

SHOW Implements Penalty For Prohibited Substance Violations

The SHOW HIO recently implemented a new penalty for use of prohibited substances at any affiliated event. In late 2020, the USDA offered HIOs the opportunity to participate in a swabbing pilot program where USDA trained SHOW personnel to conduct the swabbing at affiliated shows and send the samples to the lab at Texas A&M University for analysis. SHOW conducted samples on five different occasions late in the season under the new program.

The USDA pays for all of the program except for the required staff to collect the samples. The focus of the program is to identify the use of any masking agent or numbing agent applied prior to the inspection process. The penalty for a first-time offense is two weeks with all subsequent violations carrying a 30-day suspension. In 2021, SHOW will continue working with the USDA on implementation of the program and will honor any suspension from other HIOs that are utilizing the USDA's program. Those other HIOs will also honor the suspensions of the SHOW HIO.

The Walking Horse Trainers' Association was instrumental in implementation of the program as well as the penalty protocol and was the group that got all of the HIOs to work together in honoring suspensions across the board. The penalty will be assessed to the responsible trainer on the entry form for the horse found in violation.