



Iowa State Fair Authority Update – Livestock Barn Renovation Project February 5, 2026

Originally estimated to be a \$25 million project in 2021, the livestock barn renovation project – like all projects with the Fair since the Fairgrounds opened in 1886 – has been a true partnership: \$12 million from a General Assembly appropriation in 2022, \$13 million from the Blue Ribbon Foundation and now projected to be \$15 million from the Fair Authority to fully complete the project.

The \$12 million appropriation was exhausted in the fourth quarter of 2025.

Sheep Barn – the two-year, \$6.2 million renovation was completed in the fall of 2024 and included the following work:

- Restoration of brick and terracotta masonry
- Remodeled office spaces
- Installation of new underground storm sewer on the north, west, and east sides
- New roofing on lower-level areas including wood sheathing repair and replacement
- Remodeled existing restrooms and brand-new restrooms to meet current accessibility standards
- Repainting of the entire interior of the building
- New sun-shading for the show arena
- New show ring and portable pens

Horse Barn – Phase I of the project was completed prior to the 2025 Fair. Phase II began immediately following the 2025 Fair and will be completed in time for the 2026 Fair. The two-year, \$13.1 million renovation project includes the following:

- Masonry, sheet metal, and roofing restoration
- Exterior and interior painting
- Repair and replacement of exterior doors and windows
- New concrete floor with radiant heat
- New relocated offices on the west end

- Remodeled existing restrooms and brand-new restrooms to meet current accessibility standards
- Relocated covered outdoor wash rack and new interior wash rack area
- New portable stalls
- Enhanced ventilation
- New electrical service and lighting
- New fire suppression system

In August of 2025, the Iowa State Fair Board approved a \$1.5 million bid for Phase I of the Cattle and Swine Barn project.

Cattle Barn – While the complete scope and details of the renovation are still being determined, Phase I of the project began immediately following the 2025 Fair and will be completed in time for the 2026 Fair.

- Phase I is the construction of a new electrical distribution building on the north side of the Cattle Barn that will include space for new electrical equipment, electrical storage, and maintenance storage.

Swine Barn – While the complete scope and details of the renovation are still being determined, Phase I of the project began immediately following the 2025 Fair and will be completed in time for the 2026 Fair.

- Phase I involves the remodeling of the west office, remodeling of the west women's restroom to meet current accessibility standards, and the construction of new restrooms on the east end of the Barn (men's women's, and family).
- The remainder of the Swine Barn project will be bid this spring with bid approval set for early summer. Work on Phase II will commence immediately following the 2026 Fair.