



सत्यमेव जयते



ANIMAL WELFARE BOARD OF INDIA

Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Govt. of India

भारतीय जीव जन्तु कल्याण बोर्ड

(पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार)

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CHAIRMAN

ANIMAL WELFARE GUIDELINE FOR

EQUINES (HORSE, MULE, PONIES & DONKEYS) AT EQUINE TRADE FAIRS IN INDIA

1: Introduction

- 1.1 Traditionally, more than 60 equine trade fairs are held every year in various states viz. Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana, Bihar, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh of India. These fairs attract more than 2 lacs equine (horses, ponies, mules & donkeys) population. On an average one thousand to fifteen thousand equines congregate in each fair. The large fairs are organized by Government authorities, whereas smaller ones are managed by local Private Bodies.
- 1.2 The equines at such congregations are vulnerable to get exposed to various contagious / infectious diseases / ailments like Glander's, Strangles, Equine Influenza, Surra, Tetanus, Laminitis, Eye injuries, heat stress, dehydration, diarrhoea, Colic and Accidental injuries.
- 1.3 Lack of Veterinary care and Quarantine facilities, basic infrastructure like drinking water, green feed, shade, proper loading and unloading facilities, dung and carcass disposal facility and stabling space lead to serious health implications.
- 1.4 This guideline suggests to adopt minimum standards as under for improvement in equine welfare at equine fairs.

2. Veterinary Service Provision

- 2.1 **Veterinary care:** To handle Veterinary emergencies there should be provision of veterinary clinic with adequate Vet and Paravet staff, veterinary medicines, equipments and laboratory facilities by the State Animal Husbandry Department. In addition, there is a need to establish extension counters by various departments (Animal Husbandry, Agriculture, Rural Development, State Livestock Mission, Rep. of State Animal Welfare Board and District SPCA etc.) to educate equine owners on disease prevention and awareness about government schemes related to transportation rules, livestock welfare and development.
- 2.2 **Farriery:** Availability of adequate number of trained Farriers which are licensed by State Animal Husbandry Department as per The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Licensing of Farriers) Rules, 1965.
- 2.3 **Castration:** It has been observed that equine owner bring lot of mule foals for castration in equine fairs. The castration operations are performed by unskilled persons resulting in very high percentage of deaths due to Tetanus and post-operative complications. Such practices need to be banned. The provision of castration services by qualified government Vet need to be instituted

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2.4 **Quarantine:** The State Animal Husbandry Department should establish quarantine facility at these equine fairs to keep diseased equines/animals as per THE PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS AND CONTAGIOUS DISEASES IN ANIMALS ACT, 2009. The government Vet deputed for the fair must establish tracking of the cases and report to respective Animal Husbandry authority to take appropriate action for control and spread of diseases.

3. Management Practices

3.1 **Drinking water:** Equine requires up to 40-60 litres (4-6 buckets) of fresh and clean drinking water a day to maintain hydration in very hot and humid conditions. An equine should be offered fresh, clean drinking water at least 5-6 times a day. The requirement of water points/sources depends on number of equines and season in which equine fairs are being held. Therefore, the organizer should provide adequate water points either tube wells or hand pumps or water tank or water tanker supplies as per the geographical area of the fair site.

3.2 **Green feed:** Equine digestive physiology has evolved for grazing up to 16 hours per day. Equine needs ad lib green feed to meet their nutrient and energy requirements. The lack of green feed for equine leads to various digestive disturbance- colic, loss of appetite, diarrhoea, nutritional deficiency, etc. An average equine needs around 15 kg green feed. Adequate number of fresh green feed sellers, feed stalls at such equine fair be encouraged.

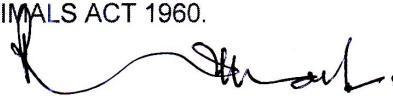
3.3 **Shade and shelter:** Equines require appropriate shade/shelter to protect them from extreme climate. In summer as well as winter season they need temporary sheds. In winter they require additional protective clothing to protect them from extreme cold and prevent respiratory diseases, hypothermia, loss of energy, fractures due to brittle bone. Lack of shed may result into sweating, dehydration, colic and shock, therefore, an adequate number of temporary sheds should be made available at such congregation points.

3.4 **Loading and unloading facilities:** Loading / unloading equines require proper specified ramp (gradual slope) as per Rule number 57 to 63 under TRANSPORT OF ANIMALS, RULES, 1978. An adequate number of ramps need to be ensured at each equine fair.

3.5 **Dung disposal:** The equine fairs should have proper dung disposal arrangement on daily basis to prevent fly nuisance and spread of diseases.

3.6 **Carcass disposal:** Appropriate disposal of carcass should be done at such congregations to avoid further spread of diseases.

3.7 **Stabling space:** Proper stabling space is important to avoid accidents due to kicking, biting injuries amongst animals. The fair organizer should provide proper stabling facilities at the site as per the PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACT 1960.


Maj. Gen. (Dr.) R. M. Kharb, AVSM, (Retd.)
Chairman, AWBI

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