

# NCHA Medications update on the use Cannabinoids (CBD)

The NCHA's Medication and Drug Rules and Guidelines ("Medication Rules") have been put in place to protect and prolong the welfare and competitiveness of the equine athletes who compete in cutting. The NCHA believes in the safety of horses as well as a level playing field at all levels of competition.

In 2018 Congress passed the Agriculture Improvement Act, also known as the "Farm Bill." The bill defines "hemp" as both the plant *Cannabis sativa L.* and any derivatives of cannabis with less than 0.3% THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol). Pure CBD (cannabinoids) falls into the category of a derivative of hemp. With the enactment of this bill, "hemp" is no longer considered a controlled substance under federal law, but THC remains a Schedule I drug with the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA).

The use of CBD (cannabinoids) have gained increased attention and are used more frequently in both humans and animals with broad statements of effectiveness in a variety of health conditions. Currently there is no scientific research that support claims of efficacy, dosage or safety in horses.

At this time the NCHA will consider pure CBD (less than 0.3% THC) a supplement or topical that does not require a medication report. The use of CBD will be tracked through the NCHA testing program and data will be retained to support future scientific studies. No penalties or warning letters will be issued until further scientific information is available and membership is informed of any rule changes. When considering the use of CBD products extreme caution should be exercised to verify a product administered to the horse is pure CBD and contains less than 0.3% THC. Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is a prohibited substance in all equestrian sports including NCHA. Violations of medication rules for prohibited substances including THC are significant and appropriately enforced. The NCHA Horse and Cattle Welfare Committee continues to recommend consultation with a veterinarian before adding supplements to your horse's diet or applying topical substances that have medically therapeutic claims.