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## Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and Heavy Horse Show celebrate 10 years

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Calgary – The Dundee Wealth Heavy Horse Show will celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of appearing with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra at the 2009 Calgary Stampede.

From July 3-5, you can see these beautiful gentle giants in cart and hitch classes as they step in time to music performed by members of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra.

“Heavy Horses have always been a crowd favorite at Stampede. The Calgary Philharmonic really brings together the power and beauty of these horses. It is a magical combination,” says Jess Debnam, Chair, Heavy Horse Committee.

The Dundee Wealth Heavy Horse Show presents more than 200 Belgian, Clydesdale, Percheron and Shire horses at their best. Heavy horse competitions run from Friday July 3-6 in the Saddledome and begin with conformation classes showing the best of each breed. Sunday, July 5 features the World Champion Six Horse Hitch Competition sanctioned by the North American Six Horse Hitch Classic Series.

### **Best photo & interview opportunity:**

July 3 – 5 (Saddledome)

July 6 – (Big Top Tent)

World Championship Six Horse Hitch, July 5 at 1 p.m. (Saddledome)

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### **For more information, please contact:**

Agriculture Media Office

Prior to July 2 via email [agmedia@calgarystampede.com](mailto:agmedia@calgarystampede.com)

After July 2 (403)232-9068

twitter.com/stampedeagmedia

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## 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary World Blacksmiths' competition

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Calgary – What does it take to put on a World Championship Blacksmith competition? After 30 years, the Calgary Stampede has the answer.

This year there will be 6 tonnes of coke (fuel made from coal) to fuel the forges, 1300 linear feet of steel bar stock and \$35,000 in prize money - and that is just the beginning.

“We have been hosting this event for 30 years and every year the show gets a little bigger and better,” says Blaine Virostek, Chair, Blacksmith Committee. “The first few Championships had 10-12 competitors and now, for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary World Championship Blacksmiths' Competition, we will see 72 competitors going for the title.”

For this landmark year, three previous world champions will be returning, attempting to regain the title of World Champion, as well as competitors representing 15 different countries. In what is considered one of the most prestigious events of its kind, the Calgary Stampede hosts a series of forging, horseshoeing and team events where competitors earn points to determine the Top Ten Finalists. The competition begins July 1 and the Top Ten finalists will compete head-to-head on Sunday, July 5 for the coveted title of 2009 World Champion Blacksmith.

The artistic side of forging is drawing the competitors as well and the number of entrants in the Metal Art Showcase has increased significantly in the last few years. Local artists and those from as far away as Australia send in their submissions for a shot at the prize money and to auction their pieces to the public.

The pieces entered into the competition include those created during the artistic forging classes that take place during the World Championship Blacksmiths' Competition. There is \$4000 in prize money to be won, followed by the Metal Art Auction which takes place on Saturday, July 4 at the BMO Centre and everyone is welcome. The pieces can be viewed from July 2 to 4 at the Western Art Showcase (Halls D/E - BMO Centre).

### **Best photo & interview opportunity:**

Round Robin competition, July 1 to 4 (Big Top Tent)

World Championship, Sunday, July 5 (Big Top Tent)

Metal Art Showcase and Auction, Saturday, July 4 (Palomino Room, BMO Centre)

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## Beef cattle on display for international customers

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Calgary – Since its inception, beef cattle have played a huge role in the Calgary Stampede. Multiple beef world congresses have been planned around the Stampede, with Albertans hosting producers from all over the world.

This year, the much-hyped World Angus Forum will be held here in Alberta, with international guests visiting Stampede for the most part – to view the beef cattle on display.

“With a huge event like the World Angus Forum taking place around Stampede time, it means beef producers will take advantage of having their cattle on display during the greatest outdoor show on earth,” said Wayne Hanson, Chair, Beef Cattle Showcase Committee. “We invite the media down, specifically in the last two days of Stampede to meet potential international buyers to hear what makes Alberta’s genetics so sought-after.”

After several years of border-closure issues for Canadian cattlemen, purebred breeders are now seeing huge interest in exports of genetics worldwide. Semen and embryo sales can mean a large financial boost for Alberta ranches, and having those genetics on display can advertise them to the larger international audience that wanders through the barns daily.

The 2009 Beef Cattle Showcase is a live animal display of beef cattle breeds located in the main agriculture barn for the full 10 days of Stampede and will be enhanced by informative displays about the breed and/or the production program. With 39 per cent of the Canadian beef herd in Alberta, this display gives producers a chance to promote and share with the public the significant value and impact the beef industry has on the well-being of this province.

### **Best photo & interview opportunity:**

July 3 - 12 (Agriculture Building)

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## Calgary Stampede hosts Canada's largest sheep showcase

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Calgary – The largest showcase of sheep in Canada, which includes the All Canada Sheep Classic, North American Sheep Shearing Challenge and the World Stock Dog Championship at the Calgary Stampede, provides a wonderful chance to see a growing part of the agricultural sector.

Activities kick off with the North American Sheep Shearing Challenge on July 3 and 4 with the finals on July 5. A new head-to-head format has shearers facing off two at a time trying to beat each other and the clock. Shearers come from around the world and the introduction of an intermediate division gives the up-and-coming champions a great opportunity to sharpen their skills.

The World Stock Dog Championship runs July 5 and 6 and highlights the partnership between a handler and their dog when moving sheep. Four minutes is all the time each team has to get their flock through a set obstacle course and into the pen. This event must be seen live – the excitement is contagious.

The All Canada Sheep Classic is a gathering place for more than 50 top breeders from across the country to showcase, exchange information and conduct business on world class sheep and genetics. From July 9 to 13 more than 325 sheep, representing ten different breeds will compete in the Classic including the market lamb class, fleece competition and the Calgary Stampede Katahdin Hair Sheep Show.

As well, the Classic will be presented by the Calgary Stampede in conjunction with the Alberta and Canadian Sheep Breeders Associations.

### **Best photo & interview opportunity:**

North American Sheep Shearing, July 3, 4 and 5 (Victoria Pavilion, Agriculture Building)  
World Stock Dog Championships, July 5 and 6 (Saddledome)  
All Canada Sheep Classic, July 9-13 (Victoria Pavilion, Agriculture Building)

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## Prestigious cutting event comes to Calgary

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Calgary – The Calgary Stampede Cutting Horse Competition, July 7 – July 9 is one of only four participating events in the inaugural year of the prestigious 6666 Ranch World Series of Cutting of the National Cutting Horse Association.

The Stampede Cutting Horse Competition is the second of four premiere events across North America that will lead to the newly reformatted World Finals held in Fort Worth, Texas this December. With added prize money of \$50,000 at each competition, the sport's top riders and leading horses – some of them coming out from retirement – will be on the road, vying for a berth in the Finals. The 6666 World Series made its first stop at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo in early March and will travel to the Columbus, Ohio for the All American Quarter Congress in October and the American Royal in Kansas City, Missouri, in November.

"We are so thrilled to align the 6666 Ranch World Series with our event," says Christine Sowiak, Chair, Western Performance Horse Committee, which puts on the Stampede cutting horse, team cattle penning and working cow horse events. "The 6666 Ranch World Series is a unique concept in the fact that it gives the sport's seasoned equine performers an opportunity to return to the spotlight."

Entries at Calgary increased approximately 40 per cent last year, when the Stampede increased its added money from \$10,000 to \$50,000 in anticipation of the 6666 Ranch World Series of Cutting in 2009.

The Cutting Horse Competition has been a part of Calgary Stampede since 1973, when AQHA Hall of Famer Bill Collins first introduced cutting to the Stampede. The Cutting Horse Competition features three divisions; Open, Non Pro and Youth. As one of the participating events in the NCHA / 6666 Ranch World Series of Cutting, both the Open and Non Pro classes will have \$25,000 added money, while in the Youth division the Bill Collins Youth Excellence Award will be presented to the top competitor.

**Best photo & interview opportunity:**

July 7 – 9 (Big Top Tent)

July 5 & 6 (Okotoks Agriculture Society – Preliminary Round)

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## Calgary Stampede kids' steer class offers up big bucks

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Calgary – Steer shows across Canada and now at the Calgary Stampede, offer the opportunity for youth to compete against the “big boys” of the cattle world.

The United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) Steer Classic returns for more than 25 consecutive years. The Grand Champion steer is awarded \$10,000 in prize money. This year, there will be a Junior Class at the UFA Steer Classic. Youth, aged from nine to 20 years old, will compete in their class to be one of two competitors advancing to the Grand Champion Class.

“The cattle industry has always been about family,” said Roger Davis, Chair, Steer Classic Committee. “Many kids own their own steers and are able to hold their own against the adults in the show ring. This gives them their own class, with their own prize money. They then have the chance to compete for the \$10,000 top prize.”

The show is an event where all aspects of the beef industry can promote and compete in everything from the merits of purebred genetics and the current trends in carcass and consumer demands. The NUFLO Market Heifer show brought to you by Intervet Schering Plough is an added class. Masterfeeds and Dun Rite Stock and Stables are sponsors of the new Junior Class.

**Best photo & interview opportunity:**  
Saturday, July 11 at 2:30 p.m. (Big Top Tent)

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## Up close and personal at the Dundee Wealth Heavy Horse Pull Auction

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Calgary – Calgarians are used to hearing about the investment by community partners for the chuckwagon tarps each year at the Calgary Stampede, but there's another great event that gives individuals and corporations alike the opportunity to promote themselves and enjoy some top-notch agricultural entertainment.

The Dundee Wealth Heavy Horse Pull Advertisers' Auction is a lively and intimate affair where heavy horse teams and their pullers are sold off in front of a live audience.

"Last year we paid out more than \$70,000, making us the richest pull in the world," says Dale Befus, Chair, Heavy Horse Pull Committee. "We attract teams from across North America who come to Calgary for the chance at winning the biggest title in the pulling world."

Sponsors love this event because it provides an affordable branding opportunity and gives them a unique venue for entertaining clients. Successful bidders get barn tours, passes to watch their teams during competition from a private VIP section, signage on the horses themselves during competition, stall signage in the barns and an exclusive party in the Pavilion alongside the horses after the main event.

### Competition Dates & Times:

Horse Pull - Light Weights, Friday, July 10 at 7 p.m. (Big Top Tent)

Horse Pull - Middle Weights, Saturday, July 11 at 7 p.m. (Big Top Tent)

Horse Pull - Heavy Weights, Sunday, July 12 at 7 p.m. (Big Top Tent)

### Best photo & interview opportunity:

Auction, Thursday, July 9 at 7 p.m. in the Victoria Pavilion

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## Talented youth compete for scholarship money

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Calgary – The Calgary Stampede International Youth Livestock Show will return in 2009 with scholarships, cash and prizes for its competitors.

“This year we have maintained our intermediate scholarships in an effort to ensure that not only the most experienced senior competitors win big, but also our passionate intermediate competitors,” said Tracy Lundago, Chair, International Youth Livestock Committee.

Each year, the International Youth Livestock Show brings together competitors to test their showmanship, judging, herdsman and marketing knowledge through a series of tasks in hopes of winning scholarships. Contestants ages 9-20 can participate in several different livestock categories including, beef, dairy, heavy horse or sheep with over \$25 000 in scholarships available.

“All of our competitors are examples of youth ready to show off their skills at one of the most exciting annual competitions. Many of our competitors make lasting friendships in addition to future industry contacts which have led to significant career opportunities,” adds Lundago.

### **International Youth Livestock Show Dates:**

Monday July 6 and Thursday, July 9 –Sunday, July 12

### **Best photo & interview opportunity:**

Youth Livestock Multi-Judging Competition, Thursday, July 9 at 1 p.m. (Big Top Tent)

Youth Livestock Awards Presentation, Saturday, July 12 at noon (Northern Lights Showring, Agriculture Building)

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## Animals, plants, bugs and technology

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Calgary – The area could hold one and a half football fields, but instead of football you will find some other rough and tough Albertans – Alberta farmers! This year visit Agrium Ag-tivity in the City which showcases many examples of Alberta’s rich agriculture industry. Exhibits include images from the past, to our strong global presence on the world stage, to exploring what lays ahead for our 21<sup>st</sup> century farmer. It is where city meets rural to discover ‘Hands on Agriculture’.

“Children, youth, parents and seniors alike will find something exciting and intriguing this year. We have many interactive displays, a heritage cabin and more than 10 live animal demonstrations daily,” says Maureen Marston, Chair, Ag-tivity in the City Committee.

Marston invites you to challenge your skills through virtual farming and see how well you can grow a present-day crop. You can listen to bugs, participate in the farming challenge and discover how food evolves. Visit a working commercial greenhouse display, explore a portable bio-diesel lab and see how bio-diesel is produced from tiny black seeds, and of course there are animals; lots of live animals for you to get up close and personal with.

“If you want even more excitement, check out the racing pigeons,” says Marston. “They can fly up to 100 kilometres per hour, have built in GPS and weigh about a pound!” You can watch these incredible athletes race into their coop daily.

“We hope to continue to provide unique learning opportunities for children and adults so they know exactly where their food comes from and to continue to support all the agriculture industries that have shaped Alberta,” she adds.

### **Best photo & interview opportunity:**

July 3-12 (Agrium Ag-tivity in the City is just outside the main Agriculture Building)

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## **Ag bites 1 of 3**

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### **You say tomato, I say tomato**

What do cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers and lettuce all have in common? They are all grown right here in Alberta! Alberta has over 290 acres of greenhouses.

For more info about the Alberta greenhouse industry, visit the working tomato greenhouse that will be on display in Agrium Ag-tivity in the City Area. See how the commercial tomato industry works to provide delicious, nutritious produce for our families!

### **Best photo & interview opportunity**

July 3-12 (Agrium Ag-tivity in the City – outside of the Agriculture Building)

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### **Canada's Biggest Horse**

The Heavy Horse Pull will be showcasing a "family" of Belgian draft horses, one of which may very well be the biggest horse in Canada. Meet the massive 4 year old, his 3 year old brother, his mother and her new colt. The 4 year old is already over 2700lbs and still has another 3 years to grow!

### **Best interview and photo opportunity:**

July 10 - 12 (Heavy Horse Barn)

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### **Vintage Tractor Pull and Show & Shine- A fan favourite**

Don't miss this popular invitational event showcasing immaculately restored tractors from the 1960's and earlier. Six different weight classes and a high-tech weight machine separate the best from the rest. Saturday evening features a "Tractor Show & Shine"; the audience can step into the show arena, check out the tractors and talk to the owners that brought life back to these vintage machines. Metal versus muscle will take place on both Saturday and Sunday; a Heavy Horse Pull team will compete against a Vintage Tractor; who has more horse power now?

### **Best interview and photo opportunity:**

Vintage Tractor Pull, Saturday, July 4 at 5:00 p.m. (Big Top Tent)

Vintage Tractor Pull, Sunday, July 5 at 3:30 p.m. (Big Top Tent)

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## Ag bites 2 of 3

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### **Miniature Donkeys make the grade**

Have you ever met a Miniature Donkey? These little Jennets and Jacks have a ton of personality and their easy-going, gentle nature makes them great pets. Top breeders in the industry will be on hand to answer questions while you get to know their four-legged companions. The Miniature Donkey Showcase is located in the Agriculture Barns; demonstrations will take place in the Northern Lights Arena.

#### **Best interview and photo opportunity:**

July 3 – 5 (Agriculture Building)

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### **International Room welcomes the World**

Located on the 2nd Floor of the centrally located Agriculture Building on Stampede Park, the International Room provides a relaxing and hospitable environment in which international visitors can enjoy some western hospitality and learn about Alberta's diverse agricultural economy. The room is open 11 am to 7 pm daily.

#### **Best interview and photo opportunity:**

July 3 – 12 (upstairs in the Agriculture Building)

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## Ag Bites 3 of 3

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### **New additions to the Light Horse family**

Horse Haven is the place to see horses of many colours at the Calgary Stampede. This year the tradition continues, with two new additions.

Three spotted mules, the offspring of a white Appaloosa mare and a mammoth jack, will be joining the group at Horse Haven this year. Walter, Wally and Waldo are brothers with many talents. At 16 hands high, they can be ridden under saddle, driven and are great for packing. They will also be demonstrating their team sheep herding skills in the Big Top.

Thoroughbreds make a return to Horse Haven this year. The sleek athletes are an important part of the equine showcase. These are the horses you will see racing or pulling the chuckwagons during the Rangeland Derby. Here is an opportunity to get up-close and personal with this incredible breed.

### **Best photo & interview opportunity:**

July 3 to 12 (Northeast end of Agriculture Building)

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### **International Auctioneer Championship**

The International Livestock Auctioneer Championship will once again be a must see at this year's Calgary Stampede. The preliminary round will be Friday, July 10 at noon at the Olds Auction Mart. The finals will take place in the Big Top Tent at the Calgary Stampede on Saturday, July 11 at 11:00 a.m. Come out and watch these world class competitors and get the opportunity to purchase livestock or a variety of other items.

### **Best photo & interview opportunity:**

Saturday, July 11 at 11:00 a.m. (Big Top Tent)

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