

Ride for the Brand Ranch Rodeo Forced to Cancel 2020 Events Due To COVID-19 Impact On The Cattle Industry

June 15, 2020

Colorado Springs, CO – Ranch rodeos are unique in that they feature and bring awareness to authentic working cowboys, ranchers working every day representing the heart of the livestock industry. The consequences of the state-wide shutdown has created the worst cattle market in recent history, leaving ranch owners and cowboys struggling to maintain operations. Additionally, the shutdowns have exposed the monopoly that the meat packing plants have on the industry. Due to these impacts, **the Board of the Ride for the Brand Ranch Rodeo has announced they must cancel the 2020 Ride for the Brand Ranch Rodeo along with the annual Longhorn Cattle Drive in downtown Colorado Springs.**

In lieu of the 2020 events, Ride for the Brand is providing meals to first responders as a thank you for their efforts during this pandemic. **On Tuesday, June 16, Ride for the Brand volunteers and board members will be handing out hundreds of smoked rib dinners to first responders, healthcare workers and their families.** Law enforcement, firefighters, EMS providers and healthcare workers are invited to pick up Rudy's BBQ smoked ribs and smoked chicken dinners downtown in the parking lot of Stockmens Bank, 25 N. Cascade Ave, from 12-3pm. Several local restaurants have partnered with Ride for the Brand and will be handing out gift cards with each meal.

The Ranch Rodeo was originally scheduled for August 1, 2020. This would have been the 18th annual Ride for the Brand Ranch Rodeo at Norris-Penrose Event Center. The Ride for the Brand Ranch Rodeo exists to support the working ranch cowboy and their families. It draws regional crowds of thousands for a weekend of longhorn cattle escorted by cowboys on horseback through downtown Colorado Springs, followed the next day by a ranch rodeo, complete with bronc riding, wild cow milking, calf branding, and a headlining concert.

Ride for the Brand is the largest donor to the national Working Ranch Cowboys Association Foundation. The WRCA Foundation provides financial and other assistance to working ranch cowboys and their families who are suffering significant hardship and who are not otherwise able to provide for their immediate needs. Despite the cancelation of the 2020 Ranch Rodeo, Ride for the Brand has committed to supporting the WRCA Foundation with another annual donation. With cattle markets crashing due to the shutdown, ranchers and cowboys are in substantial need.

Ride for the Brand Ranch Rodeo is a sponsor-funded 501(c)3 organization with many loyal and mutually beneficial business relationships. Because of the economic and financial constraints created by the business closures, the event's cancellation directly affects the exposure for these sponsors.

“While we are very disappointed to have to cancel our 2020 ranch rodeo and longhorn cattle drive, we feel it is important to allow our sponsors and the cowboys a summer off during an unprecedented time of disruption and uncertainty,” says Zack Bender, Ride for the Brand Ranch Rodeo vice president.

More information about the ranch rodeo, cattle drive and WRCA is available at www.rideforthebrand.org.