



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **N.C. State Fair Cares program supports Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina**

*House-Autry Mills donates \$15,000 to kick off fundraising effort*

RALEIGH – Fairgoers will have the opportunity to give back this year when they purchase their fair tickets online. The N.C. State Fair Cares program offers online ticket buyers the option to add a donation to the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina directly to their ticket purchase at check out. The program will be kicked off by a \$15,000 donation from House-Autry Mills.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has only heightened food insecurity in our state, and N.C. State Fair Cares is a way the community can collectively serve each other,” said N.C. State Fair Manager Kent Yelverton. “No matter the amount you add to your ticket purchase, when we work collectively, our impact will no doubt lighten the load for the Food Bank.”

“House-Autry Mills is one of the few North Carolina companies that has been around longer than the N.C. State Fair. For decades, fairgoers have lined up to try one of their famous hushpuppies, and their

commitment to the people of North Carolina never falters,” said Yelverton. “We couldn’t be prouder to have them as the lead partner for N.C. State Fair Cares.”

"House-Autry has been partnering with the North Carolina State Fair for as long as anyone can remember, and we've always valued our relationship with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture," said Craig Haywood, House-Autry Mills CEO. "Unfortunately, the pandemic has put significant restrictions on our usual activities, so this year we're prioritizing the safety of our customers and staff by pausing our hushpuppy sampling and shifting those dollars to the N.C. State Fair Cares program which will provide much needed support to our community."

N.C. State Fair Cares was created in 2018 to help North Carolinians recover from Hurricane Florence and Tropical Storm Michael. Fairgoers donated more than \$14,000 to the Food Bank that year.

"We're incredibly thankful for the N.C. State Fair Cares program, and our partners at the North Carolina State Fair and House-Autry Mills for all they do to help support North Carolinians in times of need," said Peter Werbicki, President & CEO of the Food Bank. "COVID-19 has led to folks needing to make some impossible choices around food, and the N.C. State Fair Cares program will help alleviate some of those choices."

The 2021 N.C. State Fair is slated for Oct. 14-24 at the North Carolina State Fairgrounds in Raleigh. The fair offers an experience unique to North Carolina for all who attend, and is a great value with free entertainment, thrilling rides and games, thousands of animals, endless family activities, competitions, vendors and creative deep-fried delights. For more information and to make a donation, visit [www.ncstatefair.org](http://www.ncstatefair.org).

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