

\$5,000 Reward Offered in South Carolina by Animal Wellness Groups for Info Leading to Cockfighting Arrests, Convictions

COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA, USA, March 23, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, 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 a [raid last week in Spartanburg County](#) where authorities arrested three men, and Georgia law enforcement apprehended eight individuals at a cockfight last month.



Cockfighting Match | Photo: Swanson Design

Prior to the recent Nevada and California incidents, AWA and AWF developed detailed investigations and dossiers on individuals in Alabama, Hawaii, Kentucky, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Tennessee, 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. AWA and AWF presented the information to relevant law enforcement agencies and officials, including the U.S. Attorneys representing three jurisdictions in the state.

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*Wayne Pacelle, president at
AWA*

“Federal and state law enforcement 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.”

“The blood-sport of cockfighting breeds a cesspool of illegal activities, such as gambling and drug use, and disease,” said [Marty Irby](#), executive director at Animal Wellness Action. “We will make the Palmetto State safer when we root out this egregious criminal activity, and we hope the good people of South Carolina will seek our \$5,000 reward.”

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.

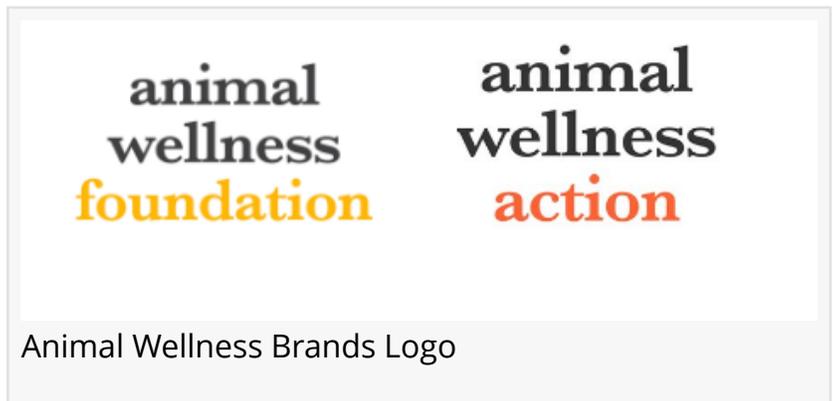


Wayne Pacelle



Animal Wellness Action Executive Director Marty Irby

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.



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

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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