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Kansas State Fair and PETA Clash Over Booth Restriction

HUTCHINSON, Kan. (AP) - The group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals is objecting to restrictions on its exhibit next month at the Kansas State Fair, saying they amount to unconstitutional censorship.

Fair officials say any videos or pictures of animals being decapitated, dismembered or butchered must not be readily visible outside PETA's booth, so that fairgoers will have to make a conscious choice to view the material.

PETA calls that a content-based restraint. It says the fair is a public forum and cannot restrict viewpoints.

Fair general manager Denny Stoecklein responded Wednesday that the fair "supports Kansas agriculture and sends a strong pro-agriculture message."

He added, "We also provide an equal opportunity to all individuals and organizations to apply for booth space and respect an individual or organization's First Amendment rights."

Associated Press