



RAS Social Media Policy

1. Introduction

Social media is about sharing and interaction. It gives everyone a chance to produce their own content, reply to others (such as followers or fans), share exciting moments, reflections and experiences. The Royal Agricultural & Pastoral Society (RAS) believes that social media has a valuable role to play in sharing the excitement of the A&P Showing Movement with spectators, supporters and the public. In addition to engaging with members of the A&P showing community, social media can help the organisation reach members of the broader public and traditional media.

Whilst social media provides great opportunities to raise the A&P showing profile and reach new audiences, it also has the potential to harm the reputation of the organisation, its competitors, members and stakeholders. It is crucial therefore that individuals representing RAS are aware of the implications of using social media. The purpose of this document is to provide representatives of the RAS with guiding principles for using social media.

This policy applies to all employees, members, competitors, support people at shows/events, people at measuring stands and other people associated with RAS and RAS events (including without limitation, those representing the RAS in team events, judging or ambassador competitions, RAS employees, officials, judges, volunteers and committees.)

Social Media is any kind of tool that you can use for sharing what you know, including, but not limited to:

- Blogs
- Photo-sharing
- Video-sharing (such as You Tube)
- Social Networks (such as Twitter and Facebook)
- Mobile phone applications
- Texting and web-casting.

2. Guiding Principles

- a. Before making a social media post, remember the following general principles:
 - Information shared on social media appears in public so careful consideration should be given to content before it is posted.
 - Information shared within online communities could have implications for the A&P showing movement and those associated with it.
 - Information shared online can be difficult to retract. A comment may be able to be removed but the very nature of social media encourages a person to share information which makes it difficult to know where the information may finish up.

- You should assume that all posts and information shared via social media can be traced back to you.
 - People will make assumptions about what you are like based on what you write and say.
 - When sharing information online, remember that you may be considered as holding yourself out as a spokesperson for the RAS.
- b. Do not make defamatory, disrespectful and hateful comments about individuals, committees or organisations. Do not insult or say anything that could be construed as offensive.
- c. You should not bring the RAS or the showing movement into disrepute. The use of obscene language and threatening comments targeted at an individual, committee or organisation will not be tolerated. Comments which are contrary to the spirit and integrity of the A&P showing movement will not be tolerated.
- d. Any comments made on social media should abide by the RAS's Code of Conduct, specifically:
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of others
 - Treating all personal information as confidential
 - Refraining from any sort of harassment.
- e. Do not share personal, confidential or sensitive information about anyone else or about the RAS.
- f. Personal sites, blogs and accounts that have an RAS 'look and feel' and could be perceived as being RAS, is strictly prohibited. Do not use the RAS logo or any other trademarked marks or images on personal social media sites.
- g. If you are having any doubts about what you are posting, talk to RAS Head Office or don't post it.

3. Consequences of failing to adhere to this policy

If you fail to follow these guidelines, RAS has the right to issue you with a take-down notice, and may impose other penalties such as a Yellow Card. Failure to follow a take-down notice in the prescribed time-frame will result in disciplinary action.

Repeated breaches of this policy could lead to disciplinary action. RAS also has the right to take legal action.

In addition, as with any form of public communication, online communication can also be subject to legal proceedings. You should be mindful that unsubstantiated claims, false statements, defamatory, offensive and threatening comments could lead to prosecution.

Note - Thank you to ESNZ, a partner organisation, for sharing their social media policy and allowing the RAS to adopt it as it pertains to the A&P Showing Movement.