



## Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association

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Thank you for your concern relating to the care and treatment of the livestock that are such an integral part of professional rodeo. I hope that this information will successfully convey the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association's (PRCA) commitment to the highest level of care for the livestock involved in PRCA sanctioned rodeos. We confirm that the The Coca-Cola Company does not sponsor as a corporation, but we do understand that many local bottlers support many community fundraising events, including PRCA sanctioned rodeos.

The PRCA has created one of the most comprehensive animal welfare programs in the United States - incorporating rules, enforcement procedures, veterinarians and extensive educational programs with the goal of insuring the highest quality of care and treatment for rodeo livestock. Following are a few highlights of the PRCA's animal welfare program:

**1. PRCA employs an Animal Welfare Coordinator to oversee the animal welfare program.**

Since 1992, the PRCA has had a staff member to administer all animal welfare programs. The PRCA animal welfare coordinator oversees the extensive PRCA animal welfare program and works with a number of other related associations to gain knowledge and share information.

**2. On-site Veterinarians.** The PRCA rules require a veterinarian on site at all PRCA sanctioned events. These on-site veterinarians assist the PRCA by participating in injury surveys. The latest survey, conducted at the 159 rodeo performances held during the 2005 PRCA rodeo season included 62,992 animal exposures and veterinarians reported 38 injuries, which calculates to an injury rate of .0006. These surveys and the presence of on-site rodeo veterinarians allow the PRCA to continuously monitor the success of the animal welfare program through feedback from the on-site veterinarians and results from the injury surveys.

**3. Rules and enforcement mechanisms.** In an effort to provide for the welfare of the thousands of animals involved in PRCA-sanctioned events, the PRCA enforces over 60 rules that govern their care and treatment. These rules are intended to ensure the humane treatment of all rodeo animals and shall be in effect for all PRCA-sanctioned events. They are the strongest employed by any rodeo association. A trained team of professional officials who serve on-site at all PRCA-sanctioned rodeos ensure compliance with the PRCA's many rules. Stiff penalties or disqualification will result for any member not following guidelines, both in and out of the arena.

**4. Animal Welfare Committee.** An organized Animal Welfare Committee meets regularly to discuss pressing animal welfare issues. The committee reviews rules and makes recommendations to the PRCA Board of Directors on animal issues. The committee is made up three large animal veterinarians, stock contractors, rodeo contestants and other horse and rodeo industry representatives.

The PRCA's animal welfare program was recognized by the American Association of Equine Practitioner's (AAEP) in November of 2003. The Lavin Cup is awarded annually to a non-veterinary individual or organization that has demonstrated exceptional compassion or developed and enforced rules and guidelines for the welfare of the horse. The AAEP press release stated, "The PRCA was selected for the Lavin Cup because of its dedication to protecting the health of the animals that participate in its events. The PRCA has made tremendous strides in recent years in uniting the rodeo industry regarding animal welfare issues as well as establishing detailed animal-use guidelines."

The PRCA and the sport of rodeo in the United States remain committed to providing proper care and treatment to the rodeo livestock that are such an integral part of the sport.

Sincerely,  
Cindy Schonholtz  
PRCA Animal Welfare Coordinator