



Dakota Events Complex (DEX) – State Fair

Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Overview

As inflation continues to raise construction costs, projects that have previously been funded by the legislature are being impacted. Governor Noem’s recommended budget includes \$6 million in one-time general funds to complete the construction of the Dakota Events Complex (or DEX), the new multipurpose livestock and equestrian facility replacing the Open Class Beef Complex destroyed by fire in 2020.

The state-of-the-art facility will provide a first-class experience for the open class and 4-H livestock exhibits during the fair. It will be a major draw for local, regional, and national livestock shows, 4-H competitions, FFA conventions, rodeos, concerts, thrill shows, and more throughout the year!

Project Description

The 150,000 square-foot facility will be able to house two full-sized equestrian arenas and seat 5,000+ people, or 1,700 plus cattle stalls, two show rings, and visitor seating. The facility will be heated for year-round usage. Additionally, to create a positive experience for livestock shows and equestrian events, adequate electrical drops, and a variety of access points for water, including water drops throughout the building, will be available.

Construction began in early 2022, and substantial construction completion is expected in June 2023. The facility will be ready for use at the 2023 State Fair.

Funding

In 2021, the legislature appropriated \$20 million for the DEX, including \$12 million in general funds and \$8 million in other fund authority to complete the project. Since then, due to significant increases in construction material costs, the project needs an additional \$9 million. The \$9 million in funding consists of \$6 million in general funds and \$3 million in other fund authority to allow for the donations necessary to finish the project.