

\$5,000 Reward Offered by Animal Wellness Group for Info that Leads to Animal Fighting Arrests, Convictions

Animal Wellness Action announced a \$5,000 reward for information to help the successful prosecution of any individual engaged in animal fighting.

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES, February 8, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Animal Wellness Action (AWA) and the Animal Wellness Foundation (AWF) announced a \$5,000 reward for information resulting in the successful prosecution of any individual for violating state or federal law (7 U.S.C. § 2156) against animal fighting. The announcement follows an extensive [cockfighting investigation released last month](#) by the organizations that revealed widespread trafficking of fighting animals from North Carolina to points all across the world.



Cockfighting Match

AWA and AWF developed detailed dossiers on 12 individuals, including eight in the Western District of North Carolina, and alleged their deep involvement in activities related to cockfighting, with several of them shipping cockfighting birds to Mexico, the Philippines, Guam, and other distant locations. These shipping records revealed that North Carolina was among the top five shippers in the nation to Guam, trailing only Oklahoma, California, Hawaii, and Alabama when it comes to the volume of birds transported to this long-time

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Wayne Pacelle

hotbed of cockfighting. AWA and AWF presented the information to relevant law enforcement agencies and officials, including the U.S. Attorneys representing three jurisdictions in the state.

“Federal agencies and officers have a duty to enforce our laws against the barbaric practices of

cockfighting and dogfighting,” said Wayne Pacelle, president of Animal Wellness Action. “But their good works depend on the cooperation and alertness of citizens. We ask people who know about illegal animal fighting activities to help us stop these forms of cruelty.”

Under the federal anti-animal fighting law, it is a crime to:

- Knowingly sponsor or exhibit in an animal fighting venture.
- Knowingly attend an animal fighting venture, or knowingly cause an individual who has not attained the age of 16 to attend an animal fighting venture.
- Knowingly buy, sell, possess, train, transport, deliver, or receive any animal for purposes of having the animal participate in an animal fighting venture.
- Knowingly use the mail service of the U.S. Postal Service, or any “written, wire, radio televisions or another form of communications in, or use a facility of, interstate commerce,” to advertise an animal for use in an animal fighting venture, or to advertise a knife, gaff, or other sharp instrument designed to be attached to the leg of a bird for use in an animal fighting venture, or to promote or in any other manner further an animal fighting venture except as performed outside the U.S.
- Knowingly sell, buy, transport, or deliver in interstate or foreign commerce “a knife, a gaff, or any other sharp instrument” designed or intended to be attached to the leg of a bird for use in an animal fighting venture.

Penalties for each violation of any one of these provisions allow for a maximum of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine for perpetrators, except for an adult attending an animal fighting venture. Penalties for an adult attendee are one year in prison and a \$5,000 fine.

“Cockfighting breeds a cesspool of other illegal activities, such as gambling and drug use,” said Marty Irby, executive director at Animal Wellness Action. “We will make our communities safer when we root out this criminal cruelty.”

An “animal fighting venture” involves a fight conducted or to be conducted between at least two animals for purposes of sport, wagering, or entertainment.

This reward offering follows a rash of high-profile cockfighting activity last week in Las Vegas and Elko County, Nevada, in Los Angeles, California, and in Chickamauga, Georgia.

What to do:

Anyone with information about illegal cockfighting activities can send information to animalcrueltytips@animalwellnessaction.org. Residents can also contact the appropriate U.S. attorneys, the state attorney general, or county sheriffs, or district attorneys.

Animal Wellness Action (Action) is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) organization with a mission of helping animals by promoting legal standards forbidding cruelty. We champion causes that

alleviate the suffering of companion animals, farm animals, and wildlife. We advocate for policies to stop dogfighting and cockfighting and other forms of malicious cruelty and to confront factory farming and other systemic forms of animal exploitation. To prevent cruelty, we promote enacting good public policies and we work to enforce those policies. To enact good laws, we must elect good lawmakers, and that's why we remind voters which candidates care about our issues and which ones don't. We believe helping animals helps us all.

The Animal Wellness Foundation (Foundation) is a Los Angeles-based private charitable organization with a mission of helping animals by making veterinary care available to everyone with a pet, regardless of economic ability. We organize rescue efforts and medical services for dogs and cats in need and help homeless pets find a loving caregiver. We are advocates for getting veterinarians to the front lines of the animal welfare movement; promoting responsible pet ownership; and vaccinating animals against infectious diseases such as distemper. We also support policies that prevent animal cruelty and that alleviate suffering. We believe helping animals helps us all.

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