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### **Ohio Butter Sculptors Whip Up State Symbols**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) Tuesday, July 22, 2014 - The 2014 butter display at the Ohio State Fair in Columbus portrays 15 intricate state symbols that showcase the character and spirit of the Buckeye State.

One Ohio icon salutes another as the butter cow and calf share their display case with a collage of carefully-crafted animals, artifacts, flowers and foods that represent the rich history and culture of Ohio. Among the line-up of creamy creations is a trilobite fossil, cardinal, paw paw fruit, spotted salamander, adena pipe and whitetail deer.

Every sculpture has a story that sheds light on Ohio's past and present. The tomato sculpture, for instance, spotlights Ohio as one of the nation's largest producers of the fruit, and the carnation, the state flower, serves as a tribute to President William McKinley, an Ohio native who always wore a carnation in his lapel.

Other butter sculptures, including the bullfrog and whitetail deer are represented in the display because of their prevalence in the state. These animals, along with the ladybug and black racer snake, both known as "friends of farmers" for eating rodents and insects harmful to plants, are found in almost all 88 counties across Ohio. A cardinal also perches proudly on a Buckeye branch in the display, a permanent resident of the state, prestigious for its clear, strong sound and vibrant red coat.

This year's display gives fairgoers a chance to glimpse into Ohio's past. A detailed trilobite fossil of a now-extinct sea creature which existed in the state 440 million years ago, and flint, a hard rock used by Native Americans to make knives, spear points and arrowheads, share the spotlight with the cow and calf.

The mural behind the display is inspired by another state symbol, featuring imagery from Ohio's state seal.

The display's theme, which is always the best kept secret during the planning and sculpting process at the Ohio State Fair, was unveiled today at noon. The 2014 butter sculptures share the cooler with the life-size butter cow and calf who are annual favorites. This year's butter cow and calf are named Scarlet and Grayce, as a result of the butter cow naming contest on Twitter.

On behalf of Ohio's dairy farmers, the American Dairy Association Mideast commissions a group of technical sculptors, several who are engaged primarily in the toy industry, to create the butter masterpiece. This year, two guest sculptors, including a dairy farmer from Shelby County, were enlisted to help with creating the display.

Crafted from approximately 2,033 pounds of butter, donated in part by Dairy Farmers of America, the display was completed in over 540 hours, which includes approximately 400 hours of actual sculpting.

The sculptors began by building wooden and steel frames to support the weight of the butter. From 55-pound blocks, the butter is sliced into manageable loaves and is layered to cover the frames. After many hours of molding and smoothing the butter in a 46-degree cooler, each sculpture begins to take shape. Fine details are added last.

Each year, the American Dairy Association Mideast selects an icon or theme to feature in butter that is non-political, non-controversial and reflects optimism and broad audience-appeal. The butter display at the Ohio State Fair attracts more than 500,000 visitors each year, reflecting positive ideals and cultural trends in Ohio for over 45 years. Several of its exhibits gain national media attention with themes that have universal appeal.

The butter display is found in the newly updated Dairy Products Building at the Ohio Expo Center, home of the Ohio State Fair. The Dairy Products Building is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and offers a variety of Ohio-produced dairy foods including ice cream, milkshakes, cheese sandwiches and milk.

The butter sculpture display and the Dairy Products Building are sponsored by the American Dairy Association Mideast, Ohio's dairy-farmer funded marketing and promotion program serving the state's more than 2,800 dairy farms.

MULTIMEDIA AVAILABLE: For broadcast quality b-roll and sound bites and high resolution stills you can access the American Dairy Association's multimedia newsroom here: <http://bit.ly/1oAa63K>

All elements are for free/unrestricted use. Courtesy: American Dairy Association Mideast

\*Only one pool camera was allowed in during the sculpting process, so this is the only place you'll find that video!

American Dairy Association Mideast is a farmer-funded organization responsible for increasing demand for dairy products on behalf of dairy farmers in Ohio. For more information, visit [www.drink-milk.com](http://www.drink-milk.com) and [www.ohiodairyfarmers.com](http://www.ohiodairyfarmers.com)

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