

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Chambers of Carnage

A Sweeping Undercover Investigation of Canada's Leading Equine Slaughterhouses

Horse Welfare Group calls for immediate closure of Canada's horse slaughter plants

Westbank, B.C., March 30, 2010: In late February 2010, the Canadian Horse Defence Coalition (CHDC) received hidden camera footage of horse slaughter practices at Quebec's Viande Richelieu and Alberta's Bouvry Exports - the latter known as North America's largest exporter of horsemeat. The CHDC has asked a panel of veterinarians, the BC SPCA and the World Society for the Protection of Animals to review the footage, which contains numerous instances of improper stunning and horses showing signs of returning consciousness.

Early audit results of the footage show automatic failures of both facilities. The CHDC has compelling proof that puts into question the effectiveness of the assembly-line slaughter of horses. The evidence demonstrates that both the facilities in Alberta and Quebec fail to meet humane slaughter standards used by the CFIA to audit Canadian slaughterhouses. The CHDC's June 2008 report on Natural Valley Farms - the now bankrupt horse slaughterhouse in Saskatchewan ([see story](#)) documented the inadequate stunning of horses with the penetrating captive bolt gun. At both plants in the February 2010 investigation, a .22 rifle was used, and again horses were shot incorrectly, with some regaining consciousness. As stated by Alberta veterinarian Dr. Debi Zimmermann: "I conclude that the wary and flighty nature of the horse, coupled with the poorly designed kill plant systems currently in place at Bouvry Exports and Viande Richelieu, results in unacceptable levels of suffering endured by horses (both in number of horses and degree of suffering), and poses inherent dangers to plant personnel." Dr. Zimmermann adds: "The shooters are seldom able to adhere to the required protocols for euthanasia by firearm, due to a combination of horse and human factors."

As there are only two government-approved methods of stunning horses in Canada - captive bolt gun and rifle - and both methods have been shown to cause prolonged suffering in numerous horses, we conclude that these animals cannot be slaughtered humanely in today's slaughterhouse assembly lines.

The CHDC therefore calls for the immediate closure of Canada's horse slaughter plants.

To view footage, go to [Chambers of Carnage](#). For further information, please contact:

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