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CASE STUDY

# COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS COMPLEX

Lorain County Agricultural Society





In an effort to make the fairgrounds a year-round event destination capable of supporting far more than the county’s annual fair, the Lorain County Agricultural Society undertook a transformative expansion anchored by the new Ross Expo Center and the Maureen M. Cromling Memorial Arena. Together these structures deliver a flexible complex designed to support agriculture, entertainment, sports, and community events throughout the year.

Authorized Nucor Builder Janotta & Herner served as the Design-Builder for the project, self-performing the design, engineering and construction of the new facilities, and partnered with Nucor Building Systems to provide a cost-effective, functional, and visually striking facility that balances tradition with versatility.

“The Ross Expo Center was designed to honor the agricultural heritage of the fairgrounds while also serving as a modern, state of the art venue capable of hosting events year-round,” said Kyle Stang, vice president of Janotta & Herner.

Functionality was equally critical to the design. Constructed as a true multi-purpose venue, the 68,200 sf Expo Center accommodates numerous events and gatherings with a layout that prioritizes openness, adaptability, and occupant comfort. A pre-engineered metal building system played a central role in achieving the project’s goals. The building features an expansive 150’ clear span and 20’ clear height, creating a large, unobstructed interior that allows the space to be easily reconfigured for a wide variety of events.

A Nucor building system was selected primarily for its efficiency and functional performance, enabling the Project Team to deliver expansive interior space required without compromising the budget. Insulated metal panels form the Expo Center’s envelope, supporting use throughout all months with occupant comfort.

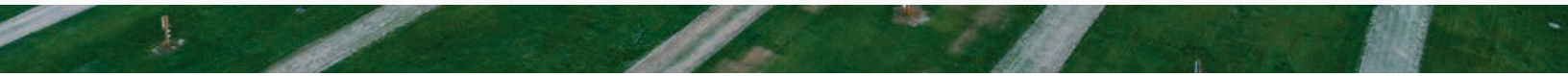
Unlike traditional fairground structures with limited seasonal use, the Expo Center was built as a fully conditioned facility. Heating, air conditioning, and robust ventilation systems were incorporated to support both livestock events as well as high-occupancy gatherings, ensuring comfort regardless of season or event type.

Complementing the Expo Center, the 32,400 sf, open-air horse arena is a competition-sized covered venue that provides ample clear span and height for unbarred use. Its aesthetics align with the Expo Center and includes Nucor’s CFR roof system and A-Panels along the perimeter.

Historically, the Lorain County Fair generated the majority of its revenue during a single week each year. The new complex



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fundamentally changes that model by enabling the fairgrounds to host events and generate income throughout all weather conditions. Beyond financial impact, the facility elevates the fairgrounds’ presence within the community, positioning it as an active destination rather than a once-a-year attraction.

Janotta & Herner secured the project in a competitive bid environment by exploring multiple design and construction approaches and leveraging a collaborative partnership with Nucor to identify the optimal balance of cost, functionality, and performance.

“Janotta & Herner and Nucor have been partners for a long time,” said Stang. “Nucor was integral in the design-build process to assist Janotta & Herner in analyzing construction and cost options, ultimately delivering a facility that maximized the building use while remaining cost-competitive.”

Open communication and flexibility throughout the process were key contributors to the project’s success, allowing the

team to adapt materials and systems as needed to meet the owner’s goals while staying competitive in the bidding process.

The Lorain County Fair Expo complex delivers a multi-functional facility that honors agricultural heritage while unlocking new opportunities for all seasons. With expansive clear spans, flexible interiors, and durable metal construction, the project represents a long-term investment in the fairgrounds and the broader Lorain County, Ohio community.

*Janotta & Herner is a Northern Ohio–based design-build general contractor serving industrial, warehousing, commercial, and food-grade markets. With architects, engineers, and designers under one roof—along with more than 100 skilled tradespeople who self-perform key trades, including PEMB erection—the company delivers efficient, seamless construction solutions from concept through completion. [JanottaHerner.com](http://JanottaHerner.com)*



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