

## **LMA ACTION ALERT!!**

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**ISSUE:** USDA Inspection of Horse Processing Facilities

**ACTION NEEDED:** Re-Open Horse Processing Facilities by Removing Ag Appropriation Language Prohibiting Federal Funds for the Inspection of Horse Slaughter Plants

Like other meat products, federal and state inspection of horse processing facilities is required for horse meat to move in interstate and foreign commerce. For several years, congressional opponents to the slaughter of horses for human food have successfully tacked on a rider to the annual agriculture appropriations prohibiting the expenditure of federal funds for the purpose of carrying out inspection at horse processing facilities thus effectively keeping horse processing plants from operating in the United States. **The House Appropriations Committee recently, by a narrow vote of 24-21, agreed to again include the horse inspection rider in the ag appropriations bill that goes to the full House of Representative, June 15<sup>th</sup> or thereabouts.**

**This could very well be our last chance to restore horse processing in this country. Thus, it is critical that every market owner/operator, whether you sell horses or not, begin contacting your U. S. Representative expressing support for removal of the horse processing inspection rider from the FY 2012 agriculture appropriations. Calls between now and House consideration of the bill, June 15, are absolutely necessary, if we are to overcome the flood of calls that can be expected to come from HSUS/PETA and other anti-horse processing supporters.**

The closure of horse slaughter facilities in America has decimated the equine industry and severely curtailed the ability of states and tribes to control the numbers of excess and abandoned horses on their lands. Documented reports indicate an increase of 400% in the number of starved, abandoned, and neglected horses between 2008 and 2009 alone. The closure of U.S. horse slaughter plants has severely impacted the livestock industry as a whole by eliminating the salvage value of horses thereby significantly reducing the market value of all horses. Also, the loss of export markets for horsemeat products export has eliminated more than \$42 million in direct income for an already struggling sector of the livestock industry. The horse industry prior to 2007 was a multi-billion dollar industry that supported at least a half million jobs directly related to horses, and another one and a half to two million jobs in indirect jobs. All indications are that the closure of U.S. horse processing facilities has severely devastated the horse industry and, if not already, will have led to the number of U.S. horse operations being cut by half.

**PLEASE, PLEASE CALL, FAX OR E-MAIL YOUR REPRESENTATIVE TODAY AND/OR THEIR AG STAFF PERSON, AND URGE THEM TO SUPPORT THE REMOVAL OF THE HORSE INSPECTION RIDER TO THE USDA APPROPRIATIONS BILL.**

**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE U. S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:**

House Switchboard: 202-224-3121;

Online Directory of the House of Representatives: <http://www.house.gov/representatives/>

Online House E-mail Contact Website: <https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml>