

**The First County Fair
October 1882**

Harbor Springs, Emmet County, Michigan

The First County Fair
Held on vacant lots in the east part of the village
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THE COUNTY FAIR

The Independent Democrat
October 3, 1882

The first meeting of the **Emmet County Agricultural Society** was held on the vacant lots in the east part of the village but Thursday and Friday, the two buildings erected for the occasion being crowded with products of **Emmet County** soil and shops.

Thursday morning opened up with a fine drizzling rain and good prospects for a stormy day. By noon however the clouds broke away and in the afternoon a large crowd was on the grounds.

Friday was the "*big day*" however, the sun rising early and shining brightly all day as if to make amends for Thursday's misconduct. Early in the morning farmers began coming in, in buggies, lumber wagons, on horseback, and the less fortunate on foot. Every train and boat helped to swell the throng, and in the afternoon the largest crowd **Harbor Springs** ever saw was taking in the sights on the grounds and about town.

The Harbor Springs Cornet Band furnished excellent music during the afternoon of both days. A running horse race came off about three O'clock, **A. Palmers** equine taking the lead and prize. **Col. I. D. Toll** of **Petoskey** made a short and spirited address, the speaker's remarks being well received. The gates were then thrown open to the crowd, who came and went without restraint.

We have no space to give a description of the exhibits in detail, and can only say that everyone was surprised at the quantity and quality of the productions shown.

The display of fruit was very fine, also the vegetables. The various kinds of potatoes exhibited only confirmed the fact that **Emmet County** beats the **State** on "*Fresh Apples.*" There was the usual display of mammoth cornstalks, squashes, beats, parsnips, etc., to be seen at every fair.

In the way of manufactures a considerable show was made which will be doubled at the next meeting. **Petoskey** people did not manifest a great deal of interest in the fair, the really fine display from the wood-turning works being the only thing of any importance from that town.

The ladies had a fine display of fancy work on exhibition, but such things are out of our line, and we can only say they were all nice. Several of our merchants made a display of the leading features of their business, among them **A. R. Matteson, Beamer & Young, C. S. Crandall, E. H. Martindale, A. M. Weston** and others.

The display of stock was good. Many fine blooded animals being on exhibition.

The list of premiums awarded was not received in time for insertion this week.

A proposition was submitted Friday afternoon to continue the fair one more day, but the majority of the exhibitors did not want "*too much of a good thing,*" and it was voted down, everybody going home well pleased with **Emmet County's** first Fair.

Looking at the fine display of productions of the farm and workshop, it was hard to realize that only seven years ago **Emmet County** was a howling wilderness, just coming into the control of the white man through the homestead law. And to the old settlers who were here and underwent the sufferings and hardships of the long winters before enough could be raised to live on, the success of the first exhibition of their productions must be doubly gratifying.

The gain receipts during the two days wee something over \$217.