

# Jackson County Fair and Exposition Center: An Economic Analysis

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Source: Jim Teece

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## **Acknowledgments**

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“There is a candle in the window. As much as ever we need safe and festive ground where we can publicly communicate our own individuality and safely scrutinize each other’s qualities as well as inherent differences in peaceful gatherings. Local communities need an opportunity to showcase themselves to each other and to see evidence of how their individual experiences add to their whole community’s identity and character. In other words we need fairs.”

—Sharon Jensen, in *Agricultural Fairs in America: Tradition, Education, Celebration*.

## **Executive Summary**

The Jackson County Fair and Exposition Center is one of the five largest in Oregon in terms of attendance, events and facilities. The Fair and Expo’s estimated economic contributions include;

- 1) Using Jackson County facilities and a \$2.2 million operating budget to contribute a projected \$15.6 million in sales of which \$9.7 million was income that stayed in the County and 988 jobs to the Jackson County economy.
- 2) The \$9.7 million dollar annual projected economic income effect is comprised of approximately \$2.3 million from basic programs/operations, \$1.3 million of import substitution or dollars that Fair and Expo events and facilities prevent from leaking out of Jackson County and \$6.1 million in visitor spending that the Fair and Expo attracts to the County.
- 3) Parts of the economic effects in the operating budget are developed through media trades with ten different stations and in addition the Fair & Expo receives sponsorship from twenty-one firms for a total of \$39,000.
- 4) Over 1,500 volunteers contributed 33,000 hours of time which increased the safety and efficiency of the Fair & Expo while making the events more affordable for attendees. Examples of those volunteer activities include teaching youth as they prepare for the events, coordinating activities for animal events – transport/clerking/ring stewardship/judging/weighing/food service, Mater Gardener Spring Fair organizing, accounting and cleaning-up after events.
- 5) Youth programs like 4-H and FFA provide positive experiences that may ultimately save thousands of dollars per youth by preventing them from becoming involved in negative experiences and entering the juvenile justice system.
- 6) Fair and Expo’s events and facilities contribute to the income of 97% of the County’s business sectors.

- 7) The more than 639 events and 266,746 attendees at the Fair and Expo are building social capital or developing networks and relationships that add to the efficiency and resilience of the Jackson County economy. In addition during 2012, 30% of the attendees were from more than 100 miles away who may not have otherwise learned about Jackson County nor had any basis for considering establishing a business or working in the County if they had not attended a Fair and Expo event.
- 8) Many of the year round events and particularly the Jackson County Fair emphasize and support the natural resource based businesses in the Jackson County economy. While those components are not as large as they were in the past, they are some of the most stable businesses in the economy. As the agriculture and foods sectors determine ways to build on the enthusiasm of the local foods movement, these sectors may have more potential for growth than many other sectors.
- 9) A number of business and government leaders visited with the author about the Fair and Expo and the Jackson County economy. The greatest focus of those discussions was looking to the future and how the Fair and Expo programs and facilities could contribute to educational programs that are applied and relevant to a quickly changing global economy.

## **Introduction**

A welcoming candle in the Jackson County's culture is a useful metaphor for the Jackson County Fair and Exposition Center. That has been true for county fairs across the nation since the 1800's. Public services that bind communities together create nontraditional market settings and provide very practical educational opportunities for a wide variety of businesses and people who are struggling to survive the economic doldrums that may persist for some time. As funding from federal and state governments has declined and property tax bases have grown more slowly, counties are making budget cuts that could not have been anticipated even a few years ago.

Most county fairs, Jackson County is no different, rely on county and state funds to support a portion of their programs. The level of funding is proportionately modest, yet the viability of county fairs often rests on that funding. Part of the services county fairs provide are public services, which means their benefits are often not withheld based on a person's ability to pay for the service (e.g. helping people understand natural resource industries with exhibits and competitions during the Fair, providing opportunities throughout the year for people to sell crafts or other goods and offering diverse groups a place to gather and build a stronger community).

The educational and social benefits of the Fair and Expo are difficult to measure yet can have a significant impact on the retention and recruitment of businesses and workers in the County. This analysis discusses, though does not attempt to quantify or resolve, the basic dilemma related to supporting the public service component of the Fair and Expo while at the same time being required to become self-sustaining. Yet, that conundrum is the “elephant in the room.”

This study had four primary objectives:

- 1) Profile the Jackson County economy.
- 2) Create an input-output economic model of the Jackson County economy and develop a template the Fair & Expo staff can readily update in the future.
- 3) Interview community leaders about the Fair and Expo’s contribution to their organizations both currently and how that contribution might be increased in the future
- 4) Estimate the economic impacts or effects of the Fair & Expo in the Jackson County economy.

The explanations for each objective are organized as subsections below. This report concludes with a summary or set of observations that suggest ways the Fair & Expo may further reinforce the Jackson County Economy.



### **Jackson County Economy**

Source: [oregon.gov](http://oregon.gov)

Over the last two decades, as Table 1 shows, the County’s economic structure has changed significantly as employment in the natural resource, manufacturing and retail sectors have declined in their relative shares or percentages of total employment and the professional services, health and social services, finance, insurance, real estate and the lifestyle (Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation) sectors have grown.

**Table 1. Unemployment and Percentage of Employment<sup>1,2</sup>**

	Jackson County		Oregon	
	1990	2013 (Medford MSA)	1990	2013
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	7.4%	10.7%	6.2%	8.2%
	1990	2006-10	1990	2006-10
<b>Percentage of Households with Self-Employment Income</b>	17.6%	16.7%	17.5%	14.2%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Mining	5.1%	2.7%	5.2%	3.4%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accomodation	1.8%	10.5%	1.3%	9.2%
Construction	6.2%	7.3%	5.6%	7.0%
Education, Health, Social Services	19.9%	21.1%	19.4%	20.9%
FIRE: Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	5.3%	8.2%	6.0%	9.3%
Information	N/A	2.2%	N/A	2.1%
Manufacturing	15.1%	8.8%	17.7%	11.8%
Other Services	5.6%	5.3%	6.7%	4.8%
Professional, Science, Management, Administration	4.4%	9.1%	4.6%	10.0%
Public Administration	3.8%	4.0%	4.1%	4.6%
Retail Trade	22.5%	16.3%	18.1%	12.3%
Transport and Utilities	6.0%	4.7%	6.5%	4.3%
Wholesale Trade	4.3%	2.6%	4.7%	3.2%

While the professional services and health and social service sectors are likely to remain stable or grow modestly as the baby boomers' needs for those services increase, the lifestyle sectors that rely on discretionary spending may experience additional stress as all age groups and at least 80% of income earners search for ways to manage real incomes that are not growing and may continue to decline.

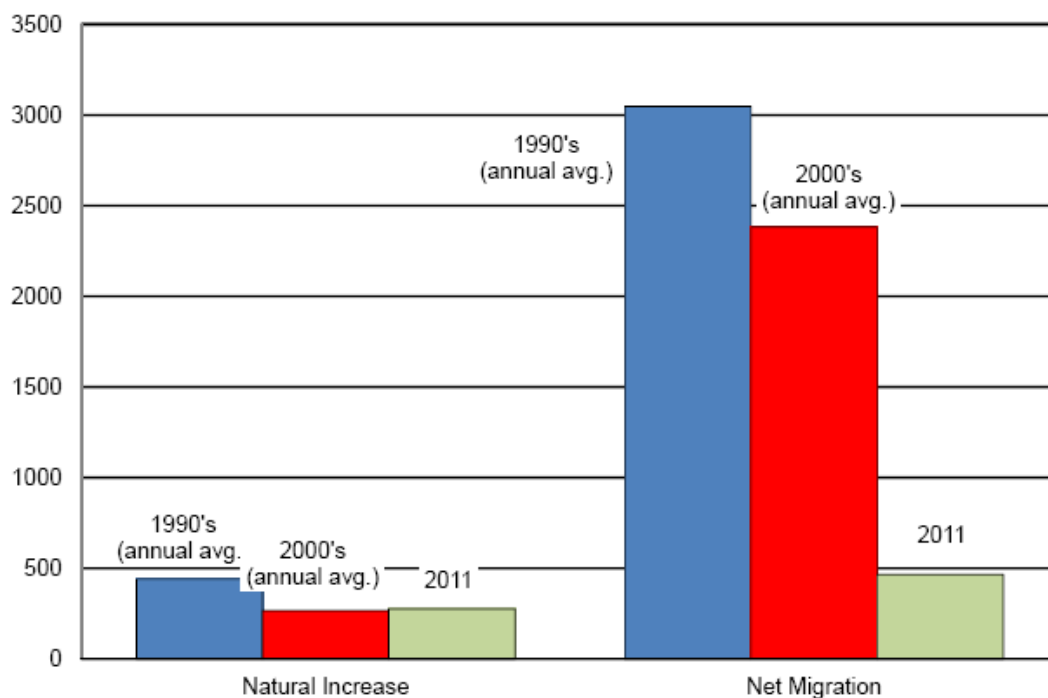
<sup>1</sup>Worksource Quality Info.org, Oregon Employment Department <http://www.qualityinfo.org/olmisi/OlmisZine>

<sup>2</sup> Oregon Rural Communities Explorer <http://oregonexplorer.info/rural/>

The smaller portion of employment in Retail Trade is primarily due to technological changes (e.g. self-checkout machines in grocery stores) and leakages of retail dollars out of the County, which makes import substitution all the more important.

The construction sectors and related businesses (real estate and finance) may also remain sluggish at best over the next few years. Figure 1 shows that in-migration has declined and it is uncertain that it will recover for the foreseeable future.

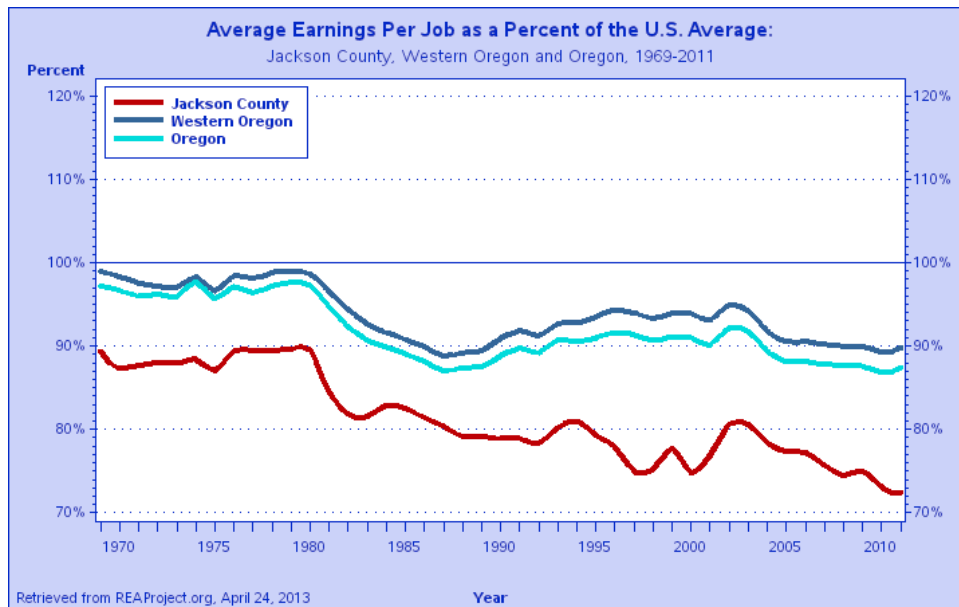
**Figure 1. Components of Population Growth Jackson County<sup>3</sup>**



The economic restructuring and declining market for Jackson County due to a slowing of population growth, technology replacing jobs that previously provided hourly pay that exceeded Oregon minimum wage levels (e.g. retail food checkout clerks) and the resulting reduction in the majority of consumer's discretionary spending has severely shocked the Jackson County economy. Probably the clearest example of this shock is the decline in the average earnings per job in Jackson County that is steeper than the decline in Oregon or Western Oregon when they are compared as a percentage of U.S. average earnings per job. These changes are shown in Figure 2.

<sup>3</sup>Tauer, Guy 2013. *Jackson County Economic Update Recession Recovery- are we there yet?* Worksource Oregon Employment Department. <http://www.olmis.org/pubs/presentations/qt022613jackson.pdf>

**Figure 2. Average Earnings Per Job<sup>4</sup>**



The Jackson County Fair and Exposition Center, as did many other businesses and organizations within the County, effectively utilized the growing arts, entertainment and recreation spending of the previous two decades to capture opportunities through facility improvements and provide an increasing variety of events throughout the year. However, the declining employment in the Fairs' primary customer base – agriculture and the intense competition for the entertainment and recreation dollar from both businesses and other government organizations combined with the consumer side of the market contracting -- put the Fair and Expo as well as other county fairs across the nation in quite a bind. They have struggled with how to continue providing public goods and services when the user fees are not sufficient to support even the private goods and services (e.g. facilities rental and admissions for concerts). Maintaining competitive prices for the Fair and Expo events and facilities does not generate enough surplus revenue to be used for the public goods and services (e.g. cultural or youth events for groups that do not have the resources to cover the full cost of facilities use), that the Fair and Expo has been expected to provide. The next two sections of this report cover the current economic contributions of the Fair and Expo to the Jackson County economy. Please note there are small rounding errors in the tables since they were calculated in fractions and are presented as whole numbers.

<sup>4</sup> Smith, Gary 2013. Pacific Northwest Regional Economic Analysis Project (PNREAP). U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. <http://oregon.reaproject.org/>

## Jackson County Input-Output Model

To estimate the economic impacts of the Jackson County Fair and Exposition Center, we used an *IMpact PLANning* (IMPLAN) economic model from the Minnesota Implan Group, Inc. It takes about two years to summarize the data for the model and then balance the data across all the 3,141 counties in the United States. The data we used for this report were from IMPLAN 2010 and 2011 data. The economic effects that we project within the County's economy are described in three unique ways:

- **Output:** Amount spent on products or services for sales within the region.
- **Net County Product (Income):** Output minus intermediate goods which are mostly purchased outside the region.
- **Employment:** Full and part-time covered and uncovered jobs.

Output and value-added are measured in annual dollars, however they cannot be added together. Value-added is the income component of output (e.g. the hourly wage earned by the gas station attendant is value-added to the gasoline and does not include the cost of importing the gasoline to Jackson County while the Output or sales number includes both the income and import costs of the gasoline).

To better understand the Jackson County economy, the author conducted discussions with retail business owners/managers, motel managers, a food producer, a newspaper editor, school representative, government administrator, a veterinary clinic manager, Chamber representatives, and Fair and Expo staff. The interview form is included as Appendix A to this report. The economic effects of the increased expenditures caused by the Fair and Expo programs/facilities were calculated as industry changes in the economic model. The personnel expenditures of the Fair and Expo were calculate as labor income changes.





Source: <http://www.attheexpo.com/SectionIndex.asp?SectionID=2>

## **Economic Effects of the Jackson County Fair and Exposition Center**

The Fair and Expo supports the Jackson County economy in three ways:

- 1) Basic program/operations direct expenditures and their multiplied effects
- 2) Import substitution or Jackson County residents' expenditures that are retained in Jackson County, which may otherwise be spent outside the County if the Jackson County residents did not have Fair and Expo events to attend. These expenditures also have multiplied effects. Without those events residents may leave the County and make expenditures not only on alternate entertainment and recreational opportunities, they may do additional shopping in conjunction with attending the out of County events or activities.
- 3) Visitor spending that the Fair and Expo attracts to the County.

This section of the report is organized around those three ways that the Fair and Expo contributes to the local economy.

### *Basic Program/Operations*

The Fair and Expo's direct program/operations expenditures including capital projects for 2012 were \$2.2 million. As noted above we sorted the Fair and Expo's annual non-personnel expenditures for 2012 into IMPLAN/NAICS sectors and adjusted each sector by the estimated local purchasing percentage. We used the IMPLAN input-output model to calculate the total effects of the expenditures as they rippled through the economy. We also estimated the direct and ripple effects of how the Fair and Expo staff spent their income. Then, we added the non-personnel and personnel economic effects together to get the total effects of the Fair and Expo's basic programs/operations. Those effects are projected in 2013 dollars and shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Economic Effects of the Fair and Expo Programs/Operations Spending in Jackson County – Annual 2013 Dollars**

Sector	Employment - Full & Part-Time Jobs	Output or Sales (\$)	Net County Product (\$)
<b>Total</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>3,568,704</b>	<b>2,292,863</b>
Ag, Forestry, Fish & Hunting	5	5,298	2,963
Mining	1	401	231
Utilities	1	187,085	125,621
Construction	4	390,423	168,693
Manufacturing	1	23,223	6,556
Wholesale Trade	1	66,874	50,885
Retail trade	3	157,373	111,380
Transportation & Warehousing	1	112,085	68,677
Information	1	300,288	154,631
Finance & insurance	1	207,431	93,596
Real estate & rental	1	262,825	224,608
Professional- scientific & tech svcs	1	108,470	66,736
Management of companies	1	24,790	13,511
Administrative & waste services	2	132,827	79,748
Educational svcs	1	9,659	4,173
Health & social services	2	213,113	124,724
Arts- entertainment & recreation	200	303,011	153,603
Accommodation & food services	1	70,702	36,929
Other services	4	292,955	123,751
Government	11	699,870	681,847

While these results are summarized into 20 two digit level NAICS sectors for presentation purposes, there are 246 sectors in Jackson County IMPLAN model. The Fair and Expo activities positively impact 240 of those sectors.



Source: Lori Burie

*Import Substitution or Retained Local Spending*

Marketing and purchasing options for Jackson County consumers are expanding at an increasing pace and global level. Before all these options were available, consumers made most of their purchases locally and those dollars rippled through the local economies many times. Today, local economies are very “leaky” and if one dollar earned in a local economy can generate another half of a dollar locally that may be the maximum possible given the alternative purchasing options available for the Jackson County consumers outside the County.

The Fair and Expo events ranging from the livestock sales to boat sales to handicraft sales provide effective central locations for local producers to sell their products. To the extent the purchases at those events may have been made outside the County, the Fair and Expo has plugged some of the County's economic leaks. This effect is called import substitution.

A substituted import can be valuable to an economy not only to retain local dollars, it may serve as the experience or evidence necessary to encourage the establishment or growth of export industries within the County. To project these effects, we first studied all the events conducted at the Fair and Expo and estimated that \$1.1 million in sales might have been made outside the County if the Fair and Expo had not provided the opportunities for local purchasing. This estimate is the most difficult and so should be considered less precise than the others. Still, the input-output model is linear; meaning if the reader believes we have overestimated, the reader can adjust our estimate by the percentage that the reader believes is appropriate. Of course it works in the other direction if the reader believes we have been too conservative. Table 3 shows the import substitution effects of the Fair and Expo.

**Table 3. Economic Effects of Jackson County Fair and Expo Retaining Local Dollars or Import Substitution – Annual 2013 Dollars**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Employment- Full &amp; Part Time Jobs</b>	<b>Output or Sales (\$)</b>	<b>Net County Product (\$)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>2,007,508</b>	<b>1,255,257</b>
Ag, Forestry, Fish & Hunting	522	971,004	569,832
Mining	1	102	62
Utilities	1	23,213	16,482
Construction	1	8,595	4,195
Manufacturing	1	7,484	1,951
Wholesale Trade	2	282,419	214,213
Retail trade	3	141,370	99,597
Transportation & Warehousing	1	31,507	19,109
Information	1	30,494	15,561
Finance & insurance	1	100,515	43,709
Real estate & rental	1	140,583	120,224
Professional scientific & tech svcs	1	35,561	22,786
Management of companies	1	22,511	12,847
Administrative & waste services	1	14,920	8,980
Educational svcs	1	4,753	2,087
Health & social services	1	97,461	57,248
Arts- entertainment & recreation	1	6,549	3,373
Accommodation & food services	1	30,060	15,843
Other services	1	41,204	18,607
Government	1	17,204	8,550



Photo: Jim Teece

The Youth Livestock Auctions, of which there are three – lamb in June and hog and steer in July at the Fair and Expo -are a unique combination of using an event for educational and value-added economic benefits and an excellent example of import substitution. Youth through the Future Farmers of America and 4-H, purchase and learn how to raise a lamb, hog or steer. The animals are then auctioned and sold, typically for at least twice the usual market value of the animal. After a very small promotional cost for the sale, the youth retains the payments. The animal is then sent to a local processor by the purchaser or sold for processing outside the region with the purchaser just paying the difference between the bid price and the resale price to the processor. All of the dollars for the locally raised and processed meat is retained at least for the first round of expenditures in the County. A significant portion of the meat processed outside of Jackson County is still processed in Oregon, shipped back to the County and sold by a local food retailer as “4-H” meat at a premium price.

For this analysis we changed the Cattle and Ranching and Animal Production Except Cattle and Poultry and Eggs sectors of the input-output model to reflect the much higher income received by the youth for raising the livestock than is typically the case for employee compensation portion of value added in the out-of-the-box IMPLAN model in those sectors. Using the edited model, we projected the total effects of the \$800,000 in sales. Although some of those production dollars leaked out of Jackson County (e.g. purchases from fertilizer manufacturers outside the County by Jackson County wholesale and retail outlets that the ranchers used for the pastures), those leakages were more than offset by the respending or multiplier effects of the dollars that remained. Once the ripple effects were included the \$800,000 in sales multiplied to \$1.44 million in sales.

More than half of the sales dollars were income, \$864,021, primarily going to the youth. The economic effects of the auctions which have been included in Table 3 as part of the totals by sector, are detailed in Table 4.

**Table 4. Economic Effects of the Youth Livestock Auctions – Annual 2013 Dollars**

<i>Type of Economic Effect</i>	<i>Sales</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Employment</i>
4-H & FFA Youth	\$800,000	\$479,812	500
Suppliers	\$194,035	\$107,826	4
Household Purchases (eg. food, dental care, etc.)	\$359,012	\$224,612	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,353,047</b>	<b>\$812,250</b>	<b>508</b>

Again, as with all the expenditures in Table 3, we did not have a way to estimate how the funds spent at the youth auction would have been spent if they had not been spent at the youth livestock auction. So, we leave it to the reader to make any necessary adjustments based on the reader's estimate of the portion that would have been spent for goods produced outside the County.



Source: Jim Teece

The Fair and Expo by providing a market forum for these auctions and a place for the other livestock events is a critical component of encouraging the educational and economic benefits of these auctions. The closest auction yards other than the Fair and Expo are in Klamath Falls and Cave Junction so creating another market forum for these auctions would be unlikely without the Fair and Expo.



Source: oregoncheeseguild.com

### *Visitor Spending*

Many visitors to Jackson County come to the County primarily or at least partially because of the Jackson County Fair or other events that are presented at the Exposition Center. The Fair and Expo staff members have maintained extensive records on attendance for the Fair and every single event or facility use throughout the year, which made it possible to estimate the number of visitors and the period of time they stayed.

After estimating the visitor days from those records, we then went through the events to estimate what percentage of the visitors' reasons for coming to Jackson County and spending money in the County could be attributed to the Fair and Expo. Next, we used the most current, 2012 Dean Runyan Associates estimates for 2011 of visitor spending, removed the portion that was directly related to the Fair and Expo and counted already under *basic programs/operations*, and projected how much the Fair and Expo's events and efforts to attract visitors to Jackson County increased the local economy activity. Table 5 details our estimates and shows the total economic effect in the County of visitor spending contributed by the Fair & Expo increasing output or sales by \$11 million, net county product by \$6.1 million and jobs by 201. Once again we have adjusted the projections to 2013 dollars.

**Table 5. Economic Effects of Visitor Spending Attracted to Jackson County by the Jackson County Fair and Exposition Center – Annual 2013 Dollars**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Employment - Full &amp; Part-Time Jobs</b>	<b>Output or Sales (\$)</b>	<b>Net County Product (\$)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>10,998,934</b>	<b>6,144,639</b>
Ag, Forestry, Fish & Hunting	2	11,195	5,224
Mining	1	1,141	607
Utilities	1	170,274	94,704
Construction	1	104,190	64,132
Manufacturing	1	118,768	29,999
Wholesale Trade	1	104,930	74,355
Retail trade	47	1,190,125	867,175
Transportation & Warehousing	1	119,011	56,852
Information	1	388,021	147,962
Finance & insurance	3	389,027	201,389
Real estate & rental	2	638,816	427,656
Professional- scientific & tech svcs	6	369,853	229,594
Management of companies	1	369,421	200,587
Administrative & waste services	5	52,367	28,406
Educational svcs	1	23,810	13,690
Health & social services	6	436,652	258,819
Arts- entertainment & recreation	38	1,292,968	792,017
Accommodation & food services	79	4,923,623	2,471,120
Other services	2	145,752	91,955
Government	2	148,992	88,397

*Total Economic Effects of the Jackson County Fair and Exposition Center*

Each of the three types of economic effects projected above is different. To estimate a total they need to be added together. It is difficult to accurately predict the economic activity that would be created or disappear based on increases or decreases respectively to the activities of any economic entity including the Fair and Expo.

To represent how much these economic contributions would decline if the Fair and Expo programs are reduced, we need to introduce two ways to view the Fair and Expo's economic contributions. The Fair and Expo creates economic activity using money that is in Jackson County and might reasonably be expected to stay in Jackson County. If the Fair and Expo did not create that activity, the economy could be disrupted for a period of time, yet economies are resilient and eventually the Fair and Expo's consumers may find other ways to spend that money in the area. At least a portion of the economic contributions from the Fair and Expo operations as shown in Table 2 may be this type of economic activity.

Yet, beyond basic operational spending, if the Fair and Expo did not provide the forum for the purchasing that is import substitution, or attract the visitor spending that we have shown in the tables above, the economy could be expected to permanently change and experience structural decline. In Table 6 we summarize all the estimated economic effects of the Fair & Expo.

**Table 6. Summary Fair and Expo Economic Effects - Operations, Import Substitution and Visitor Spending – Annual 2013 Dollars**

Description	Employment - Full & Part-Time Jobs	Output or Sales (\$)	Net County Product (\$)
<b>Total</b>	<b>988</b>	<b>16,575,146</b>	<b>9,692,759</b>
Ag, Forestry, Fish & Hunting	529	987,496	578,019
Mining	3	1,644	901
Utilities	3	380,573	236,806
Construction	6	503,208	237,020
Manufacturing	3	149,474	38,506
Wholesale Trade	4	454,223	339,453
Retail trade	52	1,488,868	1,078,153
Transportation & Warehousing	3	262,603	144,638
Information	3	718,802	318,154
Finance & insurance	5	696,973	338,694
Realestate & rental	4	1,042,224	772,488
Professional-scientific & tech svcs	8	513,884	319,116
Management of companies	3	416,722	226,945
Administrative & waste services	8	200,114	117,133
Educational svcs	3	38,222	19,951
Health & social services	9	747,225	440,791
Arts-entertainment & recreation	239	1,602,528	948,993
Accommodation & food services	81	5,024,385	2,523,893
Other services	7	479,910	234,313
Government	14	866,066	778,793

Part of this economic activity is in the form of tax receipts and government spending. The local tax effects of the Fair and Expo are shown in Table 7.

**Table 7. Local Tax Effects – 2013 Dollars**

Type of Economic Effect	Revenue
Operations	\$56,040
Import Substitution	\$41,718
Tourism	\$408,776
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$506,534</b>



## Considerations

The Jackson County Fair and Exposition Center makes an economic contribution to the Jackson County economy that exceeds by many times the public funding that is provided to the Fair and Expo. As noted above, since output or sales estimates are built on every sale that businesses make as a product moves along to becoming a finished good (e.g. fertilizer for a pasture is counted when it is purchased from the Co-op, counted again in the price of the milk it helped to produce, counted again if the milk is used to produce cheese, and counted again if the cheese is used for a meal prepared in a restaurant) there is a lot of “double counting” in output estimates. Net County Product only counts what each business adds to the value of a product or service and is the more accurate measure of the County’s net product.

The Fair and Expo contributes approximately \$9.7 million and 988 full and part time jobs to the local economy. It leverages its operating revenues from all sources a projected 4.4 times ( $\$9.7/\$2.2$ ). Due to the unique types of programs the Fair and Expo supports, it may be difficult to find substitutes to replace these dollars if the Fair and Expo programs are reduced at some point in the future. What distinguishes the Fair and Expo is the variety of programs and events that are presented throughout the year.

In addition to the quantitative projections that have been made in this analysis, it is important to also consider the “social capital” or networks and relationships that the Fair and Expo supports and builds within the community. This social capital can be critical to the economic efficiency (e.g. the trust that allows transactions to be quickly completed without negotiating contracts) and resilience (e.g. the parent who cares for another parent’s children who has lost a job and needs to search for another job) of the local economy.

County fairs will continue to struggle to balance their budgets if they rely to the degree that they have in the past on public funding or event based recreation and entertainment spending. They could partner even more with the private sector to create joint ventures and develop sponsorships that generate enough funds to move closer to meeting the expectations the community has for providing some of the public services at the Fair and Expo below costs. Those ventures and sponsorships can look towards extending and adding services that are critical to, or part of, the community’s core (e.g. youth development/education, semi-skilled worker training, strengthening social capital among diverse cultures and demographics).

The Jackson County Fair and Expo Center's planning seems headed in that direction. It is a tough and risky path to take and yet only those fairs with a tolerance for experimentation, and the inevitable mistakes that are an essential part of creativity, may be around to serve in the next century.

Finally, the author, who has done a number of these types of studies, needs to mention the competency and helpfulness of the Fair and Expo staff and volunteer leaders. Adaptability is also a key component of organizational and economic resilience. Maintaining the economic contributions of the Fair and Expo over time seems quite achievable given the folks and facilities committed to that outcome.



Source: Jim Teece

## References

Jensen, Sharon. 2000. "Fairs and Their Changing Communities: Adapting to Urban Communities." *Agricultural Fairs in America: Tradition, Education, Celebration*. Avery, Julie A. (Ed.). East Lansing, MI. Board of Trustees, Michigan State University: 80.

Tauer, Guy 2013. *Jackson County Economic Update Recession Recovery- are we there yet?* Worksource - Oregon Employment Department. [http](http://www.oregon.gov/employment)

MIG, Inc., IMPLAN System (data and software), 1725 Tower Drive West, Suite 140, Stillwater, MN 55082 [www.implan.com](http://www.implan.com)

## Appendix A

### ***Jackson County Fair and Exposition Center Individual Survey***

*Person Contacted* \_\_\_\_\_

*Title* \_\_\_\_\_

*Business/Agency* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date* \_\_\_\_\_

*Interviewer* \_\_\_\_\_

*Phone* \_\_\_\_\_

*In-Person* \_\_\_\_\_

*How do you work with the Jackson County Fair organization and for how long?*

*How does the Fair affect your business (e.g. % of your gross sales)?*

*How does the Exposition Center affect your business (e.g. % of your gross sales)?*

*In what ways do the Fair and Exposition Center activities year-round contribute to the livability of the community and do those contributions directly affect your ability to recruit and retain employees?*

*What Fair or Exposition Center activity would affect you the most if it was stopped?*

*If you could add one more activity to the Fair and one more activity to the Exposition Center schedules, what would they be?*