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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COWBOYS AND COWGIRLS TO GATHER IN FT. PIERRE FOR ONE OF THE LARGEST YOUTH RODEOS IN THE COUNTRY

FT. PIERRE, SD - A 48-year tradition rides on Aug. 15-18 as the South Dakota 4-H Finals Rodeo brings together some of the most accomplished young cowboys and cowgirls from across the state to compete for top honors at the Stanley County Fairgrounds in Ft. Pierre.

“We’re thrilled to welcome the contestants, their families, and the many who support them to the 48th Annual South Dakota 4-H Finals Rodeo,” said Kasey Hanson, president, SD 4-H Finals Committee. “These exceptional rodeo athletes have worked extremely hard for this opportunity.”

More than 1,300 youth compete in 4-H rodeos throughout the state. Those contestants compete at 35 regional rodeos, where the top 4 competitors in each event earn a coveted spot at the Finals Rodeo to compete for one of 26 event saddles, over 78 buckles, scholarships and numerous other awards. The annual event is one of the largest youth rodeos in the country, with more than 550 contestants ages 8-19 expected to participate this year.

The chute first opened on the SD 4-H Finals in 1971 as a way to gather the best of South Dakota’s 4-H rodeo athletes together to give them the chance to compete against each other. It’s since grown into a three-day event bringing an estimated \$1.4M each year to the Pierre/Ft. Pierre economy. This event is 100% made possible from outside donations and unlike other 4H events, receives no state funding. The Finals committee is already working on the planning of the 50th SD 4H Finals Rodeo in 2021.

“The entire experience affords our youth the chance to excel at our state sport of rodeo, and also really helps them develop an appreciation of our western heritage and lifestyle,” Hanson said. “Likewise, it’s a perfect time for people who just want to come see what rodeo is all about. We invite everyone to come and cheer on these great competitors.”

Festivities kick off on Thursday, Aug. 15 with the Ambassador Horsemanship Competition at 6 p.m. and the first Rodeo performance Fri., Aug. 16 at 5 p.m. Sat., Aug. 18 features rodeo performances at 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., with the Special Needs Rodeo at 2 p.m. and Ambassador Crowning at 4. Cowboy Church at 8 a.m. opens events Sunday, followed by the final rodeo performance. You can find a full schedule of events at sd4hrodeo.org.

A few facts:

South Dakota operates one of just two successful 4-H rodeo programs in the country. This is only possible due to the generous donation of time and talent from hundreds of volunteers at the local, regional and state level. The 4-H Finals Committee would also like to thank the many sponsors who make it possible for us to provide saddles and numerous prizes for the contestants.