



**Animal and Plant
Health Inspection Service**

4700 River Road
Riverdale, MD 20737
Voice 301-851-4100
Web: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov>

News Release

Contact:
Tanya Espinosa (301) 851-4092
Lyndsay Cole (970) 494-7410

USDA Announces Recent Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act Enforcement Actions

WASHINGTON, May 15, 2014 --The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is continuing to move swiftly and consistently to take enforcement action in response to animal welfare violations. As part of its effort to make its actions transparent and accessible to the public, APHIS is highlighting enforcement actions taken in response to violations of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and Horse Protection Act (HPA).

Copies of documents related to these actions, as well as copies of official warnings, are available in the APHIS FOIA Reading Room at http://www.aphis.usda.gov/foia/enforcement_actions.php.

During the month of April, APHIS filed administrative complaints alleging that the following persons violated the AWA or HPA:

HPA Docket No. 14-0088, 14-0089, 14-0090; Rhonda Baucom, Joshua Clay Mills, and Mona Dean.

The following persons entered into pre-litigation settlement agreements (also known as stipulations) in connection with alleged violations of the AWA or HPA:

APHIS Case No. MO130061-AC; Johanna A. Steele.

APHIS Case No. FL140004-AC; Patricia Zerbini dba Two Tails Ranch, Inc.

APHIS Case No. IL130042-AC; Gary Horton and Lori Stietz dba Friendly Lakeside Critters.

APHIS Case No. KS130042-AC; Pat Crabtree.

APHIS Case No. SD130007-AC; Bonnie Versteeg.

APHIS Case No. OR140006-AC; WildCat Haven, Inc.

USDA's administrative law judges and judicial officer issued decisions and orders under the AWA or HPA involving the following persons:

AC Docket No. 12-0296; Jeffrey W. Ash dba Ashville Game Farm dba Ashville Game Farm, Inc.

AC Docket No. 12-0552; Hope Knaust, Stan Knaust and The Lucky Monkey.

HPA Docket No. 13-0053; Randall Jones.

HPA Docket No. 13-0253, 13-0254, 13-0255; Jeanne Ann Rea, Dale Watts, and Pioneer Stables, LLC.

The AWA requires that minimum standards of care and treatment be provided for certain animals bred for commercial sale, used in research, transported commercially or exhibited to the public. It excludes those animals raised for food or fiber. Persons who operate facilities in these categories must provide their animals with adequate care and treatment in the areas of housing, handling, sanitation, nutrition, water, veterinary care and protection from extreme weather and temperatures.

To ensure that its licensees are meeting the AWA standards, APHIS inspectors conduct routine, unannounced inspections of all licensed facilities. Violations of the AWA can lead to penalties, including official warnings, civil penalties and license suspensions/revocations. For more information on the inspection and enforcement processes, visit APHIS' animal care website at www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/.

The HPA is the federal law that prohibits horses subjected to a practice called soring from participating in shows, sales, exhibitions and auctions. Soring is a cruel and abusive practice used to accentuate a horse's gait. APHIS works actively with the horse industry to protect against such abuse, ensuring that only sound and healthy horses participate in shows, sales, exhibitions and auctions. APHIS' ultimate goal is to end the inhumane practice of soring completely.

The HPA authorizes APHIS to issue civil penalties and to disqualify violators from participating in horse shows, exhibitions and sales. Both the AWA and HPA contain criminal penalties as well.

#

Note to reporters: USDA news releases, program announcements and media advisories are available on the Internet and through really simple syndication (RSS) feeds. Go to the APHIS news release page at www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom and click on the RSS feed link.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).