

# Cockfighting Bust in Shawnee County Yet One More Reminder Of Persistence of Staged Fights in Kansas

*Kansas law enforcement has swung behind federal FIGHT Act, to provide more tools for law enforcement to crack down on animal-fighting crimes*

TOPEKA, KANSAS, USA, June 20, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The weekend arrest of a Shawnee County man on cockfighting-related charges underscores the need for a national law to end the enduring scourge of animal fighting, said the leader of two national animal-welfare groups.



Cockfighting Match

“We applaud the Shawnee County Sheriff’s Office for taking action to break up this cockfighting event,” said Wayne Pacelle, president of Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy. “We remind all Kansans to be the eyes and ears for law enforcement and to alert them to the presence of cockfighting, dogfighting, and other malicious animal-cruelty crimes. They can only act when they have solid information about ongoing criminal activity.”

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*Sandy Horton, executive director*

Kansas treats animal fighting as a felony, but cockfighters often flaunt even strong state and federal anti-animal-fighting statutes. The Kansas arrest comes as Congress considers taking up the Fighting Inhumane Gambling and High-Risk Trafficking (FIGHT) Act to address the threat that animal fighting poses to community safety, agriculture, and animal well-being.

This past weekend, the Shawnee County Sheriff’s Office

responded to a call about the tell-tale signs of a cockfighting derby, including multiple unknown cars and people gathered at a home on Croco Road. Officers found illegal paraphernalia associated with cockfighting, arrested 66-year-old Clinton E. Dick, and seized eight roosters. Dick was booked on charges of felony animal cruelty, unlawful conduct related to cockfighting, unlawful possession of cockfighting paraphernalia.

Despite being criminalized in all 50 states and at the federal level, there are millions of fighting animals trafficked every year in the United States, with hundreds of thousands smuggled across the U.S. border with Mexico. The long-distance movement of birds, who are often infected with avian diseases, is a threat to production agriculture for broiler birds and laying hens. To address this continuing problem and to give law enforcement more tools to end this barbaric trade, Animal Wellness Action and the Center have been working to pass the FIGHT Act.

Kansas law enforcement has swung behind the legislation, with the Kansas Sheriffs' Association and dozens of county sheriffs and district attorneys backing the legislation.

The FIGHT Act, by amending Section 26 of the Animal Welfare Act, would enhance the enforcement opportunities by banning on-line gambling of animal fighting ventures; halting the shipment of mature roosters (chickens only) shipped through the U.S. mail (it is already illegal to ship dogs through the mail); creating a citizen suit provision, after proper notice to federal authorities, to allow private right of action against illegal animal fighters; and enhancing forfeiture provisions to include real property for animal fighting crimes.

"The Kansas Sheriffs Association supports H.R. 2742, the FIGHT Act, to crack down on the inhumane, illegal practices of cockfighting and dogfighting," wrote Sandy Horton, executive director of the association in a letter to Kansas's members of Congress. "Sheriffs work diligently to protect our communities, both human and animal, and we want to eliminate this form of organized crime and malicious animal cruelty."

Animal Wellness Action is calling on all U.S. lawmakers, including Kansas elected officials in Washington, D.C., to cosponsor the FIGHT Act. The measure has 600 endorsing agencies and organizations and has strong bipartisan support in both chambers of Congress.

#### Other Kansas FIGHT Act Endorsers

Anderson County Attorney's Office, Cherokee County Attorney's Office, Douglas County District Attorney's Office, Franklin County Sheriff's Office, Haskell County Sheriff's Office, Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, Johnson County District Attorney's Office, Kansas Sheriffs' Association, Labette County Sheriff's Office, Leavenworth County Sheriff's Office, Morton County Attorney's Office, Reno County Sheriff's Office, Rice County Attorney's Office, Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office, Wilson County Attorney's Office, Allen County Animal Rescue Facility (La Harpe), Cedar Cove Conservation and Education Center (Louisburg), DivaPets Cat Rescue (Shawnee), Pawsitive Tails, Prairie Paws Animal Shelter (Ottawa)

## ABOUT

Animal Wellness Action is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) whose mission is to help animals by promoting laws and regulations at federal, state and local levels that forbid cruelty to all animals. The group also works to enforce existing anti-cruelty and wildlife protection laws. Animal Wellness Action believes helping animals helps us all. X: @AWAction\_News

The Center for a Humane Economy is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(3) whose mission is to help animals by helping forge a more humane economic order. The first organization of its kind in the animal protection movement, the Center encourages businesses to honor their social responsibilities in a culture where consumers, investors, and other key stakeholders abhor cruelty and the degradation of the environment and embrace innovation as a means of eliminating both. The Center believes helping animals helps us all. X: @TheHumaneCenter

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