

Presented by the
Golden State Gay Rodeo Association
Bay Area Chapter
in partnership with Bud Light



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Animal Welfare

For Immediate Release

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The International Gay Rodeo Association (IGRA) uses stock animals responsibly and ethically in the traditional sport of rodeo. Our standards of animal care are high and clearly articulated in our animal welfare statement. Every member of IGRA loves and protects animals; both domestic pets and stock farm animals. Stock animals include horses, goats, calves and steers. We completely agree with organizations like “LGBT Compassion” that animal abuse, neglect, torture, confinement, abandonment and inhumane slaughter, are abhorrent.

IGRA does none of these horrific things and will not stand by quietly while members of “LGBT Compassion” lie, exaggerate and smear another LGBT organization in order to undermine the efforts to serve the GLBTQ community. Our record on this issue is impeccable. IGRA does not abuse animals nor condone animal abuse, at any time, in any way, by anyone. There is a large gay and lesbian cowboy and cowgirl community, who have grown up on farms and ranches and these real life experiences provide a balanced perspective on ranching, farming, animal care and use. There are also many disenfranchised gay youth in rural areas of the USA and Canada that benefit from knowing there are others of similar backgrounds who have become solid members of society and give back to their communities through gay rodeo involvement.

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of truly abused and neglected horses, farm animals, dogs and cats in the country and not one of them will be found at any IGRA Rodeo. Our stock animals are skillfully used, fed, watered, rested, vaccinated, protected from the elements and watched over by our animal issues committee and a large animal veterinarian at **every** rodeo. This responsible use does not now, never has, nor ever will, rise to the level of “abuse”. Our personal speed and roping horses are part of our families and are some of the best loved and cared for animals anywhere.

We **do not** agree or believe in the overly emotional projecting of human emotions onto stock animals. We **do not** agree that slipping a pair of underwear over the hind legs of a goat is remotely similar to starvation, beating and neglecting a goat. Our goats are well fed, well fleshed out, sturdy, healthy and not stressed. In a 24 hour day they are used for 30 minutes and go back to feeding, watering and resting. We do not use “tight straps” on our riding stock and **nothing** touches their genitalia. A

fleece, flat rear cinch is used to signal the bucking animals to buck. IGRA members represent both the non-vegetarian and vegetarian nutritional philosophies but we all believe in the humane care, transport and slaughter of stock animals raised solely for the purpose food and nutrition.

While we will never agree with “LGBT Compassion” and similar groups on the sport of rodeo; however we will always agree that animal abuse is wrong. IGRA members will never abandon the inherent passion for the sport of rodeo and will not tolerate being vilified and lied about.

We strongly encourage “LGBT Compassion”, with our support if necessary, to seek out and assist the real abused, starved, neglected, confined and tortured animals in the world.

IGRA invites our community, friends, sponsors *and critics* to come and see for yourselves how well cared for the animals are at our rodeos and make your own judgment on this issue. We ask you to acknowledge our contributions to the diverse and varied world, including the world of the LGBT community. The International Gay Rodeo Association and the cowboys and cowgirls we represent, is a valuable, responsible and ethical member of this diverse community. We do not deserve to be singled out and harassed with information that is not factual.

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