

ers took the time to properly re-home their horses. The competition industry must develop more retraining programs for horses leaving racing and other competitive fields. Breeders must be fully aware that quality over quantity is what matters, and supply vs. demand rules the market value for horses. Reducing the number of horses bred and providing breeders with incentive programs to do so will reduce the horse population. Encouraging participation of non-horse owners in horse-related programs will help to build the horse industry and increase its profits. Many people cannot afford to own a horse, but that doesn't mean they cannot lease one or participate in riding lessons, attend clinics and events, vacation at guest ranches with horseback riding, etc. There is plenty of room in the horse industry for the growth of programs using horses - educational summer camps, guided trail rides, riding instructors with lesson horses, equine-assisted therapy, 'wounded warrior' programs, prison training programs, etc. The small portion of very old, sick, crippled or dangerous horses which go to slaughter can be humanely euthanized without additional burden to any landfills, because approximately 690,000 horses die annually.

Ways You Can Help

Abandonment, abuse and neglect (including starvation) of horses is against the law. These situations occur in both good and bad economic times. It is critical to report equine cruelty to animal control officials for investigation, even if it means calling numerous times for action to be taken.

Horse owners are the first line of defense to prevent a horse from entering the slaughter pipeline. Safely re-homing a horse includes keeping it away from auctions attended by kill buyers or their agents, and advertising the horse through horse professionals such as vets, farriers, feed/tack shops, and equine publications which include several internet sites.

Federal legislation is needed to prevent America's horses from shipping overseas for slaughter and ban horse slaughter in the U.S. once and for all. Contact your Congressional representatives to vote 'yes' on

Ways You Can Help (continued)

legislation to ban horse slaughter via www.senate.gov or www.house.gov.

Log onto www.animallawcoalition.com; use the 'horse slaughter' link to keep updated on pending federal or state bills regarding horse slaughter issues and how to take action to save the horses

Write letters to the editors of your local newspapers about the need to ban horse slaughter; education is critical to saving our horses.

Distribute our 'Horse Slaughter' brochure to increase public awareness of this issue.

To Donate

— *I want to help stop abuse to horses.
My tax deductible donation is enclosed.*

— *Please send me a dozen 'Horse
Slaughter' and 'Re-Homing Your
Horse' brochures to distribute.*

Your contribution is deeply appreciated.
Please make your check or money order payable to:

Front Range Equine Rescue
P.O. Box 307 • Larkspur, CO 80118

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

HORSE SLAUGHTER



*To stand by and do nothing
makes us sharers in the guilt.*

FRONT RANGE EQUINE RESCUE

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working to prevent the abuse and neglect of horses through rescue and education.

P.O. Box 307
LARKSPUR, CO 80118
719.481.1490

info@frontrangeequinerescue.org
www.frontrangeequinerescue.org

Copyright © 2011 by Front Range Equine Rescue

One of the most controversial and critical issues facing the horse industry is horse slaughter. Approximately 100,000 to 130,000 American horses are slaughtered annually. In 2007, the three foreign-owned U.S. equine slaughterhouses were closed. The Dallas-Crowne and Beltex slaughterhouses in Texas were shuttered when a 1949 law banning horse slaughter in Texas was upheld in court. Cavel International's plant was closed when Illinois enacted legislation to ban horse slaughter in that state. During the time U.S. plants operated, American horses were also slaughtered in Canada and Mexico. With the U.S. plants closed, all American horses ship to either Canadian or Mexican slaughterhouses.

While some states classify horses as livestock, the vast majority of horses today are used for pleasure, sport or recreation. Horses are not raised as food animals in America. Throughout their lives, horses are given products and medications (both ingested and topically-applied) that are not approved for use in food animals. Horsemeat is unfit for human consumption. Read the labels of medications, wormers, fly sprays and other horse care items that are marked "not for use in animals for human consumption." Common products such as Phenylbutazone (Bute) are known carcinogens. New guidelines by the European Union (EU) have now targeted U.S. horsemeat for this reason.

When reviewing the horse slaughter issue, one should consider the ethical and moral aspect as well as an economic one. From a purely moral and ethical standpoint, horse slaughter is cruel, inhumane and wrong. Our country was established on the backs of horses and other equines. They were our primary mode of transportation, whether for day-to-day travel, farming and other agricultural use, pulling fire- and paddy-wagons, carrying police officers, pulling covered wagons for westward expansion, the Pony Express or for military purposes. Horses are an integral part of our American heritage. The rapidly diminishing wild horse herds in our western states are living symbols of our freedom, and thousands of mustangs are slaughtered every year.

Transportation to slaughter, whether in the U.S., to

Mexico or Canada, is arduous and cruel. Horses are crammed into single- or double-decker trucks, with no food or water for days. Many are injured at auctions, feedlots, during loading or unloading, and in the actual transporting process. After all, what do the people handling them care? *They are going to be killed anyway!* And, in spite of transport regulations, who is watching? For proof that transport to U.S. slaughterhouses (when operating) was horrific, log onto www.kaufmanzoning.net and click on the link for 'FOIA Documents' to see USDA inspector documentation of horses arriving at a Texas plant.

Slaughter is not quick and painless, nor is it humane. U.S. plants used the captive bolt gun to shoot a metal rod into the horse's brain, supposedly rendering it unconscious. Many times, horses are incorrectly stunned, leaving them conscious as a hind leg is chained. Then the horse is yanked onto the processing rack where its throat is slashed. It is preferred that the horse is not dead so that the heart remains beating, allowing it to bleed out more quickly. Former USDA Chief Inspector, Dr. Lester Friedlander (DVM) has stated, "The captive bolt is not a proper instrument for the slaughter of equines. These animals regain consciousness thirty seconds after being struck; they are fully aware they are being vivisected."

Canadian slaughterhouses use the captive bolt or gunshot. In some Mexican slaughterhouses, a puntilla knife is repeatedly plunged into the horse's withers in vain attempts to sever the spinal cord. The suffering is intolerable; the horse may become paralyzed, but is conscious for the next step in the slaughter process. Horses arriving at slaughter plants, whether in the U.S. (when operating) or across the borders, arrive with open wounds, fractured or broken limbs, punctured lungs, dislocated eyes, severed limbs, or are already dead from being trampled upon.

When looking at slaughter from an economic viewpoint, there are several areas to understand regarding the horse slaughter industry. The number of horses being slaughtered annually accounts for about one-percent of the horse population in America (an American Horse Council study indicated there are 9.5 million horses in the U.S.).

Horses going to slaughter consist of stolen horses, Pre-marin™ mares and foals, competition and breeder cast-offs, privately owned horses, Amish work horses, bucking stock, broodmares, discarded ranch horses, mustangs and other equines (burros, mules). The average age of horses going to slaughter is between 3 and 9 years. American Quarter horses are the #1 breed going to slaughter, with Thoroughbreds coming in second. Contrary to pro-slaughter rhetoric, only 5%-6% are considered to be 'old, sick, crippled or dangerous.'

Horsemeat is not consumed by Americans; it is sold in European and Asian specialty markets and upscale restaurants for \$15.00 to \$30.00 per pound. The demand for horsemeat in foreign countries - not the supply of horses - drives the horse slaughter industry. At auctions across the country, kill buyers or their agents have the means to outbid private buyers who might want to purchase the same horse. Kill buyers contract with foreign-owned slaughter plants and have quotas to meet on a weekly basis. Rescues and private buyers attending auctions are very often outbid by kill buyers.

For every horse slaughtered, there is one less horse owner and/or consumer for purchasing products from hay and feed suppliers or vet and farrier services. These are only the very basics. Consider the extensive negative economic impact of less horse owners due to horses going to slaughter. Horse owners purchase tack items (saddles, pads, girths, bridles, bits, reins, blankets, martingales, stirrups, stirrup leathers, halters, lead ropes, etc.); apparel (boots, riding pants, jackets, helmets and other headwear, shirts, pins, ties, socks, hairnets, clips, show clothing, casual riding wear, etc.); horse property (land, barns and shelter, fencing, tractors and equipment); support boarding facilities; riding club and other memberships including breed associations; trucks and trailers; supplements and supplies (buckets, feed pans, shavings, stall mats, rakes, muck carts) and so on. For every horse lost to slaughter, the horse industry loses consumers for the numerous direct and indirect products and services purchased by horse owners.

Horses going to slaughter would not end up there if own-