

Animals at Fairs: Protecting Our Fairs from Extremism

Before the fair: Be Prepared

1. Have copies of exhibitor's permits.
2. Do a home facility inspection (if possible).
3. Have exhibitors' inspection history: last two inspections and date of most recent inspection.
4. Have a copy of exhibitors' insurance.
5. Ask for a Safety plan/Emergency Action Plan.
6. Know their history with your fair, and company history.

At Fair Time: Define the Narrative

1. Know what animals are at your fair and where on the fairgrounds they are.
2. Take example photos of all animal exhibitions for your files, this will be useful to counter false claims. Public can take photos and use them out of context. Hire quality and stand behind them.
3. Walk by exhibits as often as possible as quality control and to address any issues (ask questions if you see something odd), be proactive.
4. Have direct contact information for two people from each exhibitor in case of protests, inspections or complaints, so they can be addressed immediately.
5. Have press releases from each animal exhibitor focusing on their mission, their conservation work, etc that can be adapted later to address any issues.
6. Every exhibitor needs a direct line to security and also should know their location.
7. Have written security protocol on how to handle extreme cases of harassment.
8. Have written signs about harassment of exhibitors and consequences posted at each gate and entrance.
9. Have night security to watch animal areas.
10. Film and photograph activists and their protests.
11. **SOCIAL MEDIA:** Use fair social media to *start* the conversation about animals at your fair, (especially before fair). Inundate with positive information before activists can dictate the narrative and frame it as a negative one.

Things to Keep in Mind:

- Know the regulations:
 - Free Speech Zones
 - Rules for amplified sound
 - Local and state trespassing laws

- On-Site Inspections:
 - Verify they are legitimate inspectors. You are allowed to ask to see credentials.
 - Federal/State Fish and Wildlife and USDA inspect often and unannounced.
 - Know who your state and local animal inspection agency is.
 - Have a designated person to accompany inspectors to exhibits and around the fairgrounds.
 - Film inspections, if you feel the need.
- Temporary workers may be undercover activists
 - Have them sign confidentiality agreements
 - Forbid workers from taking photos during “off” times and in “off-exhibit” areas that can be used out of context.

Legislation:

<http://grassroots.circusfans.org>

- “Traveling Exotic Animal and Public Safety Protection Act” (TEAPSPA) (HR 1759)
 - Bill aimed at stopping all traveling exhibitions of animals regulated under the Animal Welfare Act
 - Rhetoric is aimed at circus but would end all fair animal exhibitions that are not agricultural animals or horses
 - Driven by UK-based animal extremist organization Animal Defenders International
 - Contact your Senators, Representatives, and federal lobbyists and let them know you oppose this legislation.
- “Big Cat Public Safety Act” (HR 1818) April 2017 referred to House Resources Committee
- “Animal Emergency Planning Act” (HR 3792) October 2017 referred to House Ag Committee’s sub-committee

Local bills:

- Husbandry Tool Bans: Rhode Island; California; Pittsburgh, PA; Austin, Tx;
- Exotic and/or Performing Animal Bans: New York; Montgomery County, MD; San Francisco, CA; Los Angeles, CA;
- Stay vigilant in your region—watch for city, county, and state legislation animal rights bills

Other Resources:

- IAFE Website: www.fairsandexpos.org
 - **Activist Response Kit (ARK)**: located under Resources tab on website
 - “Your IAFE Digest” (weekly community updates for members)
 - Igniter Discussion Board
 - Animal Welfare Committee
- OABA Website: www.oaba.org
 - OABA Exotic Animal Owner - Welfare Guidelines
 - OABA Media Relations Plan - Performing Animal Exhibitors
 - USDA Animal Exhibitor Advisor: Joan Galvin, Esq., Kelley Drye & Warren, DC