

## Toxicity of Horse Meat

**U.S. horse meat is unfit for human consumption because of the uncontrolled administration of hundreds of dangerous drugs and other substances to horses before slaughter.**

### Facts:

- 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 slaughtered horses on a constant basis throughout their lives.** These drugs are often labeled “Not for use in animals used for food/that will be eaten by humans.”
- Over fifty known 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). Any use of those drugs 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** regularly administered these chemicals, unlike other animals that we eat, who are maintained within a regulated industry.
- **There are many drugs and substances regularly used on horses that have never been tested on humans.** The potential danger of eating them is completely unknown.
- Race horses are not only given the above mentioned drugs routinely, but many are **also given illegal drugs as well, such as “chemicals that bulk up pigs and cattle before slaughter, cobra venom, Viagra, blood doping agents, stimulants and cancer drugs.”**<sup>1</sup>
- Due to the multitude of substances exposed to horses, **all horse meat could cause illness or adverse reactions.**
- **The FDCA presumes any animals or food with prohibited substances are “adulterated” and cannot be sold for human consumption, and horse meat is filled with those substances.**
- The European Union (EU) banned imports of horse meat from Mexico to the EU as of January 15, 2015 after a scathing audit<sup>2</sup> of EU-certified Mexican horse slaughter plants, which kill tens of thousands of American horses each year. **The report stresses that because horses are not raised as food-producing animals in Mexico or the United States, but are instead considered companion animals and partners in work and sport, they are routinely given many medications that are illegal for use in food animals.**



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

<sup>1</sup> New York Times, March 25, 2012

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep\\_details\\_en.cfm?rep\\_id=3364](http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_id=3364); [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ%3AJOL\\_2014\\_353\\_R\\_0006&from=EN](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ%3AJOL_2014_353_R_0006&from=EN)