



NOVEMBER 2025

LEWIS COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

ECONOMIC & FISCAL IMPACT

PREPARED FOR:

New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs, Inc.
1082 County Highway 33, Cooperstown, NY 13326

LEWIS COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

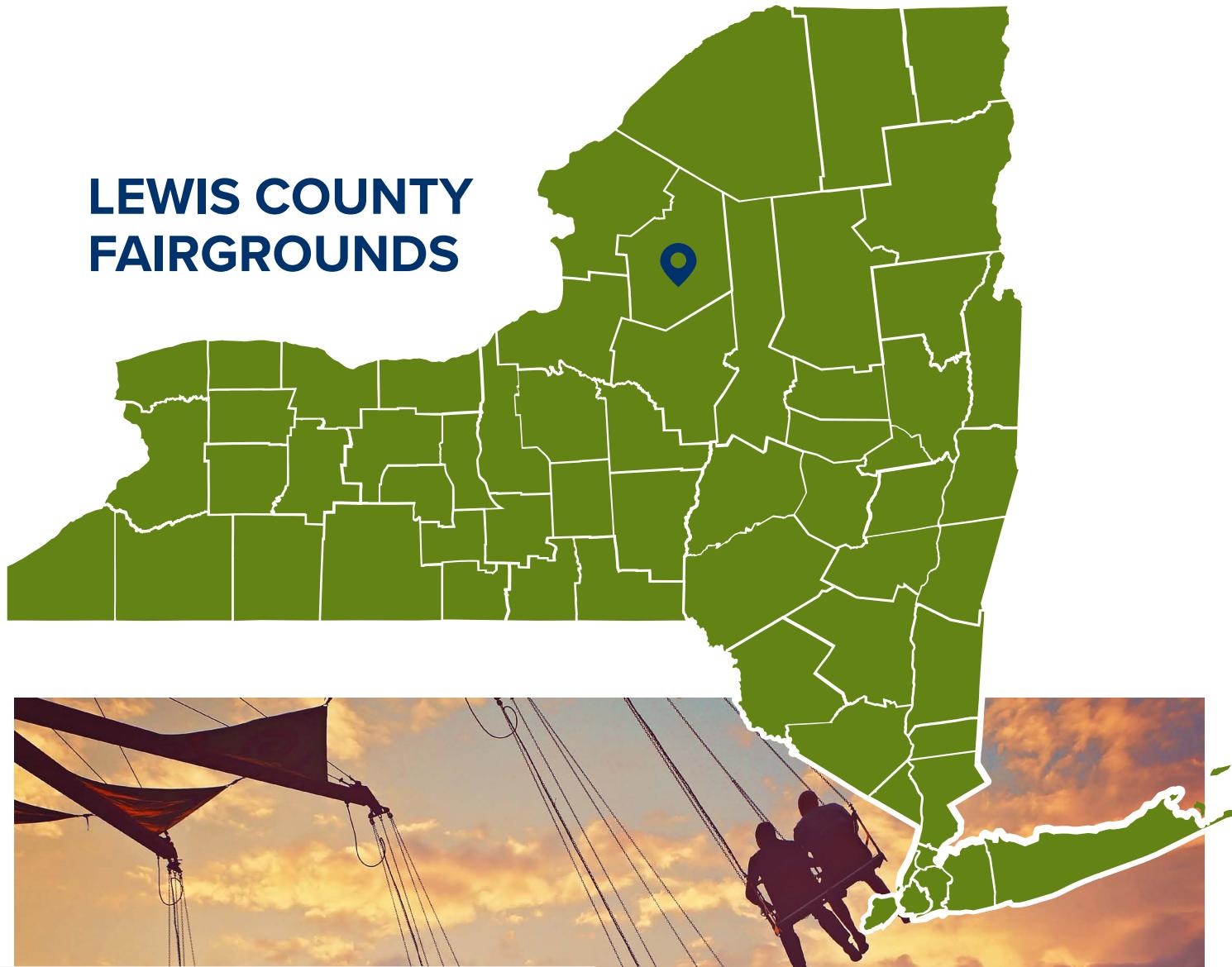


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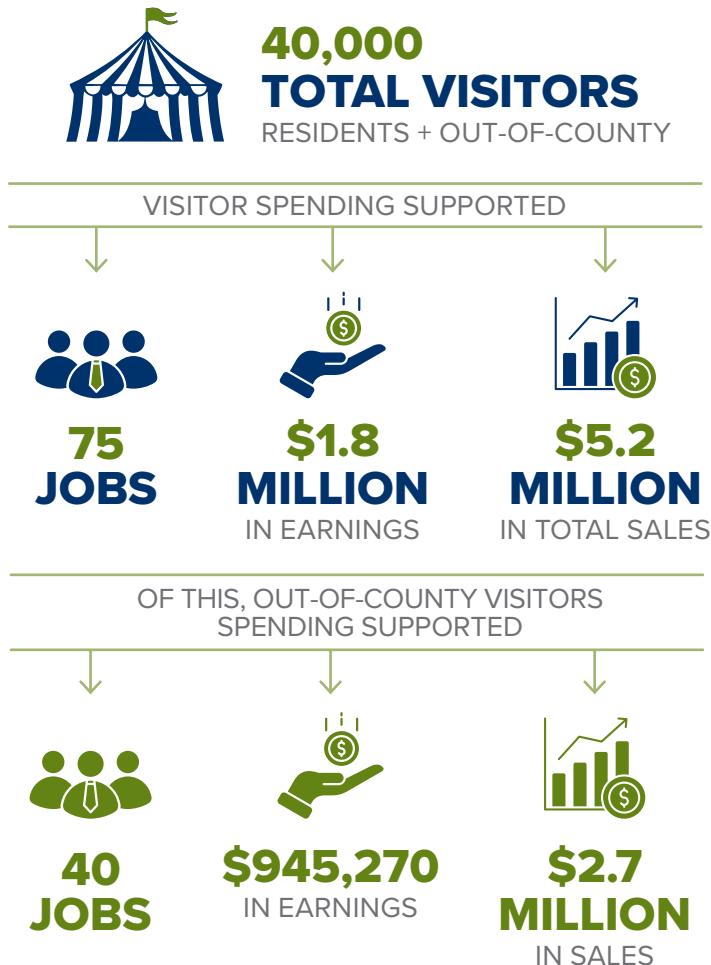
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Lewis County Fair plays an important role in the social and economic fabric of the county, serving as both a cultural anchor and an economic engine for the community. Each July, the Lewis County Fair in Lowville, NY celebrates the county's deep agricultural heritage while drawing thousands of visitors who contribute to the local economy through spending on food, entertainment, and retail.

LEWIS COUNTY FAIR IMPACT

In 2024, the Lewis County Fair attracted an estimated **40,000 visitors**, generating approximately **\$4.0 million in direct spending** within the county. This activity supported an estimated **75 jobs**, **\$1.8 million in labor income**, and **\$5.2 million in total sales** across local industries such as food services, accommodations, retail, and entertainment.

Of the 40,000 visitors an estimated **50%** traveled from outside the county, bringing in new dollars that would not otherwise circulate locally. Their spending produced a net new economic impact of **40 jobs**, **\$945,270 in earnings**, and **\$2.7 million in sales** for Lewis County.



FISCAL IMPACTS

The fairgrounds also generate fiscal benefits for both the county and state governments. In 2024, visitor spending and related earnings produced an estimated **\$166,126 in sales tax revenue for Lewis County**. Of that amount, approximately **\$87,937 in new tax revenue** was generated by out-of-county visitors.



OF THIS TOTAL,
\$87,937 IN SALES TAX REVENUE
WAS GENERATED BY
OUT-OF-COUNTY VISITORS





INTRODUCTION

The Lewis County Fair, held annually in Lowville, NY, is one of the longest continually operating county fairs in the state. Traditionally held during the third week of July, the five-day event celebrates the county's rich agricultural heritage through livestock competitions, farm exhibits, and 4-H programs, while also offering entertainment, carnival rides, and a variety of unique vendors. Drawing approximately 40,000 visitors each year from Lewis County and neighboring regions, the fair serves as both an economic driver and a cultural cornerstone for the rural North Country community.

As one of the county's largest annual events, the fair generates substantial economic activity through direct visitor spending, supports local businesses and vendors, and reinforces the area's agricultural identity. To better understand the fair's role and the broader influence of the county fairgrounds on the local economy, the New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs (NYSAAF), in collaboration with the Lewis County Agricultural Society, engaged Camoin Associates to conduct an economic and fiscal contribution analysis.

A NOTE ON IMPACT ANALYSIS AND CONTRIBUTION ANALYSIS

An impact analysis for the Lewis County fairgrounds measures the incremental or additional economic activity that occurs because of the fairgrounds — that is, the new spending, jobs, and tax revenues that would not exist in the region without the fairgrounds. It isolates the fair's direct, indirect, and induced effects to quantify their role in generating new economic value. In contrast, a contribution analysis captures the fair's ongoing economic footprint — the total level of activity it supports within the regional economy, regardless of whether it is new or existing. While impact analysis focuses on change (what's

added), contribution analysis focuses on presence (what's sustained). In practical terms, impact analysis answers "What new activity happens because the fairgrounds exist?" whereas contribution analysis answers "How much of the current economy depends on the fairgrounds' continued operation?" The following report outlines the impact of the Lewis County fairgrounds as well as the total contribution of the fairgrounds. By including both impact and contribution numbers, we provide a more complete picture of the county fairgrounds' role in the economy.



ABOUT THE STUDY

Primary data sources used to inform this study¹:

The 2024 Local Fairs Report:

This report is produced by the New York Department of Agriculture and Markets, which was provided by NYSAAF. This report contains details for all 50 county fairs, including attendance, admissions status (free or paid), exhibitors and vendors, fair finances, and more.

2025 Survey of Fair Administrators:

This survey was created and distributed by Camoin Associates with the assistance of NYSAAF. It aimed to gather information from those who run county fairs, including data about total attendance and visitor types, operational spending, off-season events, visitation, and more. This data helped form the basis of assumptions for both the total cumulative impacts of county fairs as well as key assumptions for each of the five highlighted individual fair impact analyses. In total, data for 11 out of a total of 50 fairs were collected through this survey, including the five highlighted individual fairs.

Additionally, the 2024 Economic Impact and Benefits of Pennsylvania's Agricultural Fair Industry report further informed information related to attendee spending at local fairgrounds.

STUDY OVERVIEW

Data Source

New York Department of Agriculture and Markets

Survey of New York County Fair Administrators

Geography

Lewis County

Study Period

2024

Modeling Tool

Lightcast

¹ Due to differences in data availability and updates to impact analysis best practices, the methodology used in this report differs from that applied in a similar study completed in 2019.

METHODOLOGY

For this analysis, the economic impacts and contributions are measured by the number of jobs created, sales generated, and wages earned within the county as a result of events at the fairgrounds. Lightcast designed the input-output model used in this analysis. The model allows the analyst to input the amount of direct economic activity occurring within the region and uses the direct inputs to estimate the spillover effects that the net new spending has as these new dollars circulate through the economy. This is captured in the indirect impacts and is commonly referred to as the “multiplier effect.” See Appendix A: What is an Economic Impact Analysis? for more information on economic impact analysis.

The evaluation of fiscal impacts is limited to assessing impacts to sales tax revenue generated by the direct spending at the county fairgrounds, as well as the spending by employees whose wages are supported by the county fairgrounds.

KEY DEFINITIONS

Job

A “job” is equal to one person employed for some amount of time (part-time, full-time, or temporary) during the study period.

Earnings

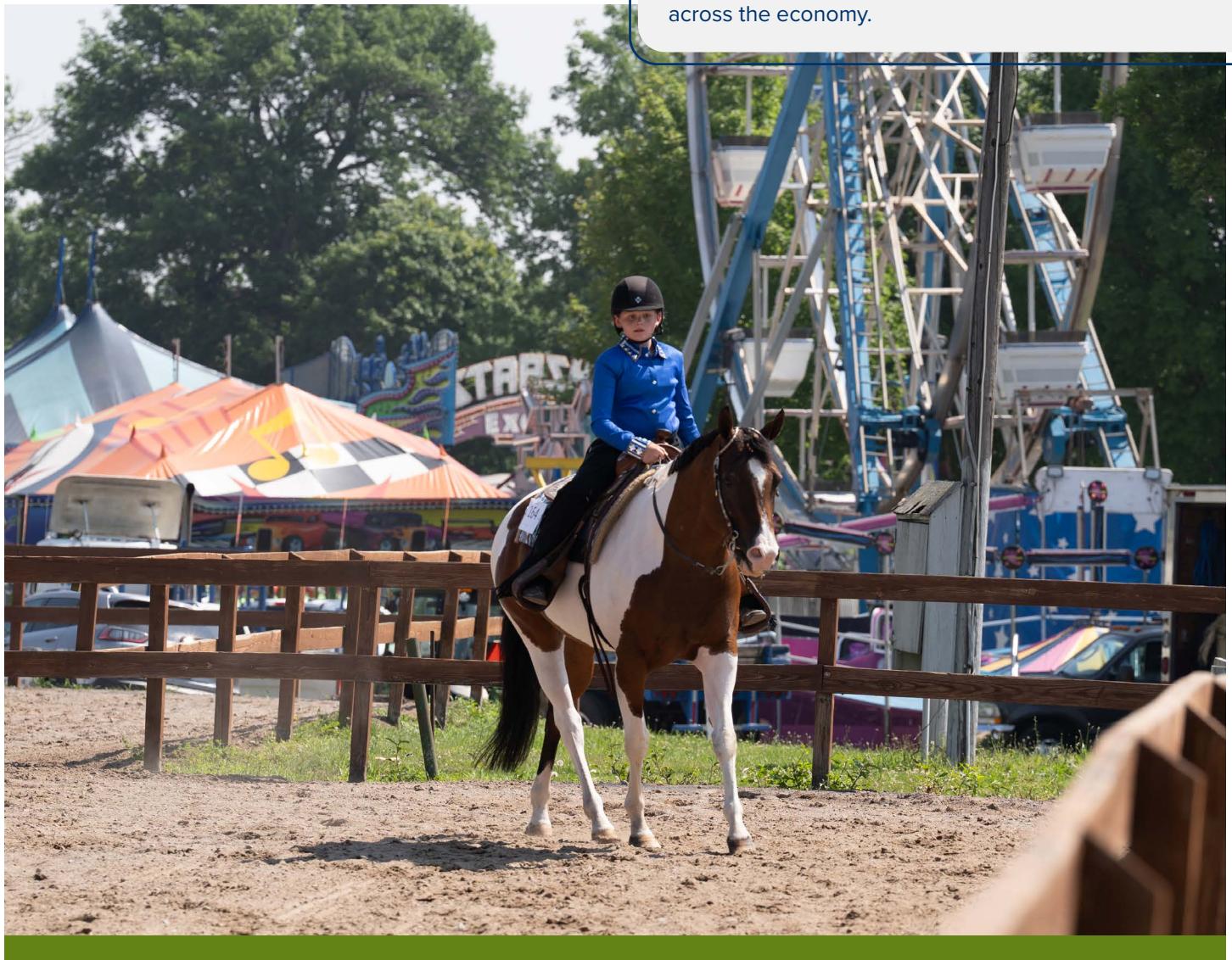
Earnings refers to the total wages, salaries, supplements, and proprietor income generated by an industry within a given region.

Sales

Industry sales are the total annual sales (gross receipts) to other industries as intermediate inputs and to consumers as final demand.

Multiplier

A multiplier is equivalent to the additional change given a one-unit increase. For example, if the jobs multiplier is 1.90, that means for every one job, there are 0.90 jobs created across the economy.





VISITORS & VISITOR SPENDING

COUNTY FAIR VISITORS

The first step in measuring the economic impact of visitor spending is to determine total fair attendance and distinguish between county residents and non-residents. According to data from the 2025 Survey of Fair Administrators, the Lewis County Fair attracts approximately 40,000 visitors annually. However, information related to the share of resident and non-resident attendees was not available. To address this gap, aggregated data for all New York county fairs were analyzed. Using statewide averages for fairs of comparable size, along with the understanding that Lewis County's population is just over 26,500, it is estimated that roughly 50% of fair attendees travel from outside the county. This assumption provides a reasonable basis for estimating the number of net-new visitors contributing to the local economy².

Table 1

Visitors to Lewis County Fairgrounds	
Visitors to the County Fair	
Total Attendance	40,000
Share of Out-of-County Attendees	50%
Number of Out-of-County Attendees	20,000
Share of Local Attendees	50%
Number of Local Attendees	20,000

Source: NY Department of Agriculture and Markets 2024 Local Fairs Report, Survey of Fair Administrators, Camoin Associates

² According to the 2025 Survey of Fair Administrators, no off-season events are held at the Lewis County Fairgrounds.



VISITOR SPENDING AT COUNTY FAIRS

These visitors contribute to the county and state economies when they spend money, both at the fair and off-site. To estimate this spending, average spending baskets are applied to resident and non-resident visitors. These spending baskets are based on the spending baskets found in the 2024 Economic Impact and Benefits of Pennsylvania's Agricultural Fair Industry, which provided a similar analysis of county agricultural fairs in neighboring Pennsylvania for 2024³, along with data from the Survey of Fair Administrators. Based on input from the project team, these spending baskets were then adapted to better align with New York's county fairs.

Note that admission to the Lewis County Fair is free and that these spending amounts reflect the average across all visitors; it is likely that many visitors spend \$0 in some categories. This spending basket reflects spending for the duration of a fair, rather than a per-day estimate.

Table 2

Spending Generated by County Fair Attendees, 2024

	Per-Visit Spending		Total Spending		Total Spending
	Residents 50%	Non-Residents 50%	Residents 50%	Non-Residents 50%	
Parking	\$7.00	\$7.00	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$280,000
Food and Beverages	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$800,000	\$800,000	\$1,600,000
Fair Purchases	\$7.00	\$7.00	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$280,000
Transportation and Travel	\$9.50	\$9.50	\$190,000	\$190,000	\$380,000
Shopping	\$8.50	\$8.50	\$170,000	\$170,000	\$340,000
Other Attractions	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$160,000	\$160,000	\$320,000
Lodging and Accommodations	\$-	\$12.00	\$-	\$240,000	\$240,000
Rides	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$240,000
Entertainment (concerts, games)	\$4.50	\$4.50	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$180,000
Other	\$4.50	\$4.50	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$180,000
Total	\$95.00	\$107.00	\$1,900,000	\$2,140,000	\$4,040,000

Source: Econsult Solutions, Inc. *Economic Impact and Benefits of Pennsylvania's Agricultural Fair Industry (2024)*; Camoin Associates; New York Department of Agriculture and Markets

³ From "Pennsylvania County and Local Agricultural Fairs: The Economic Impact and Benefits of Pennsylvania's Agricultural Fair Industry," prepared by Econsult Solutions, Inc, 2024, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.



ECONOMIC IMPACT AND CONTRIBUTION OF VISITOR SPENDING

Using the visitation figures and spending baskets outlined above, we assume that around 40,000 attendees spent approximately **\$4.0 million** while attending the Lewis County Fair in 2024. This is referred to as “direct” spending and was used as the direct input into Lightcast’s economic impact model.

The economic contribution measures the overall scale of fair-related activity—both by local and non-local visitors—as part of the broader county economy. Rather than isolating new spending, contribution analysis quantifies the total employment, earnings, and sales sustained by ongoing operations. Altogether, all visitor spending related to the county fair supported an estimated **75 jobs, \$1.8 million in labor income, and \$5.2 million in total sales in 2024**. Included in this contribution are three year-round part-time jobs directly employed by the Lewis County Agricultural Society as well as more than a dozen temporary positions.

The economic impact captures the new dollars brought into the county from visitors who reside elsewhere. Because these funds would not otherwise circulate in the local economy, they represent net new economic activity. In 2024, out-of-county visitors to the Lewis County Fair brought in an estimated **\$2.1 million** in spending throughout the county. This supported **40 total jobs**, generated more than **\$945,270 in labor earnings**, and produced **\$2.7 million in total sales across industries** such as accommodations, food services, retail, and entertainment. This activity reflects the direct, indirect, and induced effects of non-resident spending as it ripples through the county economy.

Table 3

Economic Contribution Generated by All Visitors to the Lewis County Fairgrounds			
	Jobs	Earnings	Sales
Direct	67	\$1,374,493	\$4,040,000
Indirect	5	\$255,977	\$672,795
Induced	3	\$170,431	\$450,555
Total	75	\$1,800,901	\$5,163,350

Source: Lightcast, Camoin Associates

Economic Impact Generated by Out-of-County Visitors Only			
	Jobs	Earnings	Sales
Direct	35	\$719,506	\$2,140,000
Indirect	3	\$134,590	\$352,191
Induced	2	\$91,174	\$241,009
Total	40	\$945,270	\$2,733,200

Source: Lightcast, Camoin Associates



FISCAL IMPACTS

The fiscal impacts of the Lewis County Fairgrounds include the sales tax revenue generated for the host County and the State. While fiscal impacts will vary depending on a county's tax base, rate structure, and distribution schedules, this analysis estimates sales tax revenues based on total direct spending and earnings supported by fairground activity.

SALES TAX REVENUE

Sales Tax Revenue From Direct Visitor Spending

At the Lewis County Fairgrounds, the total direct sales amount associated with visitor spending is estimated at \$4.0 million annually. Assuming 95% of these sales are taxable under the combined 8% sales tax rate (4% retained by New York State and 4% by Lewis County), total sales tax revenue amounts to \$307,040 with New York collecting \$153,520 and Lewis County receiving \$153,520⁴.

Of this total, spending by out-of-county visitors accounts for approximately \$2.1 million in direct sales, producing an estimated \$162,640 in new sales tax revenue. Of this new tax revenue, Lewis County receives approximately \$81,320.

Table 4

Sales Tax Revenue from all Visitors to Lewis County Fairgrounds—Direct Sales

Direct Sales (All Events)	\$4,040,000
Taxable Sales (95%)	\$3,838,000
Total Tax Revenue	\$307,040
Approximate Tax Revenue Collected by New York State (4%)	\$153,520
Approximate Tax Revenue Collected by the County (4%)	\$153,520

Source: Camoin Associates, Lightcast, New York State Department of Taxation and Finance

Sales Tax Revenue from Out-of-County Visitors to Lewis County Fairgrounds—Direct Sales

Direct Sales (All Events)	\$2,140,000
Taxable Sales (95%)	\$2,033,000
New Tax Revenue	\$162,640
Approximate Tax Revenue Collected by New York State (4%)	\$81,320
Approximate Tax Revenue Collected by the County (4%)	\$81,320

Source: Camoin Associates, Lightcast, New York State Department of Taxation and Finance

⁴ Assumes 95% of direct spending is taxable, excluding 5% for non-taxable food items and select fairground expenses.



Sales Tax Revenue from Earnings

In addition to direct visitor spending, earnings supported by fairground operations also generate taxable sales within local economies. It is assumed that 70% of total earnings are spent within the county and 25% of that spending is taxable⁵. Using these assumptions, earnings supported by all visitors to the Lewis County Fairgrounds contribute roughly \$25,213 in new

sales tax revenue—again divided between the state (\$12,606) and the county (\$12,606). Out-of-county visitors account for approximately \$165,442 in additional taxable sales through supported earnings, resulting in Lewis County collecting around \$6,617 in new tax revenue.

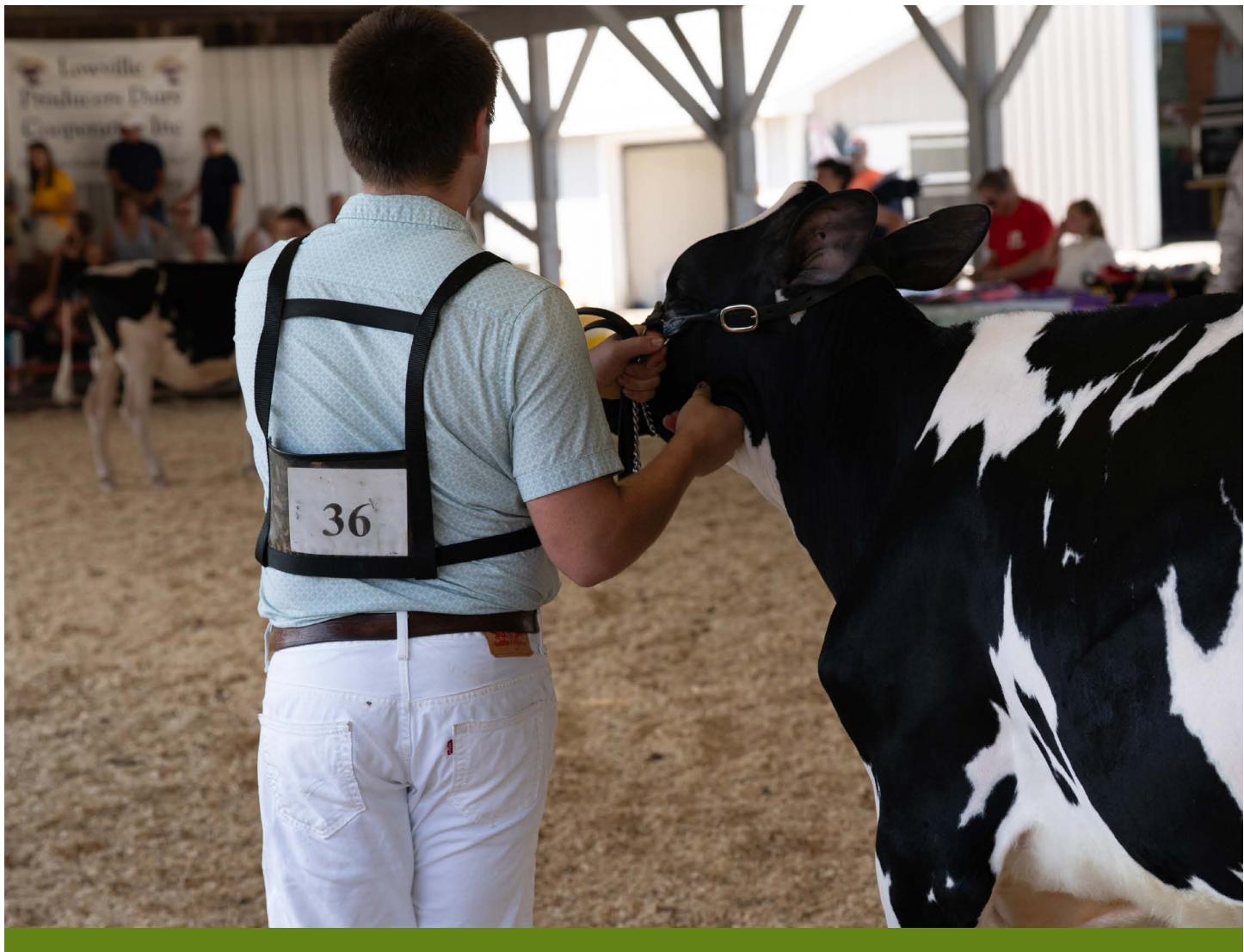
Table 5

Sales Tax Revenue from Earnings Supported by All Visitors to Lewis County Fairgrounds		Sales Tax Revenue from Earnings Supported by Out-of-County Visitors to Lewis County Fairgrounds	
Total Earnings (All Events)	\$1,800,901	Total Earnings (All Events)	\$945,270
Earnings Spent in the County (70%)	\$1,260,631	Earnings Spent in the County (70%)	\$661,689
Taxable Sales (25%)	\$315,158	Taxable Sales (25%)	\$165,422
New Tax Revenue	\$25,213	New Tax Revenue	\$13,234
Approximate Tax Revenue Collected by New York State (4%)	\$12,606	Approximate Tax Revenue collected by New York State (4%)	\$6,617
Approximate Tax Revenue Collected by the County (4%)	\$12,606	Approximate Tax Revenue Collected by the County (4%)	\$6,617

Source: Camoin Associates, Lightcast, New York State Department of Taxation and Finance

Source: Camoin Associates, Lightcast, New York State Department of Taxation and Finance

⁵ Assumptions related to the percent of purchases that are taxable are based on a breakdown of typical household spending (Source: BLS and Lightcast). Spending on services and groceries are some of the biggest categories of household expenditures and are non-taxable.



TOTAL COUNTY FISCAL IMPACT

Combining sales tax revenue from both direct visitor spending and supported earnings, Lewis County receives approximately \$166,126 in annual sales tax revenue related to the county fairgrounds. Of this total, around \$87,937 is generated by out-of-county visitors.

Table 6

Total County Sales Tax Revenue Supported by All Visitors to Lewis County Fairgrounds

Direct Sales	\$153,520
Earnings	\$12,606
Total	\$166,126

Source: Camoin Associates, Lightcast, New York State Department of Taxation and Finance

Total County Sales Tax Revenue Supported by Out-of-County Visitors to Lewis County Fairgrounds

Direct Sales	\$81,320
Earnings	\$6,617
Total	\$87,937

Source: Camoin Associates, Lightcast, New York State Department of Taxation and Finance

ATTACHMENT A: WHAT IS ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS?

An economic impact analysis describes how “new” money entering a region influences the local economy. This “new” money can be generated in two ways:

- 1) When an industry, event, or policy brings new revenue into the region that would otherwise not exist.
- 2) When an industry, event, or policy retains revenue that would have otherwise left the region.

Economic impact analyses can also assess the negative economic implications of “losing” a particular business, industry, or attraction, which results in money leaving the region.

Economic impacts do not occur when spending simply shifts from one business or industry to another. For example, town residents attending a game at a new football stadium instead of going to the local movie theater will not generate new economic impacts. However, if town leaders decide to host a concert series at the new football stadium, new visitation and spending related to the concert series would create an economic impact.

UNDERSTANDING ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Economic impacts are typically broken down into direct, indirect, and induced effects.

Direct Effects are the new activities under investigation.

Example: The sale of RVs from a new manufacturer in Elkhart, IN, to the rest of the country.

Indirect Effects reflect the extent of local supply chains for the activity being analyzed.

Example: The steel, tires, and cabinets purchased by the RV manufacturer in Elkhart, IN, from local suppliers, the purchases made by those suppliers from their local suppliers, and so on.

Induced Effects represent the actions of employees who are supported by direct and indirect activities.

Example: An employee who works for the RV company’s primary tire supplier in Elkhart, IN, purchases groceries at the local supermarket.

Traditionally, the three types of effects are evaluated in terms of jobs, labor income or earnings, industry output, or sales, and value-added or gross regional product. The sum of the direct, indirect, and induced effects is equal to the total economic impact.

ESTIMATING ECONOMIC IMPACTS

An input-output (I-O) model is used to estimate these effects. In the US, I-O models are derived from the Bureau of Economic Analysis’ Input-Output Accounts. These accounts provide the economic “recipe” each industry follows to produce its output. This includes the value of inputs purchased from other industries, as well as the contributions of labor, taxes paid, and a measure of profits. I-O models also capture household spending patterns.

These inputs are adjusted for each study area based on the estimated portion of goods and services that businesses and households purchase from local suppliers. Adjustments are also made for in-commuting by workers who then take their earnings home and spend them outside the region.

The resulting “multipliers” show, for each direct dollar spent in the region, how many additional dollars (or cents) are generated at local suppliers (indirect) and providers of goods and services to households (induced). For example, if an industry has a multiplier of 2.5, for every positive or negative change to that industry. In this case, the total effect on the regional economy will be 2.5 times the original change.

BENEFITS OF AN ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

Economic impact analysis is a flexible tool that can be used to quantify the benefit/cost of a particular project, asset, or industry. To yield the most accurate results, studies of this nature rely heavily on high-quality data and research-based assumptions. A well-crafted economic impact analysis can be used by governments, businesses, and organizations to clearly tell a story about how a specific change will affect a given economic environment.

ATTACHMENT B: DATA SOURCES



Lightcast (formerly Emsi Burning Glass) is a global leader in labor market analytics, offering a data platform that gives a comprehensive, nuanced, and up-to-date picture of labor markets at all scales from national to local. Key components of the platform include traditional labor market information, job postings analytics, talent profile data, compensation data, and skills analytics. Lightcast integrates government data with information from online job postings, talent profiles, and resumes to produce timely intelligence on the state of the labor market. Job and compensation data is available by industry, occupation, educational program, and skill type.

[Learn More](#)



IMPLAN is an economic impact analysis platform built on data (at the county, state, and national level) on commodities, core competencies, deflators, demographics, employment and wages, environmental factors, industries, occupations, taxes, and trade flows. As a modeling tool and regional economic database, IMPLAN allows for easy comparison across regions, industries, and time.

[Learn More](#)

ABOUT CAMOIN ASSOCIATES

As the nation's only full-service economic development and lead generation consulting firm, Camoin Associates empowers communities through human connection backed by robust analytics.

Since 1999, Camoin Associates has helped local and state governments, economic development organizations, nonprofit organizations, and private businesses across the country generate economic results marked by resiliency and prosperity.

To learn more about our experience and projects in all of our service lines, please visit our website at www.camoinassociates.com. You can also find us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#).

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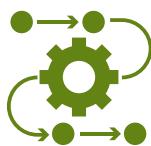


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SERVICE LINES



**Strategic and
Organizational Planning**



**Workforce Development
and Talent Retention**



**Prospecting and
Business Attraction**



**Target Industry Analytics
and Strategy**



**Housing Needs
Assessment**



**Economic and Fiscal
Impact Analysis**



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