

Spirit Of The Fair

Photography Contest Handbook

ADULT

QUESTIONS?
CONTACT US!



IMPORTANT DATES

Entry Deadline: December 31, 2026

Contest Timeline: February 4-15, 2027 - Photography Contest shoot days

February 16, 2027 - All images must be uploaded to the designated pages.

March 1, 2027 - Winners will be announced to participants

CATEGORIES & AWARDS

A. Agriculture (Animals) & Horticulture (Plants)	1st Place	\$50
B. Food (Still Life or People)	2nd Place	\$35
C. Rides & Midway	3rd Place	\$20
D. The Fair at Night	Spirit of the Fair Award	\$100
E. Exhibits & Entertainment	Will be awarded to 1 photo that most exemplifies the traditions and spirit of the Florida State Fair.	
F. Fairscape, General & Other Not Listed		

ENTRY RULES

- Participants will receive only 1 ticket and 1 parking ticket to the 2027 Florida State Fair to take photos.
- Contest is limited to 100 participants, must be a Florida Resident and age 18 or older.
- Open to professional, semi-professional and amateur-status photographers.
- A maximum of 10 images can be submitted for jurying, distributed by category in any way they choose.
- The registered photographer must have taken images during the dates of February 4 – 15, 2027.
- The Florida State Fair may use any submitted images in future marketing materials.
- Judges reserve the right to reassign photos to another, more appropriate, category if deemed necessary.
- All photos must have complete information attached, including photographer name, image title, image description, and category. The judges use this information to help select the winners.
- Digital manipulation should be limited to basic enhancements. Artificial intelligence (AI) generated, composite images, or and heavily edited photos will not be accepted.
- Photos containing watermarks or other superimposed logos will not be admitted.
- Only digitally uploaded images can be entered. Mailed or shipped entries will not be accepted.
- The Florida State Fair Authority reserves the right to refuse images that are inappropriate or unsuitable such as degrading, racist, or pornographic images.
- All photographs should accurately reflect the subject matter and the scene as it appeared. AI-generated images or images created or significantly altered using generative AI tools are not permitted and will be disqualified. Photos that have been digitally altered beyond standard optimization will also be disqualified.
- Acceptable alterations are adjustments to color, contrast, brightness and sharpness; removal of dust and scratches; cropping; black and white conversions; and use of HDR (High Dynamic Range), where multiple exposures of the same scene are combined for a greater tonal range, as well as similar processes for extended depth of field.
- **All photographers accepted for the competition will receive information on how to submit their fair photographs on February 1, 2027.**

ENTRY RULES CONT.

- Not acceptable alterations include photo composites (a combination of two or more photos not of the same scene); the addition, duplication, deletion, or moving of objects within the image; the use of artistic digital filters and effects; or the use of generative AI to create, replace, or enhance any part of the image. Examples of artistic filters and effects include watercolor, neon glow, posterizing, stained glass, and others that do not depict the scene in its natural way.
- No access to back-of-house, ride mechanical areas, animal holding or warm-up areas, service corridors, or any area marked restricted, except with staff escort.
- Participants must comply with all instructions of Florida State Fair staff, security, and the midway operator's personnel. No unmanned aircraft (drones) are permitted.
- No tripods, monopods, light stands, flash, or supplemental lighting in a manner that obstructs pedestrian flow, creates a trip hazard, or startles animals or ride patrons.
- No photography of, or interference with, any medical emergency, injury, law-enforcement action, or incident response. Participants must not obstruct first responders.
- No entry into animal pens or contact with animals without the handler's permission.
- No commercial solicitation, no sale of prints on grounds, no representing oneself as an agent of the Florida State Fair.
- Participant is responsible for their own equipment; the Florida State Fair is not a bailee and assumes no responsibility for loss, theft, or damage.
- The Authority's determination of the order in which entry forms are received, and of whether an entry is timely, is final.

JUDGING CRITERIA

- **Contest of skill.** The Contest is a contest of skill. All entries are judged on the criteria set forth in these Rules. No element of chance determines any winner, and no purchase, payment, or contribution of any kind is necessary to enter or win.
- A panel of judges, including Florida State Fair staff, will evaluate all entries based on technical quality, composition, creativity, category relevance, impact, and message. All decisions made by the judges will be final and binding. No appeals or protests will be accepted. The Florida State Fair Authority's interpretation of these Official Rules is final.
- The Florida State Fair reserves the right not to award a prize in any category in which, in the judges' determination, no entry meets the standard for an award
- **Notification and Prize Distribution:** Winners will be notified via the contact information provided at the time of entry. Entrants must ensure their email address and phone number are accurate and monitored.
- Selected entrants may be required to confirm eligibility, sign an affidavit of originality and rights, and provide additional information, including original image files (e.g., RAW files), prior to receiving a prize. Failure to respond within three (3) days of notification may result in disqualification and selection of an alternate winner.
- Prize details and fulfillment will be coordinated directly with each winner. Prizes are non-transferable and may not be exchanged. The Florida State Fair Authority reserves the right to substitute a prize of equal or greater value, if necessary.
- Winners are responsible for any applicable federal, state, or local taxes and may be required to complete appropriate tax documentation.

LEGAL DISCLOSURES

Binding Agreement: In order to enter the Spirit of The Fair Photo Contest ("Contest"), the Entrant must agree to all Entry Rules, Judging Criteria, and Legal Disclosures (collectively the "Rules"). Because these Rules form a legally binding agreement with respect to this Contest, please read them carefully. If the Entrant does not agree to and abide by the Rules, Entrant is not eligible to participate in the Contest or to win any of the prizes. Entrant agrees that his/her registration as an individual participant under the Photo Contest constitutes his/her agreement to these Rules.

Publication and Exhibition: Selected photographs may be featured in Florida State Fair Authority publications, website, social media channels, and exhibitions. However, Florida State Fair Authority will not use any photograph depicting an identifiable individual for advertising or promotional purposes unless a signed release for that individual is on file or the Authority has otherwise determined that use is permissible.

Intellectual Property: Entrant retains all copyright in the Entrant's submitted photographs. By entering, Entrant grants to the Florida State Fair Authority a non-exclusive, worldwide, perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free, fully paid-up, transferable license, with the right to sublicense through multiple tiers, to use, reproduce, publish, distribute, publicly display, publicly perform, transmit, modify, crop, adapt, and create derivative works from the photographs, in whole or in part, alone or in combination with other material, in any medium now known or later developed, for any purpose relating to the Contest, the Florida State Fair, the Florida State Fairgrounds, or the Authority's programs, including advertising, promotional, marketing, editorial, archival, educational, fundraising, and sponsor-recognition purposes. Sublicensees may include the Authority's sponsors, licensees, media partners, contractors, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and industry associations of which the Authority is a member. The Authority has no obligation to use any photograph. Entrant waives any right to inspect or approve any use, and waives any moral rights, rights of attribution or integrity, and any similar rights, to the fullest extent permitted by law. The Authority will use reasonable efforts to credit the photographer where feasible, but credit is not a condition of the license and inadvertent omission of credit is not a breach.

Choice of Law: The Contest is governed by the laws of the State of Florida and is subject to applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Entrant agrees that any and all disputes that cannot be resolved with Florida State Fair Authority, and causes of action arising out of or connected with the Contest, shall be resolved individually, without resort to any form of class action, before a court of competent jurisdiction in Hillsborough County, Florida, which court shall apply the laws of the State of Florida without regard to conflicts of law. In any such dispute, the Entrant shall under no circumstances be entitled to claim punitive, incidental or consequential damages, or any other damages, including attorney's fees, other than the Entrant's entry fee (if any). Entrant hereby waives all rights to have damages multiplied or increased.

Force Majeure: If, for any reason, the Contest is not capable of completion as planned, including, but not limited to, by reason of infection by computer virus, bugs, tampering, unauthorized intervention, fraud, technical failures or any other causes beyond the control of Florida State Fair Authority that corrupt or affect the administration, security, fairness, integrity or proper conduct of the Contest, the Florida State Fair Authority reserves the right at their sole discretion to cancel, terminate, modify or suspend the Contest. The Entrant further understands and agrees that the Creative Living Competitions & Exhibits are held in conjunction with the 2027 Florida State Fair and agree that the Florida State Fair is not liable or responsible for any delay, change of dates or cancellation of the 2027 Florida State Fair due the following unforeseeable circumstances: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake; or (c) other potential disaster(s) or catastrophe(s), such as epidemics, pandemics, or terrorism threat. In the event of cancellation, Florida State Fair Authority will not be obligated to return submitted materials and will not be liable for any losses incurred by Entrant.

LEGAL DISCLOSURES CONT.

Warranty: By entering, Entrant represents and warrants that: (a) Entrant is a legal resident of the State of Florida and at least 18 years of age; (b) Entrant personally took each submitted photograph and is the sole author and copyright owner of it; (c) each photograph was taken on the Florida State Fairgrounds during the Fair's public operating hours or during Contest-designated access, on a date between February 4 and February 15, 2027; (d) each photograph is original and does not infringe or violate any copyright, trademark, trade dress, right of privacy, right of publicity, moral right, or other right of any person or entity; (e) each photograph is free of any lien, encumbrance, or third-party claim, and no third-party consent, license, or payment is required for the Authority's use of it as permitted herein; (f) Entrant has obtained a signed release from each identifiable person appearing as a subject of a photograph, and from a parent or legal guardian for any such person who is a minor, and will produce those releases on request; (g) no photograph was created or modified in any manner prohibited by the Entry Rules, including through the use of generative artificial intelligence; and (h) no photograph is defamatory, obscene, or otherwise unlawful. Entrant will retain the original camera file (including RAW file where available) with intact metadata for each submitted photograph until at least March 1, 2027 and will produce it on request. Florida State Fair Authority reserves the right to disqualify any entry if it finds in its sole discretion that any of the foregoing warranties are not true.

Release: By entering, participants release and hold harmless Florida State Fair Authority, its affiliated organizations, and each of their directors, officers, employees, attorneys, agents, contractors, volunteers and representatives (collectively, and, hereinafter the "Authority") from any and all liability for any injuries, loss, claim, action, demand or damage of any kind arising from or related to the Contest, any prize won, any use of the entry materials by Florida State Fair Authority, the warranties participants make, any misuse or malfunction of any prize awarded, participation in any Contest-related activity, or participation in the Contest. In addition, Participant releases and discharges the Authority from any and all claims for personal injury, death, or property damage arising out of or related to Participant's presence on the Florida State Fairgrounds or participation in the Contest, including claims arising from the ordinary negligence of the Authority, whether such negligence is active or passive. This release does not apply to claims arising from gross negligence or intentional misconduct, and nothing herein waives the protections of section 768.28, Florida Statutes. Participants whose entries include identifiable minors must have obtained written consent from a parent or legal guardian, and comply with any other applicable legal requirements, and may be required to provide such documentation upon request.

Limitation of Liability: In no event will the Authority, their advertising, and promotional agencies, or their directors, officers, employees, attorneys, agents, and representatives be responsible or liable for any damages or losses of any kind, including direct indirect, incidental, consequential or punitive damages arising out of participant's access to and use of the Authority websites, or the downloading or uploading and/or printing of material from said sites, provided, however, that nothing in this section limits liability that cannot be limited under applicable law, including liability for gross negligence or intentional misconduct, and nothing in this section shall be construed to expand the Authority's liability beyond the limits of section 768.28, Florida Statutes. Without limiting the foregoing, everything on the Authority sites is provided "as is" without warranty of any kind, either express or implied. The Authority is not responsible for lost, damaged, late or misdirected photographs, or for uploading connections, garbled transmissions, unauthorized intervention or technical malfunctions. The Authority is not responsible for any incorrect or inaccurate information, whether caused by website users or by any equipment or programming associated with or utilized in the Contest or by any technical or human error that may occur in the processing of submissions to the Contest, including but not limited to any misprints or typographical errors. The Authority assumes no responsibility for any error, omission, interruption, defect, delay in operation or transmission, communications line failure, theft or destruction or unauthorized access to, or alteration of, photographs.

LEGAL DISCLOSURES CONT.

Indemnification: Entrant agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Florida State Fair Authority and its board members, officers, employees, agents, contractors, and volunteers from and against any and all third-party claims, demands, actions, liabilities, losses, damages, costs, and expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees and costs, at trial and on appeal) arising out of or relating to: (a) any breach of Entrant's representations, warranties, or obligations under these Rules; (b) any claim that a submitted photograph infringes or violates any copyright, trademark, right of privacy, right of publicity, or other right of any person or entity; (c) Entrant's conduct on the Florida State Fairgrounds; or (d) the Authority's use of any submitted photograph in accordance with the license granted herein. The Authority reserves the right, at its own expense, to assume the exclusive defense and control of any matter otherwise subject to indemnification by Entrant, and Entrant agrees to cooperate with such defense.

Eligibility Exclusions: Members of the Board of Directors of the Florida State Fair Authority, and its officers and employees (whether full-time, part-time, or seasonal), Contest judges, and the immediate family members (spouse, parent, child, sibling, and their respective spouses) and household members of each of the foregoing are not eligible to enter or win. Volunteers, contractors, and vendors engaged in the administration of the Contest are likewise ineligible.

No waiver of sovereign immunity: Nothing in these Rules is intended, nor shall be construed, as a waiver of the Florida State Fair Authority's sovereign immunity or of the limitations on liability set forth in section 768.28, Florida Statutes, or of any other immunity, defense, or protection available to the Authority under Florida law.

Rejection of entries: The Authority may, in its discretion, refuse, disqualify, or remove any entry that, as determined by the Authority: depicts nudity or sexually explicit conduct; depicts or promotes violence, unlawful activity, or the use of alcohol or drugs by minors; contains obscene, defamatory, or harassing content; depicts an individual in a manner that is degrading, humiliating, or that the individual has objected to; contains commercial advertising, third-party logos, watermarks, or trademarks; depicts an injury, medical emergency, or law-enforcement or emergency-response action; violates the privacy or publicity rights of any person; or does not depict the Florida State Fair or Florida State Fairgrounds. The Contest is a limited program conducted by it to gather images depicting the traditions and spirit of the Florida State Fair, and entries are selected consistent with that purpose. Rejection of an entry does not entitle the Entrant to any remedy. The Authority may remove any published photograph at any time, in its discretion and without liability, including upon the request of a person depicted.

HOW IT WORKS

If you are one of the first 100 to submit an entry form, an email will be sent informing you are in the contest. We will mail you one fair ticket with parking instructions. We will direct you where to register the day you are going to photograph. If you want to be here more than one day you can request 1 additional fair ticket when you check in at the Creative Living Competitions Office.

HOW TO ENTER ONLINE

- To Enter Online using ShoWorks. Go to <https://fsff.fairwire.com/>
- Everyone must register as a new exhibitor each year.
- Note that sessions expire after 20 minutes of inactivity, so "save the cart" if you plan on leaving the computer for more than 20 minutes.
- When registering, please verify that all information that you entered into ShoWorks is correct. Please pay special attention to capitalization, and full names of cities/counties, and use proper spelling (no abbreviations).
- Your fee to enter is \$0.

2027 Florida State Fair Spirit of the Fair Photo Contest Entry Form

Office Use

☐ Entered into
ShoWorks

☐ Date Received

Entry Forms must be postmarked by December 31, 2026.

Online Entry Form (see page 5 for instructions).

Please print legibly

Name (First, Last)			
Mailing Address			
City	State	Zip Code	☐ Check if you are a new exhibitor
Cell Phone while at the Fair ()			
Email			

Agreement

I hereby certify that I have read, understand and agree with the Florida State Fair Entry Rules, Judging Criteria, and Legal Disclosures for the Spirit of the Fair Photo Contest, which are incorporated into and made part of this Agreement.

I understand that the 2026 Creative Living Competitions & Exhibits are held in conjunction with the 2026 Florida State Fair and agree that the Florida State Fair is not liable or responsible for any delay, change of dates or cancellation of the 2026 Florida State Fair due the following unforeseeable circumstances: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake; or (c) other potential disaster(s) or catastrophe(s), such as epidemics, pandemics, or explosion.

Signature of Contestant

Date

Scan/Email to: CreativeLiving@floridastatefair.com

OR

Mail Entry Form to:

Creative Living Competitions – Spirit of the Fair Photo Contest
Florida State Fair
P.O. Box 11766
Tampa, FL 33680