

Residents encouraged to participate in International Plowing Match 2023 Beautification Competition

Written By **Paula Brown**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Dufferin County residents have the chance to showcase local county spirit by participating in a beautification competition for the 2023 International Plowing Match and Rural Expo.

The 2023 International Plowing Match (IPM) and Rural Expo is a five-day celebration of agriculture and rural living. It will be held in Bowling Green, between Grand Valley and Laurel, from Sep. 19 to Sep. 23. In addition to the plowing competitions, the five-day agricultural showcase has multiple events and activities scheduled, including the IPM 2023 Beautification Competition.

The Beautification Competition is the host community's opportunity to be creative and showcase their Dufferin County spirit to welcome the event's estimated 70,000 visitors to the area.

'This is the first time Dufferin County has hosted the event and we want to make sure we put our best foot forward,' said Kate Bryan, chair of the Beautification Competition Committee.

The theme for this year's IPM Beautification Competition is 'Breathe in Dufferin - Ontario's Heartland,' and will see the outdoor visual displays incorporate the flowers (hydrangeas and fall mums) and colours (blue, rust and cream) associated with the 2023 event.

Local organizers said the entries will be judged on the best use of flowers, the official colours, the theme, and overall impact and appeal. The competition will be scored out of a possible 100 points.

A total of \$2,500 in prize money is up for grabs in the competition, with first place winning \$300, second place receiving \$200 and third place awarded \$100 in each of the four categories: urban, rural, business, and barn quilts. Local churches are also encouraged to participate and are eligible for submission through the business category.

Those interested in participating in the Beautification Competition can do so by downloading the entry form at the International Plowing Match website (www.plowingmatch.org) and submitting the completed form along with an 8" by 10" photo (high-resolution jpg.) of the outdoor display by email to IPM2023Beautification@gmail.com.

The competition is open to everyone within Dufferin County and does not require an entry fee to take part. The deadline to enter the contest is Aug. 28.