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501(c) 3 Non-Profit Organization
EIN #81-1124346.



OUR GOAL-INSPIRE, MOTIVATE, EDUCATE

www.thunderinghooves.com

FACTS ON HORSE SLAUGHTER

Every year tens of thousands of Wild & Domestic American Horses are slaughtered for one reason – to supply the foreign demand for horse meat. They are transported across US Borders to slaughter facilities in Mexico and Canada and their meat is exported to foreign countries for human consumption.

Who Eats Horse Meat?

Americans traditionally do not eat horse meat therefore all of the meat is shipped overseas. The European Union is the primary consumer of horsemeat from the Americas, followed by Russia, Switzerland, and Japan.

Is horsemeat safe for human consumption?

No. In the United States, horses are raised as companion animals, for sport (such as racing, endurance, rodeo) and for work (carriage horses, farms, etc.), not as livestock meant for the food supply. They are routinely given numerous pharmaceuticals throughout their lives that are prohibited for human consumption – drugs that are in fact prohibited for livestock meant for human consumption. A common drug routinely given to horses is phenylbutazone or “Bute,” a carcinogen which can also cause aplastic anemia in humans. It has no known withdrawal period.

Where do most of the horses come from?

They come from race tracks, farms, Amish and Mennonite communities, riding academies or private owners and are sold at auctions all over the country. Irresponsible breeders continue to saturate the horse market in search of that one champion or specific color combination causing too many horses to end up as so-called “unprofitable byproducts” of the industry. According to the USDA, 70% of horses slaughtered are Quarter Horses.

How do horses end up at a horse slaughter plant?

This is a two-step process. The first step is acquiring the horse, most commonly at auction by “kill buyers” who buy horses for the sole purpose of providing a steady supply to the slaughter plants in Mexico and Canada – many with direct contracts to fulfill. After being bought by a "kill buyer" horses are loaded onto trailers and transported to either a feedlot/collecting station or their final destination, one of the slaughter plants in Canada or Mexico.

There are USDA regulations in place specifically dealing with slaughter horses and their transport. Doesn't that protect slaughter horses?

NO - while the Commercial Transport to Slaughter Regulations are to afford equines for slaughter humane treatment, the regulations are useless due to the fact that there is little to no enforcement. As a result, slaughter horses are basically left with no protection and are treated inhumanely.

COMMERCIAL TRANSPORTATION OF EQUINES TO SLAUGHTER:

"FOR PURPOSES OF THIS REGULATION, APHIS CONSIDERS INHUMANE TREATMENT TO MEAN ACTIONS THAT RESULT IN THE INFLICTION OF PAIN, DISCOMFORT, OR DISTRESS ON EQUINES FOR SLAUGHTER."

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2011/09/07/2011-22762/commercial-transportation-of-equines-to-slaughter>

Has ending horse slaughter in the U.S. led to fewer options for the disposal of horses, causing neglect and abandonment?

Absolutely not. Horse neglect and abandonment can in no way be attributed to the closure of U.S slaughter plants. The number of horses sent to slaughter has not changed significantly since domestic slaughter ceased in 2007. Since the slaughter option still exists, any increase in neglect or abandonment can only be attributed to other factors – the main one being irresponsible ownership. An economic downturn in someone's living status is also known to cause someone to neglect their animals.

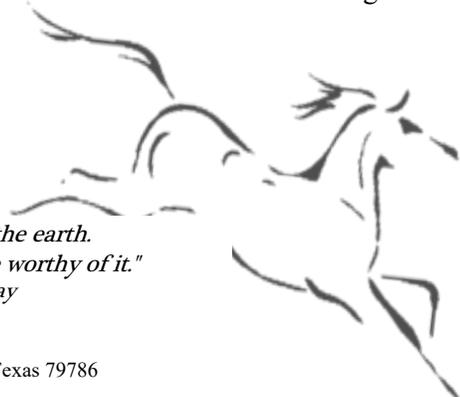
Horse slaughter is NOT a humane death or euthanasia. Slaughter should in no way be equated with humane euthanasia. Nothing about the process is humane.

Upon their arrival at the slaughter plant, some horses will already be "down," unable to rise due to exhaustion, dehydration or injuries. These horses are supposed to be euthanized immediately, sadly this is usually not the case. Regulations require that horses must be rendered unconscious prior to slaughter, usually by a captive bolt. However, due to horses' natural aversion of anything approaching their foreheads, some horses, even after multiple attempts, are improperly stunned. They remain conscious as they are hung up by their rear leg and their throat is cut.

Horse slaughter was more humane and better regulated on US soil.

This is a myth propagated by the pro-slaughter supporters. In fact, this has been proven over and over to be a complete falsehood. Pictures with the worst injuries imaginable, taken by USDA inspectors at the Cavell horse slaughter plant in Illinois and the Beltex plant in Texas, are proof that being on US soil was never a guarantee for humane treatment. These photographs demonstrate the true horrors of slaughter and transport as it took place in the U.S.

*"The horse is a gift, an offering from the earth.
We must live up to the horse; we must be worthy of it."
~ N. Scott Momaday*



THUNDERING HOOVES MOTTO:

“Together we can help to create a more humane world.”

What can be done to protect the horses from slaughter?

A NEW BILL WAS INTRODUCED ON 02/07/2025 BY REP. VERN BUCHANAN,
TITLED H.R.1661 - SAFE ACT OF 2025.

“This bill permanently prohibits the slaughter of equines (e.g., horses and mules) for human consumption. (Current law prohibits the slaughter of dogs and cats for human consumption. This bill extends the prohibition to equines.)

Specifically, this bill prohibits a person from knowingly (1) slaughtering an equine for human consumption; or (2) shipping, transporting, possessing, purchasing, selling, or donating an equine to be slaughtered for human consumption or equine parts for human consumption.

The bill subjects a violator to a fine.”

PLEASE, be a voice for the horses, contact your representatives, urge them to support the Safe Act H.R. 1661. Remind them, horses are sacred animals to be treated humanely in life and death.

Look up your representative here:

<https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>



What else can you do to help the horses?

Many times, your voice is all the hope abused animals have. Please, do not remain silent if you witness cruelty to animals. Contact your local law enforcement agency and report any incident, be precise as possible and always, always follow up. If no action has been taken ...speak out again ...only louder!

ABOUT THUNDERING HOOVES

Thundering Hooves Inc. is a 501(c) 3 Non-Profit Organization Incorporated in Texas, EIN #81-1124346. Our mission is to help create a more humane world by providing a celebratory platform of awareness and education, promoting the arts and culture through; digital storytelling, dance, film, music, photography, healing arts, and cultural events, and educating the public on subjects useful to the individual and beneficial to the equestrian community and the environment.

TO LEARN MORE OF THE IMPORTANT WORK WE DO PLEASE VISIT THUNDERING HOOVES
@ www.thunderinghooves.com

It is with heartfelt gratitude I give thanks everyone who has supported our efforts over the past 13 years!

With your support, we look forward to continuing on our mission for many years to come!

~ Neta Rhyme, Founder Thundering Hooves



Background Photo - [Thundering Hooves Memorial Fence](#)
by Nancy Smith, Lightning Horse Photography