



Commercial Transportation of Equines to Slaughter in the U.S.

A Review of the Slaughter Horse Transport Program in the United States: Challenges, Successes, and How It Works Today With the USDA and the CFIA in North America

Joseph "Joey" Astling
Field Coordinator
USDA/APHIS/VS-ASEP
Texas

Building a model for cross-border teamwork

- How recent success with horse transport showcases the opportunity for the USDA and CFIA to work together for greater North American collaboration for all livestock species.



APHIS' responsibility under the 1996 farm bill was to regulate the commercial and humane transportation of horses to slaughter.

Delegation of Authority

The Secretary of Agriculture delegated authority to the Deputy Administrator of Veterinary Services.

Delegation of Authority

- In fulfilling this responsibility, APHIS initiated a collaborative effort between the public and private sectors. Opinions were gathered from various animal welfare groups—as well as research findings by leading experts in fields of animal handling, animal stress, and transportation.

The Working Group

- Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS/Veterinary Services)
- Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS)
- Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)
- Office of General Council (OGC)

Stakeholder Meeting Participants

- Equine industry
- Horse welfare groups
- Auction terminals
- Horse slaughter plants
- Trucking industry
- Research and veterinary communities

Research Performed by:

- Colorado State University
 - Physical conditions on arrival at slaughter plant
- Texas A&M University
 - Effects of water deprivation
- University of California, Davis
 - Stress in equines shipped to slaughter facilities

Recommendations/Findings

- Separate stallions and other aggressive horses.
- Feed, water, and rest six (6) hours prior to loading.
- In trailer no longer than 28 hours.
- Owner/shipper certificate.
- Provide adequate floor space.
- Phase out two-tier trailers.



Final Rule-December 7, 2001

- The final rule on humane transport of horses to slaughter was published in the Federal Register (Docket No. 98-074-2) on the 7th of December 2001 with 90 days to fully implement on the 7th of March 2002.
- The final rule is now Title 9 CFR Part 88



Highlights of 9 CFR Part 88

1. Horses are provided access to food, water, and rest, 6 hours before loading on the vehicle.



Highlights of 9 CFR Part 88...

2. Issuance of a USDA back tag to each equine in the shipment.



Highlights of 9 CFR Part 88.....

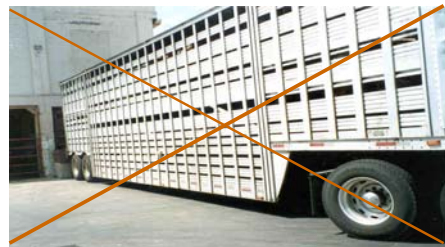
3. Complete and sign an owner/shipper certificate.

Highlights of 9 CFR Part 88...

4. Certify that each horse is fit for travel at the time of loading.
5. Adequate floor space to avoid injury or discomfort.
6. Stallions or any aggressive equines are completely segregated so there will be no contact with other equine on the conveyance.
7. Record the date, time, and place the equine(s) were loaded on conveyance.

Highlights of 9 CFR Part 88...

8. 5 year phase out of double deck trailers.
Double decks are currently prohibited



Highlights of 9 CFR Part 88....

9. Enforcement of specific requirements at slaughtering facility:
 - Inspection of Animals
 - Collection of the Owner/Shipper Certificate
10. Assessment of civil penalties up to \$5,000 per animal violation

Owner/Shipper Certificate

A HORSE WHO IS:

- Unable to bear weight on four limbs
- Unable to walk unassisted
- Blind in both eyes
- A foal under 6 months
- A pregnant mare that is likely to foal (give birth) during the trip.

Owner/Shipper Certificate

- Must be signed by owner/shipper
- Was collected by USDA/FSIS at U.S. slaughter plants and...
- Now is being collected by the importing country officials at slaughter plants in Canada and at the border crossings into Mexico.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE

According to the Framework Reduction Act of 1985, no owners are required to report to a collection of information unless it involves a valid CMAA control number. The valid CMAA control number for this information collection is 0579-0160. The area required to complete this information collection is addressed to paragraph 6.01(a) per regulation. Including the time for reviewing, maintaining, updating, data sources, gathering and collection of information.

FORM APPROVED
CMAA NO.
0579-0160

OWNER/SHIPPER CERTIFICATE FITNESS TO TRAVEL TO A SLAUGHTER FACILITY

(Please type or print in ink)

TIME HORSES LOADED ON CONVEYANCE	DATE	CITY AND STATE WHERE HORSES WERE LOADED ON CONVEYANCE
VEHICLE LICENSE NO. AND DRIVER'S NAME	NAME OF AUCTION/MARKET	
CONSIGNOR (OWNER/SHIPPER) NAME	CONSIGNEE (RECEIVER/DESTINATION) NAME	
STREET ADDRESS	STREET ADDRESS	
CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE	CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE	
AREA CODE & TELEPHONE NO.	AREA CODE & TELEPHONE NO.	

CHECK THE BOX THAT INDICATES THE FOLLOWING IS TRUE FOR ALL THE HORSES ON THIS CERTIFICATE

Horses are not older than 6 months of age. Horses are able to bear weight on all 4 limbs.
 Horses are not blind in either eye. Horses are able to walk unassisted.

TAG PREFIX	Tag NO.	Color	Sex	Breed/Type	Sex	Remarks									
		Bay	Grey	Blk.	White	Other	TB	QT	Draft	Plum	Other	Sex	Stal	Galld	Remarks include existing conditions
1															
2															

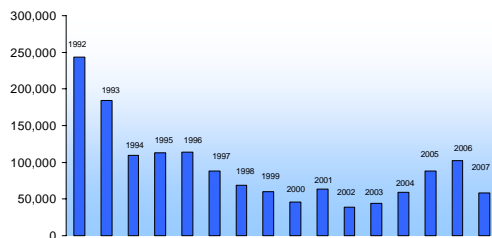
Program Position

- If a horse must be transported commercially to slaughter...
- Then it will travel in a safe and humane fashion.

What we do know...

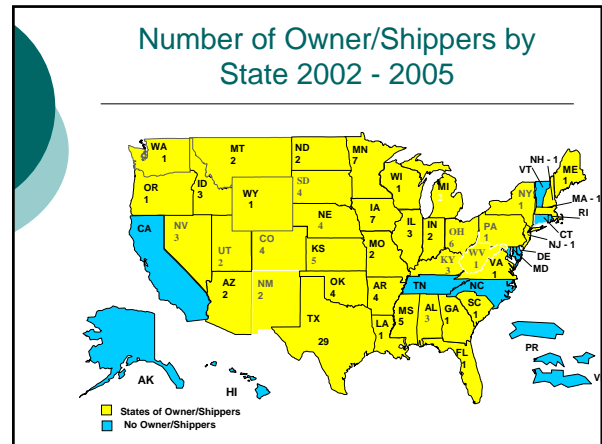
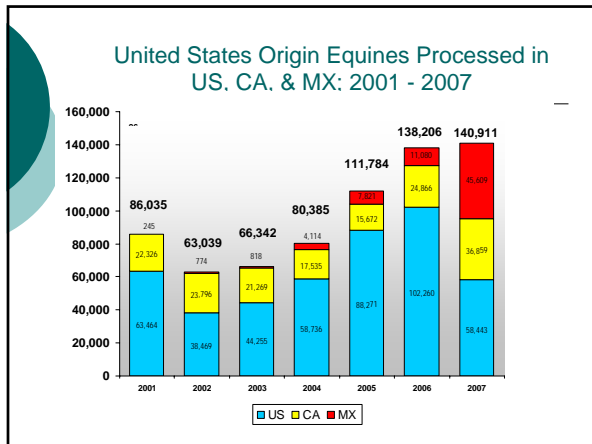
- Horses have always gone to Canada
- Jan 2007 US plants closed in Texas
- Summer 2007 Illinois plant closed
- No US processing plants accept horses

Equines Processed in U.S. Plants, '92 - 07



What we do know cont'd

- These horses didn't magically disappear.....
- Horses formerly transported to processing plants within the US started moving across borders in larger numbers



International Agreement

- In 2002 an agreement was signed by USDA and CFIA
 - Countries agreed to work together to ensure US origin horses traveled out of the US according to USDA regulations
 - Horses cross borders, so do regulations.

Collaborative Efforts

- Purposes
 - Train new staff
 - Answer questions
 - Communicate about what's working in the field
 - Identify opportunities for improvement
- Most importantly: take a pulse

Consequences should horse processing facilities not open again

- Unwanted U.S. horses intended for slaughter will be transported to and processed in plants in Canada and Mexico.
- The Slaughter Horse Transport Program (SHTP) will remain active in the field and at headquarters.
- U.S. plants that process horses will be closed and therefore not staffed by SHTP.
- Canadian and Mexican plants and border crossings will be regularly visited.

Consequences should horse processing facilities not open again

- Horses will continue to move through standard channels with SHTP owner/shipper certificates and back tags.
- Owner/Shipper Certificates will continue to be received at headquarters from Canadian plants and the Mexican border.
- Horses intended for slaughter may be exported as non-slaughter.
- While the demographics of the industry cycles, there will be sufficient foreign plants to process U.S.-origin horses.

Where do we go from here?

- Continue to strengthen relationships between USDA and CFIA
- Continue monthly teleconferences between USDA and CFIA
- Continue to turn violators around at the border
- Continue to turn violators over to USDA for prosecution

For Additional Information Contact:

USDA Slaughter Horse Transport Program
Veterinarian: Timothy Cordes
Field Coordinator: Joseph Astling
Analyst: Betsy Sillers
Specialist: Vacant

National Animal Health Programs
4700 River Road, Unit 43
Riverdale, MD 20737
301-734-6954

