



THE BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

POSITION STATEMENT

FARM ANIMALS IN RODEOS AND OTHER ENTERTAINMENT

The BC SPCA is opposed to the infliction of pain or suffering upon, or the killing of any farm animal for the purpose of recreation, sport or entertainment.

The use of farm animals for recreation, sport or entertainment is only acceptable if:

- the Five Freedoms are ensured for all animals involved, including animals used for breeding or training, and animals that have been retired from the activity;
- humane training and transport methods are used;
- risk of injury is low;
- their portrayal is not demeaning toward the individual animal or the species.

The BC SPCA recognizes British Columbia's ranching tradition and supports the showcasing of low-stress handling skills and horse riding events that do not cause fear, frustration, anxiety, pain or injury to an animal.

The BC SPCA only accepts rodeo events and other exhibitions or competitions involving farm animals if the Five Freedoms are provided to all animals during housing, training, transport and the performances themselves.

Accordingly, the BC SPCA opposes events that function by causing fear, frustration, anxiety, pain or injury to an animal, whether or not they are sanctioned by a professional rodeo association.

The BC SPCA emphasizes that the following practices are particularly inhumane and are therefore absolutely unjustified by these standards:

- the jerking or twisting of the head or neck of any animal, as occurs in calf roping and steer wrestling
- electric prodding, tail-twisting, kicking or other physical abuse;
- use of flank straps, sharpened spurs and locked rowels (the mechanism that rotates the spur) to encourage bucking
- use of extra-thin or sharp bits
- use of thin or angular-edged whips

DEFINITIONS

Farm animals: Domesticated animals intentionally reared for food, fibre, labour, or other profitable means for humans. Does not include animals bred or raised commercially for companionship or research.

Five Freedoms: A concept first developed in 1965 by The Brambell Committee, formed by the UK government to examine the conditions on commercial farms. Now internationally recognized, the Five Freedoms are considered applicable to all animals.

The *BC SPCA's Five Freedoms* describe conditions that must be fulfilled in order to prevent the suffering of domesticated animals in human care. We acknowledge that absolute provision of these freedoms may not be possible, but we expect all animal guardians to strive to provide them. The *BC SPCA's Five Freedoms* are:

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
2. Freedom from pain, injury, and disease
3. Freedom from distress
4. Freedom from discomfort
5. Freedom to express behaviours that promote well-being.

Low-stress handling: Methods that use the handler's knowledge of flight zones and other principles of animal behaviour to move animals in a calm and careful manner, minimizing stress on the animals and the people involved.

Professionally sanctioned rodeo events: calf-roping, steer-wrestling, team-roping, bronc-riding, bareback riding and bull riding.

Rodeo events not professionally sanctioned include: chuck wagon racing, calf dressing, wild cow milking, greasy pig or chicken chasing, "mutton busting," or calf riding.

Approved by the Board of Directors – October 11th, 2010