



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

Washington, D. C.
20250

May 7, 2012

Mr. Bruce A. Wagman
SchiffHardin, LLP
One Market
Spear Street Tower
32nd Floor
San Francisco, California 94105

Dear Mr. Wagman:

Thank you for your letter of April 19, 2012, to the Department of Agriculture (USDA) regarding legal issues concerning horse slaughter in the United States. The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has been asked to provide you with a response, and I appreciate the opportunity to address your concerns.

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. For more information on food safety, please visit the FSIS Web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov>.

Sincerely,

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



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