

Hon. Gerry Ritz
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
House of Commons, Parliament Buildings
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Tel: 613-995-7080 Fax: 613-996-8472

Dear Hon. Gerry Ritz,

Re: Horse slaughter practices in Canada

I am writing to ask you to support Bill C-544, *An Act to amend the Health of Animals Act* and the *Meat Inspection Act* (slaughter of horses for human consumption) tabled by Alex Atamanenko, NDP agriculture critic and MP for British Columbia Southern Interior.

The amendments are designed to address issues of meat safety and humane treatment of horses. With regard to meat safety, Mr. Atamanenko states, "The fact is that drugs which are prohibited for use during the life of any animals destined for the human food supply are routinely being administered to horses. It is irresponsible for Canada to allow the sale of meat from horses as a food item when they have never been raised in accordance with the food safety practices required for all other animals."

The issue was sparked by the horrific footage of horse slaughter that was received by the Canadian Horse Defence Coalition. The continuous video footage originated from cameras mounted in two horse slaughter facilities, Bouvry Exports (Fort MacLeod, Alberta) on February 18th, 2010 and Viandes Richelieu (Massueville, Quebec) on February 22nd, 2010.

After reviewing the footage, the BC SPCA and Canadian Federation of Humane Societies reported on the inhumane treatment of the animals including inhumane handling and stunning techniques, hoisting conscious horses, excessive use of whips and electric prods and repeat attempts to stun animals. These violations were documented two years after a similar situation occurred at a horse slaughterhouse in Saskatchewan. This recent footage shows that conditions in horse slaughter operations in Canada continue to be cruel in the extreme. This cruelty cannot continue. Please support Bill C-544 now.

Sincerely,

Signature

Name

Address

City

Province

Postal Code

