

Animal Wellness Action Releases Video Exposing North Carolina Cockfighting Front Group

Granville County bust this weekend offers a window into the ongoing lawlessness of illegal animal fighters, who are often tied to other crimes

GRANVILLE COUNTY, NC, USA, July 29, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy report that a major cockfighting bust over the weekend with dozens of arrests, 200 roosters removed, buckets of dead chickens, and illegal drugs and weapons offers yet one clear case of the presence of cockfighting trafficking that reaches from North Carolina locations to organized crime networks as far flung as Mexico, Guam, and the Philippines.



Cockfighting Match

“We applaud the Granville County Sheriff’s Office for busting an illegal animal fighting ring in its jurisdiction,” said Wayne Pacelle, president of Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a

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*Wayne Pacelle, President of
Animal Wellness Action*

Humane Economy, which is leading a national campaign against staged animal fighting. “The tentacles of cockfighting rings like this one not only reach all across North Carolina but also across the globe.”

Animal Wellness Action and the Center note that the bust in Granville County is not a one-off incident. To support that claim, the groups released a video today reveals the documented cockfighting activities of the so-called North Carolina Gamefowl Breeders Association and a few of the

other illegal animal fighters who consort with this group.

The video can be [viewed by clicking here](#):

North Carolina Gamefowl Breeders Association and their ties to COCKFIGHTING - YouTube

“Since our 2020 investigation into illegal cockfighting in North Carolina, we’ve learned about the people who have built a criminal syndicate driving cockfights inside and outside of North Carolina,” added Pacelle. “This crime network, partly organized by the North Carolina Gamefowl Breeders Association, needs to be disbanded. It not only threatens the well-being of animals but the safety of our communities. Gambling, narcotics trafficking, money laundering, and other criminal conduct are routinely commingled with animal fighting.”

Granville County Bust was Remarkable in Magnitude of Cruelty

Acting on tips, an undercover deputy paid his way into the event and captured video. Authorities removed 200 roosters from the property, and found buckets containing dead chickens, along with illegal guns and drugs at the property. Arrests were made despite cockfighters — coming from different states — fleeing authorities, hiding into the woods.

Granville County Sheriff Robert Fountain confirmed razor blades were attached to the birds' legs, the hallmark of cockfighting, and noted that he had never seen anything of this magnitude, as cockfighters were injecting birds with adrenaline and throwing them back into the battle when they were near death.

Animal Wellness Action Video, Released Today, Shows North Carolina Gamefowl Breeders Association and Their Involvement in Cockfighting

- Jorge Yanez, director of NCGBA: Yanez has transported roosters to Mexico and advertised in cockfighting magazines. His game farm includes a price list, and he shares on social media, asking people to defend cockfighting.
- David Thurston, vice president of NCGBA: He owns a gamefarm and has written emails opposing bills that would put cockfighting out of business.
- Jeff Hudspeth of Cedar Creek Farm: a show judge for United Gamefowl Breeders Association has advertised selling gamecock knives and has been documented to illegally ship 150 roosters in the U.S. mail to Guam, which is a hub for cockfighting. The birds were shipped without food or water for 9,000 miles, as they were destined for the fighting pits.
- Gerald Allen, UBGA Director: His business, Belle Farm, sells the knives and gaffs affixed to the birds' legs to enhance the bloodletting of the staged battles. It is a federal crime to traffic in these devices.
- Gerald Allen Jr., NCGA Treasurer: He was convicted by the federal government for being

involved in a cockfight in Tennessee. His criminal record is posted in the video related to this matter.

- Alan Turney, NCGA Director: His criminal history is attached in the video and consists of weapons and drug convictions.
- Francisco Valadez Jr. of North Carolina: His business logo for his “Los Panchos NC Game Farm” was identified on a trailer at the cockfight that was raided in Granville County. It may be one of the largest gamecock operations in North Carolina.

This work is the extension of an earlier report by Animal Wellness Action in 2020, which identified the large, organized crime network in North Carolina run by the state’s game breeders association. Today, the video ties this leadership to other organizations with criminal activity.

North Carolina’s anti-cockfighting law has strong provisions, but it needs to be fortified, including for possessing animals for fighting purposes.

Best Remedy is a Federal Law to Eradicate Staged Animal Fighting

Congress is now considering an upgrade of the federal law. [The FIGHT Act](#) bans on-line gambling on dogfights and cockfights; prohibits shipping adult fighting roosters through the U.S. mail, strengthens forfeiture authority for fighting pits and properties used to conduct these cruel activities; and allows private rights of action against dogfighters and cockfighters in the absences of federal law enforcement.

More than 650 organizations and law enforcement agencies already endorse The FIGHT Act, including [the National Sheriffs’ Association](#) and National District Attorneys Association. North Carolina endorsers of FIGHT include the Carteret County Sheriff’s Office, Craven County Sheriff’s Office, Onslow County Sheriff’s Office, Swain County Sheriff’s Office, along with Mayor Allen Jones of Winston-Salem), County of Wilkes, Surry County Board of Commissioners, Town of Boone, Town of Ronda, and the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners.

“I consider passing the FIGHT Act in Congress as urgent a priority as we have at Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy,” Pacelle said.

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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