



To: Petting Zoo Operators
From: Erika Fickey, REHS, LRA
Date: January 9th 2024
RE: USDA Exhibitor Licensing

In response to operator inquiry regarding the regulations requiring USDA Exhibitor Licensing, the following guidance is from USDA Licensing and Registration under the Animal Welfare Act. SCPH requires that an operator be in compliance with any applicable USDA licensing requirements prior to receiving approval to operate in Summit County.

Animal Performances and Interactions

Any owner exhibiting regulated animals performing tricks or shows or interacting with the public and receiving compensation in any venue must be licensed, unless one of the exemptions applies. This includes each person owning animals performing in circuses, marine mammal shows, amusement parks, carnivals, independent animal acts, television shows, movies, internet broadcasts, or educational exhibits. All animals must receive the same quality of housing and other care, regardless of whether the animal is currently performing.

***Please use the USDA anonymous Licensing and Registration Assistant as a potential screening tool to see if you need to apply for a USDA exhibitor license at: <https://efile.aphis.usda.gov/LRAssistant/s/>**

Exempt Animal Exhibitors

Shows of Nonregulated Animals

- Anyone with exhibits limited to species of animals not covered by law or regulated is exempt. Typical examples would be reptile houses, anyone who exhibits horses, donkeys, mules etc., and aquariums without regulated animals.

Domesticated Farm Animal Exhibits

- Anyone who arranges and takes part in showing only domesticated farm-type animals at agricultural shows, fairs, and exhibits is exempt (e.g., petting zoos with cows, pigs, sheep, goats, rabbits, llamas, and alpacas, exhibits of only racing pigs, bird fancier shows, pigeon races, etc.). Also exempt are exhibitions of art portraying traditional farming and agricultural settings (such as nativity scenes with a camel and domesticated farm-type animals displayed in a barn, and traditional agricultural displays of working animals, such as reindeer pulling a sled or working on a farm). **However, anyone exhibiting other regulated animals along with domesticated farm-type animals for nonagricultural purposes (e.g., camel rides at carnivals) must be licensed.**

Hobby Exhibitors

- Anyone who maintains **eight** or fewer pet animals, "exotic companion mammals," and/or domesticated farm-type animals for exhibition is exempt from licensing. "Exotic companion mammals" are small, non-dangerous exotic or wild mammals, such as sugar gliders, hedgehogs, degus, spiny mice, prairie dogs, flying squirrels, and jerboas. This exemption does not apply to anyone acting in concert with others where they collectively maintain more than eight of these animals or anyone exhibiting other types of animals.

If you have any questions, I can be reached at efickey@schd.org, 330-926-5627 or contact USDA Animal Care Office directly at animalcare@usda.gov.