

First San Antonio International Farm and Ranch Show a success, say organizers. Show brings in attendees from Europe, Canada and Latin America.

SAN ANTONIO - (October 14, 2009) Exhibitors and attendees were pleased with the first San Antonio International Farm and Ranch Show which took place Oct. 8-10 on the grounds of the Freeman Coliseum near downtown San Antonio, organizers said.

“We had 202 exhibitors and an estimated attendance of somewhere between 4,000 and 5,000 visitors during the show,” said Jeff Lynch of San Antonio International Ag Promotions, the organization which coordinated the event. “It was a great response for the first time we presented the show, and we’re looking forward to it being even bigger and better in years to come.”

Attendees represented approximately 1.45 million acres of agricultural property, including 119,000 crop acres and more than 1.3 million livestock acres, which produce some 112,763 head of cattle, organizers said. They added that, along with attendees from Texas and other parts of the U.S., there also were visitors from Mexico and other Latin American countries, as well as Europe and Canada.

Frank and Elaine Zehner of Seguin were among the show’s attendees.

“We enjoyed the exhibits and took in a couple of the educational sessions offered during the show,” Frank Zehner said. “It was a good experience.”

“I liked the rainwater harvesting session and the windmill exhibit,” Elaine Zehner added. “There was a lot to see and do during the show.”

Exhibitions included state-of-the-art technology in farming and ranching equipment, including tractors, combines and harvesters, as well as global positioning systems and new cattle management tools and technologies. There also were numerous booths and exhibits of farm, ranch and dairy suppliers and service providers.

Show exhibitors included some of the biggest names in agriculture, including John Deere, Holt, Case and Massey Ferguson, as well as numerous smaller businesses.

“We’re here showing people about how solar and wind power can be used for water-pumping purposes,” said David Perez, operations manager for American West Windmill and Solar Company in Amarillo. “There’s been a lot of interest in the use of alternative energy on farm and ranch operations over the past few years and it’s continuing to grow.”

Perez said that, as a smaller company, the San Antonio show provided them a venue in which to demonstrate their products to a larger number of people over a relatively short time.

“San Antonio is a prime location for such a show because it is centrally located in the state and now has the largest climate-controlled ag-related facility in Texas,” said Lyle Larson, another of the show’s organizers. Plus, there’s a lot to do here, so people can come to the show but make the trip into a vacation.”

Larson added that exhibitors lauded the “quality of attendee” at the show.

“Our focus was farmers and ranchers, and although the general public was invited we did not specifically encourage them to attend, which paid huge dividends to the vendors,” he said. “(The vendors) told us the attendees they spoke with were serious about buying supplies and equipment for their operations. They liked that we had qualified buyers and not tire-kickers.”

Larson also said he hoped the show would continue to draw participants from Mexico and other parts of Latin America.

“We got a good number of visitors from Mexico this year, especially people from just over the border, but we’re hoping to really increase our international attendance in years to come,” he said.

He added that the dates for next year’s show had already been set as Oct. 15-17.

Larson added that the show’s top-notch keynote speakers and various educational opportunities for

attendees also made it an attractive venue for farmers and ranchers.

“We had educational sessions throughout the run of the show, most of which provided continuing education units or credits,” said Bryan Davis, Texas AgriLife Extension Service agent for natural resources in Bexar County and one of the show’s educational coordinators.

Davis said 1,300-plus attendees participated in the more than 25 sessions offered at the show. Topics included tillage and irrigation technologies, livestock fertility management, precision agriculture and GPS technology, alternative energy; seed developments, alternative crops, biofuels, beef, sheep and goat production and marketing, nature-based tourism and wildlife management.

“It was a great opportunity to present to a large number of people,” said Steven Hammack, AgriLife Extension beef specialist emeritus at the

AgriLife Extension Extension and Research Center in Stephenville. “I had from 75 to 100 people in my presentation, which as on the impact of Bos Indicus cattle in the U.S. It was a good topic for people in Texas, as well Mexico.”

Show sponsors included Holt, HEB, San Antonio Steel Co., Tractor City, Grande Ford Truck Sales, Texas Deer Association and Southwest Power Fence.

For more information on the San Antonio International Farm and Ranch Show, go to: www.farmandranchexpo.com.

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