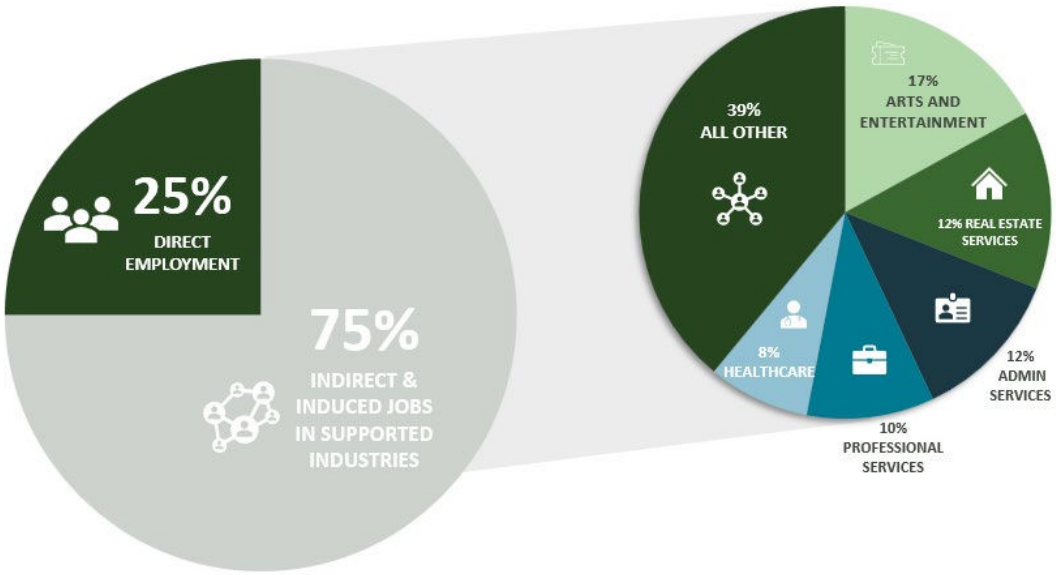
	Pennsylvania
Direct Output ($M)	$36.4
Indirect and Induced Output ($M)	$50.2
Total Output ($M)	**$86.6**
Employment Supported (FTE)	**370**
Employee Compensation ($M)	**$19.4**

Source: IMPLAN (2022); Econsult Solutions Inc (2024)

4.3. Industry Distribution of Economic Impact from Organizational Spending

Spending across the organizations includes but is not limited to advertising, vendor recruitment, and infrastructure setup, providing essential economic opportunity to many industries throughout the state, including agriculture and construction. Fair events can lead to increased spending in hospitality, retail, and food services, further amplifying the fair's economic footprint. Overall, the Pennsylvania fair industry plays a pivotal role in not only supporting traditional sectors like labor and agriculture but also in driving growth across a diverse array of industries within the state. Though its impacts are most closely related to labor and agriculture, the less obvious, indirect impacts reach other industries such as entertainment, real estate, and administration services (Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4: Industry Distribution of Indirect and Induced Jobs



Source: IMPLAN (2022); Econsult Solutions Inc (2024)

4.4. Annual Capital Expenditures

Capital expenditures are directed towards infrastructure enhancements, innovative attractions, and improved facilities. Upgraded exhibition spaces and modernized amenities offer participants and visitors a more immersive experience, amplifying the fair's appeal and ensuring its relevance in today's competitive entertainment landscape. Moreover, these capital investments often spill over into the local economy, stimulating small businesses and creating job opportunities, thereby fostering a symbiotic relationship between the fairs and their surrounding communities. In 2023, county fairs spent more than $3.7 million on capital expenditures, including spending on barn constructions, electrical upgrades and building maintenance. (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5: Capital Expenditures by Fair, 2023

County Fair	Spend
Lebanon Area Fair	$259,000
Butler Farm Show	$164,000
Oley Valley Community Fair	$150,000
Troy Fair	$138,000
Wyoming County Fair	$135,000
Gratz Fair	$100,000
Wayne County Fair	$95,000
Albion Area Fair	$85,000
Lehigh County Agricultural Society	$81,000
Clarion County Fair	$67,000
Kimberton Community Fair	$67,000
Bloomsburg Fair	$62,000
Bedford County Fair	$60,000
Spartansburg Community Fair	$60,000
Franklin County Fair	$57,000
Greene County Fair	$57,000
Fayette County Fair	$55,000
New Holland Farmers Fair	$55,000
Warren County Fair	$55,000
Waterford Community Fair	$55,000
West End Fair	$54,000
Mountain Area Fair	$52,000
Elizabethtown Fair	$51,000
Butler Fair	$50,000
Centre County Grange Fair	$50,000
Luzerne County Fair	$50,000
Green Township/ Cookport Fair	$50,000
Harford Fair	$50,000

Hookstown Fair	$50,000
Huntingdon County Fair	$50,000
Jefferson County Fair	$50,000
Juniata County Fair	$50,000
Carbon County Fair	$50,000
McKean County Fair	$50,000
Middletown Grange Fair	$50,000
Ox Hill Community Fair	$50,000
Potter County Fair	$50,000
Somerset County Fair	$50,000
South Mountain Community Fair	$50,000
Westmoreland County Fair	$50,000
Southern Lancaster County Fair	$48,000
Beaver Community Fair	$47,000
Dayton Fair	$47,000
Cochranton Community Fair	$40,000
Fulton County Fair	$40,000
Kutztown Fair	$40,000
Cambria County/American Legion Fair	$38,000
Lawrence County Fair	$38,000
Big Knob Grange Fair	$37,000
Mason Dixon Fair	$35,000
Manheim Community Farm Show	$35,000
Montour Delong Community Fair	$35,000
Dawson Grange Fair	$30,000
Greene Dreher Sterling Fair	$30,000
Lycoming County Fair	$30,000
Shippensburg Community Fair	$28,000
Foundation for Agriculture and Resource Management, Inc (Schuylkill)	$25,000
Erie County Fair at Wattsburg	$25,000
Mifflin County Youth Fair	$23,000
Crawford County Fair	$22,000
Jamestown Community Fair	$20,000
Perry County Community Fair	$20,000
Berks County Fair	$19,000
Sullivan County Fair	$19,000
Wolf's Corner Community Fair	$18,000
Harmony Grange Fair	$15,000
Mercer County Grange Fair	$15,000
McClure Bean Soup Festival	$14,000

Clinton County Fair	$12,000
Ephrata Fair	$10,000
Jefferson Township Fair	$4,000
Total	**$3,723,000**

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (2023)

As outlined earlier, not all spending recirculates through the economy, and ESI excluded these amounts before evaluating spending in the input-output model. The majority of the capital spending could be evaluated in the model; however, land purchases constitute a small portion of the total capital spending, and were thus removed. $3.6 million of the total $3.7 million was added and evaluated in the model (Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6: Summarized Capital Expenditures of County Fairs, 2023[19]

Category	Total Spend ($M)
Maintenance and Repair	$2.1
New Construction	$1.6
Non Modelable Expenditures	$0.1
Total	$3.7

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (2023); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

4.5. Economic Impact from County and Local Fair Capital Expenditures

The annual capital expenditures of Pennsylvania county and local fairs generates significant cumulative impacts across Pennsylvania, producing an annual economic impact of more than $7 million, supporting approximately 40 jobs with $2 million in employee compensation (Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7: Economic Impact from Fairs' Capital Expenditures, 2023

	Impact
Direct Output ($M)	$3.7
Indirect and Induced Output ($M)	$3.5
Total Output ($M)	$7.2
Employment Supported (FTE)	40
Employee Compensation ($M)	$2.0

Source: IMPLAN (2022); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

[19] Totals may not sum due to rounding.

4.6. Aggregate Economic Impact of Annual County and Local Fair Organizational and Capital Spending

The operating and capital expenditures of the Pennsylvania county and local fairs illustrate the extensive impact of the county and local fairs. **In aggregate, Pennsylvania county and local fairs organizational and capital spending has an annualized economic impact of almost $94 million, supporting over 400 full-time jobs with more than $21 million in employee compensation** (Figure 4.8).

Pennsylvania county and local fairs offer significant economic benefits that are distributed widely across the Commonwealth. This widespread reach ensures that the financial benefits of increased vendor sales, ancillary spending and local employment opportunities are felt by a broad array of communities.

Figure 4.8: Aggregate Economic Impact from Fairs' Organizational and Capital Expenditures, 2023

	Operations Impact	Capital Impact	Total Impact
Direct Output ($M)	$36.4	$3.7	$40.1
Indirect and Induced Output ($M)	$50.2	$3.5	$53.7
Total Output ($M)	**$86.6**	**$7.2**	**$93.8**
Employment Supported (FTE)	370	40	410
Employee Compensation ($M)	$19.4	$2.0	$21.4

Source: Econsult Solutions Inc (2024), IMPLAN (2022)

4.7. Aggregate Tax Revenue Impact from Annual County and Local Fair Spending

Pennsylvania county and local fairs not only contribute to local and regional economies through direct spending, but also generate significant tax revenue. Exempt from sales and business tax revenue, county and local fairs in Pennsylvania generate considerable income tax revenue. Sales and business taxes are not applied to any direct spending in the fiscal impact analysis, but rather to the indirect and induced spillovers caused by the operational and capital spending.

County and local fairs contribute approximately $935,000 in tax revenues each year to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9: Aggregate Fiscal Impact from Fairs Operating and Capital Expenditures, 2023, in Thousands

Tax Type	Pennsylvania
Income	$0.4
Sales	$04
Business	$0.1
Total	**$0.9**

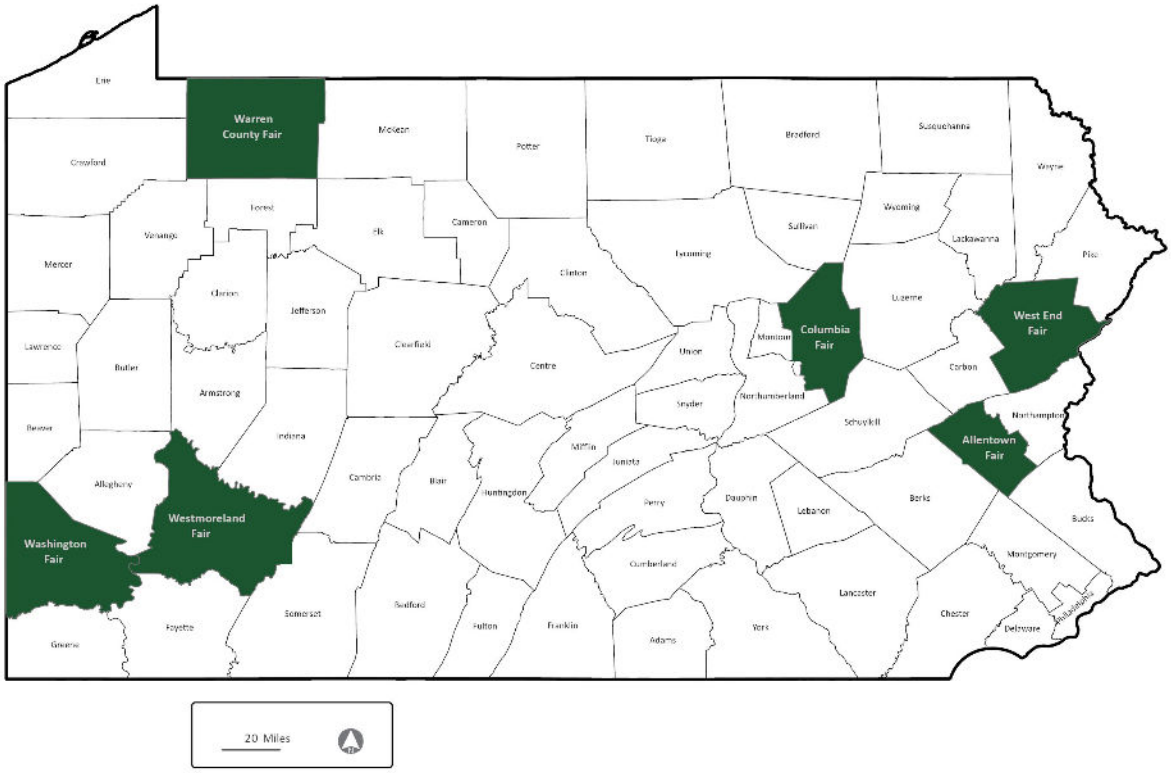
Source: Econsult Solutions Inc (2024), IMPLAN (2022)

5. Localized Impacts: Case Studies from Across the Commonwealth

Six fairs across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania were chosen as case studies based on size and geographic distribution. Data for the case studies were collected using various sources, including two surveys (visitors and fair organizers for revenue), the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (utilizing reporting on operating expenditures from fair organizers), and fair organizer interviews.

Fairs included as case studies include the Allentown, Bloomsburg, Warren County, Washington County, West End, and Westmoreland fairs.

Figure 5.1: Locations of Case Studies



Source: ESRI (2024); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

5.1. The Great Allentown Fair



The Great Allentown Fair, located in Allentown, Pennsylvania, first opened its gates in 1852 with the mission of celebrating agricultural achievements while providing entertainment to the public. Unlike many other state fairs, the Great Allentown Fair distinguishes itself by offering a wide variety of performances, featuring six to eight small acts per fair. Visitors can enjoy unique attractions such as dog shows, musical performances, and more interactive activities like contests, auctions, and even scrapple eating competitions. Beyond the attractions, the fair serves as a nostalgic gathering spot for locals, who often return year after year for reunions with friends and family.

The fair's revenue streams are diverse. A key source of income is the year-round Allentown Fairgrounds Farmers Market, open on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. To manage operations, the fair employs three to four managers throughout the year. The fair also rents out its Agri~Plex building, the largest expo center in the area, as well as its parking facilities to several different groups during the off-season.

The majority of fairgoers come from the surrounding regions, with the majority of visitors hailing from Pennsylvania, including nearby counties like Montgomery, Monroe, and Lehigh. This influx of local attendees boosts the economic impact of the fair by providing opportunities for local vendors and small businesses. Looking ahead, the Great Allentown Fair has plans for capital improvements, including expanding parking facilities. The fair is also exploring additional funding opportunities, such as the Redevelopment Capital Assistance Program (RACP). Parking is often a challenge due to fundraising activities by churches and Boy Scout groups, making this expansion a necessary step to accommodate future growth.

The statewide economic impact of The Great Allentown Fair is estimated at $62.5 million, supporting over 600 FTE jobs with over $22 million in earnings.

The Great Allentown Fair by the Numbers:

- Acreage: 42
- Fair days in operation: 6
- Estimated annual attendance: 167,300
- Estimated visitor spending: $30.8 million
- Operations and capital expenditures: $1.8 million

5.2. The Bloomsburg Fair



The Bloomsburg Fair, which began in 1855 as a modest two-day exhibition showcasing the produce of Columbia County farmers, has grown into an eight-day event that now attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors. While it retains its agricultural roots with livestock breeding and produce exhibitions, the fair has evolved to feature a variety of entertainment, including horse racing and performances by well-known artists like The Beach Boys. In addition, free entertainment, such as acrobatics, circus acts, and local bands, adds to the vibrant atmosphere that appeals to a broad audience.

One of the fair's largest expenses is personnel, with grounds caretakers, entertainers, and security staff, working at the daily fair until 10 p.m. each night. During the fair, several hundred part-time workers are also employed. Governance of the event falls to a Board of Directors, consisting of 12 directors and a president, each responsible for overseeing different aspects of the fair, from education to animals, arts and crafts, and security.

Many visitors travel from neighboring states such as New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. The fair also offers overnight accommodations, with a campground on-site. However, staffing has become increasingly challenging, as seasonal workers—especially college students—are more difficult to find, since local colleges are closed during the week of the fair. While there are no current plans to expand the fair, organizers are focused on maximizing the existing space to accommodate growing demand.

The statewide economic impact of The Bloomsburg Fair is estimated at over $80 million, supporting over 700 FTE jobs with over $28 million in earnings.

The Bloomsburg Fair by the Numbers:

- Acreage: 229
- Fair days in operation: 8
- Estimated annual attendance: 351,000
- Estimated visitor spending: $39.1 million
- Operations and capital expenditures: $2.7 million

5.3. Warren County Fair



The Warren County Fair has a rich 95-year history, owning its property since 1967 and growing with strong community support. It is governed by a volunteer board of 21 directors, elected every three years.

The fair attracts between 55,000-60,000 visitors annually, with approximately 40% coming from outside the region. The fair is known for bringing families together and offers 600 campsites, with local accommodations—including hotels and short term rentals—typically fully booked during the fair. The Warren County Fair promotes itself through various media platforms, including social media platforms, as well as traditional newspaper and TV advertising. Major investments focus on infrastructure improvements across its almost 120-acre grounds.

While the fair continues to expand and improve its offerings, it faces challenges in maintaining volunteers and infrastructure, and securing funding for improvements. They pursue grants, donations, and sponsorships, with the latter bringing in about $80,000-$85,000 per year. The fair operates with minimal paid staff, relying heavily on volunteers. They also generate additional income by renting out the grounds from April to October, earning $35,000-$40,000 annually.

Overall, the Warren County Fair is annually anticipated by locals and visitors alike, celebrating community cohesion and reunions. While the food and the activities are high-quality every year, they are known for bringing friends, family, and community together every year.

The statewide economic impact of the Warren County Fair is estimated at almost $13 million, supporting over 100 FTE jobs with $4.5 million in earnings.

Warren County Fair by the Numbers:

- Acreage: 119
- Fair days in operation: 5
- Estimated annual attendance: 53,900
- Estimated visitor spending: $6.3 million
- Operations and capital expenditures: $0.4 million

5.4. Washington County Agricultural Fair



Originally founded as an event to facilitate the sale of sheep and cattle, the Washington County Fair has grown to encompass a broader mission. Its goal is to "promote and advance the interests of agriculture, horticulture, homemaking, arts, and sciences," reflecting the county's long-standing commitment to its agricultural heritage.

The fair's main entertainment attractions are its rodeos and demolition derbies. Each year, it hosts two nights of rodeo events, followed by the popular school bus derby; and alongside car shows, drag racing, motocross, and other thrilling competitions. These events not only draw local crowds but also attract visitors from nearby counties like Westmoreland, Greene, and Allegheny, with attendees coming from neighboring states like Ohio and West Virginia.

The fair's staff includes 18 core members, composed of 11 volunteer board members, two office staff, one full-time maintenance worker, and four part-time employees. During the fair, an additional six temporary workers joined the team. Significant investments are made in school bus purchases for the derby, harness racing, and other key events. However, the fair faces financial challenges, particularly with the maintenance of its track and racehorse barns. The cost of races alone was $29,000 last year, while reimbursement from state funding was only $13,000, with an additional $5,000 raised through advertising. With no direct funding for barn maintenance, the fair must stretch limited resources, making it difficult to manage these essential aspects of its operations. Additionally, concerns about swine flu remain a key issue, especially as many of the hogs showcased at the fair are sent to slaughterhouses afterward.

The statewide economic impact of the Washington County Agricultural Fair is estimated at almost $23 million, supporting over 200 FTE jobs with $8 million in earnings.

Washington County Agricultural Fair by the Numbers:

- Acreage: 150
- Fair days in operation: 8
- Estimated annual attendance: 64,300
- Estimated visitor spending: $11.1 million
- Operations and capital expenditures: $0.7 million

5.5. West End Fair



The West End Fair, which began in 1920 as an agricultural exhibition, quickly gained in popularity. By its second year, the fair became official and expanded its grounds to include beautiful, stately oaks and majestic hemlocks that still shade the area today. With the mission of "preserving the past and growing the future," the fair continues to maintain its traditional agricultural exhibits, while also adapting with new attractions such as a winery showcase. The fair is well-known for its creative and delicious food offerings, including the famous elephant ear, gyros, and St. John's chicken sandwich.

Despite its success, the fair faces significant financial challenges. Expenditures such as wages and insurance make expansion difficult, as any additions would increase these already considerable costs. Behavioral issues during the 2023 fair also prompted organizers to enhance security measures, including renting metal detectors for $10,000 and hiring additional security personnel. Advertising costs were once as high as $50,000–$60,000, but were reduced to $20,000–$25,000 after pivoting to include more social media marketing in lieu of traditional advertising methods.

The fair employs around 100 people, comprised of staff and volunteers. The Board of Directors is primarily composed of volunteers, but officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, etc.) receive minimal compensation. During the off-season, two full-time and one part-time caretaker maintains the fairgrounds. Looking ahead, organizers plan to expand by building a rodeo venue and an indoor arena for animal events. However, rising costs associated with venue maintenance, security, and repairs remain the fair's greatest challenges.

The statewide economic impact of the West End Fair is estimated at more than $35 million, supporting over 300 FTE jobs with more than $12 million in earnings.

West End Fair by the Numbers:

- Acreage: 105
- Fair days in operation: 7
- Estimated annual attendance: 126,100
- Estimated visitor spending: $17.1 million
- Operations and capital expenditures: $1.2 million

5.6. Westmoreland Fair



The Westmoreland Fair began in 1957 when local farmers and community members collaborated to create an event that honored agriculture and aimed to educate the public about its importance. Today, the fair's mission remains unchanged, with a strong focus on promoting agriculture within Westmoreland County and engaging the community, especially its youth. A key partner in these efforts is 4-H, a youth development organization that helps young people build life skills, explore career options, and develop their passions, often through agricultural education.

The fair is well known for its scenic location, set on a hill at the foot of a mountain range. Its diverse range of entertainment includes Monster Truck events, tractor pulls, and free performances from local bands. The Westmoreland Fair prides itself on affordability, offering a $10 admission fee that includes parking, rides, agricultural exhibits, and live performances. This affordability helps ensure broad accessibility to the local community.

Staffing costs represent one of the fair's major expenditures, with personnel hired both for the fair season and the off-season to manage operations and maintain the grounds. During the fair, the team includes five to six office staff, a five-person maintenance crew, security, and a bathroom cleaning crew. In the off-season, the executive board oversees the fairgrounds, leasing the space for long-term events like Overly's Country Christmas and short-term events such as weddings, auctions, and consignment sales.

Most visitors to the Westmoreland Fair come from nearby counties. The fair typically attracts 50,000 to 65,000 visitors annually, with recent years seeing record-breaking attendance. Despite its success, the fair faces challenges, particularly in staffing. As the workforce ages, it has become increasingly difficult to find people to maintain the grounds and facilities. The fair organizers are planning to build a new barn as part of their ongoing capital improvement projects.

The statewide economic impact of the Westmoreland Fair is estimated at almost $17 million, supporting over 200 FTE jobs with almost $6 million in earnings.

Westmoreland Fair by the Numbers:

- Acreage: 179
- Fair days in operation: 9
- Estimated annual attendance: 67,200
- Estimated visitor spending: $8.1 million
- Operations and capital expenditures: $0.5 million

6. Conclusion

6.1. Summary of Economic Impacts

On an annual basis, the Pennsylvania county and local fairs have a significant economic impact in the following ways (Figure 6.1):

- **Total Impact**: The total economic impact of the Pennsylvania county and local fairs on the Commonwealth economy, considering both direct and indirect/induced effects, is more than $1.14 billion. Of that impact, $1.05 billion derives from visitor spending, and another $94 million from operations and capital expenditures.
- **Employment Supported**: The Pennsylvania county and local fairs supported more than 10,700 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs in the Commonwealth, contributing to statewide employment opportunities.
- **Employee Compensation**: Pennsylvania county and local fairs contributed to a total of $398 million in employee compensation in the Commonwealth.

Figure 6.1: Annualized Aggregate Economic Impact of Pennsylvania County and Local Fairs on the Commonwealth

-	Visitor Spending	Operations and Capital Spending	Total
Direct Output	$545	$40	$585
Indirect and Induced Output ($M)	$506	$54	$560
Total Output ($M)	**$1,050**	**$94**	**$1,144**
Employment Supported (FTE)	10,300	410	10,710
Employee Compensation ($M)	$377	$21	$398

Source: IMPLAN (2022); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

Visitor spending and operations and capital expenditures at Pennsylvania county and local fairs in Pennsylvania had a positive impact on state tax revenue. In total, the state received more than $23 million in annual tax revenue from this aggregate spending (Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2: Annualized Aggregate Fiscal Impact of Pennsylvania County and Local Fairs on the Commonwealth

Tax Type	Visitor Spending	Operations and Capital Spending	Total
Income ($M)	$6.60	$0.41	$7.01
Sales ($M)	$9.80	$0.38	$10.18
Business ($M)	$3.90	$0.14	$4.04
Total ($M)	**$20.30**	**$0.93**	**$21.23**

Source: IMPLAN (2022); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

Overall, the tax revenue generated by Pennsylvania county and agricultural fairs highlights the economic significance of these events and their contribution to the state's finances.

6.2. Pennsylvania County and Agricultural Fairs Role in the Commonwealth

Pennsylvania's county and agricultural fairs play a vital role in supporting the state's economy, particularly its agricultural sector. These fairs provide a platform for showcasing local produce, livestock, and agricultural innovations, allowing farmers to connect with consumers and potential buyers. The fairs also encourage interest in farming among younger generations through 4-H and FFA programs, fostering future agricultural leaders. The economic impact extends beyond agriculture, as local businesses, food vendors, and artisans benefit from increased tourism and sales during fair season. This creates a ripple effect that supports small businesses and job creation across the state.

Return on Investment

For every dollar invested by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in the state's county and local agricultural fairs, the Commonwealth sees $286 in economic impact and $5 in state fiscal returns. This investment drives significant benefits, showcasing the immense value of these events to Pennsylvania's economy and communities.

The fairs strengthen the social fabric of Pennsylvania's communities. They serve as cultural and social hubs where families, friends, and neighbors gather to celebrate local traditions, art, and crafts. County and local fairs bring together diverse groups of people, promoting a sense of unity and shared identity, especially in rural areas where community gatherings are essential. These events are a celebration of Pennsylvania's heritage, reinforcing the connection between urban and rural communities while educating the public about the importance of agriculture and rural life in the state's economy.



Appendix A: Economic and Fiscal Impact Modeling Report Methodology

Economic and Fiscal Impact Models

Overview

Economic impact estimates are generated by utilizing input-output models to translate an initial amount of direct economic activity into the total amount of economic activity that it supports, which includes multiple waves of spillover impacts generated by spending on goods and services and by spending of labor income by employees. This section summarizes the methodologies and tools used to construct, use, and interpret the input-output models needed to estimate this project's economic impact.

Input-Output Model Theory

In an inter-connected economy, every dollar spent generates two spillover impacts:

- First, a portion of that expenditure which goes to the purchase of goods and services gets circulated back into an economy when those goods and services are purchased from local vendors. This is the "indirect effect," and reflects the fact that local purchases of goods and services support local vendors, who in turn require additional purchasing with their own set of vendors.
- Second, a portion of that expenditure which goes to labor income gets circulated back into an economy when those employees spend some of their earnings on various goods and services. This is the "induced effect," and reflects the fact that some of those goods and services will be purchased from local vendors, further stimulating a local economy.

The role of input-output models is to determine the linkages across industries in order to model out the magnitude and composition of spillover impact to all industries of a dollar spent in any one industry. Thus, the total economic impact is the sum of its own direct economic footprint plus the indirect and induced effects generated by that direct footprint.

Input-Output Model Mechanics

To model the impacts resulting from the direct expenditures, Econsult Solutions, Inc. developed a customized economic impact model using the IMPLAN input/output modeling system. IMPLAN represents an industry standard approach to assess the economic and job creation impacts of economic development projects, the creation of new businesses, and public policy changes within its surrounding area. IMPLAN has developed a social accounting matrix (SAM) that accounts for the flow of commodities through economics. From this matrix, IMPLAN also determines the regional purchase coefficient (RPC), the proportion of local supply that satisfies local demand. These values not only establish the types of goods and services supported by an industry or institution, but also the level in which they are acquired locally. This assessment determines the multiplier basis for the local and regional models created in the IMPLAN modeling system. IMPLAN takes the multipliers and divides them into 536 industry categories in accordance with the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) codes.

The IMPLAN modeling system also allows for customization of its inputs which alters multiplier outputs. Where necessary, certain institutions may have different levels of demand for commodities. When this occurs, an "analysis-by-parts" (ABP) approach is taken. This allows the user to model the impacts of direct economic activity related to an institution or industry with greater accuracy. Where inputs are unknown, IMPLAN is able to estimate other inputs based on the level of employment, earnings, or output by an industry or institution.

Employment and Wages Supported

IMPLAN generates job estimates based on the term "job-years", or how many jobs will be supported each year. For instance, if a construction project takes two years, and IMPLAN estimates there are 100 employees, or more correctly "job-years" supported, over two years, that represents 50 annual jobs. Additionally, these can be a mix of full and part-time employment. Consequently, job creation could feature more part-time jobs than full-time jobs. To account for this, IMPLAN has a multiplier to convert annual jobs to full-time equivalent jobs.

Income to direct, indirect, and induced jobs is calculated as employee compensation. This includes wage and salary, all benefits (e.g., health, retirement) and payroll taxes (both sides of social security, unemployment taxes, etc.). Therefore, IMPLAN's measure of income estimates gross pay opposed to just strictly wages.

Tax Revenue Impact

The economic impacts in turn produce one-time or ongoing increases in various tax bases, which yield temporary or permanent increases in various tax revenues. To estimate these increases, Econsult Solutions, Inc. created a tax revenue impact model to translate total economic impacts into their commensurate tax revenue gains. These tax revenue gains only account for a subset of the total tax revenue generation that an institution or industry may have on the economy. Furthermore, where institutions are tax exempt, only the tax revenue generation from supported indirect and induced industries is accounted for.

Appendix B: Survey Questions

Fair Revenue Survey

Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to complete our Fair Revenue Survey. Your insights are invaluable as we aim to gather comprehensive information about the different revenue streams contributing to the success of fairs throughout the commonwealth. This survey should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Please ensure you have access to your fair's financial records to provide accurate information.

Fair Name: _____

Section 1: Commercial Vendor/Exhibitor Revenue

1. How many commercial vendors/exhibitors did you have at your 2023 fair?
   Number of vendors: _____
2. What was the total revenue received by the fair from commercial vendors/exhibitors at your most recent fair?

   Total revenue from commercial vendors/exhibitors' fees to the fair: $_____

   Does your fair receive sponsorships? ☐Yes or ☐No
3. What is the cash value of **fair-week** sponsorships: $_____

Section 2: Livestock Sales

1. What was the total revenue from livestock sales at your most recent fair?
   a. Total revenue from livestock sales: $_____
2. Please specify the types of livestock sold, check all that apply:

   ☐dairy beef
   ☐beef cattle
   ☐sheep
   ☐swine
   ☐goats
   ☐poultry
   ☐rabbits
   ☐other: _____

- Number of livestock transactions: _____

Section 3: Exhibit Entry Fees

1. What was the total revenue from exhibitor entry fees at your most recent fair?
   a. Total revenue from entry fees (all departments): $_____

2. Do you have different fees for adults, children, and/or seniors? Check one.

   ☐Yes or ☐No

   a. Total number of entrants: _____

Section 4: Gate Fees

1. Does your fair charge a gate/admission fee to the fairgrounds? (Check one)

☐Yes or ☐No

2. If yes, what was the total revenue from gate/admission fees at your 2023 fair?

   Total revenue from gate/admission fees: $_____

   Number of attendees (gate entries/fair attendees): $ _____

3. Do you offer multiday passes? (Check one)

☐Yes ☐No

4. Do you have different rates for youth, seniors, special groups (i.e., veterans, first responders, etc.)?

☐Yes ☐No

   a. If yes, what are those rates:
      i. Youth: _____
      ii. Seniors: _____
      iii. Special Groups: _____

5. Do you have daily entry prices, or do you sell multi-day, or week-long passes? Check all that apply:

   ☐Daily

   ☐Multi-day

   ☐Week-long

Section 5: Year-round Rental Activities/NON-Fair Week Activities

1. What types of year-round rental activities are available at your fairgrounds, check all that apply:

   ☐Special event rentals
   ☐Flea markets
   ☐Bingo/raffle events
   ☐Craft fairs
   ☐Livestock shows
   ☐Horse shows
   ☐Off season storage rentals
   ☐Off season camping
   ☐Other: _____

2. What was the total revenue from these rental activities in 2023?
   a. Total revenue from year-round rental activities: $_____
3. Does your fair generate concession income with year-round events?
   ☐Yes ☐No

   Non-fair concession revenue: $_____
4. Does your fair receive non-fair sponsorships?
   ☐Yes ☐No

   Dollar amount of non-fair cash sponsorships: $_____
5. Does your fair receive any other non-fair week revenue:
   ☐Yes ☐No

   Other non-fair week revenue: $_____

Section 6: Concert and Event Fees

1. Do you host any of the following at your fairs, check all that apply:

   ☐Concerts
   ☐Truck/Tractor pull
   ☐Rodeos
   ☐Harness racing
   ☐Other: _____

Number of events/concerts held: _____

2. Do you charge for Entertainment (Concerts, Rodeo, Tractor Pulls, Harness Racing, etc.) ?

☐Yes ☐No

Total revenue/gross ticket sales from all Concerts and Events tickets sold:

$_____

Section 7: Parking Fees

1. What do you charge for parking? $_____
2. Number of vehicles parked: _____

Total parking revenues: $_____

Section 8: Fair Concession and Carnival Revenue

1. Does your fair generate concession income of its own during your fair (concession food sales, t-shirts, souvenirs, etc.?)

☐Yes ☐No

Fair week concession revenue: $_____

2. Does your fair host carnival rides?

☐Yes ☐No

Gross Carnival Ticket Sales: $_____

Net Carnival Ticket Sales Revenue to the Fair: $_____

Section 9: Other Fair Week Revenue

1. Does your fair receive any other fair week revenue, like fair week campground rentals:

☐Yes ☐No

Other fair week revenue: $_____

Section 10: Additional information

1. Are there any other significant sources of revenue for your fair not covered above? If yes, please specify:

_____

_____

Visitor Spending Survey

Survey to understand the economic impacts of visitors on state fairs.

Thank you for visiting the [State Fair Name]! To help support this annual event, we are looking to understand visitor spending patterns so that we can highlight the impact of our fair on the local economy. Your input is important for us to understand the value of Pennsylvania's state and local fairs for local businesses and residents.

QR Code

The following questions are to help us understand the profile of attendees.

1. What Fair are you attending today? [check box]
2. Where do you live? (Check box)
   - Pennsylvania [yes or no]
   - If PA resident, what county are they from? [create drop down w options]
   - If not PA resident, what state (or outside of U.S.) [create drop down]

3. How long are here to participate in the fair and other local attractions? [Drop down]
   - Day trip
   - Overnight stay [drop down will have number of nights]

4. Please estimate how much you and your travel party will have spent during your time at the fair: ([range/checkbox]
   - Admission tickets
   - Food and beverages
   - Games and rides
   - Purchases (e.g., souvenirs, crafts)
   - Other

5. Please estimate how much you and your travel party will have spent on travel costs outside of the fair activities during your time here: range/check box]
   - Transportation/travel costs (including airplane, train, car rental, gas, parking)
   - Food and beverage (outside of the fairgrounds but during your trip_
   - Shopping
   - Attractions and entertainment
   - Lodging and accommodations (if stayed overnight)

6. How many people are in your travel group (how many people did you answer for above)? (Check box between 1 and 10)

[[additional visitor questions which will be optional]]

7. How many times have you been to this fair in the past [[check box with a range, indicating first time visitor, 1x, 2-5, 5-10, 11+]]

8. What is the main reason for you attending today? [[checkbox]]
    - Exhibitions (livestock, crafts, etc.)
    - Food and drink
    - Carnival rides and games
    - Shopping/vendor booths
    - Other (please specify

9. Please share with us your age
    - Under 18
    - 18-24
    - 25-34
    - 35-44
    - 45-54
    - 55-64
    - 65 and above

10. Please share with us your gender
    - Male
    - Female
    - Prefer not to say
    - Other (please specify)

Appendix C: Visitor Count and Spending by Fair

Visitor Count by Fair

Fair	Visitors	Fair	Visitors
Albion Area Fair	25,000	Kutztown Fair	17,113
The Great Allentown Fair	167,300	Lawrence County Fair	36,230
Beaver Community Fair	17,647	Lebanon Area Fair	47,060
Bedford County Fair	28,419	Luzerne County Fair	8,692
The Berks County Fair	2,500	Lycoming County Fair	53,000
Berlin Brothers valley Community Fair	5,332	Manheim Community Farm Show	68,000
Big Knob Grange Fair	20,000	Mason Dixon Fair	N/A
Bloomsburg Fair	350,956	McClure Bean Soup Festival and Fair	21,864
Blue Valley Farm Show	10,533	McKean County Fair	12,684
Bullskin Township Community Fair	13,785	Mercer County Grange Fair	8,000
Big Butler Fair	83,555	Middletown Grange Fair	66,000
Butler Farm Show	36,622	Mifflin County Youth Fair	9,000
American Legion County Fair	32,806	Montour-Delong Community Fair	6,920
Cameron County Fair	2,500	Morrisons Cove Dairy Show	3,500
Carbon County Fair	49,884	Mountain Area Fair	15,000
Centre County Grange Encampment & Fair	201,000	New Holland Farmers Fair	80,000
Clarion County Fair	20,457	Northumberland County Fair	18,000
Claysburg Farm Show	N/A	Oley Valley Community Fair	50,000
Clearfield County Fair	N/A	Ox Hill Community Fair	4,331
Clinton County Fair	14,060	Pennsylvania Maple Festival	9,976
Cochranton Community Fair	12,500	Perry County Community Fair	20,000
Cookport Fair	24,152	Plainfield Farmers Fair	12,000
Crawford County Fair	77,000	Potter County Fair	7,500
Cumberland Ag Expo	2,000	Schnecksville Community Fair	10,295
Dawson Grange Community Fair	7,500	Schuylkill County Fair	30,337
Dayton Fair	N/A	Sewickley Township Community Fair	4,978
Delaware Valley A Day	7,000	Shippensburg Community Fair	43,245
Denver Fair	45,000	Sinking Valley Fair*	N/A
Derry Township Agricultural Fair	6,500	Somerset County Fair	13,838

Dillsburg Community Fair	48,000	South Mountain Fair	9,246
Elizabethtown Fair	74,800	Southern Lancaster County Fair	20,000
Elk County Fair	7,000	Spartansburg Community Fair	49,835
Ephrata Fair	202,000	The Great Stoneboro Fair	26,000
Erie County Fair at Wattsburg	26,609	Sullivan County Fair	8,176
Fayette County Fair	84,550	Sykesville Ag & Youth Fair	8,253
Franklin County Fair	12,516	Tioga County Fair	17,000
Fulton County Fair	12,458	Transfer Harvest Home Fair	8,500
Goshen Country Fair	60,000	Troy Fair	46,631
Gratz Fair	15,000	Union County West End Fair	12,523
Greene County Fair	13,327	Unionville Community Fair	8,000
Greene Dreher Sterling Fair	25,313	Venango County Fair	10,000
Harford Fair	66,741	Warren County Fair	53,857
Harmony Grange Fair	18,000	Washington County Ag Fair	64,320
Hollidaysburg Community Fair	1,957	Waterford Community Fair	37,500
Hookstown Fair	N/A	Wayne County Fair	92,139
Huntingdon County Fair	65,000	West Alexander Fair	19,533
Indiana County Fair	20,421	West End Fair	126,146
Jacktown Fair	10,000	West Lampeter Community Fair	48,000
Jamestown Community Fair	12,500	Westmoreland Fair	67,247
Jefferson County Fair	19,500	Williamsburg Community Farm Show	10,500
Jefferson Township Fair	6,000	Wolf's Corners Fair	5,792
Juniata County Fair	23,000	Wyoming County Fair	36,993
Kempton Fair	6,786	York Fair	399,963
Kimberton Community Fair	35,000		
Total	**3,994,203**		

Visitor Economic Impact by County

County	Share	Direct Output ($M)	Total Output ($M)
Adams	0.4%	$2.44	$4.71
Armstrong	1.3%	$7.00	$13.50
Beaver	0.4%	$1.98	$3.82
Bedford	1.0%	$5.54	$10.68
Berks	1.8%	$9.92	$19.13
Blair	0.2%	$1.23	$2.38
Bradford	1.2%	$6.47	$12.48
Bucks	1.7%	$9.26	$17.85
Butler	4.6%	$25.03	$48.27
Cambria	1.6%	$8.56	$16.52
Cameron	0.0%	$0.23	$0.45
Carbon	0.7%	$3.77	$7.28
Centre	9.7%	$52.79	$101.79
Chester	0.5%	$2.80	$5.39
Clarion	0.4%	$2.23	$4.29
Clearfield	1.3%	$7.18	$13.84
Clinton	3.7%	$20.27	$39.09
Columbia	7.2%	$39.15	$75.49
Crawford	2.0%	$10.70	$20.64
Cumberland	0.6%	$3.02	$5.83
Dauphin	0.6%	$3.19	$6.15
Elk	0.5%	$2.63	$5.08
Erie	2.1%	$11.21	$21.62
Fayette	2.5%	$13.79	$26.60
Franklin	0.6%	$3.27	$6.30
Fulton	0.3%	$1.58	$3.04
Greene	0.6%	$3.18	$6.12
Huntingdon	0.8%	$4.61	$8.89
Indiana	1.3%	$7.22	$13.93
Jefferson	0.8%	$4.39	$8.46
Juniata	1.1%	$5.86	$11.30
Lancaster	3.1%	$17.01	$32.80
Lawrence	1.7%	$9.38	$18.09

Lebanon	0.7%	$3.80	$7.33
Lehigh	6.0%	$32.42	$62.52
Luzerne	0.4%	$1.99	$3.83
Lycoming	1.1%	$5.83	$11.24
McKean	0.6%	$3.42	$6.59
Mercer	2.1%	$11.24	$21.67
Mifflin	0.2%	$1.05	$2.02
Monroe	3.1%	$17.10	$32.98
Montour	0.3%	$1.60	$3.08
Northampton	0.4%	$2.27	$4.37
Northumberland	0.1%	$0.46	$0.89
Perry	0.2%	$1.12	$2.16
Potter	0.1%	$0.66	$1.28
Schuylkill	0.8%	$4.14	$7.98
Snyder	0.5%	$2.96	$5.70
Somerset	1.1%	$6.17	$11.89
Sullivan	0.4%	$1.99	$3.85
Susquehanna	2.3%	$12.49	$24.09
Tioga	0.4%	$2.37	$4.56
Union	0.2%	$0.95	$1.84
Venango	0.4%	$2.11	$4.07
Warren	1.1%	$6.26	$12.06
Washington	2.6%	$13.96	$26.93
Wayne	4.8%	$25.97	$50.07
Westmoreland	1.8%	$9.70	$18.70
Wyoming	2.6%	$14.12	$27.24
York	9.5%	$51.57	$99.45
		$544.62	**$1,050.22**

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (2023); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

Appendix D: Case Studies' Economic Impact Numbers

The Great Allentown Fair:

	Operations and Capital	Visitor Spending	Total Impact
Direct Output ($M)	$1.7	$30.8	$32.5
Indirect and Induced Output ($M)	$1.5	$28.6	$30.0
Total Output ($M)	**$3.2**	**$59.3**	**$62.5**
Employment Supported	20	600	620
Employee Compensation ($M)	$0.8	$21.3	$22.1
Total Fiscal Impact ($M)	<$0.1	<$0.1	<$0.1

The Bloomsburg Fair:

	Operations and Capital	Visitor Spending	Total Impact
Direct Output ($M)	$2.5	$39.1	$41.6
Indirect and Induced Output ($M)	$2.1	$36.3	$38.5
Total Output ($M)	**$4.6**	**$75.5**	**$80.1**
Employment Supported	40	700	740
Employee Compensation ($M)	$1.1	$27.1	$28.3
Total Fiscal Impact ($K)	<$0.1	<$0.1	<$0.1

Warren County Fair:

	Operations and Capital	Visitor Spending	Total Impact
Direct Output ($M)	$0.5	$6.3	$6.7
Indirect and Induced Output ($M)	$0.4	$5.8	$6.2
Total Output ($M)	**$0.9**	**$12.1**	**$12.9**
Employment Supported	5	100	105
Employee Compensation ($M)	$0.2	$4.3	$4.5
Total Fiscal Impact ($M)	<$0.1	<$0.1	<$0.1

Washington County Agricultural Fair:

	Operations and Capital	Visitor Spending	Total Impact
Direct Output ($M)	$0.7	$11.1	$11.8
Indirect and Induced Output ($M)	$0.6	$10.3	$10.9
Total Output ($M)	**$1.3**	**$21.3**	**$22.7**
Employment Supported	10	200	210
Employee Compensation ($M)	$0.3	$7.7	$8.0
Total Fiscal Impact ($M)	<$0.1	<$0.1	<$0.1

West End Fair:

	Operations and Capital	Visitor Spending	Total Impact
Direct Output ($M)	$1.1	$17.1	$18.2
Indirect and Induced Output ($M)	$1.0	$15.9	$16.9
Total Output ($M)	**$2.1**	**$33.0**	**$35.1**
Employment Supported	10	300	310
Employee Compensation ($M)	$0.5	$11.8	$12.4
Total Fiscal Impact ($M)	<$0.1	<$0.1	<$0.1

Westmoreland Fair:

	Operations and Capital	Visitor Spending	Total Impact
Direct Output ($M)	$0.5	$8.1	$8.6
Indirect and Induced Output ($M)	$0.5	$7.5	$8.0
Total Output ($M)	**$1.0**	**$15.5**	**$16.6**
Employment Supported	10	200	210
Employee Compensation ($M)	$0.3	$5.6	$5.8
Total Fiscal Impact ($M)	<$0.1	<$0.1	<$0.1

Source: IMPLAN (2022); Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2024)

Appendix E: About Econsult Solutions, Inc.

This report was produced by Econsult Solutions, Inc. ("ESI"). ESI is a Philadelphia-based economic consulting firm that provides businesses and public policy makers with economic consulting services in urban economics, real estate economics, transportation, public infrastructure, development, public policy and finance, community and neighborhood development, planning, as well as expert witness services for litigation support. Its principals are nationally recognized experts in urban development, real estate, government and public policy, planning, transportation, non-profit management, business strategy and administration, as well as litigation and commercial damages. Staff members have outstanding professional and academic credentials, including active positions at the university level, wide experience at the highest levels of the public policy process and extensive consulting experience.



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