



Texas State Fair gets bigger

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Texas boasts of just about every superlative there is — that's not news. So telling you that The State Fair of Texas is one of the largest in the country isn't news either.

This is an old story that began 98 years ago on an 80 acre track in Dallas, Texas. It's an important story of agriculture, creative arts, big business and technology. A tale of the coming-together of cultures to make this state.

Today, the fair covers 277 acres and includes permanent buildings where there used to be tents and a Coliseum where there was a corral. The fair has weathered storms, debt, war and other turn of the century

disasters like fire. The fair's popularity among the natives and the visitors to Texas brings them back while the fair keeps getting bigger.

Originally, the fair was owned privately by a group of Dallas businessmen who reached into their own pockets to keep the venture alive. After twenty years of spending more than they were taking in, the directors needed an alternative. In 1904, the City of Dallas bought the fair site from the businessmen for \$125,000. Named Fair Park, the new city park is managed by the State Fair of Texas year round and is turned over in October to the fair association for the actual fair.

In 1905, the Centennial Build-

ing was built to house the main displays at the fair. World War I began and in 1918 the park was closed as a fair facility and was transformed into an air force camp.

After reopening, other additions to the park were the Music Hall in 1925 and the Cotton Bowl in 1930-31.

A special event for Texas' hundredth birthday in 1936 was planned for Fair Park. The regular fair was cancelled in 1935 for the special construction to house the the six month exposition.

An \$18 million bond issue is currently up for a vote to refurbish the fair grounds to prepare for the Texas Sesquicentennial. That exposition will

open September 5 through October 26.

This year at the fair, there are many of the same features that keep Texans coming back.

Food: At every corner and around every turn, a different kind of mouth-watering food tempts the passerby. At the Food and Fiber Pavilion sponsored by the Texas Department of Agriculture, the object is to sample the foods grown in Texas and learn about them too. Examples of foods that originated here are: nachos, Dr. Pepper, fajitas, Fritos, canned chili and of course, Ruby Red Grapefruit.

Fauna: The rabbit show takes place this weekend in the poul-

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