

MI Pork Sampler

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HSUS Could Face Millions in Damages in Lawsuit

The nonprofit Center for Consumer Freedom (CCF) announced on December 28 that Feld Entertainment, owner of the Ringling Bros. Circus, had reached a \$9.3 million settlement with the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) in connection with a federal lawsuit filed by Feld under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization (RICO) Act.

However, CCF reported that litigation will continue against other defendants named in the RICO suit including the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and two of HSUS' attorneys.

Feld's lawsuit alleges that ASPCA, HSUS and the two HSUS attorneys took part in an illegal scheme to pursue fraudulent litigation against Feld that was tied-up in the court for years. A federal judge dismissed the suit in 2009 when it became known that the animal-rights plaintiffs channeled at least \$190,000 to a witness to testify against Feld. Feld alleges that HSUS sent six payments to this witness through a nonprofit front group that was controlled by the plaintiffs' counsel. CCF reported that evidence from court documents show some of the money was paid to the nonprofit group with an HSUS check signed by CEO Wayne Pacelle. According to CCF, the \$9.3 million settlement by the ASPCA indicates that HSUS and the other defendants could face tens of millions in damages if they are found to have acted illegally. CCF also reported that Feld Entertainment says it spent \$20 million dollars defending against the failed animal-rights litigation and the RICO Act allows triple

The MI Pork Sampler is MPPA's new publication that will help you fill up on state and national pork news in between Michigan Pork helpings!

damages to be awarded if the defendants named in the suit are found guilty under the Act.

"While HSUS has spent this holiday season raising money with tear-jerking ads featuring pet rescues, the group really ought to be asking for money to pay for their defense attorneys and shady dealings," said CCF Executive Director Richard Berman.

Public polling has shown that 71 percent of Americans mistakenly believe that HSUS is a pet shelter umbrella group and 68 percent wrongly think that HSUS spends most of its money on grants to pet shelters.

"During the Holidays, TV stations were peppered with ads from both HSUS and ASPCA pleading for money for what any logically-thinking person would conclude were funds that would be used to support pet shelters and unwanted and abused animals," said MPPA Executive Vice President Sam Hines. "It's really appalling the scam HSUS continues to perpetuate on well-meaning pet lovers who are unaware that very few of their dollars are used to help animals."

The Center For
Consumer Freedom
Promoting Personal Responsibility and Protecting Consumer Choice

Checkoff News...

USDA to Allow More Meats and Grains in School Lunches

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has responded to criticism over new school lunch rules by allowing more grains and meat in kids' meals. USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack told members of Congress in a letter in early December that the department will do away with daily and weekly limits of meats and grains. Several lawmakers wrote the department after the new rules went into effect in September saying kids aren't getting enough to eat.

"Since the new school year started and schools began to implement the new guidelines, we heard from parents concerned about children being hungry and maybe not getting enough to eat during the day," said Adria Sheil-Brown, manager of nutrition communication and research for the National Pork Board. She noted that the Checkoff has educated producers and committees on the school meal modifications and the rationale behind them.

The Checkoff is funding nutrition research to help demonstrate the importance of not only breakfast, but the inclusion of animal protein at breakfast with adolescents and the impact it can have on satiety, weight management/loss and cognitive function.

"We can't change federal guidelines, but we can proactively work with researchers to demonstrate the need for protein at meals," Sheil-Brown said. "This in turn, could help impact how school meals are viewed in the future."

In Secretary Vilsack's letter, he wrote: "This flexibility is being provided to allow more time for the development of products that fit within the new standards while granting schools additional weekly menu planning options to help ensure that children receive a wholesome, nutritious meal every day of the week."

The new guidelines, intended to address increasing childhood obesity, set limits on calories and salt, and phase in more whole grains. Though broader calorie limits are still in place, school lunch planners can now use as many grains and as much meat as they want.



Pilot Project Shows PIN Tags Help Focus Surveillance Efforts

Imagine if the management tags you use for your sows or boars benefited the pork industry by better targeting surveillance for pseudorabies and swine brucellosis in harvest channels. This could become a reality, thanks to a premises identification number (PIN) tag pilot program.

The Pork Checkoff, the American Association of Swine Veterinarians, the National Pork Producers Council, USDA's Veterinary Services and producers and state veterinarians in Iowa, Texas, North Carolina, Illinois, Indiana and Minnesota, cooperated on the pilot program, which focused on the official PIN tag approved by USDA in 2008. The pork industry has urged adoption of the tags to improve preharvest traceability and to benefit national swine disease surveillance programming.

"With early adoption of the tags by various production systems, a pilot program could be conducted to test their application for disease surveillance," said Jim Niewold a producer from Loda Ill., and member of the Checkoff's Swine Health Committee and Swine ID Implementation Task Force.

After the pilot was approved, USDA's National Surveillance Unit became a secure hub for information sharing. States provided the counties associated with swine premises, and USDA Wildlife Services provided a list of counties with feral swine.

Using PINs from official tags collected at harvest, the NSU then cross-referenced the lists to determine the presence of feral swine.

"Feral swine represent a high risk for disease reintroduction, so samples from sows in counties with these animals are more valuable to test," said Dr. Patrick Webb, director of swine health programs for

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