



MISSOURI ALLIANCE FOR ANIMAL LEGISLATION
E-NEWS – July 1, 2013

HORSE SLAUGHTER LOOMING IN MISSOURI

USDA Plans to Allow Slaughter Plant in Northwest Missouri



In an unexpected move this past week, the United States Department of Agriculture has decided to approve an application for a horse slaughter facility in the state of New Mexico and **has indicated that it will soon do the same for a proposed horse slaughter plant in Gallatin, Daviess County, Missouri.**

This is an especially difficult decision to understand as the Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, recently issued a statement opposing horse slaughter. This move by USDA to authorize horse slaughter ironically follows on the heels of the U. S. Senate Appropriations Committee passing a ban on domestic horse slaughter as part of the Fiscal Year 2014 budget. This ban would prohibit the USDA from using funds to inspect horsemeat intended for human consumption, effectively banning domestic horse slaughter in the U. S.

Senator Mary Landrieu, the sponsor of this prohibition, stated afterwards, “Today’s bipartisan vote to pass a ban on domestic horse slaughter shows once again that this is not a Democratic or

a Republican issue – it is an issue that 80 percent of the American people agree on. ***Brutal slaughter is never the answer, and I will continue to push for this ban to be signed into law.***”

This follows action taken by the House Appropriations Committee which also voted to deny funding for horse slaughter. In addition, President Obama recommended that the FY 2014 Appropriations bill not contain funds for horse slaughter.

If the FY 2014 Appropriations bill passes with the current language this would definitely deter horse slaughter in Missouri, however, there is no assurance that Congress will reach an agreement on the budget as evidenced by the current sequestration cuts.

In an effort to permanently ban horse slaughter, Senators Mary Landrieu (D-LA) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) have also introduced Senate Bill 541, the Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act. This legislation would not only permanently prohibit horse slaughter operations in the U. S., but it would also end the current export of more than 150,000 American horses shipped to Mexico and Canada for slaughter each year. A similar bill, H. R. 1094, has been introduced in the House by Representatives Patrick Meehan (R-PA) and Jan Schakowsky (D-IL).

Please write or call your U. S. Representative and U. S. Senators and tell them that you support the SAFE Act to ban horse slaughter.

You can find your U. S. Representative and contact information at:

<http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/>

Contact information for Missouri’s U. S. Senators is;

Senator Roy Blunt

(202) 224-5721

www.blunt.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact-form?p=cont...

Senator Claire McCaskill

(202) 224-6154

www.mccaskill.senate.gov/?p=contact

In New Mexico, where the first horse slaughter plant has been approved by USDA, the state’s Attorney General, Gary King, has declared that horse meat fits the legal definition of an adulterated food product and therefore cannot be manufactured, sold or delivered anywhere in New Mexico. Cattle and hogs raised for slaughter are closely monitored to ensure they are not administered drugs that would endanger the safety of their meat. Horses, on the other hand, which are raised for sport, pleasure, companionship and even work, but not for slaughter, are routinely administered drugs that would render their meat unsafe for human consumption.

Please ask Governor Jay Nixon to request that the Missouri Department of Health and Human Services issue a condemnation of horsemeat due to its adulterated nature as it is tainted from drug residues. Phenylbutazone, one of the most commonly administered drugs to horses, is a known carcinogen to humans.

Please request Attorney General Chris Koster to issue a similar ruling to New Mexico's Attorney General's decision, namely that selling horsemeat would violate Missouri's health laws prohibiting the sale of adulterated meat.

Governor Jay Nixon <http://governor.mo.gov/contact/> (314) 751-3222

Attorney General Chris Koster attorney.general@ago.mo.gov (314) 751-3321



###