

Additional charges filed in local animal cruelty case

(MSC News)--A Hoyt man will stand trial in January on 45 counts of cruelty to animals.

***The Holton Recorder* reports Frank Johnson is facing a January 11 court date in two separate criminal cases.**

The first case was file in August after 12 horses, determined to be in poor health, were removed from a farm near Hoyt and Johnson was identified as the horses caretaker.

A second case was filed last week, charging Johnson with an additional 33 counts of cruelty to animals stemming from the alleged mistreatment of horses on the property. That followed an investigation conducted November 23 by the Jackson County Sheriff's Office.

Earlier this year, Sheriff Tim Morse said his office had been receiving complaints for more than a year that the horses were living in poor conditions at the farm. Officers had made several visits to the farm but could not find substantial evidence of mistreatment.

Following an investigation of the property in July involving a veterinarian, the first 12 horses were removed from the farm. Morse said another 35 horses at the farm were determined to be in good shape at that time.

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