

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Animal Welfare Committee

FROM: Steve Ralls

DATE: June 10, 1998

RE: Commercial Transportation of Horses to Slaughter Regulations

The AHC has participated in two meetings with interested parties, including USDA representatives, to discuss the regulation of the commercial transportation of horses to slaughter facilities. USDA will be developing proposed regulations shortly. These meetings brought together almost all of the organizations and industries that have an interest in the regulations. A list of attendees at the two meetings is attached.

The first meeting was held in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, on April 21-22 and the second meeting was held in Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, on June 1-3.

As a result of these two meetings the group has developed some recommendations for USDA to consider as the regulations are developed. The only issue the group was not able to reach consensus on was the eventual banning of double-decked trailers to ship horses to slaughter facilities. Some supported a ban of double-deck trailers with a grandfather clause taking effect after enactment for trailers already being used; some did not support any type of ban of double deck trailers.

The group was able to reach consensus on several other issues such as the length of time horses should be allowed to travel before being stopped for food, water and rest, what type of horse is physically fit enough to withstand the stress of travel, and what type of certificate should be used to ensure that only horses fit enough to travel are commercially transported to slaughter facilities.

Slaughter Industry

Brent Heberlein  
U.S. Horsemeat Association  
3801 North Grove  
Fort Worth, TX 76106  
(817) 624-1136

Jack Bond  
Central Nebraska Packing  
P.O. Box 550  
North Platte, NE 69103-0550  
(308) 532-1250

Olivier Kemseke  
Dallas Crown, Inc.  
2000 W. Fair  
Kaufman, TX 75142  
(972) 932-3436

State Regulators

Dr. Ernie Zirkle  
New Jersey Dept. of Ag.  
Division of Animal Health  
CN 330  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
(609) 292-3965

Researchers

Dr. Carolyn L. Stull  
University of California at Davis  
Veterinary Medicine Extension  
Davis, CA 95616  
(530) 752-0855

Dr. Ted H. Friend  
Texas A&M University  
Department of Animal Science  
College Station, TX 77843-2471  
(409) 845-5214

AHC/AHPA Equine Transportation Forum  
Forum Participants  
April 21-22 and June 1-3, 1998

USDA

Dr. Joan M. Arnoldi, Deputy Administrator  
Veterinary Services  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
14<sup>th</sup> St. & Independence Ave. SW  
Room 320-E  
Washington, DC 20250  
(202) 720-5193

Dr. R. Timothy Cordes  
Veterinary Services  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
4700 River Road  
Unit 43 3A54  
Riverdale, MD 20737  
(301) 734-3279

Horse Industry

Steve Ralls  
American Horse Council  
1700 K Street, NW  
Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20006  
(202) 296-4031

Terri Greer  
Animal Welfare Council  
224 North Main Street  
Weatherford, TX 76086  
(817) 598-1581

Auction Industry

Dr. Warren Piersal  
New Holland Sales, Inc.  
101 West Foulton Street  
New Holland, PA 17577  
(717) 354-4866

Humane Industry

Robin Lohnes, Executive Director  
American Horse Protection Association  
1000 29<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Suite T-100  
Washington, DC 20007  
(202) 965-0500

Adele Douglass  
American Humane Association  
236 Massachusetts Ave., NE  
Suite 203  
Washington, DC 20002  
(202) 543-7780

Marc Paulhus  
The HSUS  
1624 Metropolitan Circle  
Suite B  
Tallahassee, FL 32300  
(850) 386-3435

Veterinary Community

Dr. Venaye P. Reece  
Clemson Livestock Lab  
P.O. Box 102406  
Columbia, SC 29224  
(803) 788-2260

Dr. Fred McCashin  
American Association of Equine Practitioners  
P.O. Drawer 1776  
Southern Pines, NC 28388-1776  
(910) 692-8640

Dr. David Granstrom  
American Veterinary Medical Assn.  
1931 N. Meacham Rd., #100  
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4360  
(800) 248-2862

The recommendation of the group regarding the length of time a horse should travel before being stopped for food, water and rest is:

Horses should be rested, fed and watered for not less than 5 hours prior to loading for slaughter. During transport, horses should not be without food and water for longer than 24 hours after loading. This time should only be exceeded if they will reach their final destination without being confined longer than 28 hours.

The group recommended that the following horses should not be commercially transported to slaughter:

- Horses unable to bear weight on all four limbs.
- Horses unable to walk unassisted.
- Foals under 6 months of age.
- Horses blind in both eyes.
- Pregnant mares that are likely to give birth during transport.

It was also recommended that USDA develop an Owner/Shipper statement that would be signed by the individual in charge of the horses going to slaughter. This statement would be signed prior to transport and would act as an affidavit providing the following information:

- Identification of the horses being transported (i.e. color, sex, permanent brand/markings, backtag number, etc);
- That the horses being transported are physically fit to travel, using the guidelines provided above; and
- That special care and handling methods will be used to deal with stallions being transported or other aggressive horses.

Finally, the group recommended that a representative of the USDA be at the slaughter plants to meet every shipment and review the owner/shipper statement and inspect the horses as they unload. This representative would be present for every shipment for at least the first 6 months the regulations are in effect. Depending on the number of violations found during the first 6 months the number of inspections may be decreased.

USDA is expected to begin developing regulations very soon. The Department has stated they would like to print draft regulations in the Federal Register before September 1. These draft regulations would then be available for public comment before USDA issues final regulations.

If you have any questions, or would like any further information, please contact me.