

Model Letter to the Editor on Horse Slaughter

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* Word count limits vary by newspaper. Check with the paper before submitting a letter.

[Date]

To the Editor:

I am writing to bring your attention to the brutal, unsafe, and irresponsible practice of horse slaughter.

Horses in the U.S. are not raised for human consumption and routinely receive drugs, both legal and illegal, over their lifetimes that can be toxic to humans if ingested. Phenylbutazone (“horse aspirin”) is one commonly used drug that is known to cause potentially fatal human diseases. There is no known safe level for residues of these drugs in horsemeat. Horses are gathered from random sources, and there is no system in the U.S. to track what drugs horses receive to ensure their meat is safe for human consumption.

The majority of responsible owners do not choose slaughter as an end of life option, and the choice for horse owners is not between starving a horse or sending a horse to slaughter. Horse slaughter should not exist as a crutch for irresponsible owners or as a dumping ground that enables overbreeding. No sane person would propose slaughtering dogs and cats for food as a humane solution to pet overpopulation.

Horse slaughter is not humane euthanasia; it is a betrayal of our trusted companions. The slaughter process is horribly abusive, and many horses suffer during the misguided and often repeated attempts to render them unconscious. When horse slaughter did exist in this country, the USDA documented a variety of severe abuses, and bringing slaughter back to the U.S. will not make the process humane.

The Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act, H.R. 1094/S. 541 will end horse slaughter. Please call your two U.S. Senators and your U.S. Representative urging co-sponsorship of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]

[Local]