

Guilty verdict in local animal cruelty case

(KNZA)--A rural Hoyt man has been found guilty of 45 counts of animal cruelty.

Jackson County Magistrate Judge Blaine Carter issued his written decision Tuesday in the case against Frank Johnson.

That followed a bench trial last week, which consolidated two criminal cases against Johnson.

The first case was filed last August after 12 horses, determined to be in poor health, were removed from Johnson's farm near Hoyt.

The second case was filed in December, charging Johnson with an additional 33 counts of animal cruelty. That followed an investigation conducted in November by the Jackson County Sheriff's Office.

The Sheriff's Office first began receiving complaints in April 2017 that the horses at the farm were living in poor conditions.

Johnson is scheduled to be sentenced March 4 on the misdemeanor charges. He faces up to one year in jail and a fine of up to \$2,500. In addition, he could be barred from ever owning horses again.