

## Marin County Fair Is a Healthy Fun-for-All

Going to the fair can be a lot of fun. *But can it also be healthy?*

[Marin County Fair](#) has proven that answer to be a resounding YES! The annual event, slated this year for June 30 –July 4, also proves that big changes can occur in small (yet significant) steps.

In 2004, “Play Fair Marin” replaced beer as the fair’s title sponsor, evolving into a policy that eliminates alcohol advertising altogether. And the healthy changes didn’t stop there!

- 2007: The event became the first smoke-free fair in the nation.
- 2008: Food vendors were required to add healthier options to their menus, with new items becoming so popular, some vendors have rolled them out to other festivals.
- 2011: A 1k fun run was introduced.

The Play Fair program isn’t just about the health of fair-goers. Environmental well-being is equally important, with efforts focused on recycling, conservation, valet bike parking, and even compostable containers.

### **A Fun, Green, Healthy, Happy, and Award-Winning Event**

Marin’s [“Greenest Fair on Earth”](#) features attractions such as the first solar-powered carousel at a county fair, interactive exhibits that showcase sustainable themes, and a concert stage powered by 99 percent vegetable oil biodiesel.

Even rides at the fair are going green. The Giant Ferris Wheel has been retrofitted with the latest in LED, as have the Ring of Fire and Super Shot Drop Tower. As a result, these rides are using 90 percent less power!

“Giving fair-goers healthy choices, eliminating smoking, being careful with advertising and the sale of alcohol, offering a welcoming baby sanctuary for nursing moms, and using totally compostable materials all make the fair more family-friendly, and healthier for our community and the environment,” said Patricia Kendall, medical group administrator at San Rafael Medical Center. “It makes the fair a gift to all who attend.”

Play Fair Marin now includes more than a dozen community partners and has drawn accolades and national attention. Working collaboratively, Marin County Fair, Play Fair Marin, and Healthy Marin Partnership\* have received numerous awards from the Western Fairs Association, including the prestigious Merrill Award. In addition, festivals across California and in neighboring states have looked to the Marin model for making their own events healthier.

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\*Healthy Marin Partnership includes Kaiser Permanente, Marin General Hospital, Novato Community Hospital, Marin County Office of Education, Marin County Health and Human Services, Marin Community Foundation, Hospital Council of Marin, North Bay Leadership Council, and San Rafael Chamber of Commerce.