

EXHIBIT 63



Horse Protection

Italiano English

- [Home](#)
- [What we do](#)

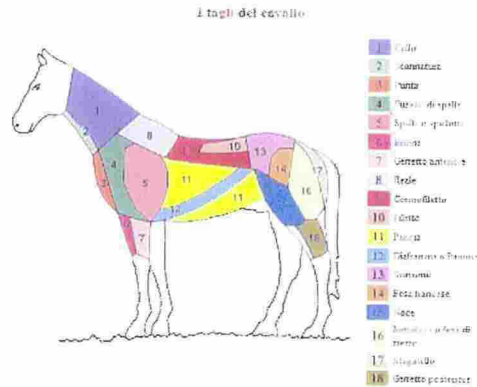
- [What you can do](#)

- [Support us](#)

- [About Us](#)
- [Video](#)
- [Contact us](#)

- [Our aims](#)
- [Equine infectious anemia](#)
- [Confiscated animals](#)
- [Photo gallery](#)
- [Reports](#)
» [Veterinary](#) » [Ethology](#) » [Equestrian sports](#) » [Horse racing](#) » [Popular feasts](#) » [Various](#)
- [Our Staff](#)
- [Events](#)
- [News](#)
- [Link](#)
- [Acknowledgments](#)

Investigation on horse meat entering Europe from America



In the USA there is no differentiation between FPA (Food Producing Animal) and non-FPA equidae; **horses are simply not considered as part of the food chain.** US' horses are slaughtered in Canada and Mexico (and perhaps in the USA re-starting in 2012). Horse meat is exported primarily to Europe (France, Belgium, Italy and Germany are the main horse-meat eating countries). The significant point here is therefore that any horse, not being considered part of the food chain, **can be treated with any and all drugs which the vet - or indeed simply the owner - considers necessary**, with no formal requirements to observe or fulfil.

The European Union, quite rightly severe (although in our opinion not sufficiently) with its own producers, from whom it demands a strict record of all drugs administered to animals destined for human consumption in the name of the health and safety of the consumer, **accepts a mere declaration by the owner of the horse that no drug which is inadmissible in Europe has been administered to the animal**, or that due time has elapsed between the administration of drugs, and slaughter. This document should also contain all the necessary information for identification of the equine.

Volunteers from the Equine Welfare Alliance (an alliance of animal rights associations, with members in 18 countries among which Italy, represented by IHP) travelled to New Holland in Pennsylvania, USA to a market for horses destined for slaughter in Canada, to see just how these declarations worked. The volunteers photographed as many declarations as they could manage to get their hands on for a moment: **they were all actually blank with just a signature and then just stuck onto any horse**, indiscriminately. In one case, there are two pages, one with just a signature and no further details about the horse, the other a blank piece of paper with the name and address of the vendor, plus a comment on how strong and healthy the horse is, and the phrase 'no drugs'. The practice begs the question, **even if the forms were filled in correctly, as to what guarantee there is that the vendor is telling the truth?** The Equine Welfare Alliance immediately sent their photos to the competent authority in the EU but has to date received no reply.

[Take a look at the certificates.](#)

Given the situation, some university researchers (Nicholas Dodman, Tufts University, Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, Massachusetts; Nicolas Blondeau University of Nice "Sophia Antipolis", Institute of Molecular and Cellular Pharmacology, France, and Ann M. Marini, University of Bethesda, Department of Neurology, Maryland) put to the test a theory, cross checking the data of some of the animals sent for slaughter with the data banks from racecourses where the horses had run. Those data bases contain the records, required by anti-doping laws, of treatments with phenylbutazone (commercial name: Bute), a non-steroid anti-inflammatory drug commonly used on horses but which is prohibited in Europe for horses destined for human consumption.

By means of a complex procedure, the researchers uncovered information about the data of races of 16 horses out of 50 of those under study. The result of the study is that **all the horses whose data was located had been treated with Bute, some of them only one week before slaughter.** However the data uncovered was relative to race dates, **while not all treatments administered are logged if they are not close to the date of a race.** Horse meat exported to Europe, therefore, is very likely indeed to contain traces of prohibited substances, and not only of fenilbutazone.

[Read here the full text of the article by Dodman, N., et al. Association of phenylbutazone usage with horses bought for slaughter: A public health risk. Food Chem. Toxicol. \(2010\), \(doi:10.1016/j.fct.2010.02.021\)](#)

After having read the results of this research, we looked further and found a shocking list of drugs and hormones, in every day use on horses in America but severely restricted (or indeed actually prohibited) in Europe because they are dangerous, some very dangerous, to human health. Some hormones permitted in the USA but prohibited, or at any rate strictly regulated in the EU, **can be considered so dangerous that some transatlantic health organisations advise, for example:** *"It is recommended that pregnant women do not handle this product and that the person carrying the container for the oral administration of the product should wear at least two pairs of disposable gloves and be assisted by someone who can open the doors for them, in order to avoid the risk of contamination"*.

Digging even deeper we came across something that we would never have wanted to find. Two inspection reports of the EU dated autumn 2010, one in Canada, one in Mexico, following an EU inspection to ensure that horse meat produced there reached an acceptable standard for European public health.

The results of the two inspections are chilling: **two slaughter houses in Mexico are completely inadequate, yet anyhow authorised to export meat to the EU.** The Mexican authorities **"promised"** the inspectors that they will not issue export certificates for meat from those two abattoirs. Other slaughter houses **"ONLY"** had the problem of non-drinkable water, hygiene issues, and, naturally, **no check on the veracity of the certificates about drugs.** The inspection concluded that the slaughter houses, even though authorised to export to Europe, **are not in line with the set standards. Imports to date have not ceased.** The situation in Canada is slightly better but even there, apart from some hygiene problems **there is absolutely no check on the presence of drugs, apart from the ridiculously inadequate declaration of the vendor.**

[Read the Canadian inspection report.](#)

[Read the Mexican inspection report.](#)

This situation is not only very serious from the point of view of public health, due to the amount of dangerous or very dangerous drugs the consumer is ingesting, but is it totally scandalous, if we think that **the authorities who are supposed to watch over these things are perfectly aware of what has been going on since autumn 2010,** quite likely even earlier, and who not only have photographs showing how the 'certificates' are produced, but also have the word of their very own inspectors, **who declare in writing that there can be no guarantee for the public health.**

As if this was not enough, it is a common myth in some Countries that horse meat should be given often to children and pregnant women, and to cure anaemia. In other words to **all those who should be the object of increased health protection. Health protection that the EU fails to give.**

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[« back](#)

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