



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

Washington, D. C.
20250

APR 25 2012

██████████@verizon.net

Dear Sir or Madam:

Thank you for your letter of April 16, 2012, to the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), regarding your concern that drugs given to horses throughout their lives are dangerous to humans. I appreciate the opportunity to address this issue.

FSIS is the public health regulatory agency in the Department of Agriculture responsible for ensuring that meat, poultry, and processed egg products are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled. FSIS enforces the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and the Egg Products Inspection Act, which require Federal inspection and regulation of meat, poultry, and processed egg products prepared for distribution in commerce for use as human food. FSIS statutory authority covers those facilities that are legally licensed to operate.

Protecting public health is FSIS' top priority. To this end, the United States has a residue control program to protect consumers from residues of drugs, chemicals, and pesticides in meat, poultry, and egg products, involving three Federal agencies: the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and FSIS.

FDA is responsible for the approval of animal drugs and feed additives. That Agency establishes limits, known as tolerances, for the amount of an animal drug residue or other chemical that may be present in a meat or poultry product. You may wish to contact FDA regarding your concerns at <http://www.fda.gov> or at the address below:

Food and Drug Administration,
Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Consumer Affairs, HFE-88, 5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20857

EPA establishes tolerances for the amount of pesticide residues that may remain in a food destined for human consumption, and FSIS enforces the level of drugs, chemicals, or pesticides through its inspections and residue testing program.

FSIS recognizes that there have been significant changes since the passage of the Fiscal Year 2006 Appropriations Act, when Congress prohibited the use of funds for FSIS inspection of horses for human food, including changes in residue testing methodologies and protocols. Reinstating horse slaughter and horse processing in inspection and regulatory environments that have changed considerably during the past 6 years requires that FSIS review its processes and programs, and that it work with the public and with other agencies that deal with a range of issues from animal drug use to environmental health. To protect public health, FSIS is carefully

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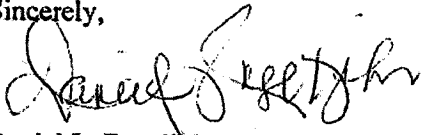
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evaluating its methods and programs to ensure that product entering commerce is adequately tested.

Selling and eating horsemeat is legal in most of the United States, as long as the meat is labeled clearly, and the horses are slaughtered at federally inspected establishments. At this time, FSIS is not aware of any federally inspected establishments approved to slaughter horses.

Thank you again for your letter. More information about food safety can be found on FSIS' Web site at www.usda.gov.

Sincerely,



Daniel L. Engeljohn, Ph.D.
Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy and Program Development

Keep Your Family Safer From Food Poisoning
Clean – Separate – Cook – Chill

**Clean: Wash Hands And Surfaces Often Separate: Separate Raw Meats
From Other Foods**
**Cook: Cook To The Right Temperature Chill: Refrigerate Food
Promptly**

Check your Steps at <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/>