revista online de extensão e cultura
REALIZAÇÃO

BY NC SA

DOI 10.30612/realizacao.v8i15.15381
ISSN: 2358-3401

Submetido em 10 de Novembro de 2021
Aceito em 09 de Dezembro de 2021
Publicado em 17 de Dezembro de 2021

ANIMAL ATHLETE: PARTICIPATION OF ANIMALS IN SPORTS PRACTICES FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES COMMUNITY

ATLETA ANIMAL: PARTICIPAÇÃO DE ANIMAIS EM PRÁTICAS ESPORTIVAS SOBRE A PERSPECTIVA DA COMUNIDADE DAS CIÊNCIAS AGRÁRIAS

ATLETA ANIMAL: PARTICIPACIÓN DE ANIMALES EN PRÁCTICAS DEPORTIVAS DESDE LA PERSPECTIVA DE LA COMUNIDAD DE LAS CIENCIAS AGRARIAS

Guilherme Resende de Almeida
Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso
Jean Kaique Valentim*
Universidade Federal da Grande Dourados
Alexander Alexandre de Almeida
Universidade Federal dos Vales do Jequitinhonha e Mucuri
Tatiana Marques Bittencourt
Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso
Joyce Zanella
Universidade Federal da Grande Dourados

Abstract: Vaquejadas, Rodeos and Lasso Trials are sports and cultural modalities of our country, which have been intertwined in the daily lives of many Brazilians for many generations. The present work seeks to analyze the opinion of professionals and students of agricultural sciences from all over the country about such practices. Descriptive-exploratory research was carried out via questionnaire, made available on the internet through Google Docs forms, and 250 records were obtained. The current scenario of the activity displays many points that are still much discussed and controversial. In the analysis of the results, the majority of the interviewees are in the age group of 15 to 25 years old, men and women, with complete higher education, knowledgeable about the precepts of Well-being, agree with the use of animals in the practice of sports, and know

* Autor para Correspondência: kaique.tim@hotmail.com

the legislation that regulates these practices. It can be seen that 39.6% of this public partially agrees with the use of animals in this sporting practice, another 35.2% totally agree with this practice and 13.9% disagree with the use of animals for sporting purposes. Regarding oversight, 84% of the interviewees believe that Brazil does not oversee this segment, requiring greater care. Seeking to delve into animal rights. When asked what would be necessary for animals to have their rights guaranteed, 41.2% reported awareness on the part of the population, 29.6% government oversight and 25.5% prohibition of any practice that could harm animals. It can be concluded from this work that the population of agricultural sciences partially agrees with the use of animals in sporting practices, with vaquejada being the sporting modality that most affects the well-being of animals. In addition, the interviewees state that there should be greater oversight by the government in the use of animals in sports, and greater awareness of the population regarding the use of animals in sports, ensuring the well-being of these animals.

Keywords: Animal welfare, Animal sports, Agricultural professionals.

Resumo: As Vaquejadas, Rodeios e Provas de Laço são modalidades esportivas e culturais de nosso País, que estão entremeadas no cotidiano de muitos brasileiros a muitas gerações. Busca-se com o presente trabalho analisar a opinião de profissionais e estudantes das ciências agrárias de todo o país sobre tais práticas. Foi realizada uma pesquisa descritiva – exploratória via questionário, disponibilizada na internet a partir do Google Docs formulários, foram obtidos 250 registros. O cenário atual da atividade exibe muitos pontos que ainda são muito discutidos e polemizados. Na análise dos resultados, a maiorias dos entrevistados está na faixa etária de 15 a 25 anos, homens e mulheres, com ensino superior completo, conhecedores dos preceitos de Bem-estar, concordam com o uso de animais na prática de esportes, conhecem a legislação que regulamenta estas práticas. Observa-se, que 39,6% deste público concorda parcialmente com a utilização de animais nesta prática de esportes, outros 35,2% concordam totalmente com essa prática e 13,9% discorda do uso de animais para fins esportivos. Quanto à fiscalização 84% dos entrevistados acham que o Brasil não fiscaliza esse segmento, necessitando de maiores cuidados. Buscando adentrar nos direitos dos animais. Quando perguntado aos participantes sobre o que seria necessário para que os animais tenham seus direitos garantidos, 41,2% relataram conscientização por parte da população, 29,6% fiscalização do governo e 25,5% proibição de qualquer prática que possa prejudicar os animais.

Conclui-se com este trabalho que a população das ciências agrárias concorda parcialmente com a utilização de animais em práticas esportivas, sendo a vaquejada a modalidade esportiva que mais afeta o bem-estar dos animais. Além, disso os entrevistados afirmam que deve ter maior fiscalização por parte do governo na utilização de animais em esportes, e maior conscientização da população quanto ao uso de animais em esportes assegurando o bem-estar desses animais.

Palavras-chave: Bem-estar animal, Esporte animal, Profissionais das agrárias.

Resumen: Las Vaquejadas, Rodeos y Pruebas de Lazo son modalidades deportivas y culturales de nuestro país, que están entrelazadas en el cotidiano de muchos brasileños desde hace muchas generaciones. Se busca con el presente trabajo analizar la opinión de profesionales y estudiantes de las ciencias agrarias de todo el país sobre tales prácticas. Se realizó una investigación descriptiva - exploratoria vía cuestionario, disponible en internet a partir de Google Docs formularios, se obtuvieron 250 registros. El escenario actual de la actividad exhibe muchos puntos que aún son muy discutidos y polemizados. En el análisis de los resultados, la mayoría de los entrevistados está en el rango de edad de 15 a 25 años, hombres y mujeres, con educación superior completa, conocedores de los preceptos de Bienestar, concuerdan con el uso de animales en la práctica de deportes, conocen la legislación que reglamenta estas prácticas. Se observa que el 39,6% de este público concuerda parcialmente con la utilización de animales en esta práctica de deportes, otro 35,2% concuerda totalmente con esa práctica y el 13,9% discrepa del uso de animales para fines deportivos. En cuanto a la fiscalización, el 84% de los entrevistados creen que Brasil no fiscaliza este segmento, necesitando de mayores cuidados. Buscando adentrarse en los derechos de los animales. Cuando se preguntó a los participantes sobre qué sería necesario para que los animales tengan sus derechos garantizados, el 41,2% relataron concienciación por parte de la población, el 29,6% fiscalización del gobierno y el 25,5% prohibición de cualquier práctica que pueda perjudicar a los animales. Se concluye con este trabajo que la población de las ciencias agrarias concuerda parcialmente con la utilización de animales en prácticas deportivas, siendo la vaquejada la modalidad deportiva que más afecta el bienestar de los animales. Además, los entrevistados afirman que debe haber mayor fiscalización por parte del gobierno en la utilización de animales en deportes, y mayor concienciación de la

población en cuanto al uso de animales en deportes asegurando el bienestar de esos animales.

Palabras clave: Bienestar animal, Deporte animal, Profesionales de las agrarias.

INTRODUCTION

Rodeo and vaquejada are sports that are widespread in Brazil and use animals in their events (SILVA, 2007). Some of these sports are questioned by animal protection agencies due to possible mistreatment, interference in their natural habitat, contact with humans and being subjected to different types of tests, such as the lasso test. The Brazilian legal system has instruments that prevent cruel acts against animals, but cultural freedom supports these types of practices (SOUZA, 2008).

This means that companies that use them in some way feel pressured to maintain good living conditions for animals during their productive life and at slaughter. Welfare can be defended from several points of view, considering the animal according to its physical and mental health (BROOM & FRASER, 2010). According to the Brazilian Vaquejada Association (ABVAQ), between 2014 and 2015, around 4,000 vaquejadas took place throughout the country. The events generated more than 120,000 direct jobs and 600,000 indirect jobs and generated around R$600 million per year, in addition to 650 million people attending these festivals.

With the need to protect the natural environment and the physical integrity of animals used in sporting events such as vaquejada and rodeo, greater rigor is needed in the elaboration of environmental legislation aimed at the defense and protection of fauna, in addition to establishing a limit for cultural freedom, so that this does not override the well-being of animals (SILVA, 2007). Still according to the author initially cited, both vaquejada and rodeo were practiced only for cultural purposes, however, over the years and with the professionalization of these modalities, the economic factor became increasingly preponderant, since a lot of money has been invested.

As a result, the practice of these sports became major festive events and animals also became more demanding, which increased pressure from society regarding the level of violence, cruelty and mistreatment committed against them (SOUZA, 2008). Even so, the cultural issue is often put forward by its practitioners as the main reason for the existence of these sports.

Several campaigns and pressure from non-governmental organizations have raised public awareness, especially in developed countries, leading to important legislative advances. This very strong Northeastern cultural tradition has as an argument for its prohibition the suffering of the animal that is thrown down in an arena by the cowboy. The premise of the defenders of vaquejada is supported by the economic and cultural aspects, considering it as an intangible heritage of the regions that maintain it, generating employment and income for this needy part of Brazil.

Therefore, further studies are being sought regarding the aspects of these practices, seeking to combine animal welfare with the culture and sustainable development of these regions. It is clear that these modalities are of utmost importance for some populations. In the country, there are improvements in the development of environmental legislation aimed at raising awareness among the population for the defense and protection of the animals used, seeking to meet the guidelines for animal welfare (LEITE et al., 2020).

In view of the above, the objective of this work was to objectively evaluate the opinion of the national Agricultural Sciences community on the participation of animals in sports practices.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Taking into account the proposed objectives, we opted for descriptive-exploratory research that, according to Gil (1999), aims to characterize and measure a certain population or phenomenon and, with this, establish certain relationships between variables, of a qualitative-quantitative nature, as a result of the interdependence in the demands imposed in this study, given the complexity of the social reality of the target audience.

This study was carried out from January to February 2019, using the Google Forms tool through the application of a questionnaire that was made available on the internet. The research was disseminated through social media websites (Facebook, WhatsApp) related to animal welfare and production.

The questionnaire contained 11 questions regarding the interviewee's profile, such as age, gender, level of education, knowledge on the subject in question, among others. The focus of the research was to interview people in the field of agricultural sciences.

After tabulating the data in Excel, filtering was carried out to eliminate duplicate responses from participants. In case of doubt, it was decided to exclude the information, carrying out descriptive comparisons, as per the study carried out by Geraldo et al., (2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In total, 250 responses were obtained to the questionnaires sent via email and social networks throughout the academic community of Agricultural Sciences. Table 1 shows the data obtained in relation to the description of the participants. It is noted that 50% of the participants were women, 48.4% were men and 1.6% did not provide information. Regarding age, 54.7%.

Regarding the age of the interviewees, 54.7% of them are between 15 and 25 years old. The item corresponding to Graph 2, which refers to the sex of the interviewees, shows that 50.8% of them are women and 49.2% are men. Regarding the age of the participants, 1 (0.4%) was under 15 years old, 134 (53.6%) between 15 and 25 years old, 92 (36.8%) between 25 and 35 years old, 16 (6.4%) between 35 and 50 years old, 4 (1.6%) were over 50 years old and 3 (1.2%) did not inform their age.

The education item showed that 30.6% of the people who responded to the survey had incomplete higher education, 26.5% had postgraduate studies, 23.3% had completed higher education, and 16.7% had completed high school, which was to be expected since the survey was aimed at students, professionals and technicians in agricultural sciences.

Table 1. Description of the participants.

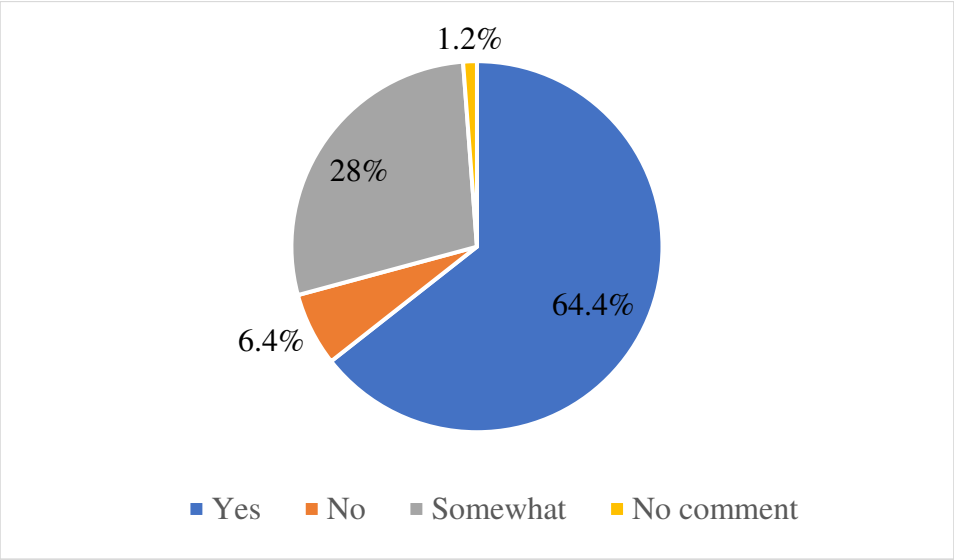
Variables		
Gender	**N**	**%**
Feminine	125	50
Masculine	121	48.4
Did not inform	4	1.6
Age	**N**	**%**
Less than 15	1	0.4

15 to 25	134	53.6
25 to 35	92	36.8
35 to 50	16	6.4
Over 50	4	1.6
Did not inform	3	1,2
Education	**N**	**%**
Completed elementary education	2	0.8
Incomplete elementary education	1	0.4
Completed high school	41	16.4
Incomplete high school	4	1.6
Incomplete higher education	76	30.4
Completed higher education	57	22.8
Postgraduate	66	26.4
Prefer not to inform	3	1,2

N: number of participants; % percentage

Entering the scope of this study, Graph 1 demonstrates the interviewees' opinion on the true concept of Animal Welfare, showing that (161) 64.4% of those involved claim to know the definitions of Welfare and its application in rural areas, (70) 28% partially know the concept of welfare, 16 (6.4%) report being unaware of the definition of welfare and 3 (1.2%) preferred not to comment on the subject.

Graph 1. Concept of animal welfare.

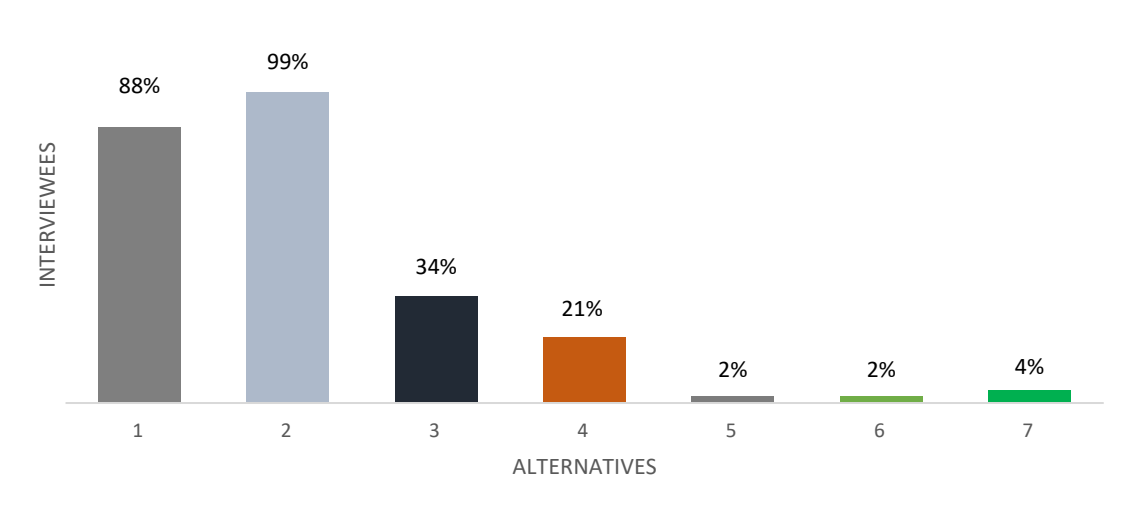


Animal welfare is related to several different issues and concepts, where the main objective is to guarantee a better quality of life for the animal, where it can be able to remain physiologically and emotionally balanced, since they are sentient animals, and therefore, capable of feeling pain, fear, affliction, and anguish .

The questionnaire questions were aimed at academics and professionals in agricultural science courses, which is why it was expected that they would have knowledge about the definition and employability of animal welfare.

Graph 2 shows opinions on the use of animals for sports practices and which sports tend to affect animal welfare the most. It can be seen that 39.6% of this public partially agrees with the use of animals in this type of sports practice, another 35.2% totally agree with this practice and 13.9% disagree with the use of animals for sports purposes.

Graph 2. Use of animals in sports practices.



1. agree; 2. partially agree; 3. disagree; 4. partially disagree; 5. depends on the practice; 6. do not know; 7. prefer not to comment.

Regarding the types of existing modalities and their effects on animal welfare, Table 2 shows that 32.8% of respondents believe that vaquejada is the activity that most violates animal rights. These results corroborate Simon et al . (2018) where 67.3% of respondents believe that animals suffer when they participate in rodeos and similar activities.

Table 2. Types of existing modalities and their effects on animal welfare.

Which ones affect animals the most?	Sports activities					
	Rodeos	Rodeos	Lasso trials	Equestrian events	All activities	Others
N	82	56	39	5	27	41
%	32.8	22.4	15.6	2	10.8	16.4

N: number of interviewees; %: percentage.

Furthermore, according to Kukul (2017), such sports activities pose risks of fractures and bruises in animals. Therefore, these are practices that cause harm to the physical integrity of the animal, directly violating the fundamental principles of animal welfare.

According to Buonoras et al. (2004), the occurrence and severity of gastric ulcers in horses used in the sport of vaquejada are determined by the intensity of training and competition, as well as the time of confinement of the animals, with a higher prevalence of non-erosive gastritis. According to the author, 48.57% of the horses had gastritis, 15.71% with the erosive type and 32.86% non-erosive.

When horses participating in vaquejadas undergo a physical and clinical evaluation, physical, biochemical and hematological changes are noted, due to excessive exercise, in addition to the stress they are subjected to during the activity, as well as the training, as many of them are inadequate. In parks or arenas, where these sports take place, the conditions to which the animals are subjected are inhospitable, not contributing to their well-being. (LOPES et. al, 2009). It is worth highlighting that animal welfare can be negatively influenced by any practice that takes the animal out of its homeostasis .

However, these are not the only factors that can cause stress to animals. Other points must also be taken into consideration, such as inadequate transport in tight spaces, where they cannot express their normal behavior.

In this way, sports practices can cause various pathologies in animals, whether due to the practice itself or the confinement in which the animals are kept, violating the basic principles of well-being and also the federal constitution, since in its art. 255 § 1º, VII.

According to Brandão (2014), this article of the Federal Constitution is the responsibility of the public authorities to protect fauna and flora, and practices that put their ecological function at risk, that cause the extinction of species, or that subject animals to cruelty are prohibited by law. According to the author, this section refers in a broad sense, and rodeos and vaquejadas fall within this issue.

When asked about the legislation that elevates such practices to cultural expression, Table 3 shows that 54.4% of respondents say they are aware of it, and 39.2% of them do not agree with this law. Another important point elucidated in this research was the opinion of this target audience regarding the supervision of government agencies in these sporting activities, where 84% of respondents reported that the country does not have firm legislation to regulate these activities.

Table 3. Legislation that elevates such practices to cultural manifestation.

Variables		Yes	No	Prefer not to talk	Others
Are you familiar with law 13,364, which elevates rodeos, vaquejadas, and other related practices to the status of national cultural manifestations?	N	136	109	5	*
	%	54.4	43.6	2	
If so, do you agree with this law?	N	94	98	58	*
	%	37.6	39.2	23.2	
Do you think our country is well structured in terms of monitoring the use of animals in these activities?	N	28	210	8	4
	%	11.2	84	3.2	1.6

N: number of interviewees; % percentage; * Did not present the option.

According to Amorim et al. (2007), 78% of people questioned about animal protection legislation say they are unaware of it. Much has been said about the legislation governing animal rights, which is why studies focused on animal protection are essential so that it becomes known to a large part of the population.

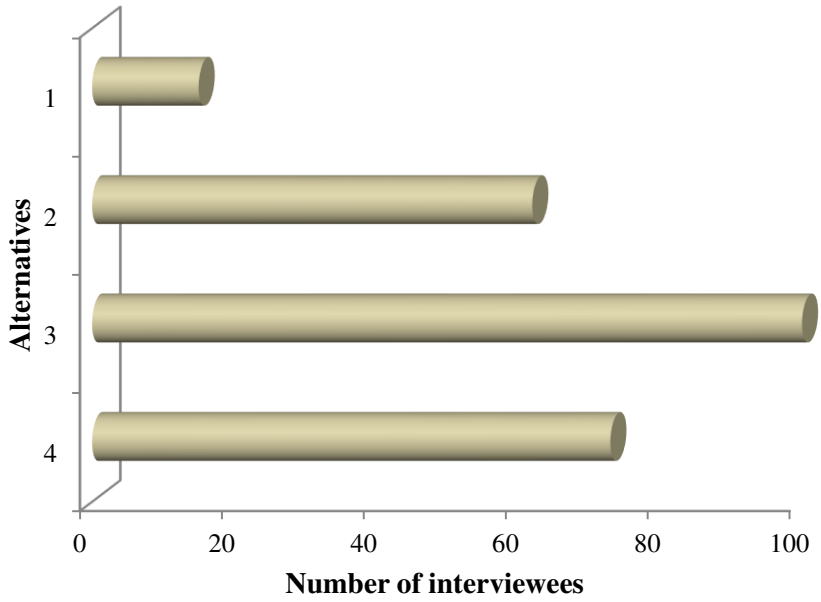
Sports activities that use animals for such practice must be governed by a constitution/legislation, as it is a practice in which animals are more susceptible to stressful actions and mistreatment, which significantly interfere with their well-being. To regulate the best well-being conditions, there is the Federal Constitution of 1988, Law No. 9,605/1998, Law No. 10,220/2001, Law No. 10,519/2002 and Bill No. 4,564/2019; however, specific legislation is ideal so that animal rights are taken into account (AMORIM et al. 2020). In addition to Federal Law No. 13,362/2016, which elevates rodeo and vaquejada to the artistic-cultural category, that is, they are considered cultural manifestations (SIMON et al. 2018).

However, according to Panicacci (2012), event organizers seek to justify the approval of such sports as a way of expressing the culture of the region. However, events such as the "full circuit" are events held in the culture of the United States, as well as the clothing worn at the events, which are characteristic of cowboys from the "Wild West".

Regarding inspection, 84% of those interviewed believe that Brazil does not inspect this segment, and that greater care is needed. Seeking to delve into animal rights. According to Kukul (2014), collective participation in inspection is essential to better adapt cowboy festivals. Only then will it be possible to have ethical actions with animals, in order to reduce animal abuse, with the aim of enabling harmony between humans and the environment.

When asked about what is necessary for animals to have this guarantee, 41.2% of those interviewed stated that awareness among the population involved in these segments is the main factor influencing this, as shown in graph 3.

Graph 3. Monitoring of sports activities.



1. Others; 2. Prohibition of any practice; 3. Raising awareness among the population; 4. Inspection.

When participants were asked what would be necessary for animals to have their rights guaranteed, 41.2% reported raising awareness among the population, 29.6% reported government oversight and 25.5% reported a ban on any practice that could harm animals.

However, Brazil is a country that has legislation that encompasses animal protection, but these laws are not enforced. Therefore, there is a lack of awareness among the population regarding their employability (AMORIM et al. 2020). Animals must be free from fear and pain, and it is essential to guarantee their physical integrity (FRASER et al ., 1997). Avoiding injuries and diseases that cause suffering is a fundamental duty carried out with any animal species.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded from this work that the population of agricultural sciences partially agrees with the use of animals in sports practices, with vaquejada being the sport that most affects the welfare of animals. Furthermore, the interviewees state that there should be greater supervision by the government in the use of animals in sports, and greater awareness of the population regarding the use of animals in sports, ensuring the welfare of these animals.

REFERENCES

AMORIM, BP; OLIVEIRA, CEC; OLIVEIRA CAETANO, GA Animal abuse in cultural manifestations: an analysis from the legal perspective **. PUBVET** , v.14, n.1, p.1-14, 2020.

AMORIM, LMPV et al. Perception and attitude of the population of Lauro de Freitas, Bahia, towards animals: preliminary data. In: INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON CONCEPTS IN ANIMAL WELFARE, 2., 2007, Rio de Janeiro **. Proceedings...** Rio de Janeiro: WSPA, 2007.

BRANDÃO, IM Environmental crimes: a view on rodeo and vaquejada practices. **Scientific Interfaces - Law** . v.2, n.2, p.93-104, 2014.

BUONORA, G.S.; BASTOSMANSO, J.A.; ALMEIDA, H.B.; SILVEIRA ALVES, G.E. Study of the occurrence of gastric lesions in vaquejada horses. **Brazilian Journal of Veterinary Research and Animal Science** , v.41 (suppl), p.263-264, 2004.

FRASER, D.; WEARY, DM; PAJOR, EA; MILLIGAN, BM A scientific conception of animal welfare that reflects ethical concerns. **Animal Welfare** , v.6, n.3, p.187-205, 1997.

GERALDO, A., VALENTIM, J.K., ZANELLA, J., MENDES, J.P., SILVA, A.F., GARCIA, R.G., *EBERHART, B.S. ;* CARVALHO PANTOJA, J. Profile of producers and consumers of free-range chicken meat in the Alto São Francisco region–MG. **RealizAção,** v. 7, n. 14, p. 81-93, 2020.

KUKUL, IM Animal cruelty: Analysis of the constitutionality of rodeo festivals. **Contributions to the Social Sciences** , 1, p.1-10, 2017.

Leite, GDO, Rodriguez, MAP, Silva, JT, Durães, HF, Alves, JO, dos Santos *, Abreu* , ACM; Dias, BA Development of activity between students and rescued companion animals. **RealizAção,** v. 7, n. 14, p. 14-22, 2020.

LOPES, KRF; BATISTA, JS; DIAS, RV C; SOTO-BLANCO, B. INFLUENCE OF VAQUEJADA COMPETITIONS ON PARAMETERS INDICATING STRESS IN HORSES. **Brazilian Animal Science,** v. 10, n. 2, p. 538-543, Apr./Jun. 2009.

PANICACCI, FL Rodeos and the São Paulo jurisprudence on practices that subject animals to cruelty. **Hortolandia News** , p. 1-27, 2012.

SIMON, V., ZAGO, L., MAGALHÃES, DR, LEVRINO, GAM, SAÑUDO, C., KIRINUS, JK Rodeo as a sporting practice of cultural identity in the Southern region of Brazil. **Pubvet** . v.12, n.12, a 201, p. 1-6, 2018. Doi : 10.31553/pubvet.v12n1