



## Iowa State Fair Announces Largest Renovation Project to Date

**Des Moines, IA** –The historic Swine Barn on the Iowa State Fairgrounds is undergoing a three-year, \$19.6 million renovation, marking the largest facilities project in Iowa State Fair history.

Originally built in 1907 and expanded in 1936, the barn has served generations of exhibitors and Fairgoers with more than 184,000 square feet of livestock space. With the last major improvements completed in 1942, this renovation is a long-overdue investment in the iconic barn.

The project is supported in partnership with the Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation's "Back the Barns" program, a fundraising campaign dedicated to renovating the Fair's historic livestock barns. Jeff and Deb Hansen of Iowa Select Farms have generously contributed \$2 million to the renovation of the Swine Barn and will be adding an interactive, educational exhibit on the swine industry. Upon completion of the improvements, the building will be named the Jeff & Deb Hansen Iowa Select Farms Swine Barn.

Phase I of the project began immediately following the 2025 Fair and will be completed in time for the 2026 Fair. Phase I involves remodeling the west office, remodeling the west women's restroom to meet current accessibility standards and constructing new restrooms on the east end of the Barn (men's, women's, and family). Phase II will begin immediately following the 2026 Fair and will be completed in time for the 2028 Fair. The renovation project includes the following:

- Reconstructed roof lines that shed rainwater away from the internal portions of the barn
- A new south center stalling area with fewer columns and higher ceiling space
- New storm sewer, sanitary sewer and water utility lines
- Installation of an underground storm sewer retention system south of the barn
- Remodeled office spaces
- Restoration of masonry and sheet metal
- New membrane roofing to replace the current ballasted roof system
- Exterior and interior painting
- Repair and replacement of perimeter metal gates
- A new concrete floor in areas affected by new utilities
- New storage areas
- Remodeled existing restrooms and brand-new restrooms (including family restrooms and showers) to meet current accessibility standards
- A new interior wash rack area
- New portable pens in the south center stalling area
- New electrical service and lighting
- Improved sound system and internet connectivity

The "Back the Barns" program is one component of the Iowa State Fair's long-term facilities plan to renovate and improve the Fairgrounds' infrastructure and enhance exhibitor and visitor experiences. To date, nearly \$20 million in renovation work has been completed in the Sheep Barn (completed in 2024) and the Horse Barn (completed in 2026). To show appreciation for "Back the Barns" supporters, the Blue Ribbon Foundation is giving each member a commemorative belt buckle recognizing their commitment to preserving the Fairgrounds and encouraging the next generation of Iowa agricultural leaders.

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