

ANIMAL WELFARE OR ANIMAL RIGHTS: DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE?

By the Ethics and Animal Welfare Committee, of the Saskatchewan Horse Federation

Animal Welfare

Since earliest times animals have traditionally been sustainers, companions and workers for humankind.

Animal welfare groups defend and support the humane use of animals, while striving to understand and promote the safety, health and well-being of animals.

They take seriously the issue of wise stewardship of all living things, and actively resist abusive or inhumane practices that may occur either by intent, neglect or carelessness.

Those in the horse industry embrace the ideology of Animal Welfare. The Saskatchewan Horse Federation and its member associations support Animal Welfare and the humane use of animals.

Animal Rights

These groups, that number in the hundreds in North America alone, promote an extreme policy of animal use and rights. They claim humans have no right to use animals at all - for food, research, work, entertainment, sport or even companionship. Instead they argue animals have the same rights as humans.

Animal Rights Activists often use forms of extremism to achieve their goals - threats, vandalism, dramatic demonstrations and sometimes even bombings or other violence.

The "hidden agenda" of animal rightists is to release animals from all forms of human use or control. This ultimate goal would result in vegetarianism and domesticated species being returned to the wild.

Animal rights groups want to see the end of the horse industry.

What should you do?

- ☐ Educate yourselves, your families and friends about animal welfare.
- ☐ Practice what you preach.
- ☐ Educate the public about your horses.
- ☐ Always give a "user-friendly" impression: Pet the horse, explain how it is fed and maintained, its personality and character.
- ☐ Avoid confrontations - media attention is a powerful ally for activists.
- ☐ Present clean, healthy, happy animals in all public situations.
- ☐ Think carefully about the ethics of winning and profit.
- ☐ Respect and observe the rules of your breed/discipline.
- ☐ Exercise your right to information about groups to whom you give money.

Saskatchewan Horse Federation Statement of Principle

The Saskatchewan Horse Federation sanctions the humane treatment of the equine species in all matters pertaining to their use and upholds the rights of people to own and use horses for purposes of work, of sport and recreation.

The Saskatchewan Horse Federation is committed to:

- ☐ Upholding the welfare of horses, regardless of value, as a primary concern in all activities.
- ☐ Requiring horses are not subjected to mistreatment and they be treated with the respect and the compassion they deserve.
- ☐ Ensuring owners, trainers, exhibitors and their agents use responsible care in the handling, treatment and transportation of any horses placed in their care for any purpose.
- ☐ Providing for the continuous well-being of horses by encouraging routine inspection and consultation with health care professionals and other show officials to achieve the highest possible standards of nutrition, health, comfort, sanitation and safety as a matter of standard operating procedure.
- ☐ Continuing to support scientific studies on equine health and welfare.
- ☐ Increasing education in training and horsemanship practises.
- ☐ Requiring owners, trainers and exhibitors to know and follow their sanctioning organization's rules and to work within industry regulations in all equine activities.
- ☐ Reviewing, revising and formulating rules and regulations to protect the welfare of horses.

The standard by which conduct or treatment will be measured is that which a reasonable person, informed and experienced in generally accepted equine training and exhibition procedures, would determine is neither cruel, abusive nor inhumane.