

DON'T SUPPORT THE EXPLOITATION OF ANIMALS FOR PROFIT

When businesses depend on animals for profit their welfare is often put at risk. Sometimes the very nature of the business is inhumane. Rodeos, for example, expose animals to stress, fear and pain. Other businesses, like zoos and aquariums are less obvious – they deprive animals of space and the opportunity to engage in natural behaviours. Often, inhumane treatment is behind the scenes: we never see how sled dogs live when they're not working or how animals used in circuses or movies are treated when the show is over and the cameras are off.

Even well-intentioned businesses can put animals at risk. When a company faces financial pressures or goes out of business, it's the animals who are likely to pay the price. Their welfare is an overhead. Their existence becomes a cost. They become commodities.



CORPORATE ENTERTAINMENT AND PARTIES

Some captive animal agencies rent out animals for corporate entertainment, birthday parties and so-called "educational" events in malls or community centres. They often claim they are using the animals to teach the public about conservation, but in reality they are exploiting the public's fascination with exotic animals for profit. When they are not on show the animals are, as usual, languishing in cages.

CIRCUSES USING PERFORMING EXOTIC ANIMALS

Many cities and towns in British Columbia have banned circuses using exotic animals in performances, but most jurisdictions across Canada still allow them. This means animals continue to be caged, chained and forced to perform degrading tricks for human amusement. Trainers use bullhooks, whips, sticks and electric prods to force animals to perform. In addition, they suffer from long hours of close confinement while being hauled in often unventilated trucks from town to town.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

DON'T SUPPORT any of the animal businesses described here and tell your friends and family to do the same.

WRITE LETTERS to local newspaper editors and contact other media to complain if these businesses operate in your area. Use social media like Facebook and Twitter to alert others about animal exploitation.

SUPPORT VHS in its fight against the inhumane use of animals for profit.

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YOU CAN STOP THEIR SUFFERING



STOP THE EXPLOITATION OF ANIMALS

THE VANCOUVER HUMANE SOCIETY (VHS) OPPOSES THE EXPLOITATION OF ANIMALS FOR PROFIT AND URGES THE PUBLIC TO AVOID BUSINESSES THAT PUT ANIMALS AT RISK. FOLLOWING ARE SOME EXAMPLES:

SLED DOGS – TOURS AND RACES

The slaughter of 100 sled dogs in Whistler BC in April 2010 shocked the world. The dogs, used to pull tourists on popular sled tours, were killed when they were no longer needed. It was an example of what can happen when animals become surplus to the requirements of a business that depends on them for revenue. But there are other, more inherent, problems with this industry. One is the practice of tethering dogs to posts for long hours when they are not working. Research has shown that such tethering is psychologically damaging to dogs.

Another problem is lack of access to veterinary care. Behind-the-scenes operations are often in isolated areas and old, sick or injured dogs may be shot rather than euthanized by a vet. With some operators having hundreds of dogs, the cost of veterinary care can become an unsustainable burden.

While the dogs enjoy pulling sleds, their unique abilities are exploited in sled dog races that push them beyond their physical limits – again because there is a profit to be made. The famous Iditarod race in Alaska has seen 136 dogs die since records of the race have been kept.

RODEOS

Rodeos are cruel because they subject animals to fear, pain, stress and the risk of injury or death – all for the trivial purpose of entertainment. For example, in the calf-roping event, three-month-old calves are goaded out of a chute, chased across an arena, roped by the neck and jerked to a violent stop, then picked up and slammed to the ground.

In chuckwagon races, horses are pushed beyond physical limits in a high-speed race at dangerously close quarters. The infamous Calgary Stampede chuckwagon races see horses die almost every year, with four killed in the 2010 race.

In addition to rodeo animals being put at undue risk of injury, the fear they are exposed to is especially cruel. Dr. Temple Grandin, the renowned animal behaviourist has said: *“The single worst thing you can do to an animal emotionally is to make it feel afraid. Fear is so bad for animals I think it’s worse than pain.”*



ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS

Zoos and aquariums deprive animals of the lives nature intended for them. Most captive animals live in spaces hundreds or thousands of times smaller than their natural wild environment. For example, the territory of a Siberian tiger may be as large as 170 square kilometres, an area no zoo could possibly match. Obviously, a captive tiger cannot engage in its natural activities such as hunting or patrolling its territory. The same is true of aquariums, in which whales and other marine mammals live in pools that are an infinitesimal fraction of the size of their natural habitats – the open ocean.

Many zoo animals suffer such deprivation, leading to severe frustration and stress – all to entertain humans. Zoos and aquariums argue that they contribute to conservation and education through their activities, but in fact conservation is a very small part of their work and their educational value is questionable. For example, how can one learn about tigers in the wild by looking at one pacing back and forth alongside a chain-link fence?

Children’s petting zoos can be miserable for animals and dangerous for children. Animals can be stressed by constant noise and attention from visitors, often finding no place to rest or hide. Transmission of disease from animals to children is a serious risk, especially from potentially deadly E. coli bacteria.

ANIMALS IN FILM, TELEVISION AND ADVERTISING

VHS believes no wild or exotic animals should be used in film production, except where the animal is being filmed unobtrusively in its natural habitat. The animal rental agencies that supply these industries are largely unregulated, receiving less oversight than zoos. Too often, this means animals can be kept in poor conditions where they are deprived of space and natural surroundings. Though their images may be popular with the public, once the cameras are turned off these animals are returned to their cages and lives of misery. The introduction of Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) and animatronics into filmmaking has provided an alternative to the use of captive exotic animals – there is no longer any need to use real animals.