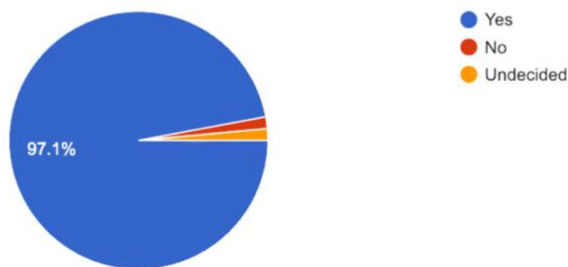

1. Drug Testing Notification

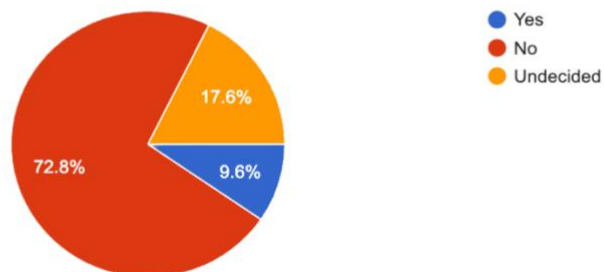
When a horse is selected for drug testing, should the trainer be notified?

Current practice requires only an adult present to sign the paperwork, which may be a parent or other responsible adult rather than the trainer. One possible alternative would be notifying the trainer (for example, by text or phone call) and allowing a brief window for the trainer to arrive or designate another responsible individual.



2. Clipping Faces & Ears

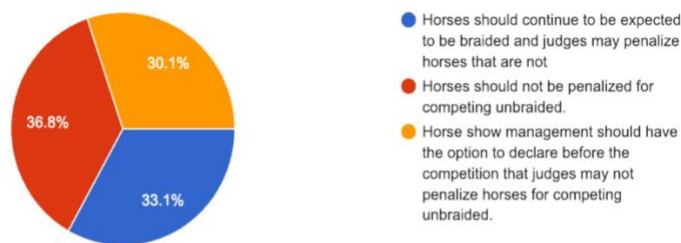
At the USEF National level (not FEI competition), should clipping a horse's face and ears be regulated?



3. Braiding in Rated Competition

How should braiding be handled in USEF-rated hunter divisions?

Background: USEF rules do not require braiding. Historically, some horse show management teams have instructed judges not to penalize unbraided horses, particularly to help reduce exhibitor costs. We'd like your input on how this should be handled moving forward.



Summary of Additional Comments

Respondents shared additional feedback on a variety of topics, with the most discussion centered around braiding, clipping, and judging standards.

Braiding & Clipping: Several respondents expressed support for maintaining traditional turnout standards, particularly at higher-rated shows, while others suggested allowing greater flexibility at lower-rated shows and in schooling divisions. The cost of braiding was identified as a significant financial burden, with some respondents suggesting that reducing braiding requirements could make showing more accessible, particularly for young horses, amateur riders, and grassroots exhibitors. Opinions varied on whether unbraided horses should be penalized, with some favoring judge discretion and others advocating for clearly defined standards. Regarding clipping, respondents expressed differing views on trimming ears and muzzles, with some raising concerns about horse welfare and the removal of sensory hairs.

Amateur Judges: Multiple respondents expressed concerns about amateurs judging major horse shows and national finals, suggesting that eligibility requirements and potential conflicts between amateur status and paid judging responsibilities should be reviewed.

Horse Welfare & Young Horse Development: Respondents raised concerns about lame horses being permitted to compete and questioned who should be responsible for identifying and preventing unsound horses from entering the show ring. Additional suggestions included expanding incentives for young horses, such as reduced or waived entry fees, and providing greater flexibility in turnout requirements to support their development.

Rules & Judging Standards: Respondents requested clearer and more consistent rules regarding trot jumps in handy hunter and equitation classes. Additional concerns included excessive embellishments on rider attire in hunter and equitation divisions and the role of judges in evaluating horse presentation.

Transparency in Fees & Horse Sales: Respondents advocated for standardized horse sale documentation that clearly discloses commissions and identifies all parties receiving compensation. Additional concerns included establishing transparent fee structures and requiring horse shows to disclose feed, bedding, and other applicable charges before exhibitors arrive or incur those expenses.

Overall: The comments reflect interest in maintaining traditional standards while exploring opportunities to improve affordability, transparency, horse welfare, and consistency in judging and competition rules.