



Freedom 250

Great American Rodeo





GREAT AMERICAN RODEO

Dear Rodeo Leaders,

As we approach the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding on July 4, 2026, we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to unite every American in honoring our shared history. Rodeos are uniquely positioned to amplify this moment. They represent the backbone of rural America, where agriculture, community, and the cowboy spirit converge.

Following the success of the Great American State Fair initiative, launched under Executive Order 14189, over 38 states have already joined the celebration. From digital campaigns to flag ceremonies and concert tie-ins, the creativity and patriotism on display have been inspiring.

Now we are excited to extend this celebration to another cornerstone of American heritage: the rodeo. We are inviting rodeos across the country to participate in Freedom 250 by incorporating the branding and spirit of the initiative into events you already have planned. Whether it is a banner at the gate, a patriotic concert, or a social media post, every contribution counts. We understand this is a late-stage request and appreciate the complexity of your planning. This is not a call to create new programming. It is an opportunity to elevate what you already do best.

We kindly ask for your commitment to participate by November 30th. Once you confirm, we will send branding assets, brand guidance, and any contacts you may need. Our team is also happy to brainstorm with you or help tailor ideas to your event.

Thank you for your leadership and partnership in making Freedom 250 a truly historic celebration.

Warm regards,

Brooke L. Rollins

Secretary of Agriculture



Freedom 250 Rodeo Toolkit

How to Participate

We're inviting rodeos across the country to be part of a once-in-a-lifetime celebration: Freedom 250. This milestone is about honoring the spirit of our nation, and there's no better place to showcase that pride than in the heart of a rodeo arena.

We know this is a late request, and we deeply respect the time, energy, and planning that goes into your events. That's why we're not asking you to create anything new—we're simply asking you to do what you already do best, with a patriotic twist. Whether it's a banner at the gate, a shoutout from the announcer stand, or a themed funnel cake at the concession stand, every gesture counts.

No idea is too small. Every rodeo that participates (no matter how modestly) will be recognized as part of this historic national celebration. So we encourage you to do whatever you can. Your community, your traditions, and your pride in America are exactly what this moment is meant to honor.

Ways to Integrate Freedom 250 into Existing Programming

These ideas are designed to fit seamlessly into your current rodeo schedule:

- **Freedom 250 Branding & Social Media Participation Display:** logos, banners, and signage at entrances, arenas, vendor areas, and online platforms. Share your patriotic programming online—tag **@Freedom 250** and use **#Freedom 250** to be featured.
- **Opening Ceremony Enhancements:** Begin with a patriotic grand entry—flag-lifting fire trucks, mounted riders with flags, and the National Anthem. Announcers can share Freedom 250 messages and historical facts.
- **Patriotic Concerts:** Rebrand existing concerts as Freedom 250 Performance Concerts. Encourage patriotic songs. For artist booking support, contact Carlee.
- **Livestock Show Recognition:** Award patriotic ribbons or bandanas to livestock and exhibitors. Judges wear flag-themed sashes or pins.
- **Patriotic Food Branding:** Rename classic foods: Freedom Fries, Liberty Corn Dogs, Stars & Stripes Funnel Cakes, and more. Use signage to highlight Freedom 250.
- **All-American Pie Eating Contest:** Serve apple, cherry, and blueberry pies. Emcee in patriotic attire. Winners receive Freedom 250 medals or buckles.
- **Face Painting & Kids' Zone:** Offer patriotic face designs. Create a "Little Buckaroos' Patriot Corral" with obstacle courses and crafts like flags, masks, and sand bottles.
- **Veteran & First Responder Salute:** Host a daily salute honoring local heroes with a standing ovation and commemorative ribbon or pin.



- **Founding Fathers Booth:** Display portraits with QR codes linking to educational content. Style with rustic western decor.
- **America-Themed Prizes:** Offer patriotic prizes: bald eagle plushies, flag capes, cowboy hats, glow sticks, and more.
- **Freedom 250 Merchandise Tent:** Host a merch tent with Freedom 250 gear—hats, apparel, cups, flags—you name it, we have it! We provide staff and inventory; you provide the space. Contact Carlee to coordinate.
- **Rodeo Arena Decor:** Wrap bucking chutes, roping boxes, and announcer stands in red, white, and blue bunting. Add Freedom 250 decals to arena panels.
- **Flag Presentation on Horseback:** Include a mounted flag team riding in formation to patriotic music. Feature state and Freedom 250 flags.
- **Rodeo Royalty Spotlight:** Have rodeo queens and princesses wear Freedom 250 sashes or pins. Include them in flag presentations or salutes.
- **Freedom 250 Bronc or Bull Ride:** Designate one ride per performance as the “Freedom 250 Ride.” Use special music, announcer script, and award a themed buckle or ribbon.

New Freedom 250 Activations

Fireworks Finale

Host a red, white, and blue fireworks show set to patriotic music to close out the evening.

Patriotic Drone Light Show

Host a drone show set to music, forming shapes like the Liberty Bell, flag, or eagle.

Cowboy Poetry or Storytelling Corner

Set up a small stage or tent where local cowboys share patriotic poems or stories about American heroes and rodeo history.

American Heroes Celebration

Feature stories of American heroes—Founding Fathers, military, inventors, and rodeo legends—through live or video tributes, especially from your state.



What States Are Saying and Doing

Use These Highlights as Inspiration for Your Own

The Great American State Fair campaign has sparked incredible creativity and patriotic pride across the country. Over 38 states have joined the initiative, and each one has brought its own unique flavor to the celebration. Here are just a few standout examples to inspire your own rodeo integration:

Iowa State Fair

- Dedicated Freedom 250 webpage outlines plans for 2026, including nods to “The Spirit of Iowa ’76”
- Programming will focus on agriculture, industry, and the American dream, with red, white, and blue themes throughout the fairgrounds
- Concerts, contests, and exhibits will tie directly into the Freedom 250 celebration

Mississippi State Fair

- Opening ceremony featured Chief Cyrus Ben of the Choctaw Tribe, Mayor John Hohn of Jackson, the Mississippi National Guard TAG, a military flyover, and an honor guard by the Sons of the American Revolution
- October 8 designated as the Day of Prayer and Rededication of America as “One Nation Under God”
- Lee Greenwood headlined the closing concert, followed by a massive fireworks display
- Red, white and blue dress code encouraged for all fairgoers
- “Most Patriotic” competitions included food vendors, livestock stalls, and even a Most Patriotic Cow Contest
- Great American Parade and marching band competition added community-wide engagement

New Mexico State Fair

- Freedom 250 branding featured throughout the Agriculture Building at NM Expo Fairgrounds
- Country Store staff wore Freedom 250 t-shirts, reinforcing the theme across customer touchpoints
- A custom Hat Bar allowed guests to create personalized hats with Freedom 250 DTF transfers
- Signage and banners throughout the fairgrounds promoted the initiative

Wyoming State Fair

- Governor Gordon officially proclaimed participation, kicking off the celebration with statewide support
- A \$2.50 flash sale on July 4 tied directly to Freedom 250 branding
- Extensive media coverage across print, digital, and broadcast outlets



- Over 6,000 flags distributed across the fairgrounds and downtown Douglas
- Downtown Window Decorating Contest with local businesses and civic groups
- “Cowboys’ Constitution for Kids” launched with Sarah Falen to teach American values
- 4-H, FFA, and Livestock Superintendents integrated patriotic themes into barns and show rings