



Governmental
Relations Division

1910 Sunderland Place, NW
Washington, DC
20036-1642
phone 202.789.0007
800.321.1473
fax 202.842.4360

AVMA Headquarters

1931 N. Meacham Rd.
Suite 100
Schaumburg, IL
60173-4360
phone 847.925.8070
800.248.2862
fax 847.925.1329
www.avma.org

AVMA Review of GAO Report on Horse Welfare

- The GAO took a thorough and balanced look at the impact of the cessation of horse processing on the welfare of US horses.
- The GAO confirmed that the closure of the processing plants, coupled with the poor economy and high feed costs, has had a negative impact on horse welfare. These negative impacts include:
 - Horses traveling longer distances to processing facilities in Mexico and Canada
 - Increase in horse abandonments
 - Increase in horse abuse and neglect
- The AVMA believes these negative ramifications must be considered by Congress when debating the future of the horse processing plants.
- The AVMA urges the USDA to issue a final rule to amend the Commercial Transportation of Equines to Slaughter regulation to define “equines for slaughter” so that the USDA’s oversight protections extend throughout the transportation chain, not just the last leg to the processing plant.
- The AVMA supports improving USDA resources to adequately enforce the Commercial Transportation of Equines to Slaughter regulations.
- The AVMA supports stronger penalties for transporters who do not comply with the Commercial Transportation of Equines to Slaughter regulations.
- The AVMA supports the phase-out of double-decker trucks for the transportation of horses.
- The AVMA supports the efforts of groups like the Unwanted Horse Coalition, whose mission is to reduce the number of unwanted horses and to improve their welfare through education, as well as the efforts of organizations committed to the health, safety, and responsible breeding, care and disposition of horses.