

## LEGISLATIVE BILL 423

Approved by the Governor May 8, 2013

Introduced by Agriculture Committee: Schilz, 47, Chairperson; Bloomfield, 17; Hansen, 42; Harr, 8; Johnson, 23; Wallman, 30; Brasch, 16; Carlson, 38; Davis, 43.

FOR AN ACT relating to agriculture; to amend sections 2-3812, 38-3330, 54-742, 54-901, 54-902, 54-905, and 54-906, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and section 29-818, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2012; to provide for use of the Nebraska Agricultural Products Marketing Cash Fund for purposes of bovine trichomoniasis prevention; to provide for waiver of privilege and liability limitations for veterinarians for purposes of bovine trichomoniasis prevention; to prohibit sales of cattle, require notifications, and provide for assessment of costs for purposes of bovine trichomoniasis prevention; to change and eliminate livestock animal seizure provisions; to define and redefine terms; to change provisions of the Livestock Animal Welfare Act; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the original sections.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Section 2-3812, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

2-3812 There is hereby created the Nebraska Agricultural Products Marketing Cash Fund. The fund shall consist of administrative costs collected under subsection (4) of section 54-742 and money appropriated by the Legislature which is received as gifts or grants or collected as fees or charges from any source, including federal, state, public, and private. The fund shall be utilized for the purpose of carrying out the Nebraska Agricultural Products Marketing Act and for purposes of subsection (4) of section 54-742. Any money in such fund available for investment shall be invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.

Sec. 2. Section 29-818, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2012, is amended to read:

29-818 (1) Except for pet animals ~~or equines~~ as provided in subsection (2) of this section, property seized under a search warrant or validly seized without a warrant shall be safely kept by the officer seizing the same, unless otherwise directed by the judge or magistrate, and shall be so kept so long as necessary for the purpose of being produced as evidence on any trial. Property seized may not be taken from the officer having it in custody by replevin or other writ so long as it is or may be required as evidence in any trial, nor may it be so taken in any event where a complaint has been filed in connection with which the property was or may be used as evidence, and the court in which such complaint was filed shall have exclusive jurisdiction for disposition of the property or funds and to determine rights therein, including questions respecting the title, possession, control, and disposition thereof.

(2) (a) Any pet animal ~~or equine~~ seized under a search warrant or validly seized without a warrant may be kept by the officer seizing the same on the property of the person who owns, keeps, harbors, maintains, or controls such pet animal. ~~or equine.~~

(b) When any pet animal ~~or equine~~ is seized ~~or held~~ under this subsection, the court shall provide the person who owns, keeps, harbors, maintains, or controls such pet animal ~~or equine~~ with notice that a hearing will be had and specify the date, time, and place of such hearing. Such notice shall be served by personal or residential service or by certified mail. If such notice cannot be served by such methods, service may be made by publication in the county where such pet animal ~~or equine~~ was seized. Such publication shall be made after application and order of the court. Unless otherwise determined and ordered by the court, the date of such hearing shall be no later than ten days after the seizure.

(c) At the hearing, the court shall determine the disposition of the pet animal, ~~or equine,~~ and if the court determines that any pet animal ~~or equine~~ shall not be returned, the court shall order the person from whom the pet animal ~~or equine~~ was seized to pay all expenses for the support and maintenance of the pet animal, ~~or equine,~~ including expenses for shelter, food, veterinary care, and board, necessitated by the possession of the pet animal. ~~or equine.~~ At the hearing, the court shall also consider the person's ability to pay for the expenses of the pet animal ~~or equine~~ and the amount of

such payments. Payments shall be for a succeeding thirty-day period with the first payment due on or before the tenth day following the hearing. Payments for each subsequent succeeding thirty-day period, if any, shall be due on or before the tenth day of such period.

(d) If a person becomes delinquent in his or her payments for the expenses of the pet animal ~~or equine~~, the court shall hold a hearing to determine the disposition of the seized pet animal ~~or equine~~. Notice of such hearing shall be given to the person who owns, keeps, harbors, maintains, or controls such pet animal ~~or equine~~ and to any lienholder or security interest holder of record as provided in subdivision (b) of this subsection.

(e) An appeal may be entered within ten days after a hearing under subdivision (c) or (d) of this subsection. Any person filing an appeal shall post a bond sufficient to pay all costs of care of the pet animal ~~or equine~~ for thirty days. Such payment will be required for each succeeding thirty-day period until the appeal is final.

(f) Should the person be found not guilty, all funds paid for the expenses of the pet animal ~~or equine~~ shall be returned to the person.

(g) For purposes of this subsection, pet ~~+(i)~~ Pet animal means any domestic dog, domestic cat, mini pig, domestic rabbit, domestic ferret, domestic rodent, bird except a bird raised as an agricultural animal and specifically excluding any bird possessed under a license issued by the State of Nebraska or the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, nonlethal aquarium fish, nonlethal invertebrate, amphibian, turtle, nonvenomous snake that will not grow to more than eight feet in length at maturity, or such other animal as may be specified and for which a permit shall be issued by an animal control authority after inspection and approval, except that any animal forbidden to be sold, owned, or possessed by federal or state law is not a pet animal. ~~+~~ and

~~(ii) Equine means a horse, pony, donkey, mule, hinny, or llama.~~

(h) This section shall not preempt, and shall not be construed to preempt, any ordinance of a city of the metropolitan or primary class.

Sec. 3. Section 38-3330, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

38-3330 (1) Unless required by any state or local law for contagious or infectious disease reporting or other public health and safety purpose, no veterinarian licensed under the Veterinary Medicine and Surgery Practice Act shall be required to disclose any information concerning the veterinarian's care of an animal except under a written authorization or other waiver by the veterinarian's client or pursuant to a court order or a subpoena. A veterinarian who releases information under a written authorization or other waiver by the client or pursuant to a court order or a subpoena is not liable to the client or any other person.

(2) The privilege provided by this section is waived to the extent that the veterinarian's client or the owner of the animal places the veterinarian's care and treatment of the animal or the nature and extent of injuries to the animal at issue in any civil or criminal proceeding.

(3) The privilege provided by this section is waived to the extent and for purposes of notifying any owner or manager of cattle that have a significant risk for exposure to bovine trichomoniasis. A veterinarian who releases information about the risk for exposure to bovine trichomoniasis is not liable to the client or any other person.

(4) For purposes of this section, veterinarian includes the employees or agents of the licensed veterinarian while acting for or on behalf of such veterinarian.

Sec. 4. Section 54-742, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

54-742 (1) It is the duty of any person who discovers, suspects, or has reason to believe that any animal belonging to him or her or which he or she has in his or her possession or custody or which, belonging to another, may come under his or her observation is affected with any dangerous, infectious, contagious, or otherwise transmissible disease which affects livestock to immediately report such fact, belief, or suspicion to the department or to any agent, employee, or appointee thereof.

(2) The department shall work together with livestock health committees, livestock groups, diagnostic laboratories, practicing veterinarians, producers, and others who may be affected, to adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to effectuate a workable livestock disease reporting system according to the provisions of this section. The rules and regulations shall establish who shall report diseases, what diseases shall be reported, how such diseases shall be reported, to whom diseases shall be reported, the method by which diseases shall be reported, and the frequency of reports required. For disease reporting purposes, the department

shall categorize livestock diseases according to relative economic or health risk factors and may provide different reporting measures for the various categories.

(3) Any person who reasonably suspects that any beef or dairy breeding bull belonging to him or her or which he or she has in his or her possession or custody is infected with bovine trichomoniasis shall not sell or transport such animal, except for consignment directly to a federally recognized slaughter establishment, unless such person causes such animal to be tested for bovine trichomoniasis. Any person who owns or has possession or custody of a beef or dairy breeding bull, or who has a beef or dairy breeding bull belonging to another under his or her observation, for which a laboratory confirmed diagnosis of bovine trichomoniasis has been made, shall report such diagnosis to the department within five business days after receipt of the laboratory confirmation. Any such breeding bull for which a laboratory confirmation of bovine trichomoniasis has been made shall not be sold or transported except for consignment directly to a federally recognized slaughter establishment.

(4) (a) An owner or manager of any beef or dairy breeding bull for which a laboratory confirmed diagnosis of bovine trichomoniasis has been made shall notify each adjacent landowner or land manager of the diagnosis if such land is capable of maintaining livestock susceptible to bovine trichomoniasis. Such notification shall be made to each landowner or land manager within fourteen days after the diagnosis even if cattle are not currently maintained on the owner's or manager's land.

(b) The owner or manager of the cattle shall submit to the department a form or affidavit attesting to the fact that the notification required under this subsection has occurred. The form or affidavit shall be submitted to the department within fourteen days after the diagnosis and shall include the names of adjacent landowners or land managers who were notified and their contact information.

(c) If an owner or manager does not, within such fourteen-day period, submit the form or affidavit indicating that adjacent landowners or land managers have been notified as required under this subsection, the department shall notify each adjacent landowner or land manager of the diagnosis. The department shall assess the administrative costs of the department to notify the adjacent landowners or land managers against the owner or manager that failed to comply with this subsection. The department shall determine the definition of adjacent based on the disease characteristics and modes of transmission. The department shall remit any administrative costs collected under this subsection to the State Treasurer for credit to the Nebraska Agricultural Products Marketing Cash Fund.

Sec. 5. Section 54-901, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

54-901 Sections 54-901 to 54-912 and section 9 of this act shall be known and may be cited as the Livestock Animal Welfare Act.

Sec. 6. Section 54-902, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

54-902 For purposes of the Livestock Animal Welfare Act:

(1) Abandon means to leave a livestock animal in one's care, whether as owner or custodian, for any length of time without making effective provision for the livestock animal's ~~feed,~~ feed, water, or other care as is reasonably necessary for the livestock animal's health;

(2) Animal welfare practice means veterinarian practices and animal husbandry practices common to the livestock animal industry, including transport of livestock animals from one location to another;

(3) Bovine means a cow, an ox, or a bison;

(4) Cruelly mistreat means to knowingly and intentionally kill or cause physical harm to a livestock animal in a manner that is not consistent with animal welfare practices;

(5) Cruelly neglect means to fail to provide a livestock animal in one's care, whether as owner or custodian, with ~~feed,~~ feed, water, or other care as is reasonably necessary for the livestock animal's health;

(6) Equine means a horse, pony, donkey, mule, ~~hinny, or llama,~~ or hinny;

(7) Euthanasia means the destruction of a livestock animal by commonly accepted veterinary practices;

(8) Law enforcement officer means any member of the Nebraska State Patrol, any county or deputy sheriff, any member of the police force of any city or village, or any other public official authorized by a city or village to enforce state or local laws, rules, regulations, or ordinances; ~~Law enforcement officer also includes any inspector under the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act to the extent that such inspector may exercise~~

the authority of a law enforcement officer under section 28-1012 while in the course of performing inspection activities under the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act;

(9) Livestock animal means any bovine, equine, swine, sheep, goats, domesticated cervine animals, ratite birds, llamas, or poultry; and

(10) Owner or custodian means any person owning, keeping, possessing, harboring, or knowingly permitting an animal to remain on or about any premises owned or occupied by such person; and

~~(10)~~ (11) Serious injury or illness includes any injury or illness to any livestock animal which creates a substantial risk of death or which causes broken bones, prolonged impairment of health, or prolonged loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ.

Sec. 7. Section 54-905, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

54-905 (1) In addition to any other sentence given for a violation of section 54-903 or 54-904, the sentencing court may order the defendant to reimburse a public or private agency for any unreimbursed expenses incurred in conjunction with the care, ~~impoundment,~~ seizure, or disposal of a livestock animal involved in the violation of such section. Whenever the court believes that such reimbursement is a proper sentence or at the prosecuting attorney's request, the court shall order that the presentence investigation report include documentation regarding the nature and amount of the expenses incurred. The court may order that reimbursement be made immediately, in specified installments, or within a specified period of time, not to exceed five years after the date of judgment.

(2) Even if reimbursement for expenses is not ordered under subsection (1) of this section, the defendant shall be liable for all expenses incurred by a public or private agency in conjunction with the care, ~~impoundment,~~ seizure, or disposal of a livestock animal. The expenses shall be a lien upon the livestock animal.

Sec. 8. Section 54-906, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

54-906 (1) Any A law enforcement officer who has reason to believe that a livestock animal has been abandoned or is being cruelly neglected or cruelly mistreated may seek a warrant authorizing entry upon private property to inspect, care for, or impound the livestock animal. ~~or livestock animals.~~

(2) Any A law enforcement officer who has reason to believe that a livestock animal has been abandoned or is being cruelly neglected or cruelly mistreated may issue a citation to the owner or custodian as prescribed in sections 29-422 to 29-429.

(3) A law enforcement officer may specify in a custody agreement the terms and conditions by which the owner or custodian may maintain custody of the livestock animal to provide care for such animal at the expense of the owner or custodian. The custody agreement shall be signed by the owner or custodian of the livestock animal. A copy of the signed agreement shall be provided to the owner or custodian of the livestock animal. A violation of the custody agreement may result in the seizure of the livestock animal.

~~(3)~~ (4) Any livestock animal, equipment, device, or other property or things involved in a violation of section 54-903 or 54-904 shall be subject to seizure, and distribution or disposition may be made in such manner as the court may direct. Any livestock animal involved in a violation of section 54-903 or 54-904 shall be subject to seizure. Distribution or disposition shall be made under section 9 of this act as the court may direct. Any livestock animal seized under this subsection may be kept by the law enforcement officer on the property of the owner or custodian of such livestock animal.

(5) A law enforcement officer may euthanize or cause a livestock animal seized or kept pursuant to this section to be euthanized if the animal is severely emaciated, injured, disabled, or diseased past recovery for any useful purpose. The law enforcement officer shall notify the owner or custodian prior to the euthanasia if practicable under the circumstances. An owner or custodian may request that a veterinarian of the owner's or custodian's choosing view the livestock animal and be present upon examination of the livestock animal, and no livestock animal shall be euthanized without reasonable accommodation to provide for the presence of the owner's or custodian's veterinarian when requested. However, attempted notification of the owner or custodian or the presence of the owner's or custodian's veterinarian shall not unduly delay euthanasia when necessary. The law enforcement officer may forgo euthanasia if the care of the livestock animal is placed with the owner's or custodian's veterinarian.

~~(4)~~ Any (6) A law enforcement officer acting under this section shall not be liable for damage to property if such damage is not the result

of the officer's negligence.

Sec. 9. (1) After a livestock animal has been seized, the agency that took custody of the livestock animal shall, within seven days after the date of seizure, file a complaint with the district court in the county in which the animal was seized for a hearing to determine the disposition and the cost for the care of the livestock animal. Notice of such hearing shall be given to the owner or custodian from whom such livestock animal was seized and to any holder of a lien or security interest of record in such livestock animal, specifying the date, time, and place of such hearing. Such notice shall be served by personal or residential service or by certified mail. If such notice cannot be served by such methods, service may be made by publication in the county where such livestock animal was seized. Such publication shall be made after application and order of the court. The hearing shall be held as soon as practicable and not more than ten business days after the date of application for the hearing unless otherwise determined and ordered by the court.

(2) If the court finds that probable cause exists that the livestock animal has been abandoned or cruelly neglected or mistreated, the court may:

(a) Order immediate forfeiture of the livestock animal to the agency that took custody of the livestock animal and authorize appropriate disposition of the livestock animal, including sale at public auction, adoption, donation to a suitable shelter, humane destruction, or any other manner of disposition approved by the court. With respect to sale of a livestock animal, the proceeds shall first be applied to the cost of sale and then to the expenses for the care of the livestock animal and the remaining proceeds, if any, shall be paid to the holder of a lien or security interest of record in such livestock animal and then to the owner of the livestock animal;

(b) Issue an order to the owner or custodian setting forth the conditions under which custody of the livestock animal shall be returned to the owner or custodian from whom the livestock animal was seized or to any other person claiming an interest in the livestock animal. Such order may include any management actions deemed necessary and prudent by the court, including culling by sale, humane disposal, or forfeiture and securing necessary care, including veterinary care, sufficient for the maintenance of any remaining livestock animal; or

(c) Order the owner or custodian from whom the livestock animal was seized to post a bond or other security, or to otherwise order payment, in an amount that is sufficient to reimburse all reasonable expenses, as determined by the court, for the care of the livestock animal, including veterinary care, incurred by the agency from the date of seizure and necessitated by the possession of the livestock animal. Payments shall be for a succeeding thirty-day period with the first payment due on or before the tenth day following the hearing. Payments for each subsequent succeeding thirty-day period, if any, shall be due on or before the tenth day of such period. The bond or security shall be placed with, or payments ordered under this subdivision shall be paid to, the agency that took custody of the livestock animal. The agency shall provide an accounting of expenses to the court when the livestock animal is no longer in the custody of the agency or upon request by the court. The agency may petition the court for a subsequent hearing under this subsection at any time. The hearing shall be held as soon as practicable and not more than ten business days after the date of application for the hearing unless otherwise determined and ordered by the court. When all expenses covered by the bond or security are exhausted and subsequent bond or security has not been posted or if a person becomes delinquent in his or her payments for the expenses of the livestock animal, the livestock animal shall be forfeited to the agency.

(3) If custody of a livestock animal is returned to the owner or custodian of the livestock animal prior to seizure, any proceeds of a bond or security or any payment or portion of payment ordered under this section not used for the care of the livestock animal during the time the animal was held by the agency shall be returned to the owner or custodian.

(4) Nothing in this section shall prevent the euthanasia of a seized livestock animal at any time as determined necessary by a law enforcement officer or as authorized by court order.

(5) An appeal may be entered within ten days after a hearing under this section. Any person filing an appeal shall post a bond or security sufficient to pay reasonable costs of care of the livestock animal for thirty days. Such payment will be required for each succeeding thirty-day period until the appeal is final.

(6) If the owner or custodian from whom the livestock animal was seized is found not guilty in an associated criminal proceeding, all funds

paid for the expenses of the livestock animal remaining after the actual expenses incurred by the agency have been paid shall be returned to such person.

(7) This section shall not preempt any ordinance of a city of the metropolitan or primary class.

Sec. 10. Original sections 2-3812, 38-3330, 54-742, 54-901, 54-902, 54-905, and 54-906, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and section 29-818, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2012, are repealed.