

**71ST ANNUAL**

**RIO GRANDE VALLEY  
LIVESTOCK SHOW**

**MERCEDES, TX**

**EDUCATION & LEADERSHIP  
FOR THE FUTURE**

**MARCH 12 - 21, 2010**



**Sponsor  
Opportunities**

Educating Youth and Promoting Agriculture  
A 501 (c) 3 Non-Profit Organization

## Purpose of the Show

The purpose of this Organization, as set forth in its bylaws, is primarily for the education of young people in Texas, particularly in the lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, in the care, grooming, management, showing and marketing of livestock, to cooperate with the various organizations otherwise training youth, to give youth an incentive to work harder in their training, to give them an outlet for the demonstration of the work they have done in the handling of livestock and in the growing of farm products, and to maintain public affairs and exhibits in connection with such educational programs.



## Scope of the Show

The Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show reflects the lifestyles and interests of residents of South Texas and Northern Mexico. It is one of the largest events held south of San Antonio attracting over 200,000 people annually. More than 1,000 volunteers put on the Show each year. Approximately 3,000 exhibitors participate.

Since its inception in 1940, the Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show has always had youth education in livestock activities as its primary focus. In more recent years, the development of scholarship programs have provided deserving 4-H and FFA Exhibitors from all over Texas with scholarships to Texas colleges and universities. Eighty-eight scholarships were awarded during the March 2009 Show with a total value of \$82,250.00.

The Livestock Show is a showplace for families to work together, learn together and have fun together. Attractions include nonstop entertainment, a huge parade, rodeos, a fun filled carnival, outstanding livestock exhibit, new and old farm machinery exhibits and over 250 commercial exhibits and food booths.

Main sources of revenue are gate and carnival receipts, rental fees for concessions and commercial exhibits and sponsorships. The Livestock Show is a 501 (C) 3 non- profit organizations, therefore donations receive the fullest possible tax benefits.



## **HISTORY OF THE SHOW**

**In 1939, the Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show and Agricultural Exposition, the forerunner of today's Show, was organized as a project of the Mercedes Chamber of Commerce. The first Show was held in 1940 on the grounds of a local livestock sales yard with make shift pens and lean-to sheds. The Show continued to be held on this same property until 1949 when it moved to its present location at 1000 North Texas in Mercedes.**

**In 1947, the Show was incorporated and chartered as a non-profit educational organization with a Board of Directors representing all of the four southmost counties of Texas.**

**Up until 1955, all livestock was shown primarily in tents. By 1979 all exhibits which were once housed in some 12 tents were in permanent building located on slightly over 100 acres.**

**In 2005, the Coliseum and Hog Barn were demolished and a Multi Purpose Event Center was built with the help of grant monies received from the U. S. Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration.**

**Volunteers from all walks of life - bankers, lawyers, accountants, farmers, ranchers, etc., and a dedicated Board of Directors, give endless hours of their time to make the Show a success. Without them it would be impossible to produce the Show as the cost would be excessive.**

**It is estimated over 26 million dollars have been paid to FFA and 4-H exhibitors during the 71 years the Show has been in existence.**

**The Show has continued to grow each year and now ranks as one of the top ten in the State. People from all over Texas eagerly anticipate the event and come to enjoy the many activities including a parade, rodeos, competitive livestock events and the many, many attractions which are scheduled daily.**