

CODE OF ETHICS

The Donkey and Mule Society of South Australia requests that all members subscribe to the following Code of Ethics to promote and foster the highest standard of care for donkeys and mules. This Code of Ethics is a guideline, not rules, regulations or a legal document however repeated failure to abide by this code may result in loss of membership to the Donkey and Mule Society of South Australia with forfeiture of any dues paid.

Care of Donkeys and Mules

Food and Water: Clean water must be available at all times. Animals must have feed available every day, either grazing or suitable supplemental feed including plenty of roughage. Feed must be sufficient to maintain appropriate weight in adults and promote healthy development in foals. Animals should be neither too obese nor too thin.

Shelter: All animals should have access to shelter from rain and wind as well as shade from heat. Shelters or stables should be mucked out daily.

Paddocks: Paddocks must allow enough space for adequate freedom of movement and exercise. Fences should be sturdy, well built and safe with special consideration of enclosures for confining jacks to protect jennies, foals, other stock and neighbouring properties.

Health Care: Vaccinations such as tetanus/strangles/Hendra should be administered as recommended by a vet. An internal and external parasite program should be maintained. Yearly teeth checks should be undertaken by a qualified equine dentist or vet. Hooves of all animals should be kept properly trimmed on a regular basis to maintain proper hoof shape and function.

Veterinary Advice: Any ill or injured donkey or mule should be attended to by a vet in a timely fashion. Any donkey who through illness, advanced age or injury cannot have a good quality of life should be humanely euthanized.

Transport: Any vehicle, float or trailer used must have effective airflow and a surface or flooring that minimises the risk of injury from slipping or falling.

Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines rules state that donkeys and mules should be off-loaded at least every 12 hours and given access to food and water. We also recommend rest stops every 2-3 hours. Donkeys attending shows or events must have food and water provided at regular intervals.

Breeding

Breeders should plan each breeding with the aim of maintaining or improving the breed standards. Donkeys of either sex selected for breeding should be free of serious faults with good conformation and temperament.

Breeders should refrain from using animals which although free from defects consistently produce offspring with faults such as cryptorchidism, under and over-bite, dwarfism and other genetic defects.

Animals should not be bred until they are both physically and mentally mature. Jennies should not be bred before the age of three years.

Any jack sold as a pet should be gelded prior to leaving for their new home. Any jack sold ungelded should be of breeding quality and not sold as a pet.

Records

Owners and breeders should keep accurate records including registry paperwork and health and breeding records for each donkey.

All donkeys and mules should be freeze-branded or microchipped for identification purposes.

Selling

Sellers should be discriminating in the sales of their animals and endeavour to ensure a responsible, caring home. No seller should knowingly sell a donkey to a buyer who is unable to provide a suitable environment, proper nutrition and appropriate care.

All buyers should be informed that donkeys and mules are herd animals and need companions, preferably other equines in order to be happy.

Sellers should guarantee the health of any animal sold. A vet check at buyers expense should be allowed. Sellers should provide new owners with a diet guide and vaccination and parasite control records.

All sales agreements should be in writing. Sales records should be kept and all applicable registration papers should be transferred at the time of purchase.

Foals should not be weaned before six months and be properly weaned, be well handled and taught to tie up and lead.

Showing/Competing

Showing donkeys and mules is a sport and competitors should express good sportsmanship in all activities. Exhibitors will refrain from unnecessary criticism of other people's animals or of the judge. Exhibitors should take pride in their animal and present them with a clean coat and neatly trimmed hooves.

Any donkey or mule that is in poor condition or ill-health on the day of a show may be prevented from entering.

Any behavior that could be defined as abuse or harm to donkeys or mules either in training or showing will not be tolerated.

Contacts for the Donkey and Mule Society of South Australia can be found on our website at www.donkeymulesa.org.

Acknowledgement and thanks to the American Donkey and Mule Society and the Donkey All Breeds Society of Australia for allowing the Society to use portions of their Code of Ethics.