

# COMMON GROUND COUNTRY FAIR



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**SENSORY-FRIENDLY FAIR GUIDE**

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# WELCOME!

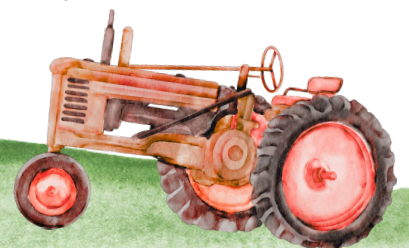
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The Common Ground Country Fair is committed to building sensory-aware, inclusive spaces. We know that big, bustling events can sometimes feel overwhelming. This guide is here to help Fairgoers navigate the day with more ease and comfort.

So you can plan your visit with more confidence, we've developed a color-coded Sensory Map that highlights areas of the Fair by stimulation level: high-stimulation zones, low-stimulation zones, and essential services. The Quiet Time Tents are labeled in purple. We welcome folks to use these areas as needed — to rest, regulate, journal, or just catch their breath. In future years, we hope to expand and deepen these spaces with input from the community.

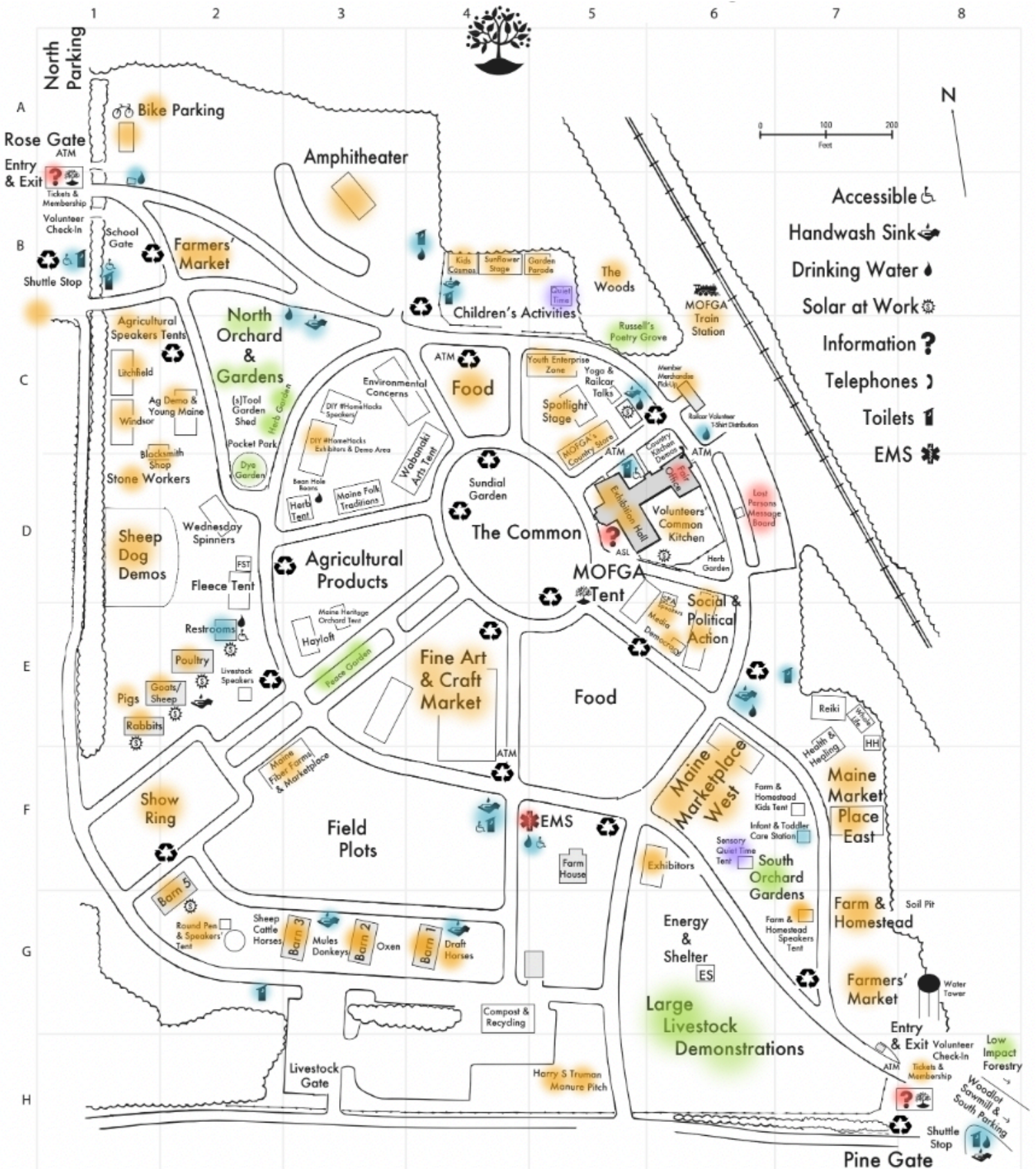
Statement of inclusion — MOFGA strives to promote organic food and a sustainable farming community that is inclusive of all people that validates diverse identities including race, class, ethnicity, tribal affiliation, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or beliefs. We urge all exhibitors and presenters to consider their participation through the lens of race, equity, social justice, and supportive local food systems. We expect all attendees to be courteous, respectful and to refrain from inappropriate language, humor, gestures, or statements that discriminate against any individual or group.

Please note: We have formatted this document intentionally with bionic typing to be more inclusive to all members of the community.





# SENSORY FRIENDLY FAIR MAP





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# QUIET TIME TENTS

## A SIMPLE SPACE TO PAUSE

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**QUIET TIME TENT**  
LOCATED F6 ON MAP

While there is no formal setup or programming inside, their purpose is to provide a supportive space to rest, regulate, or take a break.

The tent is sidewalled with a small amount of seating. Families are encouraged to bring their own sensory supports. We welcome suggestions for next years tents as we grow this space.



This year, the **Quiet Time** tents are intentionally simple.

Due to the nature of the Fair, there is no way to make the **Quiet Time Tents** completely silent, but they do offer shade, a soft place to land, and a moment of calm away from the activity of the fairgrounds.



**CHILDREN'S AREA**  
**QUIET TIME TENT**  
LOCATED B5 ON MAP

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## COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

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- Please don't leave a mess behind.
- Avoid strong smells (food, perfume, etc.).
- Respect others' space and needs.
- Keep voices low and kind.
- Use gentle hands and bodies.
- Electronics on silent or with headphones.
- Ask before taking photos or videos.
- Take turns with shared items.

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# GENERAL ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

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The Common Ground Country Fair is located on 250-plus acres of fields, woods, and hills in rural Maine. Most of the Fair exhibits and activities take place within a 40-acre parcel around the main building. While we make efforts to accommodate fairgoers with mobility challenges, we want people to recognize that there are parts of the property that may be difficult to access for individuals in wheelchairs or who are dependent on canes or walkers. People with such challenges find it helpful to come with assistants who can help them get around.

## Grounds and Walkways

The fairgrounds are expansive. Getting from point A to point B can take some time, especially when there are lots of people walking along with you. It's a good idea to look at the fairgrounds map when planning your schedule for the day. There is a paved ring road that encircles the Common, the Exhibition Hall, and several of the main vendor/exhibitor areas of the Fair. This road has a smooth surface and provides access, or at least a vantage point, to most areas of the Fair. This is the only paved surface on the grounds. The majority of the grounds consists of either turf or dirt walkways, which we attempt to keep free of rocks and divots.

## Restrooms

There are accessible facilities in the bathrooms in the main building, next to the Exhibition Hall, and in the restrooms on the west side of the fairgrounds near the Poultry Barn. We also have accessible port-a-potties in several locations around the grounds. See the map in the fairbook for specific locations.

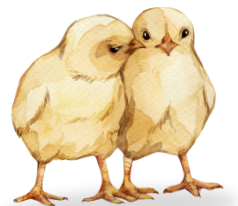
## Service Animals

Dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability are welcome on the fairgrounds.

## Free Admission

MOFGA provides free admission to the Fair for individuals with disabilities, as well as free admission for one accompanying aide per person. We do not require documentation of disability — your self-identification is honored and sufficient.

*Please note, we do not have carts or wheelchairs available for individual fairgoers.*



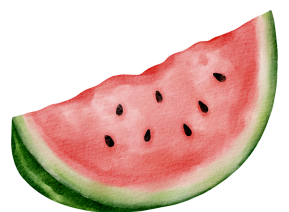


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# TIPS FOR A SENSORY-FRIENDLY FAIR DAY

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- ♥ Visit later in the day, especially on Friday and Sunday.  
Crowds are often smaller and energy is calmer in the afternoon.
- ♥ Use the Quiet Time Tent.  
It's a simple, open space to rest, regulate, or step away from stimulation.
- ♥ Take breaks before you need them.  
Plan moments to pause and reset, even if everyone feels okay in the moment.
- ♥ Use your sensory-friendly map.  
It can help you choose routes, avoid loud areas, and plan where to rest.
- ♥ Pick a home base.  
Choose a central spot your group can return to if separated or overstimulated.
- ♥ Snap a photo of your entry point.  
Take pictures of the gate you entered, parking spot, or campsite for easy reference.
- ♥ Bring comfort items.  
Noise-reducing headphones, sunglasses, fidgets, gum, essential oils, quiet music, or favorite snacks can help regulate the senses and reduce sensory load.
- ♥ Go at your own pace.  
There's no pressure to do everything. Rest when needed and follow the rhythm that works for you.
- ♥ Create a signal for breaks.  
A hand sign or simple phrase like "time out" can help anyone in your group communicate when they need a pause.
- ♥ Check the schedule ahead of time.  
Knowing when louder events or performances happen can help you plan around them.
- ♥ Plan your food + hydration.  
Look at food options in advance or pack familiar snacks that feel safe and nourishing. There are water stations throughout the fair. See Sensory Map.
- ♥ Support transitions.  
Whether arriving or leaving, give gentle cues so everyone has time to shift smoothly.



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# SEPARATION SAFETY TIPS

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If you or someone in your group gets separated, do not panic.

- ♥ Find someone in a black “**planning team**” shirt immediately.
- ♥ Planning team members will call safety, who are trained to help reunite lost people.
- ♥ Try to stay calm so that you can communicate with safety effectively.
- ♥ Some helpful information to share with safety will be what the lost member is wearing, what their name is, and where the last place you saw them was.
- ♥ It is also helpful to stay as close to where you were at when you noticed there was a member of your party missing.  
It is easier for safety to help when you stay in one place.





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# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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**Question: My child needs a break — what should I do?**

**Answer: Head to the nearest Quiet Time Tent (see map). You're welcome to stay as long as needed. Additionally, you could find a Common Ground Fair planning team member, wearing a black Common Ground Country Fair T-shirt.**

**Question: Can we bring our own sensory tools or snacks?**

**Answer: Yes! Comfort items, headphones, sunglasses, and small snacks are encouraged.**

**Question: Are there vendors or areas that are especially loud or crowded?**

**Answer: Yes — these areas are marked in orange on the map. They may include livestock areas, music stages, or dense vendor clusters.**

**Question: Who can I talk to if I need help or accommodations?**

**Answer: Find a Common Ground Fair planning team member, wearing a black Common Ground Country Fair T-shirt. Visit one of the two Quiet Time tents (B5 & F6) — see sensory-friendly map.**

**Question: What if I am experiencing an emergency?**

**Answer: If it's a medical emergency, see the EMS team located next to the Farm House (Red Star).**

**Question: Are there places we should avoid if sensitive to noise?**

**Answer: Yes — livestock barns, performance stages, and some vendor areas are louder or crowded.**

**Question: What is the best time to come to the Fair for lowest sensory impact?**

**Answer: While this is somewhat weather-dependent, generally, later in the day tends to be quieter, especially after lunch as some visitors begin to head out.**

- **Friday mornings are popular with school groups, who receive free admission from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., so expect more children during that window.**
- **Saturday is typically the busiest day of the Fair.**
- **Sunday has a similar feel to Friday, with a bit more space and ease later in the day.**



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# GENERAL FAIR GUIDELINES

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The following **guidelines** apply to all people attending the Fair in any capacity.

**Pets are not permitted on the fairgrounds or in the Fair parking areas. Animals tied to trees or cars, or left within vehicles (whether locked or not), may be removed by the local animal control officer**

**No smoking on the fairgrounds, except for the designated smoking area across from the Fair office.**

**Fair participants may not build fires without written permission from the Fair office.**

**The Fair follows Maine laws regarding public drinking of alcohol and use of controlled substances on the fairgrounds and in the Fair parking lots.**

**Unauthorized possession of firearms, weapons or explosives is not allowed on the fairgrounds.**

**Audio and video devices audible to the general public are prohibited on the fairgrounds unless they are part of a Fair-approved demonstration.**

**Do not feed livestock or other display animals unless tending to your own animals.**

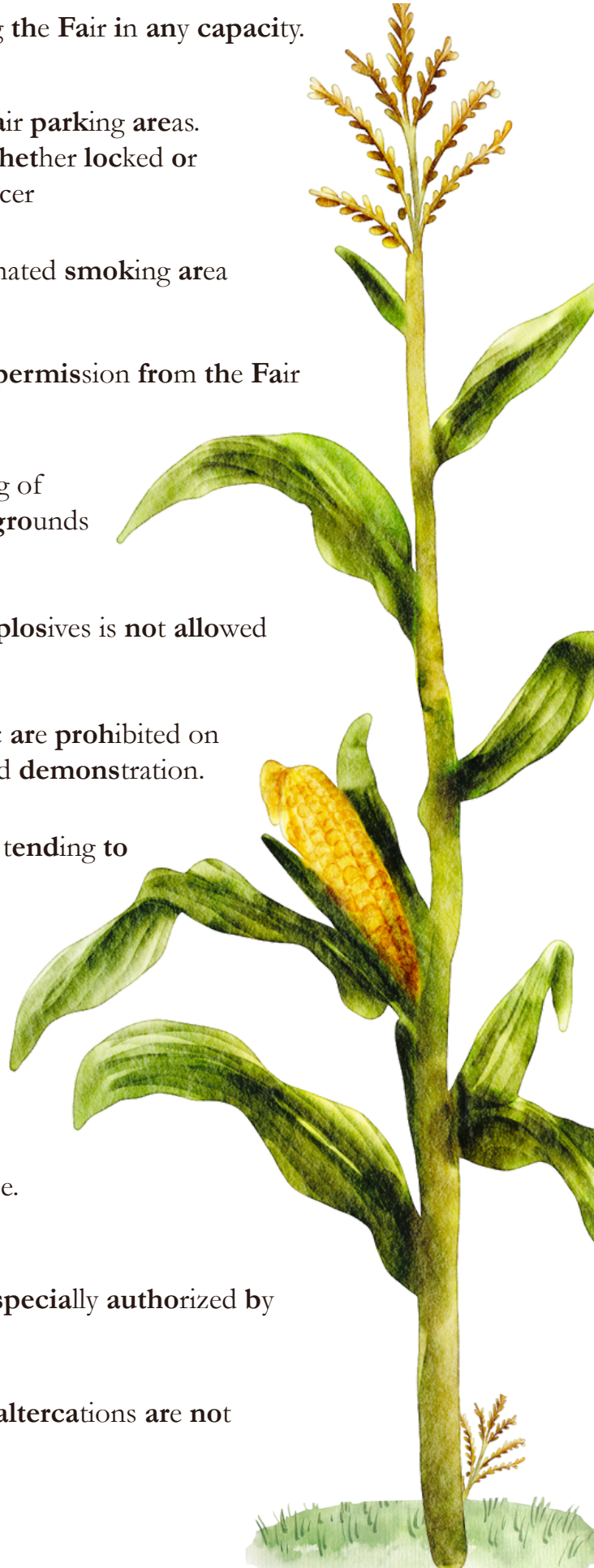
**Skateboards, bicycles, or other unauthorized wheeled vehicles are prohibited on the fairgrounds.**

**The Fair office assumes no liability for damage to or loss of personal property.**

**All demonstrations must be approved by the Fair office. Busking is not allowed.**

**Kites are not allowed. Drones are not allowed unless specially authorized by the Fair office in writing.**

**Harassment (verbal, physical, or sexual) and physical altercations are not allowed.**





# SUGGESTION BOX

## Help Us Make the Fair More Sensory-Inclusive

We're working to make the **Common Ground Country Fair** more welcoming and supportive for people with sensory needs — but we **can't** do it **without** your input. If you used the Quiet Time Tent or color-coded sensory map, or simply have ideas about how to make the Fair more accessible and comfortable, we'd love to hear from you.

There are two easy ways to share your feedback:

1

Fill out our short feedback survey.

The survey takes just a few minutes and helps guide future improvements.

Take the survey here: [LINKED HERE](#) or use QR code



2

Leave a note in the Suggestion Box inside the Quiet Time Tent.

We know the Quiet Time Tent is fairly minimal right now, and we're committed to growing it with care. If you think of things that could be helpful, or could be improved, jot it down. What would make this space feel safer, calmer, or more supportive for you or your family?

Your voice helps shape a more inclusive experience for future fairgoers.

Thank you for being part of this effort.

[Take the survey here.](#)

