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**SHARK Sues California's Biggest Rodeo, and One of Largest in US for Failing to Report Animal Injuries; SHARK Video Documents Severe Animal Suffering at Salinas Rodeo**

**Salinas, Calif.** — SHARK is suing the California Rodeo Salinas – the largest rodeo in California and one of the largest rodeos in the U.S. – for failing to report animal injuries to the state veterinary medical board, as required under California law.

“California law requires the reporting of rodeo animal injuries,” said Steve Hindi, founder and president of SHARK. “The intent was to make rodeos transparent. Instead, the law has not been enforced, but rather, manipulated to make rodeos appear harmless.”

Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF) filed the suit (12-17-14) in Monterey County Superior Court on behalf of SHARK (SHowing Animals Respect and Kindness). Also named as a defendant is California Rodeo Salinas head veterinarian Tim Eastman.

According to the suit, the defendants are accused of significantly under-reporting the number of animals injured at the California Rodeo Salinas. In the last two years, SHARK has video documented injuries to 41 animals —yet the rodeo has reported only four of those injuries.

The California Rodeo Salinas holds an annual rodeo each summer in mid-July, drawing crowds of approximately 50,000 people. Events include steer wrestling, bull riding, calf roping, and team roping, all of which pose serious risks of injury to animals.

The lawsuit notes that SHARK has attended the California Rodeo Salinas and videotaped more than 40 injuries to animals, including calves limping in pain after being dragged to the ground, and a horse with a tennis ball-sized wound on his neck. Expert veterinary assessment of this footage confirms those injuries required immediate veterinary care, and should have been reported. But to mask the inherent danger of rodeo events, California Rodeo Salinas drastically and chronically under-reported animal injuries.

“California law recognizes that rodeos endanger the animals who are forced to participate, which is why the law requires veterinarians to report animal injuries,” said Stephen Wells, executive director of the Animal Legal Defense Fund. “Without transparency, groups such as ALDF and SHARK cannot hold rodeos accountable for the suffering they cause. This lawsuit is intended to change that.”

[http://www.sharkonline.org/images/handouts/SHARK\\_v\\_Salinas\\_Rodeo\\_Complaint.pdf](http://www.sharkonline.org/images/handouts/SHARK_v_Salinas_Rodeo_Complaint.pdf)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1a\\_2LYwdGQ4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1a_2LYwdGQ4)