

2025 Calgary Stampede opens amid growing opposition to rodeo and chuckwagon events

The Vancouver Humane Society is calling for an end to the Calgary Stampede's rodeo and chuckwagon racing events, which lead to animal deaths nearly every year.

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA, July 7, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With the 2025 Calgary Stampede underway, the Vancouver Humane Society (VHS) is renewing its call to end the rodeo and chuckwagon races, citing serious animal welfare concerns.



Calf roping event at the Calgary Stampede. Jo-Anne McArthur / We Animals Media.

“Animals are dying nearly every year in Stampede events, all for the sake of public entertainment,” said VHS Communications Director, Chantelle Archambault. “Last year alone, three horses died in the chuckwagon races and a steer suffered a fatal neck injury during a wrestling event.”

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The Stampede has so much more to offer. It's time to move forward and focus on the many popular Stampede attractions that bring people together without putting animals in harm's way.”

*Chantelle Archambault, VHS
Communications Director*

Since the VHS began tracking fatalities in 1986, at least 109 animals have lost their lives at the Stampede. A majority of the fatalities have occurred during the chuckwagon races, which are particularly deadly due to the fast pace and close proximity of teams of horses and wagons racing. The VHS also points to the inherent risks, stress, and suffering animals endure in events like calf roping, steer wrestling, and bucking, which rely on fear, pain, and force to provoke fleeing, resisting, and bucking behaviour.

“The animals used in these events don't have a choice,” added Archambault. “They are frightened and stressed. These are not willing athletes or competitors—they are prey animals reacting to handling practices that mimic being attacked by a predator.”

Research Co. polling data shows growing public opposition to rodeo and chuckwagon events, including among Albertans and Calgarians. Surveys conducted in [2023](#) and [2024](#) indicate a majority oppose the use of animals in rodeo and government funding for such events. A [2022 Research Co. poll](#) found removing rodeo and chuckwagons from the Stampede program would not affect Stampede attendance and could attract new visitors.

The VHS is urging Stampede officials, Calgary City Council, and the Alberta government to retire these increasingly controversial events.

“The Stampede has so much more to offer,” said Archambault. “It’s time to move forward and focus on the many popular Stampede attractions that bring people together without putting animals in harm’s way.”

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Steer wrestling event at the Calgary Stampede. Jo-Anne McArthur / We Animals Media.



Chuckwagon racing event at the Calgary Stampede. Jo-Anne McArthur / We Animals Media.

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