



MISSOURI ALLIANCE FOR ANIMAL LEGISLATION E-NEWS – January 15, 2014



HORSES SPARED FROM SLAUGHTER

Congress reached an agreement on an omnibus budget bill that defunds inspections for horse slaughter. Its passage, in effect, ends the possibility of horse slaughter plants opening in the US until the budget is once again under consideration next fall.

Last year Congress re-appropriated funding for the inspection of horse slaughter plants leading to the real possibility that slaughter plants might re-open in the U. S. This included one facility right here in Northwest Missouri (Gallatin) which was set to open at any time.

The slaughtering of horses is fraught with cruelties including inhumane transport, which can last for many hours in overcrowded trucks, without food, water, or rest. Due to their temperament, horses are not suited to be closely confined in large groups in ways cows and hogs often endure when they are transported for slaughter. In such crowded situations, horses will often fight resulting in injuries from being kicked, bitten, or even trampled.

Upon arrival at slaughter plants, the systems are geared toward general farm animals and don't take into account the skittish nature of horses. Horses are much more excitable than other livestock and are more likely to panic in tight quarters commonly experienced at slaughter facilities. Horses become very agitated when prodded as they are moved down alleyways to the "kill box" and many incur injuries from slipping and sliding resulting in dangerous falls. Horses are more difficult to shoot or place a penetrating bolt into their forehead as they are more high strung and move their

heads much more than docile hogs or cattle moving down the line. As a consequence, the horse is often not made unconscious and is subsequently rolled out of the kill box alive, shackled by a rear leg, and hoisted up in the air upside down where its throat is slit and the horse is bled to death.

While we are fortunate that Congress has spared horses from slaughter by defunding inspections, this newly approved budget only extends until September 30, 2014 when the fight will commence once again in Congress over horse slaughter.

It is apparent that the ultimate solution to this issue is the complete prohibition of horse slaughter in the United States *and* the prohibition of the export of horses to slaughterhouses in Mexico and Canada. Fortunately, the Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act, would do both.

Please take a moment to write, email, or call Senator Claire McCaskill and ask her to vote to support the SAFE Act and to vote to deny future funding for inspections of horse slaughter plants so that horse slaughter will not return to Missouri.

The Honorable Claire McCaskill
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You can contact her at www.mccaskill.senate.gov and leave your comments under “Tell Claire Your Concerns.”

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