



## CNE Organizers Anticipate Labour Day Weekend Attendance Will Soar Sky High

### Early attendance figures indicate 2023 will match or exceed last year's near record-breaking attendance of 1.56 million

The long weekend forecast is looking bright and sunny, much like the attendance estimates for the 2023 Canadian National Exhibition which have been tracking close to the same figures as last year heading into the final long weekend. Last year, final attendance totalled 1.56 million, which was one of the highest in the past seven years, propelled by the post-pandemic excitement after a historic two-year closure of Canada's largest Fair.

This year, the CNE returned to positive financial stability, and organizers are optimistic that attendance will remain close to, or exceed, 1.5 million with the culmination of massive crowds flocking for the Canadian International Air Show, and the popularity of marquee attractions including the 150ft Superwheel and Fountain Show. Returning staples proved more popular than ever such as the Gaming Garage sponsored by Intel, CNE Drone Show presented by Vinfast, Celebrity Kitchen Stage, and the Ice Skating & Acrobatics Show with Elvis Stojko that packed the stands daily inside Cola-Cola Coliseum. Coupled with renowned artists on the Bandshell Stage including Dionne Warwick; and the internationally acclaimed exhibition, *The Pink Floyd Exhibition: Their Mortal Remains*, which is extended until October 1, this year's balance of new and nostalgia proved to be a winning formula.

"Even if we get close to last year's attendance, it would be more impressive to achieve those numbers without the pent-up demand from the pandemic that fuelled the near record crowds last year. It's a testament that the CNE is one of the most beloved and successful annual events in the City of Toronto, not by luck or circumstance, but by the fact that we reflect our diverse cultures, honour our heritage, and embrace the future," said Darrell Brown, CNE CEO. "Our long-term strategy is to build from the success of our 18-day Fair to offer programming and opportunities for the community throughout the year."

There are 110 vendors in the Food Building, more than 100 concessions and games in the Midway, and over 700 indoor and outdoor retail vendors who rely on the CNE as a significant contributor of their sales and revenue. A recent study indicates that the CNE generates an economic impact of approximately **\$112 million** for the Greater Toronto Area and **\$142 million** for the province of Ontario each year (when in operation).

#### **Final Weekend Highlights:**

- 74<sup>th</sup> Canadian International Air Show featuring Canadian Snowbirds and the US Navy Blue Angels, (Sept. 2-4, 12pm – 3:30pm)
- CNE Bandshell Stage: The Sheepdogs (Sept. 1), Classic Albums Live performs *Pink Floyd - Dark Side of the Moon* (Sept. 2), Brett Kissel (Sept. 3), no concert on Labour Day
- CNE's Rising Star Competition Finals (Sept. 3)
- Ice Skating & Acrobatics Show with Elvis Stojko (through to Sept. 4, 2pm and 5pm)
- Food Truck Frenzy & Craft Beer Festival, (through to Sept. 4)

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