

Cotton Rosser, Stock Contractor  
Professional Rodeo Cowboy Assn. Hall of Fame member  
Flying U Rodeo Productions  
Marysville, Calif.



To concerned citizens:

The PRCA (Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association) has strict guidelines regarding the care and treatment of animals in rodeo. I have been in business for over 53 years and as a rodeo stock contractor and producer, firmly agree with these guidelines that are set forth by the PRCA.

If my animals were not healthy, then I would not be able to operate my business successfully.

It is my intention to bring back a quality professional rodeo to the City of Palm Springs. A show that will be a great source of family entertainment and pay tribute to my friend, the late Mr. Frank Bogert.

The following items are the protocols my company adheres to in all of our rodeo productions.

Sincerely,  
Cotton Rosser

## **Palm Springs Rodeo Protocols**

### **Animal Care & Feeding**

The rodeo livestock will be in 30' by 30' holding pens, totaling approximately 15 pens. The animals will have water at all times in water troughs that we bring in. The animals will be fed grain in the morning and then turned into the arena for exercise. The animals will then be fed hay in the evening after the performance. The animals will work 8 to 16 seconds each weekend, depending on our entries.

### **Animal Housing and Numbers**

We have all the necessary portable steel panels for corrals and arenas and will be bringing in the following livestock depending on the number of entries received.

30 bareback and saddle broncs

25 Bulls

40 steers

25 calves

12 head of pickup and grand entry horses

We will have 10 trucks, pickups and trailers

### **Animal Ambulance**

Many rodeo contractors do not travel with an ambulance for their stock, but Flying U is concerned about stock health and welfare, and will have a fully-equipped ambulance in Palm Springs.

An animal ambulance is the most effective way to transport an injured animal. Our ambulance is equipped to enable it to transport an animal that is able to walk, or one that has been restrained in order to prevent further injury, or an animal that is unconscious or unable to walk on its own. The ambulance allows for safe and quick removal of an injured animal. The ambulance is even large enough to handle an injured bull.

## **Injuries to Rodeo Animals**

The most recent survey of livestock welfare in rodeos was conducted by veterinarians at 174 rodeo performances and 74 sections of timed event competition with 68,489 animal exposures. 27 injuries were reported, calculating to a rate of injury of .0004. This follows years of documented injury rates which are very similar.

If an animal is injured at a California rodeo, the vet has to report it to the Veterinary Medical Board within 48 hours of injury, according to California penal code 596.7(2). In Palm Springs, Dr. Steve Carter, a DVM, will be on-site during all performances.

## **Strict Rules Govern Animals in PRCA Rodeos**

The PRCA has more than 60 rules to ensure the proper care and treatment of rodeo animals included in its official rules and regulations.

The Flying U Rodeo Co. meets or exceeds all 60 rules and regulations. In fact, in his position as a PRCA Board Member for many years, Cotton Rosser helped develop many of these rules.

While all 60 rules and regulations are too numerous to list here, several of the safeguards for the proper treatment of animals in the rules and regulations are listed below.



- A veterinarian must be on-site at all PRCA-sanctioned rodeos.
- All animals are inspected and evaluated for illness, weight, eyesight and injury prior to the rodeo, and no animals that are sore, lame, sick or injured are allowed to participate in the event.
- Acceptable spurs must be dull.
- Standard electric prods may be used only when necessary and may only touch the animal on the hip or shoulder area. These are C Battery powered devices that surprise the animal more than shock it.
- Stimulants and hypnotics may not be given to any animal to improve performance.
- Any PRCA member caught using unnecessary roughness or abusing an animal may be immediately disqualified from the rodeo and fined. This holds true whether it is in the competitive arena or elsewhere on the rodeo grounds.
- Weight limitations are set for both calves (between 220 and 280 pounds) and steers (450-650 pounds).
- The flank straps for horses are fleece- or neoprene-lined and those for bulls are made of soft cotton rope and may be lined with fleece or neoprene.
- Steers used in team and steer roping have a protective covering placed around their horns.
- The use of prods and similar devices is prohibited in the riding events unless an animal is stalled in the chute.
- A no-jerk-down rule provides for fines if a contestant jerks a calf over backwards in tie-down roping.
- All rodeos must have a conveyance available to humanely transport any injured animal.
- Chutes must be constructed with the safety of the animals in mind.

For a complete list of the rules and regulations dealing with the proper care and treatment of animals, please send your request to PRCA Animal Welfare, PRCA, 101 Pro Rodeo Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80919 or email [animalwelfare@prorodeo.com](mailto:animalwelfare@prorodeo.com).

## **PRCA's response to accusations of animal cruelty:**

There have been many opinions printed recently regarding the care and handling of rodeo livestock that is used in rodeos sanctioned by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association. The Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association takes the welfare of the livestock involved in sanctioned rodeos seriously

and has rules and procedures in place to provide for their care. 60 rules are in place that provide these protections and govern equipment, competition and facilities as well as requiring a veterinarian on-site. The on-site veterinarians provide the PRCA invaluable information through periodic livestock welfare surveys. The most recent survey was conducted by veterinarians at 174 rodeo performances and 74 sections of timed event competition with 68,489 animal exposures. 27 injuries were reported, calculating to a rate of injury of .0004. This follows years of documented injury rates very similar.

Modern rodeo livestock is bred specifically for the sport and is well-suited to the competition. The calves and steers are specific breeds and must meet pre-determined weight requirements that are optimum for the livestock in each timed event. In the roughstock events, the bucking horses and bulls come to rodeo in various ways with the majority today being bred specifically for the talent to buck. Not every horse will buck, just as not every horse will run on the racetrack or perform other equine sports. Through the years the horse industry has done a great job in breeding traits such as bucking out of performance horses. This created the need for rodeo to breed horses with the talent, heart and athleticism to buck. It takes a very special horse that will perform consistently in the saddle bronc and bareback events; this has led to bucking horses becoming quite valuable. One such horse, the great stallion, Night Jacket, owned by J Bar J Rodeo Company in Michigan was sold to Cullen Pickett of Texas for \$200,000! Much like the bucking horses, specialized breeding programs are producing top quality bucking bulls that display amazing feats of athleticism in the rodeo arena.

There are numerous misconceptions about the sport of rodeo and many of those are perpetuated via the internet by organizations who wish to end all use of animals including rodeo. However, the PRCA relies on the veterinarians with expertise on livestock to advise on issues relating to livestock welfare and they continually communicate that the equipment used is safe and the livestock well-suited for the competitions.

With rules in place and veterinarians on-site the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association has continued to thrive with more than 20 million spectators attending sanctioned rodeos each year and seeing the healthy and well-cared-for livestock that participate. The upcoming Palm Springs Wild WestFest and Rodeo offers those in the area a chance to celebrate our Western Heritage, and with any entertainment event, the choice to attend is made by purchasing a ticket.

We know the community of Palm Springs will enjoy the influx of rodeo personnel and contestants and the accompanying economic impact and FUN that the rodeo will bring!

For more information on the sport of rodeo and the livestock involved go to [www.prorodeo.com](http://www.prorodeo.com) or contact Cindy Schonholtz, PRCA Livestock Welfare at [animalwelfare@prorodeo.com](mailto:animalwelfare@prorodeo.com).

For tickets to the Palm Springs Rodeo, go to [www.palmspringswestfest.com](http://www.palmspringswestfest.com)  
You may also sign up there for a guided chute tour 2 hours prior to the rodeo.

There will be a marked area on-site for peaceful protest on the west side of No. Avenidas Caballeros St. just north of Margarita's Restaurant.

