

# Watsonville celebrates strawberries this weekend

Events

By **DONNA JONES**

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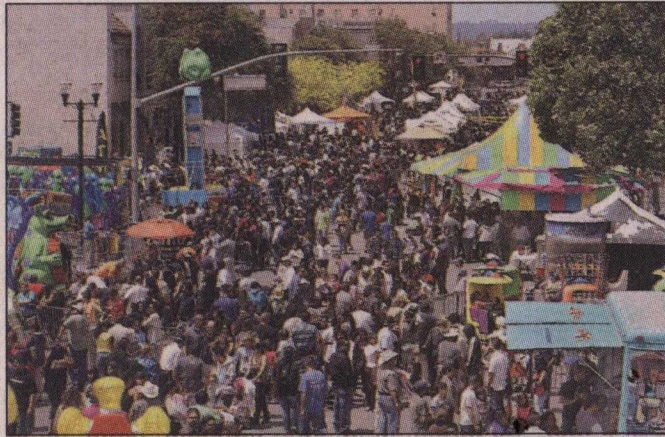
**WATSONVILLE** — The 19th annual Watsonville Strawberry Festival at Monterey Bay promises to be one sweet event.

Strawberry shortcake is only the start. There will be strawberry nachos, strawberry kabobs, strawberry ice cream, strawberry pizza and just plain strawberries for sale.

The city-sponsored event Saturday and Sunday downtown also will feature live music, arts and crafts vendors, a carnival and vendors offering a range of treats, from Hawaiian barbecue to kettle corn.

“It’s a way to bring the community together, to unify the community, to cel-

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DAN COYRO/SENTINEL FILE

Downtown Watsonville is filled with celebrants during the 2011 Strawberry Festival. This year’s event is Saturday and Sunday.

7-31-13

**IF YOU GO**  
WATSONVILLE  
STRAWBERRY  
FESTIVAL

**WHAT:** Carnival, arts and crafts, live music, food vendors, and strawberry treats

**WHEN:** 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

**WHERE:** Downtown Watsonville

**COST:** Free

**DETAILS:** [cityofwatsonville.org/visitors/strawberry-festival](http://cityofwatsonville.org/visitors/strawberry-festival)

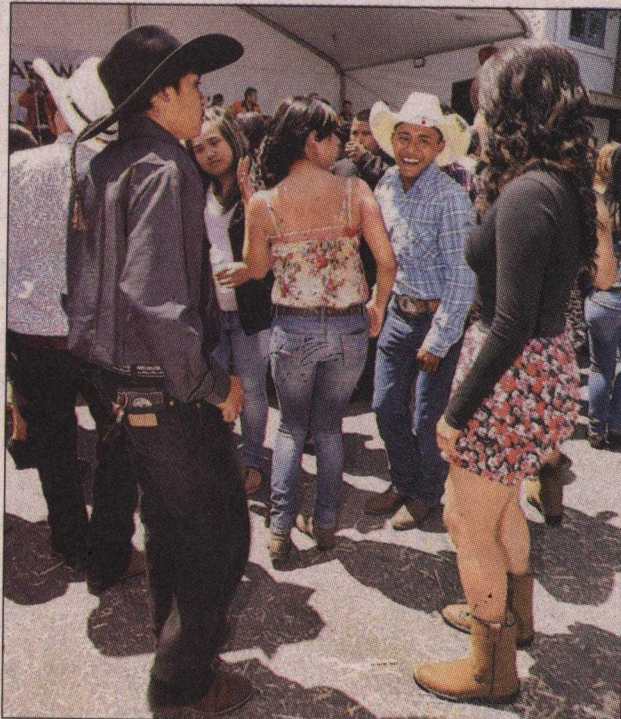
## FESTIVAL

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celebrate something so important to Watsonville, not just economically,” said Israel Tirado, a city Parks and Community Services recreation supervisor. “I don’t think anyone in Watsonville doesn’t love to eat strawberries. They’re the freshest in the world here, and Watsonville as a community takes pride in that and this event tries to showcase that.”

Watsonville is home to the California Strawberry Commission for good reason. Strawberries are Santa Cruz County’s premier crop, valued at almost \$200 million in 2011. Thousands of acres of the sweet red fruit surround the city, and industry heavyweights such as Driscoll’s are in the neighborhood.

Growers have donated 11 pallets of fresh strawberries to the event. More than a dozen nonprofit agencies will benefit from the bounty as they turn the fruit into



DAN COYRO/SENTINEL FILE

A young dance crowd fills Main Street during the 2011 Watsonville Strawberry Festival. This year’s event goes off Saturday and Sunday.

fundraising treats.

Tirado said an expanded

carnival, set up on Main Street between Second

Street and Riverside Drive. The Berry-Go-Round and other tame rides will be back to please the younger set, but some new attractions are being added for teens.

“I’m not promising the Giant Dipper,” he said, referring to the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk’s historic roller coaster. “But the rides will be a little more thrilling, a little more scary.”

Main Street will be closed from East Beach to Riverside Drive, along with Peck Street, Maple Street and Second Street.

Parking is available at the Civic Plaza garage on Rodriguez Street, a half block east of Second Street. The \$5 fee benefits Watsonville police and fire cadet programs.

Volunteers are being recruited to staff an information booth and help with decorations. To help, call Marisol Jimenez at 831-728-6084.

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