

# After one-year absence, the **RODEO RETURNS**

By **JEFF BUDLONG**  
*EO Media Group*

**T**he Farm-City Pro Rodeo is back after a pandemic-forced one-year absence, and in many ways it is setting up to be one of the biggest since the rodeo began in 1988.

An estimated 500 cowboys are set to take part in the four-day event, Aug. 11-14, at the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center.

It figures to be one of the biggest rodeos in the nation that weekend with a record purse of \$17,500 per event plus entry fees in bareback riding, tie-down roping, steer wrestling, saddle bronc riding,

barrel racing and bull riding.

“We should have all of the top cowboys here as always,” Farm-City Pro Rodeo Board of Directors President David Bothum said. “It has been a little different because we have had a year off, and we want to make sure everything is lined up.”

Bothum said bringing the rodeo back is important to Hermiston for both financial and community reasons.

“It draws a lot of people from across the area as well as a lot of cowboys,” he said. “After this rodeo most of the rodeos are in the northwest so the cowboys stay around in this area. Plus, you get to see world champions.”

Bothum expects a large number of cowboys to attend the rodeo because of the truncated season a year ago due to the pandemic.

Cowboys are looking to pick up points for various tours, including the National Finals Rodeo, which ends the season in Las Vegas. The rodeo also draws some of the best animals, having won the award for best bucking stock twice.

The rodeo will be televised live on the Cowboy Channel, the official network of ProRodeo, and available in 42 million homes through cable and satellite systems.

“We were televised three years ago on CBS Sports, but it is not an every year deal,” Bothum said. “It will promote the town and the talent, and part of the money they give us for being televised goes toward the cowboys.”



**Tanner Aus hangs on during the 2019 bareback competition at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo.**

Ben Lonergan/EO Media Group, File

Family Night is Wednesday with face painting for children as well as a chance to meet and get an autograph from bull riders and clowns.

Thursday is Youth and Ag Night with a tribute to all farmers, and Patriot Night is Friday night, along with wine night for women to enjoy a wine tasting before the rodeo.

The rodeo grounds have seating for 8,500 spectators, and with restrictions being lifted in late June, Bothum is planning for a full house. Tickets are available online with reserved seating \$20 and general admission \$17. Gates open at 6 p.m. each night with rodeo action beginning at 7:45 p.m.

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