



**HANDLE
WITH CARE**
STOP LONG DISTANCE TRANSPORT
OF ANIMALS FOR SLAUGHTER

WSPA
World Society for the Protection of Animals

HALT THE CRUEL TRANSPORT OF HORSES

Every year, thousands of horses are transported live from Spain and Eastern Europe to southern Italy for slaughter in cramped and unsanitary conditions.

The World Society for the Protection of Animals wants people to take action. Next month the WSPA-led **'Handle With Care'** coalition of animal welfare groups will be meeting European Health Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou to call for an end to these long journeys for slaughter.

One particular 'trade route' is the focus of the campaign. Each year some **10,000 horses** travel on journeys **up to 36 hours**, many of the times without water, food or rest and in cramped conditions which flouts the European Union regulations designed to protect them.

More than 40,000 people across Europe have signed letters to the Health Commissioner supporting the campaign. WSPA will hand in these over to the European Commission next month and they are calling for more people to join this protest action.

Sofia Parente, WSPA's Programmes Manager said:

"Our meeting with the Health Commissioner in Brussels is a crucial opportunity for the Handle with Care Coalition. Our supporters are deeply concerned about trade in horses from Spain to Italy. The horses

are denied adequate rest, food and water; they are constantly distressed by overcrowding and are subjected to roasting temperatures that often exceed 40 degrees centigrade."

"The conditions result in extreme stress for these sensitive animals during their final hours. In transit the horses must continually shift their weight to maintain balance, a journey of 36 hours is the equivalent of being forced to walk for nearly two days without rest."

Horses could be slaughtered humanely in Spain and the meat exported to Italy.

Horses endure this journey for one reason: If slaughtered in Italy, their meat can be stamped Italian and misleadingly marketed to consumers as being of 'traditional Italian' origin.

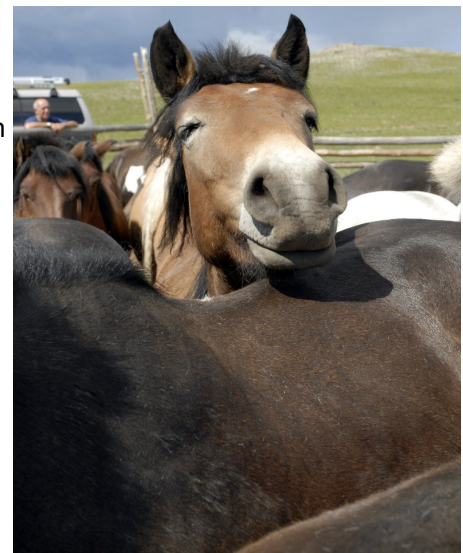
Chilled or frozen meat can be transported easily and already makes up a significant part of the Italian horsemeat market.

So far, over 42,000 individuals from the Netherlands (24,908), UK (10,732) and Denmark (6,217) supported this cause. The Handle with Care Coalition wants to deliver more than 50,000 letters from all over Europe to the European Commission in October.

The Handle with Care Coalition includes animal welfare groups all over the world, including:

- World Horse Welfare,
- RSPCA and
- Compassion in World Farming.

There is **strength in numbers**. You can help thousands of horses and other animals by adding your name to a letter to the European Commission that asks for an end to long journeys for live animals at www.handlewithcare.tv/uk (Click 'Take Action')



About WSPA

The World Society for the Protection of Animals is the world's largest alliance of humane societies and animal protection organisations, representing over 900 member societies in 153 countries. Through direct field work, campaigning, legislative work and education, WSPA strives to create a world where animal welfare matters and animal cruelty ends.

WSPA's campaign areas include wildlife, whaling, zoo welfare, bears, farming and bullfighting, as well as focusing on four priority animal welfare areas:

- Farm animals - intensive farming, long distance transport of live animals and slaughter of animals for food
- Disaster management - providing care to animals suffering as a result of man-made or natural disasters, which also helps recovering communities and farmers
- Companion animals - responsible pet ownership, humane management of stray cats and dogs and cruelty prevention
- Commercial exploitation of wildlife - intensive farming and the cruel management and killing of wild animals for food or by-products

For more information on the WSPA's work please visit www.wspa.org.uk