

November 3, 2025

Dear Mr. de Vos,

On behalf of PETA US, PETA Germany, and the 10 million people who are part of PETA entities around the world, plus many more who care about horses, we urge you to maintain the current rule regarding disqualification of horses when blood on their bodies is visible. This is a sound rule enacted by the FEI to protect horses. Weakening it to force injured horses to compete would endanger these animals, reward cruel horsemanship, and cannot be justified.

It would also further damage FEI's reputation at a time when the exploitation of horses is under scrutiny. Multiple scandals have plagued the show jumping and dressage world in recent years. During the 2024 Olympic Games, Italian rider Emiliano Portale was eliminated when the horse he was riding bled from his mouth, the UK's Charlotte Dujardin was [banned](#) for a year for whipping a horse, and riders from Austria, Brazil, Denmark, and the US came under [scrutiny](#) for alleged cruel practices. At the [Tokyo Olympics](#), a horse ridden by a Swiss competitor was injured so badly that he had to be euthanized, and an Irish competitor forced a horse named Kilkenny to finish the course even though he had blood pouring from his nostrils.

The abuse spans decades and continents. Colombian-American coach Cesar Parra was recently [banned](#) for 15 years after he was caught on [video](#) whipping one horse and forcing the neck of another into hyperflexion. Swiss Olympian Martin Fuchs [whipped](#) a clearly terrified horse who didn't want to jump a fence. Canadian Eric Lamaze's horse [dropped dead](#) during a stadium jumping event. German Olympian Ludger Beerbaum was caught "[barring](#)" a horse. New Zealand Olympian Sir Mark Todd [repeatedly beat](#) a reluctant horse with a thick tree branch.

Horses don't choose to compete—humans force them to do so, often through violence and coercion. Better oversight won't eliminate this fact—and the only way to protect horses from widespread cruelty is to end these "sports" altogether. At the very least, FEI is obligated to maintain rules that protect horses from the worst abuse, and it is reasonable to see them strengthened not weakened.

Please reject the proposed rule to allow human competitors to wipe away visible blood and force horses to compete. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kathy Guillermo  
PETA US

Peter Höffken  
PETA Germany