



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Food Safety and  
Inspection Service

Washington, D. C.  
20250

May 15, 2012

Ms. Diana Johanson  
[REDACTED]@tsgins.com

Dear Ms. Johanson:

Thank you for your e-mail of May 8, 2012, to the Secretary of Agriculture expressing your thoughts on horse slaughter. The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has been asked to provide you with a response, and I appreciate the opportunity to address this matter.

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.

Currently there are no facilities approved for horse slaughter in the United States. Following a decision by Congress in November 2011 to lift the ban on horse slaughter, one establishment, located in New Mexico, has applied for a grant of inspection exclusively for equine and FSIS is reviewing the application. However, given that the Agency last conducted a horse inspection 6 years ago, FSIS has determined that despite the congressional decision to lift the ban, the Agency will require a significant amount of time to update its testing and inspection processes and methods before it is fully able to develop a future inspection regimen.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

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



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Rcardwell, ecims deputy director 5/11/2012