

October 22, 2012

For Immediate release

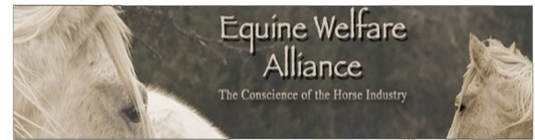
Contacts:

John Holland, Equine Welfare Alliance
540.268.5693

john@equinewelfarealliance.org

Simone Netherlands, Respect4Horses
928.925.7212

Simone@Respect4Horses.com



Horse slaughter; is it on or off the table?

Phoenix (Respect4Horses) - On Thursday Oct 11th the European Commission published a report, which evaluates the operation of controls over the production of horsemeat for export to the European Union. This is the report:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_inspection_ref=2012-6340

On Friday Oct 12th Canadian and Mexican horse slaughter plants temporarily shut down, reportedly because of failure of compliance with these European food safety standards on one or more shipments that arrived in France.

Horse welfare organizations were cautiously hopeful that this was a permanent situation and that an end had finally come to the cruel and fraudulent foreign horse slaughter industry that is preying on our American horses. They began to assess the situation with the goal of rescuing the horses caught in the pipeline.

On Monday morning Oct 15th it became apparent that horse slaughter plants were opening their doors once again to American horses trucked across our borders.

The European commission report of Oct 11th sites deficiencies in the validity and authenticity of the affidavits for horses for human consumption, as well as a lack of a system to verify these declarations accompanying the horses as well as a deficiency in post-mortem examinations of the meat. The US has no system in place to meet EU standards for food safety standards of traceability.

Horse welfare organizations have said for a long time that the EID forms (Equine Identification Documents) accompanying horses for slaughter for human consumption are fraudulent and are being filled out by kill buyers themselves. Kill buyers routinely fill out these forms only a short time after buying the horse, claiming they have identified the horse over 6 months ago and that the horse has not received any banned substances such as phenylbutazone (a carcinogen) and clenbuterol (a bronchodilator/bulking agent) for that entire period of time.

According to the USDA 92 percent of all horses slaughtered are healthy and in the prime of their life. Horse welfare organizations explain that horse slaughter is NOT a service business designed to help dispose of old and abused horses, but simply a for profit demand driven business just like any other business and the number of horses slaughtered is determined by the demand of horse meat abroad, not by the number of “unwanted” horses.

"Regardless of the instrument that prompted the EU to issue an unprecedented mandate to suspend the import of American horse flesh into Europe, and then reverse itself, the action has now made it glaringly obvious to the global community that the U.S. Congress and Senate *must* step up to the plate and pass the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act." said R.T. Fitch, volunteer president/co-founder of Wild Horse Freedom Federation.

“How is knowingly shipping these contaminated horses off for foreigners to eat, any less a scandal than China shipping baby food intentionally contaminated with melamine?” asks EWA’s John Holland, “For our government to tolerate and even support this exploitation puts all our exports in a bad light.”

Horse welfare organizations are urging breed associations to take responsibility and restrict breeding policies. “For example, states Simone Netherlands of Respect4Horses, if they truly cared, they could turn some of those breed incentives into funds for euthanasia, funds for gelding and funds for horse rescues.”

The American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act ([S.1176](#) and [HR.2966](#)) currently has the co-sponsorship of half the house and a quarter of the senate. Horse welfare organizations stand united in urging congress to pass the Act without delay.

#

See related video (non- graphic): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eiLlyseGnG0&feature=relmfu>

The Equine Welfare Alliance (EWA) is a dues-free 501c4, umbrella organization with over 250 member organizations and over 1,000 individual members worldwide in 18 countries. The organization focuses its efforts on the welfare of all equines and the preservation of wild equids.

Wild Horse Freedom Federation (WHFF) is a registered, Texas non-profit corporation with federal 501(c)(3) status. WHFF puts people between America’s wild equids and extinction through targeted litigation against governmental agencies whose documented agendas include the eradication of wild horse and burros from public, federal and state lands.

Respect4Horses (R4H) is a horse welfare organization whose goals include providing information and documentation to educate the public, the media and legislators in order to promote changes in legislation in regards to current horse welfare issues such as horse slaughter and the roundups of our last remaining wild horses and burros.