

AQHA Updates Members on Status of Cloning Lawsuit

By way of update regarding the cloning lawsuit, AQHA and its legal team continue to defend the right of the AQHA Board, acting on behalf of the membership, to decide whether horses produced by cloning ought to be eligible for registration. As you recall, in April 2012, Jason Abraham and two of his related companies, Abraham & Veneklasen Joint Venture and Abraham Equine Inc., filed a lawsuit against AQHA in the United States District Court in Amarillo seeking to force AQHA to repeal Rule 227(a) (now Rule REG106.1) so as to allow cloned horses and their offspring to be eligible for registration with AQHA. These Plaintiffs also seek money damages from AQHA.

The discovery process in the lawsuit is winding down. For the past several months, the parties have exchanged requested documents and responded to interrogatories. To date, over 20 depositions have been taken. These depositions include those of the Plaintiffs and their experts as well as depositions of Executive Committee members, Stud Book & Registration Committee members, AQHA staff and AQHA experts.

Recently, AQHA filed a Motion for Summary Judgment seeking dismissal of the Plaintiffs' antitrust claims. The Court has not yet ruled on the Motion. This past week, the parties participated in court ordered mediation which did not result in settlement of the lawsuit. The trial ready date is June 24, 2013. It is anticipated that a trial would last 2-3 weeks.