

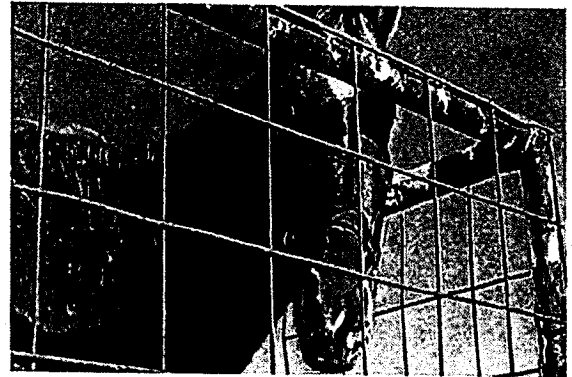
USDA Should Declare U.S. Horse Meat Condemned and Unqualified for Human Consumption

THE PETITIONS

In March and April, Front Range Equine Rescue (FRER) and HSUS petitioned FDA and USDA respectively to classify all horses without a lifetime medical history as condemned and unqualified to be slaughtered for human consumption. The Petitions explain that many of the drugs regularly given to horses throughout their lives are banned for horses used for food under federal law and/or are potentially dangerous to humans. Eating these horses creates an unacceptable and illegal public health threat.

The Petitions demonstrate, with ample scientific and documentary support:

- Virtually all horses slaughtered for human food start their lives as American pets, sport horses (competitions, rodeos and races), or former wild horses who are privately owned.
- Hundreds of chemicals are applied to or ingested by these horses on a constant basis throughout their lives. These drugs are often labeled "Not for use in animals intended for food/human consumption." An exhibit to the Petitions lists 115 examples of such drugs and products.
- Over fifty of the listed drugs are expressly prohibited by current federal regulations for use in food animals (for example, Phenylbutazone, or "Bute," a pain reliever known to cause potentially fatal human diseases). Use of any of those drugs in horses should block their use as food, yet almost every horse who would be slaughtered for meat has been exposed to many of these prohibited drugs.
- Horses are not raised for food and therefore they are regularly administered these chemicals -- unlike other animals that we eat, who are maintained within a regulated industry.
- There are many dangerous drugs and substances regularly used on horses that have never been tested on humans. The potential danger of eating them is completely unknown.
- Due to the multitude of substances that horses are exposed to, all horse meat could cause illness or adverse reactions.
- The Federal Food Drug and Cosmetic Act presumes any animals given prohibited substances are "adulterated" and cannot be sold for human consumption, and horse meat is filled with those substances.



The resumption of horse slaughter in the U.S. will result in the regular sale of meat containing harmful substances, which is not only adulterated according to the FDA, but also has the potential to cause significant consumer harm.

USDA REQUEST

USDA should grant the FRER/HSUS petitions by issuing rules that classify all horses without a proven lifetime medical history as condemned, adulterated, and unqualified for use as human food.