



California Strawberry Festival

NEWS RELEASE

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Berry Tastes and Treats at 37th Annual California Strawberry Festival

Ventura, Calif. (April 18, 2023)—The 37th Annual California Strawberry Festival makes its debut at the Ventura County Fairgrounds Saturday and Sunday, May 20 and 21 with strawberry-themed food, beverages and contests, live entertainment, rides and activities. This year marks the first time the festival is being held at the fairgrounds ([10 W. Harbor Blvd., Ventura, CA 93001](#)). Hours are 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. both days.

For strawberry lovers, the California Strawberry Festival is two days of strawberry heaven. Over 50 food and beverage vendors will serve such treats as strawberry pies, strawberry-topped funnel cakes, strawberry nachos, deep-fried strawberries, berry kabobs, strawberry tacos, strawberry beer and smoothies. Festivalgoers can build their own strawberry shortcakes, piling on as many strawberries and whipped cream as possible.

Nearly 50,000 people are expected to attend the festival over two days, many coming from Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Riverside and Orange counties. An estimated 1.5 million strawberries will be consumed over the two-day festival. Strawberries are the number one crop in Ventura County. Strawberries grown in the Oxnard Plain are considered by many to be the best-tasting and juiciest in the world. For festivalgoers who want to take a bit of the festival home, Ventura County family-owned farms will be selling fresh-picked, vine-ripened strawberries at the festival in 3-packs, half trays and full trays.

On two stages, 24 bands offering reggae, Latin, rock, country, and R&B music will perform. Popular LA-based reggae artist, Arise Roots, will take the stage at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday afternoon. In the festival's Strawberryland, kids can enjoy science and magic shows on the Jest in Time Family Fun Stage presented by [Wonderfold](#). The stage will also be the site of the Berry Baby Fashion Parade presented by [SoCalFord](#) at 2:00 p.m. both days. Kids from infants to four years of age can show off their strawberry-themed costumes from stage (with the help of their parents). There is also a Strawberry Tart Toss and a Ninja National obstacle course.

The California Strawberry Festival features more than 200 artisans from throughout the West who will showcase their goods. Many of the artists and crafters have been coming to the festival for years. "Festivals allow shoppers to get an up-close look at items before buying. They can talk with the artisans to learn more about their work. It's an experience that you don't have when shopping online," says Dana Hale-Mounier, director of Pacific Fine Arts Festivals and coordinator of the festival's arts and craft booths.

"We are looking forward to providing a comfortable festivalgoer experience--a rain or shine venue with three food courts, indoor space for our artists and crafters, indoor and outdoor dining areas, paved parking on site, an Amtrak Station across the street, close proximity to the 101 Freeway, and easy access to free shuttles," says Dean Kato, festival chair.

Through the California Strawberry Festival, participating nonprofit organizations have raised over \$5 million. “Our goal has always been to create a celebration in honor of the strawberries that grow prolifically throughout our rich agricultural region and to support other nonprofits within our community,” says Kato. “Our all-volunteer board is dedicated to providing a wonderful two-day experience for festivalgoers.”

General admission is \$15. For active military and their dependents with ID and seniors 62 years and older, admission is \$10 and for ages 5 to 12, admission is \$8. Children 4 and under are free. Tickets can be purchased in advance at www.CAstrawberryFestival.org or upon entry to the festival.

A limited amount of parking is available onsite for \$20 per vehicle. Free shuttles will run every 15 minutes from locations in Oxnard and Ventura. The Ventura Amtrak Station is onsite for out-of-area visitors. For parking options, go to <https://castrawberryfestival.org/getting-here/free-shuttle-service>.

To learn more, go to www.CAstrawberryFestival.org, email info@castrawberryfestival.org or follow the festival on Facebook and Instagram.

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BACKGROUND: The festival pays tribute to California’s billion-dollar strawberry industry. Ventura County, with its unique coastal environment of ocean exposure and year-round moderate temperatures, is ideal for the luscious fruit. Strawberries are Ventura County’s largest crop generating \$712 million in value in 2021. The festival premiered in 1984 at Channel Islands Harbor. After eight years, the increasingly popular event outgrew its original site, moving in 1992 to Strawberry Meadows at College Park. In 2023, the festival moved to the Ventura County Fairgrounds.

POSITIVE IMPACT: The nonprofit California Strawberry Festival is known as one of the nation’s finest. The International Festival & Events Association and the Library of Congress have recognized the California Strawberry Festival for its extensive community programs benefiting education, the arts and youths. The Association’s research estimates the festival’s economic impact on the community hovers at approximately \$7.5 million for the two-day event.