



Position on Stewardship of the Horse (Revised 2002)

The American Association of Equine Practitioners advocates respect for the dignity and the welfare of all horses and recognizes their specialized needs. It is the responsibility of AAEP members to serve as stewards of the horse and to follow practices that promote the health and welfare of the horse.

The American Association of Equine Practitioners champions and fosters: research towards understanding and reducing injuries and illnesses, education to inform and support owners, trainers, event organizers and veterinarians regarding preventive medicine, responsible training and the humane treatment of horses; modern and progressive horse care as insured by periodic examination and disease prevention implemented by licensed veterinarians in partnership with horse owners, breeders and managers, euthanasia when justified by thorough and expedient diagnostic procedures to end inhumane suffering.

Regarding the horse in competition, the American Association of Equine Practitioners advocates: ethical and humane conditions and handling which includes proper housing, transportation and nutrition in the training and care of the competitive horse; standardization of rules, policies and procedures for all equine events to insure maximum safety, health and welfare for all participants; quality drug testing to assure equity and fairness regarding the regulation and use of appropriate therapeutic medications as they affect the competitive horse.

Approved July 2002 by AAEP Board of Directors.

Position on the Transportation and Processing of Horses (2002)

*Replaces "Humane Care of Horses Intended for
Slaughter (1998)"*

The AAEP advocates the humane treatment of all horses and believes the equine industry and horse owners have a responsibility to provide humane care throughout the life of the horse. However, a small percentage of horses are ultimately unwanted because they are no longer serviceable, are infirm, dangerous, or their owners are no longer able to care for them.

The AAEP recognizes that the processing of unwanted horses is currently a necessary aspect of the equine industry, and provides a humane alternative to allowing the horse to continue a life of discomfort and pain, and possibly inadequate care or abandonment. The AAEP

encourages, fosters and provides education regarding responsible ownership and management that will reduce the number of unwanted horses. In addition, the AAEP supports and commends the efforts of equine retirement facilities and adoption groups.

Regarding the care of horses destined for processing, the AAEP's position is that these horses should be:

- Treated humanely and with dignity;
- Transported to the production facility according to the guidelines approved by the United States Department of Agriculture in 2002;
- Euthanized in a humane manner in accordance with the guidelines established by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

In addition, the AAEP recognizes that the human consumption of horsemeat is a cultural and personal issue and does not fall within the purview of the association, whose mission is the care of the health and welfare of the horse throughout its life.

Approved May 2002 by the AAEP Board of Directors

Position on the Management of Mares Utilized in the Pregnant Mare Urine (PMU) Collection Industry (1996)

Through on-site investigations and peer review of ongoing research, the American Association of Equine Practitioners believes the collection of urine from pregnant mares and care of their offspring as prescribed by the recommended "Code of Practice," represents responsible management of horses to produce a commodity for the benefit of mankind that should not result in abuse, neglect or inhumane treatment of horses.

Position Statement on the Use of Horses in Urban Environments (2003)

*Replaces "Guidelines for Commercial City Carriage
Horses (1994)"*

The AAEP recognizes the unique issues of horses working in an urban environment, i.e. mounted patrols, tourist carriages and taxi/limousine services. Horses engaged in these activities require special work and living conditions and precautions for their safety and well being. Urban environments present health and welfare hazards that may preclude their use, such as pollution, concussion, climactic extremes, and load factors.

Provisions should be prepared for each jurisdiction.