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STILL FRYING AT THE DELMARVA CHICKEN FESTIVAL

Mention the Delmarva Chicken Festival and likely the first thing that comes to mind is the festival's Giant Fry Pan. When the 65th and final Delmarva Chicken Festival gets underway at the Queen Anne's County 4-H Park near Centreville, Maryland on June 20-21, 2014, the renowned pan will be front and center and fired up ready to cook an estimated four tons of chicken.

The pan's storied history began in June 1950 when it made its first appearance at the third Delmarva Chicken Festival in Dover, Delaware. Designed and built by the Mumford brothers at Mumford Sheet Metal Works in Selbyville, Delaware, the pan was given to Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc. (DPI) for use in promoting chicken produced on the Delmarva Peninsula. Indeed, the giant pan has fulfilled its mission! Over the course of the pan's more than 60-year history, it has cooked tons of chicken and remains one of the festival's most publicized attractions.

The pan measures 10 feet in diameter with an eight-foot handle and weighs in at 650 pounds. It is eight inches deep, requires 180 gallons of cooking oil to fill, and can cook 800 chicken quarters at one time. When readied for operation, the pan is placed on a concrete block base over gas-fired burners. About 150 gallons of LP gas are used during a two-day festival.

In 1988 after 38 years of use, the original pan was retired and replaced with a new one, identical in dimensions to the original. The original giant fry pan is on permanent loan to the Historical Society of Delaware.

During the 65th Delmarva Chicken Festival, the giant pan will be operated by the Queen Anne's County Farm Bureau. Platters will include one chicken quarter seasoned with the famous English coating blend, homemade coleslaw, applesauce, and a roll for just \$7. Family buckets of four chicken quarters and four rolls will be available at \$12 per bucket and, for smaller appetites, the Farm Bureau will offer a "shortie" order of one chicken quarter and a roll for \$4.

Supporting the Queen Anne's County Farm Bureau with the donation of products and services are *Perdue Farms Inc.* supplying the thousands of pounds of chicken that will be cooked, *Mid-Atlantic Propane Gas Association* in cooperation with *Callahan Gas* supplying the propane that will fire the giant fry pan, *Perdue Agribusiness* and *DuPont Pioneer* supplying the soybean oil that will be used in cooking the chicken, and the *English Company* supplying its famous seasoning blend that will coat the chicken.

Along with chicken from the Giant Fry Pan, the festival will offer a long menu of other food items that include chicken sandwiches, chicken wings, chicken cheese steaks, and chicken hoagies. To complete the dining experience, there will be French fries, funnel cakes, hand-dipped ice cream, baked goods, and Italian ice. For

snacking while enjoying the event's live musical entertainment, cups of freshly popped kettle corn will fill the bill.

Visitors will be able to quench their thirst on a variety of Pepsi products including bottled water, along with fresh squeezed lemonade, and fruit smoothies. All food choices and beverages will be available at reasonable prices during festival hours of 10 a.m. until 8 p.m.

The Delmarva Chicken Festival is sponsored by Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc. (DPI) and will be hosted this year by Queen Anne's County. The event is open to the public and admission is FREE. For additional festival information and a schedule of activities, visit www.dpichicken.org and click on 2014 Delmarva Chicken Festival or www.visitqueenannes.org.

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Editor's note: Fry pan photos are available upon request by calling or emailing Connie Parvis as shown above.