



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Karen Ross, Secretary

December 1, 2016

Here in California, it's always "fair season." It's just one of the many reasons our agricultural community is so fortunate to live and grow in a place so well-suited to what we do. A new year is just around the corner, and that means it's almost time to cut the ribbon on our 2017 season of California's agricultural fairs.

You make that happen. Each year, when the gate closes on the annual fair, our exhibitors set about creating their piece of the next one. In a way, it's a lot like being a farmer: even as we close the barn door on this year's harvest, we are thinking of the blank slate and the new opportunity that awaits us in the season to come.

Fairs and farms are tied together that way, as they always have been. Exhibits and shows, art and innovation, competitions and carnival rides, and my personal favorite: education. Fairs are perhaps our best chance to show-and-tell the story of farming to an audience that may not often think about what agriculture means beyond the pristine produce at the market. Thank you for the role you play in creating a fair full of fun, memorable, educational moments.

Each fair in our state has its own flavor, its own sense of place. The variety of our local fairs mirrors the variety of our state's agriculture, and it reminds us just how diverse and unique California's communities are. As you look forward to your exhibits for 2017, please know that I and our farmers and ranchers appreciate the creativity, innovation and effort that you bring to the fair.

Yours truly,

Karen Ross
Secretary

