



# ANIMAL FACTS 2006

## AMERICAN HORSE SLAUGHTER PREVENTION ACT

### The Issue:

U.S. Department of Agriculture statistics show that more than 90,000 horses were slaughtered in 2005 at three American-based, foreign-owned slaughterhouses for human consumption in Europe and Asia. Thousands more were shipped live to Canada for slaughter there.

Pet horses, work horses, racehorses and even wild horses go to slaughter. Most arrive at the slaughterhouse via livestock auctions where, often unknown to the seller, they are bought by middlemen working for the slaughter plants. These so-called “killer buyers” travel from one auction to the next collecting young, old, sick and healthy animals until their trucks are full. Some are shipped for more than 24 hours at a time without food, water or rest.

Callous treatment at the slaughterhouse often results in prolonged suffering. Improper use of stunning equipment, designed to render the animal unconscious, means that horses sometimes endure repeated blows to the head, and remain conscious through the last stages of slaughter, including throat slitting.

Horses play an important role in American history and modern culture. Americans do not eat horses. We do not raise them for food. The vast majority of Americans, when told that our horses are being slaughtered for dinner abroad, are horrified and feel the practice should be banned.

In October 2005, Congress demonstrated its support for shutting down this foreign-owned industry by passing an amendment to the Agriculture Appropriations bill intended to temporarily halt most horse slaughter for much of 2006. The amendment withdrew funding for inspections required of horses prior to their slaughter for human consumption. However, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has defied Congress by implementing a program for allowing the slaughter plants to pay for the inspections, thus the slaughter continues. This highlights the urgent need for a permanent end to horse slaughter.

### The Solution:

The American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act has been reintroduced in the U.S. Senate (S. 1915) by Senators John Ensign (R-NV) and Mary Landrieu (D-LA) and in the U.S. House of Representatives (H.R. 503) by Representatives John Sweeney (R-NY), Chairman of the Congressional Horse Caucus, and John Spratt (D-SC). This bill will amend the Horse Protection Act to prohibit the transportation and sale of horses and other equines to slaughter for human consumption, effectively bringing the slaughter of America's horses to a permanent end.

### What You Can Do:

Please ask your U.S. senators and representative to co-sponsor the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act (S. 1915/H.R. 503).



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