

Vets, animal activists urge Montreal politicians to cancel rodeo event

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An urban rodeo slated for Montreal this summer is stirring up controversy, with animal rights activists calling for the event to be cancelled.

As part of the city's 375th anniversary celebrations, a rodeo that will feature bull-riding, among other activities, is slated to be held in the city in August.

But some veterinarians are hoping the city will reconsider.

PHOTOS



Animal rights activists are protesting the plan to hold a rodeo in Montreal in August.



A promotional poster for Nomad Fest's urban rodeo.

"These animals are being tormented, these are things that they're doing with them that we would never do with our dogs and cats and there's no excuse for it, just for entertainment," said one protester at a rally.

The SPCA has already spoken out against the rodeo, but now a group of veterinarians have collected nearly 600 signatures from veterinarians and veterinary technicians who are opposed to it.

Veterinarian Jean-Jacques Konaboun plans to present the petition to the city, telling CTV Montreal in French that he's against using animals for entertainment when there could be "psychological or physical suffering."

Some city councillors are questioning the cultural significance of rodeos in Montreal, as the city celebrates its 175th anniversary in 2017.

"It's supposed to be a celebration of our history of 175 years, and I don't know where a rodeo fits into our history," said Projet Montreal Coun. Sterling Downey.

At council on Monday, public safety official Anie Samson said that the rodeo will attract more tourists to Montreal.

Rodeo organizer Nomad Fest states on its website that the incidences of injuries among rodeo animals is 0.0046 per cent.

Still, last month major grocery chain Loblaw withdrew its sponsorship of the event.

Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre has defended the rodeo in the past, saying organizers are respectful of the animals.

With a report by CTV Montreal's Angela MacKenzie

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