



# News Release

## For Immediate Release

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### **The Festival Expands Partnership with BayCare Through Property Purchase**

Plant City, Fla., March 17, 2026 – The Florida Strawberry Festival announced today that its partnership with BayCare Health System has widened through the purchase of the property that was formerly home to South Florida Baptist Hospital, creating new opportunities for future Festival growth and improved guest access.

The newly acquired property will play an important role in supporting the Festival’s long-term planning, particularly by providing additional parking and operational space for close to 600,000 guests who attend the event each year in Plant City.

Festival leadership says the expansion reflects a shared commitment between the Festival and BayCare to continue investing in the community while preparing for the future of one of Florida’s most recognized annual events.

“This is an exciting step forward for the Florida Strawberry Festival and for our partnership with BayCare,” said President of the Florida Strawberry Festival Kyle Robinson. “The addition of this property helps us plan for the long-term growth of the Festival and improve the experience for our guests. BayCare has been an incredible partner, from the multipurpose building showcased during the 2026 Festival to now helping make this property acquisition possible. Together, we’re investing in the future of the Festival and the community we serve.”

The expanded partnership builds on BayCare’s ongoing support of the Festival, including the 15,000-square-foot BayCare multipurpose building that debuted during the 2026 event. The facility provides a climate-controlled gathering space featuring restrooms, a showcase stage, seating areas, vendor space, and a permanent strawberry shortcake location celebrating one of the Festival’s most beloved traditions.

Located just north of the Milton E. Hull Building and south of the Amscot Main Ticket Gate 1, the building was designed to serve both Festival guests and the community year-round as a flexible venue for receptions, corporate events, trade shows, competitions, and other gatherings. Festival leaders say the property purchase and facility improvements represent a continued investment in ensuring the Festival can accommodate growing attendance while maintaining a welcoming and accessible experience for guests.

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## **About the Florida Strawberry Festival**

The Florida Strawberry Festival is an 11-day community event celebrating the strawberry harvest of Eastern Hillsborough County. Each year, nearly 600,000 visitors enjoy the Festival's headline entertainment, youth livestock shows, exhibits of commerce, and, of course, its strawberry shortcake. The 2027 Florida Strawberry Festival will take place March 4 through March 14 in Plant City, Fla. For more information, visit [www.flstrawberryfestival.com](http://www.flstrawberryfestival.com), download the Festival's app available on Google Play and the Apple App Store, or follow the Festival on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X, and YouTube ([#berryfest27](https://www.instagram.com/berryfest27)).

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