



WBFSH Seminar 2011 - Seville

DEUTSCHE REITERLICHE VEREINIGUNG
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The future of horse welfare and ethics in the sport horse industry

Overview about the German situation

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Horse Welfare in Germany

Animal Welfare Act in Germany (1/2):

- ⇒ animal welfare has high priority in Germany
- ⇒ political impact becomes more and more important
- ⇒ animal welfare is „aim of state“ and anchored in the National Constitution of Germany since 2002
- ⇒ animal welfare rules have been always fairly strict in Germany



Horse Welfare in Germany

Animal Welfare Act in Germany (2/2):

- ⇒ guidelines issued by the German Ministry of Agriculture and Consumer Protection for horse welfare
 - ⇒ Guidelines about animal welfare in horse sport
 - ⇒ Guidelines for evaluation of horse keeping under animal welfare aspects
 - ⇒ Guidelines for ability tests of stallions of the German Sport Horse Breeds

We have to keep in mind:

Ministry guidelines have no legal character but serve to help as orientation and by interpretation!



Horse Welfare in Germany

Rules/Principals of German Equestrian Federation:

- ⇒ Official Rule Books for
 - ⇒ training and education
 - ⇒ competition sport
 - ⇒ leisure riding and driving
 - ⇒ breeding and keeping
- ⇒ Ethical principles and basic rules
 - ⇒ The Ethical Principals of horse-lovers adopted 1995
 - ⇒ Basic Rules for behavior in Horse Sport adopted 2007
- ⇒ Several FN-Guidelines for
 - ⇒ Riding (The Principles of Riding)
 - ⇒ Volting, Longing, etc.
 - ⇒ Horse Keeping



Horse Welfare in Germany

Ministry guidelines about animal welfare in horse sport :

following aspects are considered

- ⇒ handling of horse on education and use
- ⇒ start of training and use in competition
- ⇒ equipment and tackles
- ⇒ doping



Horse Welfare in Germany

Actual discussions about welfare in horse sport :

⇒ doping and medication rules

- ⇒ discussion about FEI-rules in Germany – in some points they are not strict and clear enough in relation to national rules
- ⇒ problems because of differences between international and national rules
- ⇒ FN builds up training controls for all cadre riders and their cadre horses realised by National Anti Doping Agency

⇒ „LDR“ / „Rollkur“

- ⇒ problems with acceptance of FEI-definition
- ⇒ realisation of the regulation is problematic
- ⇒ first study about LDR shows pictures about movement and manipulation of the larynx movement

⇒ draw reins

- ⇒ there is a general discussion about the use in competitions
- ⇒ German Animal Welfare Organisation asks for prohibition



Horse Welfare in Germany

Ministry guidelines for evaluation of horse keeping under animal welfare aspects:

- ⇒ maintenance and management of horses
- ⇒ horse keeping
 - ⇒ pasture and underrun
 - ⇒ stable climate and conditions of illumination
- ⇒ building construction and dimensions
 - ⇒ keeping moulds
 - ⇒ dimensions

Actual discussions about horse keeping:

- ⇒ keeping in tie stalls is forbidden as well in barbwires!
- ⇒ docked tails are forbidden!
- ⇒ increasing discussions about dimensions of „old“ stables



Horse Welfare in Germany

Ministry guidelines for ability tests of stallions of the German Sport Horse Breeds :

- ⇒ gives a frame how to test young horses
- ⇒ issued 2003 for 30-day Ability Test for stallions in March
 - ⇒ describes procedure, criterias, maximum requirements and control (i.e. tests not before 1. March, max. 1,30 m for loose jumping)
 - ⇒ guidelines „serves as example“ for testing and judging young horses



Horse Welfare in Germany

Hotbranding (1/4):

- ⇒ Hotbranding is a possible and acceptable identification method prior to EU legislation
- ⇒ EU-Directive accepts alternative methods for identification like i.e. diagram + hotbranding + DNA
- ⇒ hotbrand or transponder are at best tools and part of a identification method and alone not sufficient
- ⇒ German National by-law sees identification method by transponder as compulsory method
- ⇒ „additional“ identification by hotbranding is at present allowed
- ⇒ as well in the animal welfare act!
- ⇒ BUT: German Animal Welfare Organisation(s) and a few political parties want to ban hotbranding in Germany



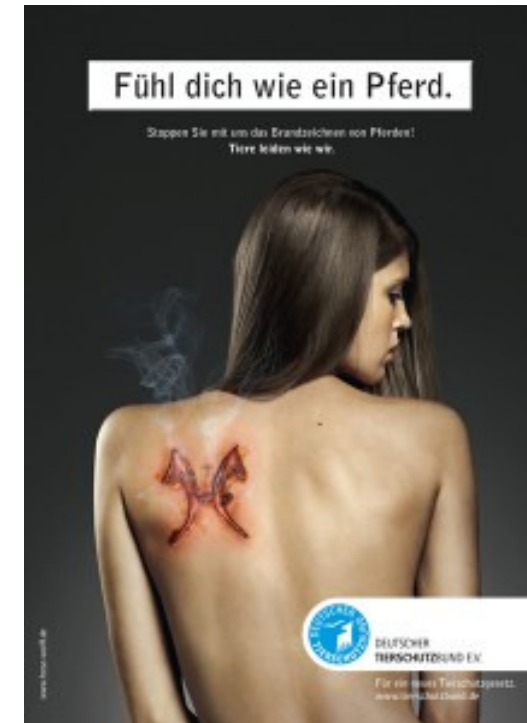
Horse Welfare in Germany

Hotbranding (2/4):

Emotional Animal Welfare!!!

Campaign : Feel like a horse.

- ⇒ initiated by German Animal Welfare Organisation
- ⇒ not acceptable in the opinion of FN and German Breed Societies
- ⇒ The factual level is left with this campaign!
- ⇒ **horse breeders = animal abusers = violent criminals**





Horse Welfare in Germany

Hotbranding (3/4):

- ⇒ Sequences of identification method with transponder
- ⇒ only two examples of some foals with abscesses
- ⇒ no problems with hotbranding since 1992





Horse Welfare in Germany

Hotbranding (4/4):

- ⇒ there are advisory opinions in Germany saying that hotbranding is acceptable prior to animal welfare act
- ⇒ this opinion is supported by many veterinarians
- ⇒ new studies attest that stress and pain of both methods are equal and credible prior to animal welfare act
 - ⇒ Study of University of Vienna
 - ⇒ analysed stress hormone cortisol, behaviour, body- and body surface temperature, heart rate
 - ⇒ around 30 to 40 foals
 - ⇒ Study of University of Kiel
 - ⇒ body surface temperature, heart rate, behaviour proven by video analysis up to one week
 - ⇒ 28 foals
 - ⇒ study compared it with clipping and there is no difference



Horse Welfare in Germany

Hotbranding (5/5):

- ⇒ another study will be commissioned by some federal states of Germany at present
 - ⇒ will consider existing studies
 - ⇒ new aspects will be considered like sense of pain and mutations of the skin
- ⇒ 35.000 supporting signatures have been collected and presented to German Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Consumer Protection
- ⇒ some federal states and several politicians support the aim that hotbranding will be allowed in the future in Germany
- ⇒ Future of hotbranding in Germany? → open end!