



EQUINE ADVOCATES

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PROMOTING THE HUMANE AND RESPONSIBLE TREATMENT OF HORSES

HORSE SLAUGHTER FACT SHEET

The last horse slaughterhouse operating in the United States closed in 2007, but despite how most Americans feel, there were movements in Congress recently to bring horse slaughter back to the United States. Horse slaughter is opposed by numerous sectors of America. Here's why, and here are its consequences.

Social/Cultural

- 80 percent of Americans are opposed to America's wild and domestic horses being sent to slaughter (according to a recent poll).
- While the polling shows that voters believe it is illegal to slaughter a horse for human consumption, when informed that it is not, the overwhelming majority think that it should be.
- Horses today are domesticated livestock used primarily for recreation, pleasure and sport.
- Horses are part of American heritage. They hold a "favored" status like cats and dogs.
- Like other domesticated animals, they should, whenever necessary, be humanely euthanized by lethal injection, not led to slaughter.
- Horse slaughter perpetuates abuse and neglect, without consequences.
- Transporting horses to slaughterhouses outside our borders leads to inhumane death, which most Americans are opposed to.
- If slaughter and/or export of horses for slaughter become legalized, it could also open the door to export our dogs and cats out of animal shelters to countries where their meat is consumed, e.g., China.

Economic

- Unfortunately, many owners of "working animals," such as racing and quarter horses, work and show horses, mules, urban carriage horses and camp horses consider providing a humane death for horses too costly an option; whereas slaughterhouses pay for "inconvenient equines" who no longer "earn their keep."
- Horses are acquired for slaughter without disclosure and often through fraud and misrepresentation.
- Slaughterhouses primarily pay for live equines (from "killer buyer" middlemen), which they then have butchered and exported.
- Horse slaughter leads to an increase in horse theft because it is difficult to trace a horse once the animal enters the slaughter pipeline. Horses stolen by criminals for a quick profit, for revenge or other reasons usually get away with it.
- Defending horse slaughterhouses by a promise of economic improvement in the community is a misconception. Historically, they have been connected to a rise in crime and usually were highly opposed by local residents.
- Horses are taxed as luxury animals, differently than food animals. Their feed, care and other aspects of their livelihood bring tax dollars to states.

Political

- Vice President Joe Biden and Senator Tom Udall (NM) included language in the 2014 and 2016 Omnibus Spending Bills, respectively, defunding horse meat inspectors, therefore, making it impossible for equine slaughterhouses to open in the U.S.
- It will, however, require a Federal Ban to stop the cruel and inhumane transport and slaughter of 150,000+ U.S.-bred horses and other equines each year to Mexico, Canada and other countries.

Culinary/Health

- Horses are not “food animals,” i.e., raised for edible consumption by people.
- Horse meat is not sold in stores or served in American restaurants except in food fraud cases.
- Eating horsemeat is culturally repugnant in the U.S. It also violates dietary laws of some of the world’s major religions including Judaism and Islam.
- Horses have no “production base” in agriculture for consumption in America and therefore are commonly treated with pharmaceuticals that, when horse meat is eaten, are dangerous to humans.
- It is out of step with the beliefs of most Americans to supply world meat market demands with American domesticated and wild equines.

**In 2013, horse meat was found in foods labeled
100% beef in England and throughout much of Europe.
Major food businesses impacted included
Burger King, Walmart, Taco Bell,
Ikea, Nestle, Tesco and others.**

**In 2015, horse meat was
found in chopped meat products in the United States!**

Founded in 1996, Equine Advocates is a non-profit equine protection organization and Horse Sanctuary based in Chatham, NY. Its mission is to rescue, protect and prevent the abuse of equines, especially through banning the slaughter of American horses, through education, investigation, rescue operations, the dissemination of information to the public and the operation of a horse sanctuary for slaughter-bound, abused and neglected horses.