



ONTARIO FESTIVALS AND EVENTS GET A BOOST

McGuinty Government Supporting Festivals and Events in Local Communities

For Immediate Release

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Ontario is enhancing the support it provides to festivals and events across the province.

The Province will invest \$11 million in *Celebrate Ontario 2009* to support 224 community events across Ontario, an increase of 150 per cent over last year. This investment – \$2 million more than the \$9 million originally announced – recognizes the important economic benefits these events have for communities.

Since 2007, the McGuinty government has invested \$25 million in the *Celebrate Ontario* program, as part of an effort to encourage more tourists to discover the province.

From the Canadian Tulip Festival in Ottawa to the Schrieber Heritage Days in Schrieber, festivals and events boost local economies by attracting new visitors to communities across the province. This funding will help the festivals and events enhance their tourism offerings and give visitors new reasons to travel in Ontario.

“Our government recognizes the economic impact that festivals and events have on local communities throughout the province. By enabling community events to improve their product, we are helping them reach new audiences, create more jobs and generate more economic activity.”

- Monique Smith, Minister of Tourism

“Festivals and events have a huge economic impact on their communities. With Ontario’s commitment to enhancing the quality of festivals and events in this province, we are in turn helping to fill hotels, bed & breakfasts, restaurants, and other local attractions – the ripple effects are many.”

- Gary Masters, Executive Director, Festivals and Events Ontario.

"Celebrate Ontario funding helps us to improve our programming and keep a competitive edge in the tourism marketplace. It's not only an investment in our festival, it's an investment in the many local businesses that rely on the visitors we draw."

- Hitomi Suzuta, President of the Ottawa Folk Festival's Board of Directors

QUICK FACTS

- ③ 300,000 people in Ontario are directly or indirectly employed by the tourism industry
- ③ In 2007, tourists spent over \$22 billion in Ontario
- ③ Last year, 90 festivals and events were funded through *Celebrate Ontario 2008*
- ③ In the 2008 Ontario Budget, the McGuinty government committed to stable and ongoing funding for the *Celebrate Ontario* program

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