From: hunter4me@aol.com

Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2006 1:56 PM

To: FSIS RegulationsComments

Subject: Horse slaughter

I want you to know I am in favor of continuing the existence of horse slaughter facilities in the United States. I am writing you in response to the article that appeared in the 2/8/06 edition of The Dallas Morning News.

As a horse owner, and lifetime member of both AQHA and APHA, I believe horses to be one of God's special creatures, and I want them to be treated with kindness and respect. However, horse slaughter is a legitimate business which needs to be allowed to continue.

Horses are not easily disposed of when they become unusable. They can't be simply buried under the backyard tree. They are expensive to maintain; if a person's circumstances make them unable to care for a horse, and they can't find a buyer, they can't simply be dropped off at the nearest animal shelter.

The horse auction market is such that horses with a viable future, i.e., those with good temperaments, conformation and training, are in demand so that they bring more money. But those with infirmities, those with dangerous temperaments and those with severe physical problems are by far the ones who are claimed by horse slaughter buyers. Horse slaughter strengthens the horse market by providing a base price for a horse, and by providing a market for horses that would otherwise go unwanted, yet still demand huge outlays of cash in time for maintenance. It is the ultimate form of recycling.

This is a very emotional issue, to be sure, and yet, a proper decision must be made logically. I am perplexed that, by and large, those who are against horse slaughter are for abortion, euthanasia, aggressive management of natural resources and recycling. It seems so contradictory.

I have not had to send a horse to "the killers." I hope I never have to. However, I someday, may need to, and I want that option available to me. Even though I find the idea distasteful, I must respect the right for it to exist.

Lori Allen
Mansfield, TX