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CFIA limits ports of entry for slaughter-bound horses

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Regulatory agency reduces number of border crossings, hours, and steps up veterinary inspections in response to 'humane transport issues'

by KAREN BRIGGS

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency has announced that, effective January 1, 2012, shipments of American horses destined for Canadian abattoirs may enter Canada only at one of eight designated border crossings, three of which are in Ontario.

The ports of entry at Windsor, Sarnia, and Niagara Falls/Queenston will henceforth be the only Ontario crossings which will accept slaughter-bound horses.

Horses being transported across the border for the purpose of racing, showing, or breeding will not be affected and may enter the country at any border crossing. The three designated border crossings are staffed by CFIA veterinarians and have appropriate unloading facilities. Slaughter-bound shipments will be accepted only during the CFIA's regular hours of operation, and transporters will be required to arrange an appointment for inspection of the animals at least 24 hours before arrival.

Since 2007, there have been no operational slaughterhouses in the United States which process horse meat. American horses designated for slaughter are now shipped either to Mexico, or to Canada, where four abattoirs – two in Quebec, and two in Alberta – currently process horse meat.

Norval Meats, the only facility in Ontario to accept equines in recent years, officially closed in March 2011.

Lisa Gauthier, of CFIA's Media Relations department, explained the changes. "The Government of Canada takes the humane treatment of animals seriously and has been taking steps to enforce the regulations for the humane transportation and slaughter of animals.

"These new measures are being taken to enhance the CFIA's ability to verify compliance with the humane transport provisions of the Health of Animals Regulations.

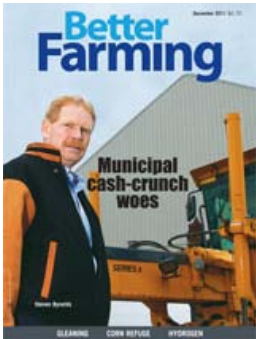
"Humane transport issues have been identified in this industry."

In addition, Gauthier said, the CFIA has determined that not all of the border crossings had facilities appropriate for unloading horses, and/or veterinary staff available for inspections. **BF**

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Premarin Foals

Submitted by an online visitor on November 7, 2011 - 6:55am.

We adopted 2 PMU foals 8 years age, saving them from slaughter. Evidently the little ones are considered delicacies in Japan. I do know that all the Wormers we use specifically say "not for use in horses intended for food purposes."

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Slaughter Horses From USA

Submitted by an online visitor on November 6, 2011 - 10:50am.

They are going to have to do much more than that. The EU just issued a report stating the traceability of US horses were "not satisfactory" and the US would have to implement a traceability system comparable to the passport system or they must be refused for export to the EU.

I'm an American and I can tell you for sure that our horses are NOT fit for human consumption - none of them. We have no traceability system for horses, as they are not considered to be food animals here. There are a myriad of horse products with the warning "not for use in horses intended for food purposes." NO horse here is INTENDED for human consumption, so all are allowed to use anything, including the bute on which there is a lifetime ban. I could guarantee every horse in the US has had bute at some point in their lives, which is supposed to ban them from the human food chain for life. But, since we have NO traceability, they are going into the human food chain daily. And our authorities are turning a blind eye to this blatant criminal activity because the heavy hitting lobbyists want - for reasons known only to themselves - to restart horse slaughter in the US. 80% of the American people are adamantly against horse slaughter, but this doesn't matter apparently.

Canada really should ban our horses completely or strongly advise the EU to do so. How this unconscionable export of tainted horse meat for humans to eat can continue is unbelievable.

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Unfit for human consumption

Submitted by an online visitor on November 7, 2011 - 6:52am.

We adopted 2 PMU foals 8 years age, saving them from slaughter. Evidently the little ones are considered delicacies in Japan. I do know that all the Wormers we use specifically say "not for use in horses intended for food purposes."

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Slaughter bound horses

Submitted by an online visitor on November 5, 2011 - 2:23pm.

It's about time the CFIA did they job!

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