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ANIMALS' ANGELS

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Horse Slaughter Bombshell in Belgium and Holland

Belgian and Dutch consumers were shocked to learn of widespread horse slaughter-related cruelty in North and South America. Undercover video footage aired on three major news programs showed horses designated for slaughter are routinely starved, dehydrated, injured and abused.

Horse meat is commonly available in Belgium and the Netherlands where consumers are almost completely unaware of the cruelties of horse slaughter. Most believe what suppliers claim on their websites, that the meat on their dinner plate comes from contented, grass-eating, healthy horses. The story begins by asking, "Do they [consumers] really know where it comes from?"



countries.

Viewers are told "Cruelty goes hand in hand with incompetence", as undercover video shows a worker knowingly crushing the lower leg of a live horse as he forces the iron gate of an overcrowded trailer shut.

The 8½ minute news segment was produced by [GAIA](#), a respected animal welfare organization from Belgium, with much of the footage provided by [Animals' Angels USA](#). The dire conditions of horses at slaughter plants, feedlots and markets in Mexico, Brazil and the U.S., have generated talk of boycotts and moratoriums on the import of horse meat from these

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European Consumers shocked about undercover footage from horse slaughter plants in Brazil and Mexico

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Our Mission

Animals' Angels works to improve conditions for farm animals. We closely cooperate with law enforcement and government agencies to fight animal cruelty. Our investigators are out in the field nationwide, visiting auctions, feedlots and slaughter

An English version of the story is available on youtube:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/GAIAforanimalrights#p/u/0/DyaF65cPqQU>

Consumers responding on television websites demanded action. "They [importers] told us the meat is of superior quality because the animals live a life of luxury and freedom on green pastures...well cared for with plenty of food. But it's a horrible lie."

On importer Chevideco's website, horses are said to be treated with respect and to live without stress. An accompanying photograph depicts well-proportioned horses standing knee deep in grass. Importer such as Visser & van Walsum make similar claims.



Within hours of the story's broadcast, supermarkets responded with promises to investigate. Delhaize, the second largest retailer in Belgium asked their supplier to remove affected meat from their shelves. Two other major grocers have told consumers they do not import horse meat from outside Europe.

Fenavian, the Federation of Meat Producers in Belgium, issued a response denying any wrongdoing and offering reassurances that adherence to safety and European Union animal welfare rules were standard practice.

"However, the evidence is quite overwhelming," said Sonja Meadows, president of Animals Angels U.S. "Up until recently, officials may have been able to claim that to their knowledge, the animals were treated properly. But now such claims are quite obviously false. Unfortunately we have plenty of documentation to prove that animals caught up in the horse slaughter pipeline are horribly abused."

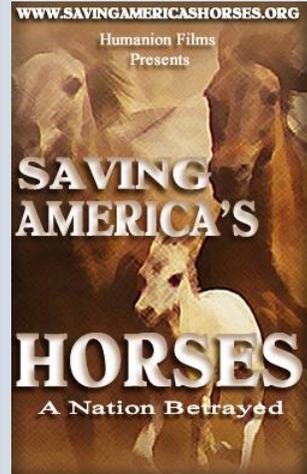


Animals' Angels' began focusing efforts on the issue of European consumers' awareness about horse slaughter in November 2009 after meeting with the European Commission. AA shared with committee members evidence of extreme cruelty uncovered at Mexican horse slaughter plants, U.S. feedlots and government export facilities. AA filed an official complaint with the commission soon after the meeting.

plants.

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Last month Gaia asked Animals' Angels for footage from Mexico and the U.S. to help with a European campaign to publicize the conditions endured by horses in the slaughter pipeline. Gaia had recently finished undercover investigations in South America and had gathered their own ample evidence of brutality.

Other organizations in the Netherlands and France are also launching consumer awareness campaigns. Most national and regional newspapers have published the story and photographs. Fueled by concerns from both consumers and animal welfare advocates, many more European news outlets are expected to pick up the story.

"I really doubt I'll ever eat horse meat again," said one man. "They may say they fixed the problem, but I'll never trust them again."