



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**DAUPHIN'S COUNTRYFEST 2016:  
Dwight Yoakam confirmed for Sunday's line-up**

December 11, 2015 (Dauphin MB) -- **Dauphin's Countryfest**, Canada's longest running country music festival, is pleased to announce that country music star **Dwight Yoakam** will play the Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries Main Stage on Sunday night.

Pioneering honky-tonker Yoakam began his major label recording career 30 years ago, with distinctive vocals accented with his Kentucky croon. His latest album, *Second Hand Heart*, was self-produced, and reflects where he's been, and where he's going.

Yoakam played Countryfest once before, in 2004. Now fans will get a second chance to see him in 2016.

"Dwight Yoakam performed a fantastic show the last time he was at Countryfest, and we're looking forward to hosting him again." says **Eric Irwin** President of **Dauphin's Countryfest**.

Dwight Yoakam joins previously announced artists **Autumn Hill, High Valley, Dallas Smith, Dean Brody, Chris Janson, Thomas Rhett**, and **Lady Antebellum**. He'll be performing on Sunday night, along with a country legend recently named the Greatest Country Artist of all Time...

**BILLBOARD HONOURS MERLE HAGGARD WITH TOP RECOGNITION:**

Back in November, Billboard Magazine released their list of "The 30 Greatest Country Artists of the Modern Era." Topping the list, in the number one position, is **Merle Haggard**. This is why they chose him: "Jimmie Rodgers and Johnny Cash sang about the prison experience, but Merle Haggard lived it. A singer/songwriter who made his mark with songs about the common men and women, his music ran the gamut – from songs of love and heartbreak to unabashed patriotism."

<http://www.billboard.com/photos/6721954/best-country-artists-of-all-time/1>

It's not just media who have labelled Haggard the best country artist. The acclaim comes from his peers, too. Country Outfitter Life recently posed the question to Country Music Hall of Fame member Vince Gill, about who he thought was the greatest country music artist of all-time, and Vince Gill said Merle Haggard. "He epitomized everything I wanted to be," said Gill.

<http://countryoutfitter.life/vince-gills-tells-us-who-the-greatest-country-music-artist-of-all-time-is/>

Merle Haggard will entertain fans at Dauphin's Countryfest for the first time ever, on Sunday, July 3.

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**GIVE THE GIFT OF COUNTRYFEST FOR CHRISTMAS:**

Tickets for Dauphin's Countryfest can be purchased online at [www.countryfest.ca](http://www.countryfest.ca), by calling 1-800-361-7300, or in-person at the Dauphin's Countryfest office (28 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NE in Dauphin).

**ABOUT DAUPHIN'S COUNTRYFEST:**

The 27<sup>th</sup> annual Dauphin's Countryfest takes place June 30-July 3, 2016. Canada's longest running country music festival has been attracting the biggest names in country music to one of the most beautiful regions of Manitoba since 1990. Situated on the edge of Riding Mountain National Park, the unique outdoor amphitheatre built into the side of an escarpment provides every patron a perfect view from any one of the 14,000 seats in the house.

Dauphin's Countryfest is a not-for-profit organization that consists of a 12-member volunteer Board of Directors and a membership of more than 2000 loyal supporters. Organizers credit over 2000 volunteers who work tirelessly each year providing essential services for the festival weekend, while fundraising for their respective community organizations. In addition to various community contributions, Countryfest pays out approximately \$150,000 each year to community organizations that provide services for the festival.

Dauphin's Countryfest was named a finalist at the prestigious Canadian Tourism Awards in 2013, nominated in the category of Tourism Event of the Year. The festival was also awarded the 2012 Philanthropist of the Year Award from The Dauphin & District Community Foundation, given to individuals or businesses that show the true spirit of philanthropy and giving. [www.countryfest.ca](http://www.countryfest.ca)

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