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QuickChek remains title sponsor of N.J. balloon festival



By Craig Turpin | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com

For the 24th consecutive year, QuickChek is returning as title sponsor of the annual [New Jersey Festival of Ballooning](#) in Readington Township, according to a news release issued by the festival.

The Whitehouse Station-based convenience market chain's sponsorship is the longest-running sponsorship of any festival in the United States, according to sponsorship analysis firm IEG. The balloon festival, according to its organizers, is the largest summertime hot air balloon and music festival in North America.

This year's festival takes place July 29-31 at Solberg Airport in Readington. A record 175,000 people attended last year's festival.

"This annual event has an amazing impact on Hunterdon County's tourism industry," said Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno. "It is not surprising that the Festival has been repeatedly acknowledged as a Top 100 Festival in North America by the American Bus Association. I encourage both residents of New Jersey and surrounding areas to attend and experience this showcase event."

QuickChek has maximized its sponsorship of this three day event into a nine month long partnership, according to the news release.

"The balloon festival is our number one branding event," said QuickChek Chief Executive Officer Dean Durling, whose family-owned company operates 143 locations throughout New Jersey, the Hudson Valley and Long Island. "It has proven to be a highly effective way to introduce consumers to our brand and deliver our message of providing restaurant-quality food and the best cup of coffee on the market at a great value, as well as our outstanding customer service. It truly is a showcase event for us."

Last summer the company launched its new in-store Q Café to festival attendees. It was paired with QuickChek's on-site 2,700-square-foot, air conditioned replica store. The company also has a hospitality tent for anyone to use.

"QuickChek is an excellent example of how a company continues to connect with its customers, attract new ones, and integrate all facets of its corporate mission," said Festival Executive Producer Howard Freeman. "We share many of the same beliefs, including a sense of serving our communities, which have made this a true partnership from the very beginning. Together we have been able to produce the greatest event of its kind in the world year after year."

According to the festival organizers, the event has an economic impact of \$42.7 million on the state's travel and tourism and local economies and has raised more than \$2.55 million for local charities, non-profit organizations and children's hospitals since The Festival Group and QuickChek came together in 1993.