

AQHA

# Animal Welfare Commission

August 23, 2018

Amarillo, Texas

Welcome & Thank You!

## Animal Welfare Commission

### Why?

- Animal welfare is the single most important issue facing the horse industry today – not just AQHA, but the entire industry.
- To prosper, if not survive, we must be on the cutting edge of protecting our horses.
- AQHA has opportunity/responsibility to lead & be an exemplar

# Animal Welfare Commission

## Why?

- Responsibility of most accomplished professional horsemen, as teachers & role models
- Responsibility of least experienced who deserve to learn the right way to treat horses from day one
- Enticement for all to stay in an industry that truly cares about its horses



# Animal Welfare Commission

## Why?

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AQHA protecting the horse, its members, &  
the industry

## Animal Welfare Is Not New in AQHA

- “One of my prime objectives was to see that the sport of showing & racing is maintained on the highest possible level in accordance with AQHA rules.”
- “I have no sympathy for cheaters & they should pay the penalty when proven guilty of infractions.”
- “I am confident that the vast majority of our membership is in full agreement with AQHA rules.”
- “Let’s not let a few destroy our industry.”

*Jack Anderson, AQHA President, 1983*

## It Is Not Just AQHA



- We live in a world of accountability
- Famous athletes have been prevented entry to halls of fame, removed from halls of fame, or had their titles withdrawn because of some form of cheating, use of performance enhancing drugs, other dishonesty

## AQHA Mission Statement

- Every American Quarter Horse shall, at all times, be treated humanely and with dignity, respect, and compassion





# Animal Welfare Commission

- Recognizing that animal welfare is the single most important issue facing the equine industry today, the AQHA Executive Committee created the Animal Welfare Commission in 2012.
- AWC reports directly to AQHA EC





## Animal Welfare Commission Mission

- To serve as AQHA's primary body for rules, policies, programs, and procedures related to all areas of animal welfare

AMERICAN  
QUARTER  
HORSE  
ASSOCIATION



# Animal Welfare Commission Charge

- Identify issues negatively affecting & enhancing the welfare of the American Quarter Horse
- Stay current on all animal welfare issues
- Recommend actions that will help to protect the American Quarter Horse from inhumane practices and AQHA and its members from the negative impacts associated with those practices.

## Animal Welfare Commission Mission

- Share discussion, action items, and recommendations with alliance partners



# Animal Welfare Commission Results

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AQHA Statement of Position on Animal Welfare  
posted at AQHA events

## AWC Results - 2012

- Developed fines & penalty system
- Developed AQHA warning card system
- Defined levels of offenses for components of Rule VIO204
- Identified permitted/unpermitted training equipment at AQHA events
- Establish a warning database to monitor repeat offenders



## AWC Results - 2012



- Revised 1<sup>st</sup> line of AQHA mission statement to read:
  - “To record & preserve pedigrees of the American Quarter Horse while maintaining the integrity of the breed & welfare of its horses”
- Added 5<sup>th</sup> objective to mission statement that reads:
  - “To ensure the American Quarter Horse is treated humanely, with dignity, respect, & compassion, at all times”

## AWC Results - 2013



- Made equipment recommendations:
  - Tie downs - no cavesson or curb strap connected to tie-downs in roping, speed events, team penning, ranch sorting, mounted shooting
  - Mechanical hackamores – no visible metal over nose; nosebands should be covered in leather
  - Rope & drop nosebands & cavessons can be used as training tack if not excessively tight
  - Allow bonnets of rope, flat nylon webbing or leather (minimum 3/8” width) in speed events, team penning, ranch sorting, mounted shooting
  - Exhibitors schooling in a discipline in tack not allowed by AQHA or respective alliance will be asked to cease using it

## AWC Results - 2014

- Prohibited use of lighters in halter classes
- Prohibited use of lip chains at AQHA events





## AWC Results - 2015

- Updated AQHA Show Fines & Penalties Chart & included it in AQHA's rulebook
- Added Clenbuterol to list of prohibited drugs & substances



## AWC Results - 2015

- 204.13 to make the following prohibited equipment a Level 1 Violation
  - Riding in curb without a curb strap
  - Excessively tight cavessons
  - Draw reins attached between or around front legs
  - Side reins
- VIO204.14 use any item or appliance that restricts ~~movement or circulation~~ of horse's tail



## AWC Results - 2015

- VIO204.15 ~~exhibiting~~ a horse which appears to be sullen, dull, lethargic, emaciated, drawn, or overly tired
- VIO204.17 applying excessive pressure on or excessively jerking of a halter lead shank or ~~an allowed~~ lip chain



## AWC Results - 2016

- Confirmed that only legal AQHA equipment may be used in alliance partner classes at AQHA produced shows
- Developed a rule that would prohibit the use of paint and/or other substances to cover-up abuse
- Prohibited belly bands at AQHA shows
- Clarified that trail poles used for practice, including in the warm-up pen, must adhere to SHW466.2



## AWC Results - 2017

- Reworded AQHA rule SHW325.1.2, which constitutes obvious lameness, to read, “Lameness is obvious at a walk.”
- Implemented the no jerk own rule for tie down roping
- Modified AQHA rule VIO204.14 to read, “..use of any item or appliance that restricts the circulation of the horse’s tail (minimum Level 3); use of any item or appliance other than a weighted tail that restricts movement of the horse’s tail (minimum Level 1); use of any drug, chemical, foreign substance, surgical procedure, or trauma that would alter a horse’s normal tail function (minimum Level 2)”

## AWC Results - 2017

- Allowed hydroxyzine to be submitted on a medication report form as long as all requirements of AQHA rule VIO403 are met
- Amended the VIO405.9 Furosemide (Lasix) – the maximum permitted plasma concentration of furosemide is 100 nanograms per milliliter. Each 24 hours, the dose should not exceed 500mg. When used, furosemide must be administered IV at least 4 hours prior to competition. Medication report form must be filed with show management as required in VIO403 above.

## AWC Results - 2017

- Amended rules below to read: No person or entity shall:
- VIO108.7 hide or attempt to hide the natural markings of a horse by surgery (violator will be disciplined & horse shall be disqualified)
- VIO108.8 at any time, apply any substance, including but not limited to any type of colorant, dye, glue, hair, or hide or attempt to hide the natural markings of a horse (violator & horse, as above)
- VIO 108.9 at any time, apply any substance including but not limited to any type of colorant, dye, glue, or hair to a horse's shoulder, belly, flank, or head (violator & horse)

# AWC Results - 2017

- Added hair testing to AQHA rules VIO302 & SHW120.1
- Racing Media/Award Policy – If a racing jurisdiction reports that a horse tested positive for a Class 1 or 2 substance, clenbuterol, or any other medication other than those defined by ARCI as being a controlled therapeutic medication, such horse shall be ineligible for AQHA awards or online polls in the calendar year of the positive test, including pending violations.
- Reviewed breed specific QH medication rules implemented with ARCI
- AQHA commitment to racing welfare outlined





# Materials Developed

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU WITNESS OR SUSPECT INHUMANE TREATMENT

AQHA supports humane treatment of horses at all equine events, as well as at other locations, and recognizes that all of us are responsible for protecting the horse.

### AT AN AQHA EVENT:

AQHA has processes in place to oversee humane treatment at its AQHA events, to receive and review reports of inhumane treatment, and to impose penalties commensurate with the inhumane treatment.

### IF AN INCIDENT OCCURS AT AN AQHA EVENT:

- First and foremost, do not put yourself in danger
- If possible, get other witnesses
- Promptly report the matter to show management and an AQHA steward (if one is present)
- Provide documentation to show management and an AQHA steward
- Documentation should include your name and contact information; name and date of show; date, time, and location of observed inhumane treatment; detailed description of the observed inhumane treatment; name of person(s) involved; detailed description of the horse, such as color, markings, and name (if possible); names and contact information of any witnesses; names of show management and steward to whom the matter was reported
- If possible, provide photos and/or videos of the incident evidencing the inhumane treatment
- Maintain copy of above documentation for yourself

**The AQHA Mission Statement:**  
*“Every American Quarter Horse shall, at all times, be treated humanely and with dignity, respect, and compassion.”*

### AT LOCATIONS OTHER THAN AN AQHA EVENT:

AQHA is a worldwide organization with more than 250,000 members and a horse population exceeding 2.8 million. While AQHA denounces inhumane treatment that occurs outside of AQHA events (for example at a private training facility), such incidents are more properly reported to local law enforcement and/or animal welfare authorities. Such authorities' proximity to the incident, investigative resources, jurisdictional/subpoena powers, and if necessary, ability to confiscate horse(s) that have been subjected to inhumane treatment places such authorities in a more effective position to address matters that occur at locations other than at AQHA events.

### IF AN INCIDENT OCCURS AT A LOCATION OTHER THAN AN AQHA EVENT:

- Again, do not put yourself in danger
- If possible, get other witnesses
- Promptly report the matter to local law enforcement or animal welfare authorities
- Provide documentation to such authorities in form requested
- Be prepared to report the following to authorities: your name and contact information; date, time, and location of observed inhumane treatment; detailed description of the observed inhumane treatment; name of person(s) involved; detailed description of the horse, such as color, markings, and name (if possible); names and contact information of any witnesses
- If possible, provide photos and/or videos of the incident evidencing the inhumane treatment
- Provide AQHA with same information provided to authorities as well as detailed description of contact with such authorities including name and phone number of the authority, date contacted and name of authority representatives contacted
- Maintain copy of above documentation for yourself
- AQHA will seek updates on the status of the case from the authority in question; however, AQHA appreciates any assistance from you and others in that regard
- According to AQHA Rule VID205, AQHA may accept (1) an individual's conviction, no contest plea, or deferred adjudication or (2) judicial confiscation of a horse for an offense inhumane treatment as a presumptive violation of AQHA inhumane treatment rules, the effect of which is to automatically suspend the violator's AQHA membership.



## AWC Results - 2018

- Support & implement Tail Testing Task Force Recommendations
- Proceed with development of AQHA's Drug & Medication Guidelines document
- Develop abridged version of National Equine Health Plan
- Move forward with mandatory microchipping of all horses
- AQHA staff to develop & implement guidelines for videoing tie-down run for purpose of evaluating a jerk-down
- Support "Modifications to AQHA Policy Concerning Awards & Publicity of Horses and/or Trainers with Racing Medication Positives"

## AWC Results - 2018

- Review World Show veterinary contracts & update to include language that clearly prohibits any veterinary practices that are inhumane and/or in violation of AQHA medication or prohibited alteration rules. Contracts shall require veterinarian's license number for the purposes of reporting veterinarian to licensing agency should they engage in prohibited conduct.

# Animal Welfare Commission Results 2012-18

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Increased awareness of welfare among  
professional horsemen, amateurs, youth, & owners

AQHA

We Are Not Done

Ruidoso Downs

August 2018



# Animal Welfare Commission

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Tasks for Today

## AWC Potential Tasks for 2018-19

- Consistency in penalties
- Refinement of role of stewards
- Education
- Support of AQHA Racing Council initiatives for medication and welfare reform
- Other tweaks

## *AWC Action Items 2018-19*

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Create active action item list

Complete all items on schedule