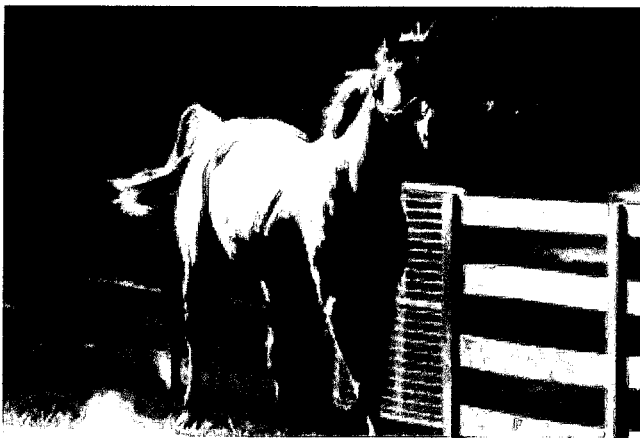


Submitted by Counsellor Berardinetti  
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News / Investigations

## Star investigation: Ottawa refuses to say whether drug-tainted horse meat entered food chain

The Star traces a former Stronach racehorse's life from birth to the slaughterhouse and makes an unsettling discovery: serious flaws in Canada's food inspection system are putting our health at risk when it comes to horses destined for the food chain.



Like most competitive horses, Backstreet Bully was not raised to be eaten. He had been given at least 21 doses of nitrofurazone, which has been linked to cancer in humans.

By: Mary Ormsby

Dale Brazao

Published on Fri Mar 29 2013

Backstreet Bully was unloaded from a trailer after dawn and led by his halter into an abattoir in rural Quebec. Once owned and raced by Magna's Frank Stronach, the chestnut thoroughbred was to be slaughtered then packaged for human food.

That same January morning earlier this year, frantic phone calls from the Stronach group tried to save Backstreet Bully's life — and protect the public from eating toxic meat.

A Star investigation has found that Canada's food inspection system has serious flaws when dealing with the steady stream of racehorses sent to slaughter every year. During his life, Backstreet Bully, like many competitive horses, was given powerful performance-enhancing drugs that are potentially deadly in meat eaten by humans.

**Related :** Horses as food: Confusion and loopholes plague system

Two of these, nitrofurazone and one nicknamed "bute" (phenylbutazone), had been administered to

Backstreet Bully dozens of times but the shoddy paperwork and poor oversight allowed by Canada's food watchdog cleared him for human consumption in a market that includes Quebec, Europe and some Toronto restaurants.

"You can't kill that horse," Stacie Clark, who works for the Stronach farm, recalled pleading with an abattoir official. It wasn't just small amounts of these drugs that had once been given to the horse: 21 doses of nitrofurazone, which has been linked to cancer in humans, and at least 23 doses of bute, a drug linked to bone marrow disease.

According to Canada's Food and Drugs Act, horses should not be sold for food if they have been given nitrofurazone at any point in their lives. Backstreet Bully had been given many other drugs that could also pose a serious risk to humans.

"Racehorses are walking pharmacies," said Dr. Nicholas Dodman, a veterinarian at Tufts University in Massachusetts who has studied the issue extensively. "Do you really want to be eating a piece of meat that has the rabies vaccine in it?"

The Star found a host of problems in Canada's food protection system related to horses. From one document to the next, the Star discovered confusion over which drugs are considered safe, how quickly a toxic drug leaves a horse's body, and whether any trust can be placed in the system that regulates horses sold for meat.

In a Thursday email to the Star, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency said it is working with the horse industry to "develop measures to enhance equine traceability."

When Clark, from Stronach's Adena Springs farm in Aurora, made her rescue attempt, she was already too late. Backstreet Bully was dead, shot in the head while imprisoned in a cramped abattoir stall. Canadian officials have refused to tell the Star if the horse's meat entered the food chain.

As part of an investigation into the number of racehorses sent to slaughter as cash-strapped Ontario racetracks close, the Star has traced the life and death of Backstreet Bully, using interviews, government documents and veterinary records.

If not for a clue on his leather halter — a brass plate engraved with the name Backstreet Bully — the fate of the playful animal with "tons of puppy dog personality" might not have been discovered. The horse's identification paper was falsified, the Star has learned, and is now private property of the slaughterhouse, which refused to produce it.

The Star obtained Backstreet Bully's veterinary records from when he was under Stronach's care, which show that in addition to bute and nitrofurazone, he had been given numerous other risky substances, such as the anabolic steroid stanozolol.

Most problematic, though, were the 21 applications of nitrofurazone, a topical ointment used to treat skin infections. In Europe, nitrofurazone was banned for use in food-producing animals in 1995 because it was linked to cancer in humans.

Canadian officials gave a conflicting and confusing response about nitrofurazone: the drug cannot ever be administered to a horse that will be eaten by humans, but the horse's medical history must only show it has not had the drug for six months before it is slaughtered.

Canada is a major international supplier of horse meat. Some 82,000 horses — most coming from the United States where slaughter was banned in 2006 — were killed in federally inspected facilities across the country last year, and about 14,000 metric tonnes of meat exported annually, mostly to Europe and Japan. Canadians consume another 300 tonnes of horse meat each year, mainly in Quebec.

Like most competitive horses, Backstreet Bully was not raised to be eaten.

Born into North America's premier thoroughbred racing stables in 2004, the early hope was that the leggy chestnut baby — foaled at Stronach's Kentucky farm — would become another of Stronach's celebrated Queen's Plate or Breeders' Cup champions. Lack of speed ended that hope.

Backstreet Bully ran only three times at Ontario's Fort Erie racetrack in 2008, collecting a victory and two top-10 finishes for \$5,333 in winnings. But retirement didn't dampen his sunny disposition.

"He was so funny, he was such a cutie," said Stacie Clark, a former jockey and television commentator who runs Stronach's racehorse retirement program in Aurora.

Stronach launched North America's first in-house "after care" program for racehorses in 2004, offering his horses for sale so they can go on to a second career. Thoroughbreds are athletic and have other potential such as show jumpers, pleasure riders or companion animals.

Sarah Irving of Grandview Farm, a competitive riding stable in Oro, Ont., visited Adena Springs in the fall of 2008 looking for a gentle teaching horse for her younger students. She settled on Backstreet Bully.

"He was such a sweetheart," said Irving. She bought Backstreet Bully for \$1,050 on Oct. 21, 2008. Irving recalled giving Bully powdered bute in his food whenever he had soreness or inflammation.

Less than a year later, Irving gave Backstreet Bully free to the family of one of her students, confident he was going to a good home with Chris and Karen White at their farm in Apto, near Elmvale, Ont.

Backstreet Bully remained with the Whites for three years, up until three months ago, when the couple decided the horse was not being ridden enough and wanted to find him a home with more grazing pasture. In a tearful interview, Karen White said it was a difficult decision to send their beloved Backstreet Bully away.

They contacted Glen Priest, a veteran Wyebridge horse dealer who said he buys and sells about 3,000 horses in Ontario a year, and asked him to find Backstreet Bully a home with large, grassy fields. Priest arrived at the Whites' farm on the morning of Jan. 7 this year and said he knew a woman with such a place in nearby Coldwater.

The Whites, who confirmed that Backstreet Bully was given three applications of bute in June 2011, sold the horse to Priest for \$100 on the understanding that if the woman in Coldwater didn't want him,

Backstreet Bully would be returned to them. Priest promised to do just that.

Instead, after the unnamed Coldwater woman refused to buy the horse for \$150 — he wanted the extra \$50 for gas costs — he housed the animal overnight in his barn.

The next morning, Jan. 8, Priest trucked Backstreet Bully to the Ontario Livestock Exchange in St. Jacobs, near Waterloo, where he joined dozens of unwanted horses at the weekly auction.

Priest signed the federal government's mandatory Equine Information Document — a type of horse passport that must accompany all horses destined for slaughter — and stated that as owner, he had “uninterrupted possession, care and control” of Backstreet Bully for the past six months.

In fact, he had owned him for about 24 hours.

In signing the passport, Priest also attested that Backstreet Bully had been drug free for the past six months and had not been given any “not permitted” substances listed on the government's website.

Critics of the passport system say the form is confusing and open to misinterpretation or outright fraud.

Priest, who has been in the horse business for more than 40 years, said he rescues and sells horses to good homes. He told the Star he falsely claimed he'd owned Backstreet Bully for six months because “everybody does” this on the horse documents.

Calling himself “the last resort” for people who no longer want their horses, Priest said Backstreet Bully was a bone rack who looked 15, not 9 years old, and that he was doing the Whites a favour by taking the gelding to auction.

Priest said he has sold dozens of horses at auctions over the years without any problem.

“The only mistake I made was the halter shouldn't have went with that horse. That's where it all leaked out,” Priest told the Star.

The federal government relies heavily on the accuracy of the passports, which have been in existence since 2010 and are the first line of defence in keeping tainted horse meat from the human food chain. The government does not require owners selling a horse for meat to provide additional medical history such as veterinary records.

Dr. Martin Appelt, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's national veterinary program manager, acknowledged the government relies on an honour system and hopes that the documents are “a reflection of the truth.”

But it's far from a foolproof system: last year, tainted horse meat from Canada, bound for Belgium, was found to contain traces of two controversial drugs, bute and clenbuterol, the latter on the list of drugs in Canada that are never to be given to animals sold for human food.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency began testing horse meat for bute in 2002. In detecting prohibited veterinary drug residues in meat, there is an overall compliance rate of 96 to 98 per cent, according to an

agency spokesperson. Testing is random though a horse or its carcass will be tested if there are red flags or concerns.

The European Union takes a tough stance on many veterinary drugs in human food, including bute and nitrofurazone, for its homegrown horses. Yet the EU will accept Canadian-processed horse meat if the animals' documents say they were drug free for six months at the time of slaughter.

There is little research on the depletion rate of bute in horses and what level, if any, is safe for consumption.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency does not monitor provincial auction houses. It has inspectors at the four abattoirs where horses are killed then processed as human food. Two abattoirs are in Quebec, two in Alberta.

Backstreet Bully was sent to Les Viandes de la Petite Nation in Saint-André-Avellin, Que., a 90-minute drive northwest of Montreal. It is the same slaughterhouse that processed the two tainted meat samples bound for Belgium last year.

On Jan. 8, Backstreet Bully was walked through the St. Jacobs sales ring, looking healthy and weighing in at 1,200 pounds, according to thoroughbred owner Mindy Lovell of Cumberland, Ont., who was there that day.

Lovell runs Transitions Thoroughbreds, a non-profit racehorse rescue operation that has saved dozens of horses from slaughter. She'd made herself known that morning to an auction employee, who in turn alerted her to a chestnut thoroughbred in one of the pens.

Lovell tried to bid on the gelding but claims the auctioneer ignored her waving wildly at him. She lost out to a Quebec man named Jonathan Lalonde, who Lovell said purchased Backstreet Bully for 26 cents a pound — about \$300. Lalonde is one of a number of people who supply horses to slaughterhouses and are referred to by some as “kill buyers.”

Lalonde said “it's not really my problem” when informed Priest had falsely signed the horse passport, adding it's the responsibility of horse owners to ensure their animals are drug free when he buys them.

Lovell said she tried to buy Backstreet Bully from Lalonde. He refused, telling her the horse was “meat only.” Lalonde told the Star he refused because he was respecting the wishes of the owner, Priest, that Backstreet Bully be sold for meat.

Upset, Lovell drove home. She knew the horse's name. She'd read it on his halter nameplate and wondered about his history. In the early hours of Jan. 9, a computer search revealed Backstreet Bully was once a Stronach horse. She phoned her friend Stacie Clark at Adena Springs around 7:30 a.m.

Clark said that in a phone call just after 8 a.m., she offered to fax the slaughterhouse manager Backstreet Bully's full drug history, but the offer was rejected. About an hour later, during another call, Clark was told the horse was dead.

Her insistence that the former racehorse had been given bute prompted slaughterhouse staff to conduct a post-mortem drug test.

The slaughterhouse would not reveal the test results, saying it was private information.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency would not talk to the Star about the Backstreet Bully case.

An email obtained by the Star from Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Gerry Ritz to a woman concerned about Backstreet Bully's fate stated the test was negative for bute. The email does not say if the dead horse was tested for nitrofurazone or other drugs.

What happened to Backstreet Bully's carcass is a closely guarded secret. Neither the government nor the slaughterhouse owner will say whether the horse's meat became someone's dinner somewhere in the world.

Slaughterhouse owner Jordan Harpur refused to answer any questions from the Star regarding how the drug tests were conducted or whether Backstreet Bully's carcass was released for meat. Harpur also refused to provide Backstreet Bully's passport.

"Unfortunately, for competitive reasons, we wouldn't be sharing those documents," Harpur said.

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## Rescuing Horses as Industry Bides Its Time

By JOE DRAPE

Published: November 1, 2012

HUNTINGTON BEACH, Calif. — Deborah Jones has a ticket to the Breeders' Cup, and as a lifelong horse lover, she would cherish a weekend amid the best thoroughbreds in the world and some of the most prominent owners in racing. But she will not make the drive 41 miles north to Santa Anita Park on Friday to watch the horses of sheiks and titans of industry compete for more than \$25 million in purses.

Enlarge This Image



Ann Johansson for The New York Times  
Deborah Jones, a thoroughbred advocate, said, "They run for big purses, but then you see how easily they are discarded."

Instead, Jones will make and take dozens of phone calls from like-minded thoroughbred advocates on the lookout for former racehorses that have landed at auctions and are en route to slaughterhouses in Canada and Mexico. When they are found, she will call their breeders or former owners in the hope they will send a trailer or some money to help find the horses a safe home.

Some have been horrified to learn of their horses' fate and have helped immediately. But many more, Jones said, have declined to help at all.

Just two weeks ago, eight horses were discovered in a kill pen in Ohio. One of them had raced 12 days earlier at nearby Thistledown, and another had earned more than \$217,000 in his career. Jones mobilized a rescue through her Facebook page.

Within hours, \$6,200 was raised, and the horses — all in poor shape — were removed, quarantined and under veterinarian care. Over the past four years, Jones and her informal network have raised tens of thousands of dollars to save hundreds of horses.

"It is frustrating to know that these thoroughbreds are bred to make money for people," Jones said. "There are values assigned to their pedigrees, they run for big purses, but then you see how easily they are discarded."

In the past three years, nearly 86,000 thoroughbreds have been registered as foals, but only about half of them will actually make it to the races, according to Jockey Club

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statistics.

Slow or injured horses do not stay on an owner's balance sheet for long, and only a handful of horses possess the rare combination of regal bloodlines and proven talent to assure a career after racing. In 2011, for example, 1,861 stallions covered 35,391 mares in North America.

So where do the other former racehorses go?

Hard numbers are elusive, but 138,000 horses were sent to Canada or Mexico in 2010 to be turned into meat for Europe and other parts of the world, according to a Government Accountability Office report.

Advocacy groups say up to 10 percent may be thoroughbreds.

"We know the problem is massive: half the foal crop doesn't make it to the races year after year, and it becomes exponential," said Mike Ziegler, executive director of the Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance, an organization of breeders, owners, sales companies and racetracks recently formed to accredit and raise money for facilities for retired thoroughbreds.

Some owners treat their horses as members of the family and retire them to their farms or find them a home at retraining centers. Other owners treat them as commodities. Their horses are the ones that Jones and dozens of rescue groups come across.

Mindy Lovell has stopped hundreds of horses from reaching a slaughterhouse in Quebec, and she cares for more than 40 of them herself on her farm in Ottawa. They include expensive sons and daughters of stars like the Kentucky Derby winner Silver Charm and the Breeders' Cup Classic winner Skip Away. It costs her \$7,000 a month to keep them fed and cared for, money that comes out of her own pocket.

"In all the years I've done this, only one breeder has ever taken back his horse and cared for it the rest of its life," Lovell said. "So many involved in the racing industry just sit there silently while we pull them out of the kill pens."

John Murrell is a longtime horse owner and a friend of Jones's. Like many who save horses, he has a hard time squaring his passion for what he believes is a beautiful sport and the greed that encourages cruelty and abuse off the track.

He provided half the money to rescue Grunwald, a 5-year-old gelding who had won 11 times, and the seven other horses that went from the racetrack to the kill pen in Ohio in October. He knows he cannot save every horse, but he has spent countless hours and thousands of dollars saving scores of them.

"I'm part of the industry, and I know many, many fine people who take care of their horses," said Murrell, a Dallas-based oilman. "But we're breeding too many, and we're dumping them like yesterday's trash when they become economically useless. It has to stop."

Over the years, there have been substantial donations by individual owners and groups to umbrella organizations and aftercare programs.

In the past three years, for example, the Jockey Club has given \$750,000 to Thoroughbred Charities of America and the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation. For the fourth straight year, trainers and owners of Breeders' Cup contenders have pledged a percentage of their earnings to New Vocations Racehorse Adoption Program. So far, more than

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\$150,000 has gone to the organization, which finds homes for horses coming off 40 tracks.

Broader efforts have not fared as well. Since 2009, the Jockey Club has given owners an opportunity to donate \$25 to \$100 toward thoroughbred retirement when they register their foals. Participation has been poor, and although 86,000 foals have been registered, only a little more than \$156,000 has been raised.

Next year, the Jockey Club will add a \$25 transaction fee for registering a foal and give the money to the Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance.

Auction companies like Keeneland have pledged a percentage of their gross sales receipts, and horseman groups have agreed to set aside a portion of purse money to take care of retired racehorses. Ziegler said the alliance had promises for \$4 million for 2013, an admittedly modest start.

"There are a lot of transactions surrounding a horse, and if we take a small percentage of them, it's a lot of money," Ziegler said.

Less eager to participate, however, have been the commercial breeders who are responsible for the glut of racehorses. While 13 farms have pledged a portion of their stallion fees to the initiative, hundreds more, including some mainstays of the industry, have chosen a wait-and-see approach.

For Jones, the constant ringing of her phone, the often heartbreaking photos of missing horses that appear on her Facebook page and the 17 hours a day she says she spends identifying racehorses in distress and setting the wheels of rescue in motion are evidence enough that there is no time left to wait and see. Too often, her efforts are too late, and the horses are sent to their death.

As much as she would like to spend a day at the Breeders' Cup, Jones knows her time is better spent standing up for those thoroughbreds that have long been forgotten, she said.

"I'm not antiracing," she said. "I work with, and need to work with, people in the industry. I'm just looking for more responsibility and accountability."

A version of this article appeared in print on November 2, 2012, on page B9 of the New York edition with the headline: Rescuing Horses as Industry Bides Its Time.

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## YNN Hudson Valley: Lawmakers introduce bill to ban horse slaughter in NY <sup>0</sup>

*Posted by Admin – April 19, 2013 – Updates*

For past racing stars like Travers winners Thunder Rumble and Will's Way, Old Friends at Cabin Creek just might offer the very best of equine retirement.

For countless other horses, however, their golden years end in less glorious fashion, inside foreign slaughter houses, where they're butchered and sold for human consumption.

"Horses at slaughter houses are treated with cruel indifference and subjected to unimaginable pain and suffering," State Senator Kathy Marchione said.

On Thursday morning, Marchione and Assemblyman Jim Tedisco were joined by members of the equine industry to introduce a bill to protect New York horses from slaughter.

"Bringing a bill like this forward is going to really give a lot of publicity to kind of the dark side of racing," said Sackatoga Stable Operating Manager Jack Knowlton, whose horse Funny Cide won the Kentucky Derby and Preakness in 2003.

"This should be a national legislation but what we should do as the Empire State is set the standard in the Northeast," Tedisco said.

With efforts to ban horse slaughter at the nation level stalled, it remains legal to ship horses across the border to countries like Canada and Mexico where slaughter is a common practice. If passed, this bill would make it illegal to transport those animals through New York State.

"We should not be an artery to which horses are transported on a regular basis into Canada," Equine Advocates President Susan Wagner. "That's why if we pass this legislation, it will have such a huge impact."

According to Equine Advocates president Susan Wagner, in 2010 more than 137,000 horses crossed the border into Canada to be slaughtered. While it's unknown how many of those animals passed through New York, advocates believe getting a law on the books here will have a nationwide impact.

"I think the public, they see these majestic athletes at places like Saratoga, they wouldn't want to see these horses go to slaughter," Knowlton said.

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CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES DU CANADA

## BILL C-322

## PROJET DE LOI C-322

An Act to amend the Health of Animals Act and the Meat Inspection Act (slaughter of horses for human consumption)

Preamble

Whereas horses are ordinarily kept as pets for sporting and recreational purposes;

Whereas horses are not raised primarily for human consumption;

And whereas horse meat products for human consumption are likely to contain prohibited substances;

Now, therefore, Her Majesty, with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows:

1990, c. 21

## HEALTH OF ANIMALS ACT

**1. The *Health of Animals Act* is amended by adding the following after section 14:**

Importation of horses

**14.1 No person shall import horses for slaughter for human consumption.****2. The Act is amended by adding the following after the heading "EXPORTATION OF ANIMALS" before section 19:**

Exportation of horses

**18.1 No person shall export from Canada, or send or convey from one province to another, horses for slaughter for human consumption.**

R.S., c. 25 (1st Supp.)

## MEAT INSPECTION ACT

**3. The *Meat Inspection Act* is amended by adding the following after section 9:**

Horse meat products

**9.1 No person shall import or export a horse meat product for human consumption or send or convey a horse meat product for human consumption from one province to another.**

Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé des animaux et la Loi sur l'inspection des viandes (abattage de chevaux à des fins de consommation humaine)

Attendu :

Préambule

que les chevaux sont habituellement des animaux de compagnie utilisés à des fins récréatives et sportives;

que l'élevage de chevaux n'a pas pour objet premier la production de viande destinée à la consommation humaine;

que les produits de viande chevaline destinés à la consommation humaine risquent de contenir des substances interdites,

Sa Majesté, sur l'avis et avec le consentement du Sénat et de la Chambre des communes du Canada, édicte :

## LOI SUR LA SANTÉ DES ANIMAUX

1990, ch. 21

**1. La *Loi sur la santé des animaux* est modifiée par adjonction, après l'article 14, de ce qui suit :****14.1 Il est interdit d'importer des chevaux en vue de leur abattage à des fins de consommation humaine.**

Importation de chevaux

**2. La même loi est modifiée par adjonction, après l'intertitre « EXPORTATION D'ANIMAUX » précédant l'article 19, de ce qui suit :****18.1 Il est interdit d'exporter du Canada, ou d'expédier ou de transporter d'une province à une autre, des chevaux en vue de leur abattage à des fins de consommation humaine.**

Exportation de chevaux

## LOI SUR L'INSPECTION DES VIANDES

L.R., ch. 25 (1<sup>er</sup> suppl.)**3. La *Loi sur l'inspection des viandes* est modifiée par adjonction, après l'article 9, de ce qui suit :****9.1 Il est interdit d'importer ou d'exporter un produit de viande chevaline destiné à la consommation humaine ou de l'expédier ou le transporter d'une province à une autre.**

Produits de viande chevaline



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# Horse Meat In Human Food Chain Causes Health Concerns

By WBZ-TV Chief Correspondent Joe Shortsleeve

May 14, 2013 11:29 PM

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**BOSTON (CBS)** – The practice of slaughtering race horses is considered inhumane by animal rights groups. There is also a growing health concern for people, as horse meat shows up in the human food chain.

A retired race horse often doesn't have many options according to Tawnee Preisner of Horse Plus Rescue. "If they're lucky, they go to a person who wants them and who will retrain them, but most of the time they go to slaughter," she says.

That can mean a long and grueling trip to Canada or Mexico, because the last slaughter facility in the United States closed six years ago.

"The way in which they are transported to slaughter is inhumane," according to Dr. Nicholas Dodman of the Tufts Veterinary School.



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"There are rules for example that they should not be transported in double-decker transporters and not crushed in, and none of those rules are policed."

By one estimate, 160,000 American horses shared this fate last year, ending up in the human food chain.

Steven O'Toole, General Manager of the Plainridge Track in Plainville, told WBZ no horse leaves his premises for any type of slaughter situation. He added that Massachusetts race tracks were the first to prohibit trainers from sending horses to slaughter.

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Although Plainridge has stiff penalties if they find a horse was auctioned to a so called "Kill Buyer," O'Toole admits it's not foolproof. "At some point a horse that races with us might end up in a slaughter situation because some will fall through the cracks."

Nationally, preventing slaughter is even harder to police. A track employee from out West wouldn't reveal her identity as she said, "It happens quite frequently. . . I think people just want to get rid of the horse anyway they can, and if they can make some money on it, all the better."

There's also a real health concern here. Race horses can be given all kinds of drugs in their lifetime, and that is not something that you want going from stable to table.

Dr. Dodman has studied the presence of drugs like phenylbutazone, or 'bute', in horsemeat. "It does bad things to your bone marrow. You really don't want to consume it. The FDA knows that. They banned it for human consumption, and it is banned for use in animals intended for human consumption, but it is used like water in horses."

In a global economy, Dr. Dodman worries that meat slaughtered in Canada or Mexico could circle back to the United States, particularly because it is cheaper than beef.

A study of 27 European countries found horse DNA in 5% of frozen entrees marketed as beef. Some had traces of 'bute.'

Statistics like that worry Congressman Jim McGovern, particularly as a permit to open a new horse slaughter plant in New Mexico is under review.

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McGovern has co-sponsored a bill to ban the export of horses for slaughter, and make it illegal here permanently.

"We ought to stop this practice and protect these horses, and protect the American people, and other consumers around the world," said McGovern.

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ziggypop • 11 hours ago

This is the sick little secret the horse breeders and trainers do not want you to know!!! Much like the dairy association and meat growers associations to not want you to know how they load up their meat with drugs, and do not give a rip about how sick you get once you ingest it.

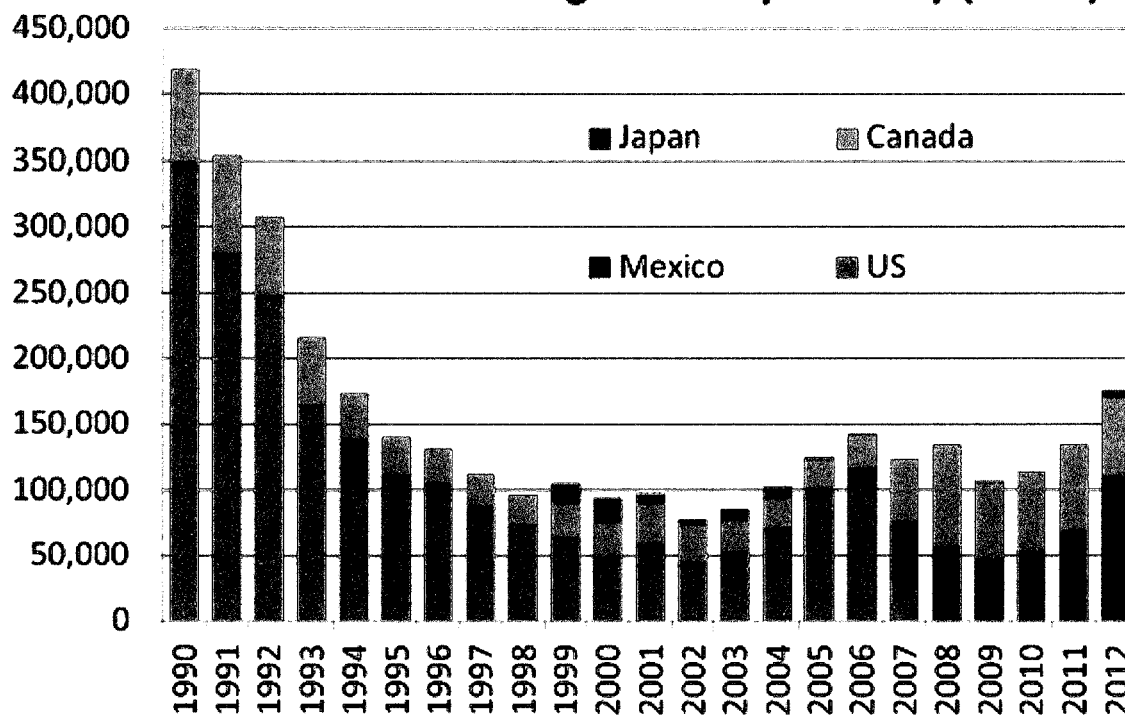
The horse slaughter industry is rife with fraud and massive abuse...killer horse buyers and amoral breeders, and unholy horse auction owners, made lawyers look angelic.

There is massive drug using going on in the horse industry, and they admit! Trainers and breeders are using growth hormones to fatten up their "show horses", race horses are being given snake venom, and cocaine, none of which are tested for. Lance Armstrong has nothing over American horse breeders and trainers.

How immoral is the horse industry? They do not care their tainted and toxic horse meat is landing up on the plates of children all over the world. They got their money to abuse their horses. They got you and I to pay the wages for the inspectors that



## Total US Horses Slaughtered by Country (USDA)



The slaughter of United States horses soared by 32 per cent in 2012 to more than 176,000 – a 20-year high.

The horses were exported largely to slaughterhouses in Mexico and Canada, which then shipped the meat to the European Union (EU), where more than a dozen member states are embroiled in an investigation into the contamination of beef products with horse meat.

The number of horses exported to Mexico increased from 68,429 in 2011 to 110,202 in 2012, a 61 per cent increase, while exports to Canada decreased by 7.5 per cent to 59,812, US Department of Agriculture figures show.

The Equine Welfare Alliance, an umbrella organisation for horse advocacy groups, condemned the trade.

It said authorities had allowed the trade to continue despite the EU repeatedly finding the prohibited carcinogen phenylbutazone and other banned substances in the meat of US horses, and despite its own audit reports stating that they still have no effective way of preventing contaminated horse meat from entering their food chain.

Both Canada and Mexico require slaughter-horse sellers to provide Equine Information Documents (EIDs) stating any drugs the horses have been given. But, inexplicably, Mexico does not test for phenylbutazone or even include it on seller affidavits despite the fact that the drug is at the top of the EU's banned substance list, the alliance says.

The group said the discovery of horse meat in meals supplied to schools and hospitals was of particular concern since children were extremely vulnerable to even trace amounts of phenylbutazone, which can cause potentially lethal aplastic anemia.

"The reason for both the scandal and the contamination lies in the nature of the horses," explains alliance president John Holland.

"US horses being sent to slaughter are overwhelmingly young sport horses, four to eight years old, and at the end of very short careers. The horses are comprised largely of quarter horses – about 70 per cent – followed by thoroughbreds and standardbreds. Most were used in rodeo and racing before being dumped to slaughter.

"Since the horses are a byproduct of these sports, they were not raised for slaughter and were almost universally given drugs prohibited in food animals.

"The low cost of these horses – \$US100 to \$US500 – makes them far cheaper than beef, thus providing a huge incentive for the fraudulent substitution."

Increases in the cost of keeping horses in recent years have suppressed the domestic market for recreational horses, leaving the kill buyers with bargains galore, Holland says.

pto →

A ban on funding for US horse meat inspections, which was passed by Congress in 2006, was rescinded in 2011, but to date no horse slaughter plants have opened in the US, he added.

"Despite the devastating effect of the scandal on beef sales in the EU, and endless revelations about contaminated horse meat, Oklahoma is considering repealing its own ban on horse slaughter in hopes of enticing a plant to that state."

Mexico exports nearly 70,000 tonnes of horse meat annually. However, the biggest producer in the world is China, which exports more than 170,000 tonnes annually. The second-biggest producer is Kazakhstan, which produces about 73,000 tonnes annually.

**Under: slaughter**

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1.  *nanci little* says:  
[March 26, 2013 at 8:26 am](#)

There is not an increase in unwanted or abandoned horses due to the closing of slaughter plants. All you have to do to know that those who will starve or mistreat were doing so in Texas even while the plant was open IN Texas (Animal Planet's Houston Humane Society!) .. When tax write-offs were taken away from race horse people, animals were being dumped. When our economy started downhill horses were being dumped and that is on-going. Many people pay board on their horses of \$400/month and when you are facing eviction for lack of mortgage payments, out of necessity either the horse is sold at auction to the highest bidder or is advertised (a pretty certain death in the MOST horrible way down here in Miami, Florida) 'free to a good home' . If the horse is kept on the same property ad the family's residence, suddenly the cheapest hay that is available.. or NO hay at all.. is provided. Once horses start going downhill, it is money for feed and possibly vet care to bring them back... and many are abandoned instead. So, the UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WHO ALLOWED THE CRASH OF OUR ECONOMY BY LACK OF OVERSIGHT HAD BETTER REMOVE THEIR HEADS FROM THEIR NETHER REGIONS AND ACT RESPONSIBLY HERE. Offer subsidized euthanization (vets will gladly work with rescue groups) for those horses that cannot be rehabbed, support in every way possible the horse sanctuaries and rescue groups, and FORGET THE DISGUSTING CRUEL POLLUTING SLAUGHTER HOUSES that will destroy the economy of a town over time! Admit culpability, all you POLITICIANS, in this ECONOMIC CRISIS and do NOT even open up the can of worms as THIS horror is going to be for a decade to come!