



www.AHAfilm.org  
**Film & TV Unit**  
NO ANIMALS WERE HARMED™

A Program of American Humane

## **IMPORTANT REMINDER!**

**If you are using an animal not supplied by a USDA-certified animal supplier (e.g.: belonging to cast or crew),**

**The animal owner MUST obtain a USDA Exhibitor's License Waiver (one-time use of animal) *prior to* using the animal.  
The USDA and AHA take this requirement seriously.**

**Please read the attached letter from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS)**

**Don't stress! Here's how to apply:**

- 1) **WRITE A LETTER:** Prior to production using the animal, the animal owner, NOT production, must write a letter to the USDA in their Region (see below for details). The letter may be faxed for expedited requests; *make sure to request that the USDA fax the waiver back to you.* The letter must state:
  - a. the type and age of animal used;
  - b. the location and date on which the animal will be used;
  - c. that this is a one time only event;
  - d. what the animal is expected to do; and
  - e. any potential danger the animal may encounter.
- 2) **REVIEW & RESPONSE:** Once this information is reviewed and accepted, the waiver is granted. The animal owner will receive a letter from USDA granting a one time exception to exhibit the animal(s) on the date and location specified.
  - a. This waiver/exception is given under the condition that AHA is permitted to monitor the animal action.
  - b. Both the owner & production should retain a copy of the letter on set.
- 3) **FUTURE USE OF THE ANIMAL:** Once the animal is used, as authorized by the waiver, that animal may NOT be exhibited again until the owner has successfully obtained an Exhibitor's License from the USDA.

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*USDA Western Regional Office (West of the Mississippi)*

Ph: (970) 494-7478 - Fax: (970) 494-7461

*USDA Eastern Regional Office (East of the Mississippi)*

Ph: (919) 855-7100 - Fax: (919) 855-7123

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**In addition, please refer to AHA's GUIDELINES FOR THE SAFE USE OF ANIMALS IN FILMED MEDIA ("Special Requirements for Extras / Others Who Supply Dogs").**

AHA-Film & TV Unit \*15366 Dickens St. \* Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

email [filmunit@americanhumane.org](mailto:filmunit@americanhumane.org)

phone (818)501-0123 \* fax (818)501-8725



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Animal and  
Plant Health  
Inspection  
Service

Animal Care  
Western Region

9580 Micron Ave., Suite J  
Sacramento, CA 95827  
Telephone: (916) 857-6205  
Fax: (916) 857-6212

February 1, 1999

Alliance of Motion Picture  
and Television Producers  
15503 Ventura Blvd  
Encino, CA 91436

Dear Sir/Madam:

As authorized by the Animal Welfare Act (AWA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is responsible for regulating the care and treatment of certain animals dealt with in exhibition. In carrying out this responsibility, APHIS requires that persons who engage in such activities be licensed; the Agency also conducts inspections of facilities and records to ensure that regulated entities comply with the AWA standards and regulations.

It has come to our attention that you may be arranging activities that would require licensing under the AWA. Accordingly, we are enclosing a packet of AWA related information, including copies of the AWA regulations and standards and other materials. Please review this information.

The owner of any animal exhibited on television and/or in films is required to be licensed with USDA *before* the animal may be exhibited. Exhibition without licensing is a violation of Federal law. As a service to your members, you may wish to provide this information to any of them who might be considering using their pets in such productions.

Exemptions from licensing may be granted by this office if a pet is being used on a one-time basis in a situation presenting few welfare concerns. Requests must be made by the animal's owner, in writing, to this office, with sufficient lead time to allow a positive response to be received *prior* to the exhibition. The request must contain enough information to allow us to evaluate the welfare concerns involved, and it is frequently necessary for us to request further information before approval is granted. Requests submitted only a few days before an intended filming can rarely be approved in time for the animal to be legally exhibited.

We appreciate your efforts in helping us ensure compliance with the Animal Welfare Act. If you or any of your members have any questions regarding this letter, feel free to contact this office at 916-857-6205 or 916-857-6206.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Gibbens, D.V.M.  
Director  
Western Region, Animal Care

Enclosure



APHIS - Protecting American Agriculture

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