

Outstanding TALENT SHOW Entertainment

Tuesday, June 16th

7:00 p.m.



2024 Junior Winner
Audrey Neukomm
Cissna Park, IL

4th Place Winner - IAAF State Talent Contest 2025

2024 Senior Winner
Reese Mueller
Fairbury, IL



Ford County Fair Talent Contest Rules

Talent Committee – Natalie Aberle (217) 579-0507 & Mary Hastings (217) 841-7894
Show Date – Tuesday, June 16th 2026 at 7 PM in the dance building on the fairgrounds.

- 1) **Age Requirements by Division**
 - A) Junior Division – Contestant must be between 9-14 years old or younger on the date of the local contest. The winner who represents Ford County at the IAAF contest can be 15 years old.
 - B) Senior Division – Contestant must be between 15 and 21 on the date of the local contest. The winner who represents Ford County at the IAAF contest can be 22 years old.
 - C) Mixed ages must compete in the division of the group's oldest competitor.
 - D) Previous state winners MAY compete again if all age qualifications are met.
 - E) Contestants MUST be an Illinois resident or be enrolled in an Illinois school. Contestants may reside outside of Ford County.
- 2) **Talent Divisions**
 - A) Junior Division – 9-14 Years of age
 - B) Senior Division – 15-21 Years of age
 - C) Ford's Fabulous Fair Future – 8 and Younger (Does NOT qualify for state competition)
- 3) **Specific Contest Rules**
 - A) Entry forms may be found online on the fair website www.fordcountyfair.org, or by emailing the committee at fordcofair@hotmail.com. ALL entries are due in the committee's possession no later than Monday, June 1 2026. All emailed entries must be time stamped before 11:59 PM on May 31, 2026. Entries received after that date will be ineligible. Group entries must be sent together, and all group forms must accompany the entry to qualify including alternates. In the Ford's Fabulous Fair Future division, entries will be limited to the first 10 contestants who are registered and fees are received.
 - B) All contestants may appear in multiple acts with a maximum of 2 acts but may not appear in identical acts (i.e. – cannot perform 2 vocal solos).
 - C) All contestants must be of amateur status. Those who have been or are being paid for performing are considered professionals and are ineligible to perform.
 - D) A keyboard/piano & sound system will be provided. For music tracks, MP3/USB drives are preferred. Contestants may utilize their own equipment.
 - E) All acts are limited to 4 minutes each. Any act going over 4 minutes will be disqualified.
 - F) A 4 minute setup time per act is permitted and will be strictly timed if necessary.
 - G) When using a music track (USB or MP3), ONLY the song the contestant is using is to be on that device. This will lessen the confusion on our sound tech. Sound tech will not be held responsible for music track failures that results in a contestant's inability to perform.
 - H) Judging is based on the following criteria totaling 100 points...
 - Costume – 10 Points
 - Audience Appeal – 10 Points
 - Stage Presence – 30 Points
 - Natural Ability – 50 PointsAll judges decisions are final. Rules interpretations will be made final by the committee.
 - I) Like talent is strictly not allowed. For example, on music tracks there should be no tap sounds on a tap dance, background vocals on a vocal solo, etc. Any instrumental act must be played live on stage. If there are any questions, please contact a committee member prior to the contest day.
 - J) All acts must be memorized.
 - K) Should a contestant/group win their division at another county fair prior to the Ford County contest, they may compete and qualify for premiums/trophies. The contestant/group may represent another fair at the IAAF contest ONLY if they're representing their home county. Otherwise, the contestant/group will be expected to represent Ford County in Springfield.
 - L) There will be awards for the top 3 places in each division as well as cash premiums of \$50, \$75, and \$100.
 - M) The winners from each division will qualify to perform at the IAAF Convention in Springfield in January 2027. Should the winner not be available to perform, the runner-up will be the next qualifier. Each winner will also receive their entry fee paid as well as a \$100 stipend for their performance at the state competition.
 - N) Division winners that compete in Springfield must adhere to all rules of the IAAF State Talent Contest. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture or payback of the stipend and entry fee.
- 4) **Extraneous Rules**
 - A) Each contestant will be notified by email once their entry has been received to verify that their form was filled completely and accurately and to confirm their entry and performance.
 - B) Sound/mic checks will be allowed up to 15 minutes prior to the show to assure that their music tracks work properly. It is solely the responsibility of the contestant to be fully prepared for their act. Please arrive at least 45 minutes to an hour before the contest.
 - C) It will be the determination and final decision of the committee only as to whether a contestant can repeat their performance because of a technical difficulty that was beyond the control of the contestant/group.
 - D) Talents may be designated as dance, vocal/instrumental, magic, speech/comedy, etc. Please remember that this is a family-friendly venue. Any act that is considered or judged to be inappropriate in music, lyrics, or dance will be disqualified.
 - E) Professional behavior and conduct is not only expected, but demanded from every contestant, their families, their friends, and their coaches/teachers. Failure to adhere to these expectations will result in forfeiture of premiums. In egregious cases, violators will be asked to leave the fairgrounds.

GOT TALENT?

Show us what you got!

Tuesday, June 16th
7:00 p.m.

NEW THIS YEAR!!

We're excited to introduce a new division called the Ford's Fabulous Fair Future (FFFF). This division is for children 8 years old or younger.

2026 Ford County Fair Talent Show Entry Form

Contestant or Group Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (Cell/Text): _____ Email: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____ Division: FFFF Jr. Sr.

If Group, Please List Members: _____

Please attach a brief bio of yourself for our emcee (if group, describe it generally speaking)

BY SIGNING YOU AGREE TO REPRESENT FORD COUNTY IN SPRINGFIELD.

Sign: _____

Type of Talent:

Vocal Solo Vocal Duet Vocal Group Dance Solo Dance Group
Instrumental Solo Instrumental Duet Instrumental Group Vocal/Instrumental
List Instruments/other talent _____

Entry Deadline Is June 1, 2026 – Entry form can be found in the fair book or online at fordcountyfair.org. Email entry must be time stamped by 11:59 PM on May 31st. Mail entries to Mary Hastings 1754 E 700 N Rd. Loda, IL 60948. Email entries to fordcofair@hotmail.com. An entry fee of \$5 MUST be mailed (even if entry is made online) and received by the committee prior to the contest unless other arrangements are made. For questions or more information call or text Brian Neukomm at (815) 263-5134.