

17 March 2013

Re: Tight nosebands on horses

Dear Professor McGreevy

Djurens Rätt (Animal Rights Sweden) Working group for horse issues supports call from the International Society for Equitation Science (ISES) for changes in the use of nosebands in competitions.

The Working group for horse issues are opposed to all procedures or other uses of horses that causes them pain, suffering and distress.

We live in a society where horses are used for riding and driving and it is our stand that all handling of horses should be based on knowledge, humility and respect. No handling, riding or driving of horses should be forced by coercion or violence. Therefore we oppose the use of equipment that are used in propulsive or punitive intent, as our opinion is that the horse's own will to interact with and cooperate with humans should be the driving force behind the relationship between horse and man.

Overly tightened nosebands prevent the horse from opening its mouth, something that is penalized by judges at competitions. The usage of tight nosebands is thought to be used to mask a tensed horse and bad riding. Research has shown that tight nosebands cause deformation of the nasal bone as well as physical stress. We therefore strongly oppose this practice.

The Working group for horse issues supports ISES' recommendations regarding the use of a standardised taper gauge to ensure that the "two-fingers" rule is applied. In the near future we also hope that the use of a noseband is optional at competition.

Yours sincerely
Eva Carlsson