

Donkey & Mule Society of New Zealand (Inc.)

<http://www.donkey-mule.org.nz/>



Owners' Code of Ethics

August 2006

The Donkey & Mule Society of New Zealand is the only National Breed Organisation in New Zealand for Donkeys and Mules of all types. It administers the Donkey & Mule Society of New Zealand Register which includes miniature, standard and mammoth donkeys and mules.

This Code of Ethics is a guideline, not rules, regulations or a legal document. However, the Society encourages owners and breeders to follow them to promote and foster the highest standards of care for donkeys and mules.

Care of Donkeys and Mules:

Food and Water:

Clean water must be available at all times and care taken that water supplies are unfrozen in winter, and clean at all times. Animals should be neither too obese nor too thin, and proper rations should be available every day.

Shelter:

All animals should have access to clean, dry shelter from rain, wind and snow as well as shade from heat. Shed and stable areas should be mucked out daily.

Paddocks:

Fences should be well built and safe and paddocks have enough space to allow for adequate freedom of movement and exercise.

Safety and Protection:

More than one jack over 6 months old must not be allowed to be grazed with a group of females. Caution must be taken at all times to ensure that under age females will never be available to the jack to be bred. Jacks should be kept so that they will not injure each other, jennies or kill foals.

Health Care:

Care should be taken that vaccinations are administered in accordance with health needs. An internal and external parasite control program should be maintained. Sick animals and newly introduced animals should be isolated from the general population. Hoofs of all donkeys and mules should be kept properly trimmed at regular intervals.

Donkeys should not be run with bulls because the nutritional needs of bulls are in excess of that required by donkeys. Donkeys are desert animals and their diet should be carefully monitored to ensure they do not become overweight. A donkey can founder in only a couple of weeks on lush feed.

Transportation:

New Zealand MAF rules state that when donkeys and mules are transported they should be off-loaded every 12 hours and be given access to water. This included commercial transportation.

Breeding:

Breeders should aim to:-

- Plan each breeding with the paramount intention of improving the breed.
- Select the sire and dam with an eye to conformation, temperament and good health and with a careful study of the breed standard and the principles of genetics.
- Refrain from close breeding, and only practice it after careful study of both sire and dams genealogy.
- Not breed any male or female until they are both physically and mentally mature. Jennies should not be bred before the age of three years.

Before entering into any breeding arrangement pedigree, conformation and health of both the sire and dam, should be scrutinised keeping in mind the ideal of the breed. Breeders have an obligation to refuse the breeding if in their opinion it is not in the best interests of the breed.

If responsible owners of a sire refuse a breeding they should explain their reasons to the owner of the jenny.

Breeders should only breed from sires and dams that are free from defects such as cryptorchidism, under and over bite, dwarfism and other genetic defects. Responsible breeders should refrain from using a breeding animal, which although free from the above defects consistently produce afflicted offspring.

Breeders should geld the majority of their jack foals as jacks do not make pet donkeys. These jacks should be gelded before they leave for their new homes.

Records:

Owners and breeders should follow the Donkey & Mule Society Registry requirements.

Owners should keep accurate records and retain those records for a minimum of 5 years. These records will include Registry paperwork and health and breeding paperwork for all animals in their herd. The Registrar should be notified of the death of an animal to keep records current.

Health and breeding records should be kept for each donkey. All matings should be recorded and a sire's breeding certificate made out at the time of breeding. A sales record showing to whom each animal (registered or non-registered) is sold should be kept. All donkeys and mules should be easily identified by the owner, and should be branded or micro chipped.

Sellers should be discriminating in the sales of their animals and concerned with the type of homes in which they are placed. Sellers should guarantee the health of animals they sell to others. Donkeys and mules should not be sold to wholesalers

or meat buyers. Donkeys and mules that must be put down should be humanely euthanised.

All applicable registration papers should be transferred at the time the purchase agreement is completed and is suitable to all parties. Sellers should not advertise their donkeys or mules as “registered” and then present the new owner with a filled out application and expect them to register the animals themselves.

Upon the sale of an animal the seller should provide the new owner with a diet record, an inoculation and parasite control record and a health guarantee. Breeders should not sell any young donkey or mule until it is at least 6 months old and properly weaned, leads, ties up and is well handled.

All buyers should be informed that donkeys and mules need companions, preferably other equines, in order to be happy because they are herd animals not solitary creatures.

Advertising:

All advertising of donkeys and mules should be factual and honest both in substance and implication.

Buyers should not be encouraged to breed from a jenny without explaining that the breeding of any animal involves certain responsibilities and is not to be taken lightly.

Competing:

Showing donkeys and mules is a sport and competitors should express good sportsmanship in all activities. Exhibitors will refrain from unnecessary criticism of other people’s animals, or of the judge. Sellers should not represent any animal they sell as being a sure winner, knowing that judges differ in their opinions.

No behaviour that could be defined as serious abuse or harm to donkeys or mules should be demonstrated either in training a donkey or in showing it.

Contacts for the Donkey & Mule Society of New Zealand can be found on our web site at: www.donkey-mule.org.nz

Acknowledgment is made to the American Donkey and Mule Society who has allowed the Society to substantially use their Code of Ethics