



## CHAPTER 2

# VETERINARY CARE GUIDELINES

- 2-1\* ..... All animals used in filmed media should be vaccinated based on veterinary standards for their species. Documentation of this must be provided to American Humane Society upon request.
- 2-2 ..... Use of Veterinarians
- a. American Humane Society shall be made aware of any veterinarians on set. In order to properly document the use of animals in filmed media, production and the animal handler shall ensure that there is open communication between American Humane Society and the veterinarians.
  - b. Veterinarians used for filming should have working experience and knowledge of the species of animals being used (e.g., specializing in exotic, avian, livestock, etc.).
  - c. When different species of animals are used, there may be a need for more than one veterinarian to ensure that all animals are properly cared for using techniques particular to their species.
  - d. Veterinarians must be located close enough to the set to ensure their availability in case of an emergency. Contact information for each veterinarian should be provided to American Humane Society and should be placed on the call sheet.
  - e. A veterinarian should be present on the set when filming in locations so remote (approximately 1 hour or more away) that local veterinarians could not respond quickly to an animal emergency.
  - f. Veterinarian(s) shall be present at all times during the rehearsal and filming of scenes with strenuous activity or risky stunts, special effects, extensive running, or very large numbers of animals (e.g., racing scenes, rodeo scenes, battles, stampedes, charges, runaways, or wagon crashes) which may create a risk of injury. (Also see Industry-Wide Labor-Management Safety Committee Safety Bulletin #6, "Animal Handling Rules for the Motion Picture Industry," paragraph 8.)
  - g. Additional veterinarians may be required when animals are to be used

- on sets at different locations or units.
- 2-3 ..... To address animal emergencies involving injury, illness, death or allegations of abuse, the following should be considered:
- a. The establishment of a communications system to quickly report information to local law enforcement, the veterinarian and the executive offices of American Humane Society.
  - b. Facilities for the holding, restraint or examination of animals by a veterinarian.
  - c. Transportation arrangements for evacuating sick or disabled animals from remote or difficult-to-access locations.
  - d. The ability to humanely relieve pain or euthanize animals suffering from severe injury or illness.
  - e. Independent oversight of international investigations and the report issued to the local animal control agency.
- 2-4 ..... Animals must be checked daily for injury and/or illness. If an animal is injured, sick or lame or becomes incapacitated, it shall receive immediate medical care.
- a. Such an animal shall not resume work until the veterinarian determines that the condition has been corrected.
  - b. If veterinary care is required, the veterinarian shall assess the extent of the injury and send a copy of his or her report to American Humane Society.
  - c. American Humane Society staff may accompany the animal to the veterinarian's office and remain until a diagnosis/prognosis is made.
- 2-4.1 ..... Sick animals must be isolated from other animals on the set and will not be permitted to work. When possible, sick animals shall be removed from the set.
- 2-4.2 ..... Animals with mechanical (i.e., non-painful) limitations or defects that give the visual appearance of lameness or injury may be used only if a veterinarian has examined the animal, determined that using the animal in the manner intended will not cause pain or stress, and provided American Humane Society with a letter certifying that the animal is serviceably sound.
- 2-5 ..... In the event of a death or an injury resulting in the subsequent euthanasia of an animal during production, a necropsy of the animal must be performed. The result of the necropsy shall be provided to American Humane Society.
- 2-6 ..... No drugs, including anesthetics, sedatives and chemical laxatives, may be administered to an animal for the purpose of filmmaking.
- a. Under certain circumstances and with prior approval by both American Humane Society and the animal's veterinarian, the administration of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs may be permitted.
  - b. At no time shall an animal be used which has been administered a drug to conceal any defects or lameness of the animal.
  - c. The practice of nerve-blocking an animal for performance purposes is prohibited.

**ADVISORY:** Sedatives induce behavioral changes that render animals quiet, calm and relatively indifferent to their surroundings. Clinical signs

of tranquilization, especially in horses and other equines, include lowering of the head and extension of the neck, relaxation and drooping of the lower lip, and slight prolapse of the third eyelid. Males may exhibit protrusion of the penis, which could lead to injury. Additionally, some horses may exhibit excitation, sweating, trembling and convulsions. Repeated doses can cause renal failure. Older animals and animals suffering from heat stress are more susceptible to complications from sedation.

The most common sedative is Acepromazine (Atravet®, PromAce®). Overdose can cause excessive sedation, slow respiratory and heart rate, pale gums, unsteady gait, poor coordination and inability to stand, and it may cause sudden collapse, unconsciousness, seizures and death. It can be detected in the blood for 36-120 hours, although repeated doses may make it remain present for several months.

2-7 ..... Animals known to be pregnant shall not be used in intense action scenes.

2-8 ..... The birth of animals shall not be induced for filming purposes. The natural birth of animals may be filmed “documentary style,” which means that filming shall have no impact on the birth process and no actors will appear in the birth scene.

- a. A veterinarian must be present, and crew shall be limited to the minimum necessary for filming.
- b. American Humane Society shall remain on set at all times to adequately monitor the health and welfare of the animals being filmed.
- c. To prevent the spread of disease, strict biosecurity measures such as hand washing and foot baths shall be in place for all persons entering and leaving the set.
- d. No other animals may be present when filming scenes involving an actual birth process.

