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**DRAFTS AND STEERS AND DOGS OH MY!**  
*Make the Most of Activities at Five Points Bank Arena  
during Nebraska State Fair*

*Grand Island, NE* – Whether it be the Draft Horse Pull Friday night, the Cattle Dog Trials Tuesday or the Supreme Champion Drive Thursday, Five Points Bank Arena comes alive for fairgoers at the Nebraska State Fair.

“This is an area our guests do not want to miss,” said Bill Angell, livestock division director. “The schedule is a complete reflection of Nebraska agriculture and there is so much to learn, see and do here.” He said that on top of all the educational activities and critters throughout all the barns, the highlights continue to be the events scheduled in the Farm Bureau Show Ring.

“I would guess the Draft Horse Show is still the most popular,” said Angell. “Tickets are on sale now and they sell out every year.” The Draft Horse Show, presented by the Grand Island Independent, begins opening day, August 24 at 6 p.m. with the first hitch class. Fans will see two-up, four-up and six-up hitches (the number of horses hitched to a cart or wagon) complete complicated maneuvers in competition. Farm team classes begin the next morning at 7:30 a.m. with the 6 p.m. show finalizing hitch classes Saturday evening and then again Sunday at 4 p.m. Fans are most enthused about the Draft Horse Pull the following Friday, August 31. This is where the heavies take on challengers to try and outpull their competition. All these activities occur in the Farm Bureau Show Ring at Five Points Bank Arena.

Angell said the other fan favorite at Five Points Bank Arena is the Midwest Regional Cattle Dog Trials. These stock dogs, such as Australian shepherds, kelpies or border collies, have one job: to move a select number of cattle into a pen in the Farm Bureau Show Ring. They receive no help from anyone, other than short, direct calls from their handler. A timed event, crowds go wild as a dog carefully guides the cattle toward the pen and then through a not-so-wide gate.

“If you’re a dog lover, this is the event to come see,” said Denny Hoffman, cattle rancher and State Fair Board member from Thedford, NE. “Working dogs make all the difference for us on the ranch. They know their job, and it’s a thrilling experience to get to see them in action.” The Cattle Dog Trials begin August 27 and the finals run August 28 at 7 p.m.

Because of the size of the Farm Bureau Show Ring (115 feet by 215 feet), this ring is capable of hosting all cattle shows. Dairy cattle competitions are held August 24 and 26. Beef breeds (from Hereford to Black Angus to Shorthorn and more) fill the Tom Dinsdale Automotive Cattle Barn for competition August 29-30.

A highlight of the week is when Governor Ricketts arrives to take part in awarding the Supreme Champion Beef August 30 at 6 p.m. “Crowning the beef champion is a surge of pride and sometimes immense surprise for the victor,” Angell said. “The Governor will actually assume the role of the judge by carrying on the tradition of declaring the winner – he will slap the hip of the top heifer or bull, which is the signal that this is the champion.”

Lori Cox, executive director, said it’s at that moment that Five Points Bank Arena erupts with cheers and applause. “These are the moments we work for all year,” she said. “This is why we put the hours in, sweat a little, worry a lot. A fair is about competitive virtue as much as it is about entertainment. Sharing that fever with our guests means we draw them a little closer to the farm.”

Another competition often forgotten in publication is the Longhorn Cattle Show. For guests, these hearty Texas cattle with their horn spread more than 6 feet from tip to tip, are a marvel to see. Colorful, lean and slow-moving, they

show August 25-26. The annual Midwest Mutton Bustin' runs August 31 at 1 p.m. All kids are welcome to sign up at [StateFair.org](http://StateFair.org) to ride a wooly bugger – a sheep – for six seconds toward earning the championship buckle.

The State Fair closes out Five Points Bank Arena with FFA and 4-H youth cattle, goat and sheep competitions September 1-3. Orschelns Farm & Home is the presenting sponsor of all livestock events at Nebraska State Fair.

The complete Five Points Bank Arena agenda, including Farm Bureau Show Ring competition schedules, Five Points Bank Loft hospitality activities, vendor showcases and concessions amenities is located at [StateFair.org](http://StateFair.org) under Ag Attractions.

Bundles are on sale now for the Draft Horse Show at discount pricing through August 23, available at [StateFair.org](http://StateFair.org). The Cattle Dog Trials and all other livestock competitions are free to the public.

The 2018 Nebraska State Fair runs August 24 through September 3 in Grand Island. Ticket discounts are currently available at all Pump & Pantry locations or check out **StateFair.org**. Bundle prices, entertainment information and a schedule of events can be found online.

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