

EXHIBIT 16

Food Safety News

Horse Slaughter Issue Won't Go Away

by Dan Flynn | Oct 25, 2011

In the nearly five years since the last legal horse slaughterhouses in the United States shut down, strange events keep happening in Florida's C-9 Basin, north of Okeechobee Road and west of the Florida Turnpike.

This time, Miami-Dade police are investigating the illegal sale of horse meat, specifically a brown bay thoroughbred they found without legs and with its heart cut out.

Neighbors who heard noises and saw the carcass called police back to the isolated area where evidence of slaughtered horses has been found before, including last year.

In the most recent case, police are benefiting from a tattooed identification number on the upper lip of the six-year old racehorse. "This could have been the best race horse ever, Richard Couto of the Animal Recovery Mission, told the Miami Herald. "We just don't know who she was yet."

Couto's Animal Recovery Mission focuses exclusively on the horse meat trade in South Florida.

The C-9 Basin is a mix of small farms, wetlands, and trailer parks., where 21 horse carcasses were found in 2009, a year when joint task forces shut down 70 illegal horse slaughter operations.

Couto says horse meat can go for as much as \$40 a pound in South Florida with some demand for its medicinal value and others who see it as a delicacy. He said the horse was still alive when its heart was removed and died from slowly bleeding to death.

While its been nearly five years since the last legal horse slaughterhouses in the U.S. shut down, the Animal Law Coalition estimates that somewhere between 60,000 and 100,000 horses a year are exported -- mostly to Mexico and Canada -- for slaughter for human consumption.

That's roughly the range that were previously slaughtered annually by the last three domestic slaughter operations, two in Texas and one In Illinois.

America's Cowboy Culture has long spared the horse from the menu, but in much of Europe and Asia "Mr. Ed" is seen as just another choice for dinner.

Congress, which helped bring about the closure of domestic slaughterhouses without exactly making it illegal, is now getting involved in the issue again.

Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-LA, and Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-SC, have introduced S.B. 1176, which would prohibit the sale or transport of horses or equine parts in interstate or foreign commerce with intent of processing for human consumption.

And earlier this year, an House amendment to the appropriations bill continues to de-fund inspections required for horses bound for slaughter for human consumption.

In rural America, however, states are moving in a different direction with Arkansas, Montana, Nebraska and North Dakota among those moving toward horse meat production under state regulation. Rural states are concerned about a crisis over horse populations, with expensive euthanasia and disposal the only option.

In Colorado, with more than 250,000 horses, a state group called the Colorado Unwanted Horse Alliance conducted a formal Environmental Assessment. It found the horse crisis is due both to closure of the U.S. plants processing horses and the worsening economic conditions.

The Unwanted Horse Alliance said the state's horse rescue facilities are full, sanctuaries are full, and euthanasia options are "limited and expensive."

Colorado's humane officers and sheriffs are reporting more horse surrender and abandonment, said the alliance's environmental assessment. It call for more options and resources for cost effective euthanasia and increased rescue capacity.

Just as it did five years ago, the horse slaughter issue largely pits animal rights groups against animal agriculture.

Wayne Pacelle, president and chief executive of the Human Society of the United States (HSUS), recently wrote: "Today's apologists for cruelty are most sophisticated and deceptive, now laying claim to the argument that they are best defenders of animals, and that when it comes to caring for them, they know best."

For its part, horse country did an online petition asking the Obama Administration to restore horse slaughter for human consumption in the U.S., an action they said would "improve horse welfare, stop needless and wasteful suffering of horses and even create jobs."

No incident of foodborne illnesses from horse meat can be found on the Foodborne Illness Outbreak Data Base.

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