



7OYS Interview with Veterinarian Horacio Chavira

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AUSTIN -- The following is a portion of an interview 7 On Your Side conducted with one of Mexico's leading opponents of horse slaughter:

By Horacio Chavira

Equine Veterinarian and Academic at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) in Mexico City.

Member of the APASDEM Commission for the Mercado de San Bernabé (San Bernabé Market).

-What are your feelings towards American horses being driven to Canada and Mexico to be slaughtered?

It is a terrible situation, since in Mexico we know that the slaughtering conditions are atrocious.

The horses are introduced alive through all the borders into Mexico, one example is Ciudad Juárez, State of Chihuahua, México.

We do not know where these animals end up.

-Critics say horses bound for slaughter are transported in horrible trailer conditions from the US to Mexico. Can you explain how the horses are transported?

When they get into the interior of Mexico, they are put into quarantine and are transported from the borders in double tier compartments, with minimum space between them, even to breathe. As a result of this, many die in transport. They go through a distressing and long agony.

This violates the Mexican standards: NOM 051 ZOO-1995, (said by the SAGARPA) for transportation of horses.

How are the animals slaughtered?

The method used to kill horses in most of the clandestine plants in Mexico, (all over the country) is by stabbing them in the spine until they are disabled. Then they are strung up from their hind legs and their throats are slit. Some others are killed by hitting them with a hammer on their heads, as well as donkeys and mules and most of them are skinned even if they are still alive. Some others are put into a box to immobilize them and stab them to death. The "puntilla" method appears to be standard at older slaughter plants throughout Mexico.

These intelligent and sensitive animals go through unspeakable suffering, even before their death.

-How is the Mexican government reacting to horse slaughter in their country?

Complete indifference and unaware of the extent of the problem.

-What can Americans do if they want to stop horses from being driven to Canada and Mexico for slaughter?

They have to press the American Congress and their Government to pass the S.311, it is vital that they write to their congressmen and ask him/her to support it to amend the Horse Protection Act to prohibit the shipping, transporting, moving, delivering, receiving, possessing, purchasing, selling, or donation of horses and other equines to be slaughtered for human consumption, and for other purposes. Implement border control, inspection of all the trailers coming into and out of the country.

Control the propagation by neutering the animals.

-How do you respond to American ranchers and horse auctioneers who support horse slaughter?

I would ask them to stop selling the animals and to also control the propagation by neutering them.

Conclusion

The Mexican animal protection groups (APASDEM -Asociaciones Protectoras de Animales de México) and other groups in Mexico and worldwide as well as humanitarian people of all over the world, strongly recommend that the American Congress or Government pass laws to stop

every attempt to cause suffering to horses, donkeys, mules and stop the transport of any of them into Mexico and Canada. It is imperative to stop this insensitive commercial exploitation of animals.

The horses, mules, donkeys have endowed their lives to supporting people, children, ranchers, industries, etc.