



**Did you know your horse is at great risk?
Over 50% of horses at rural auctions
go to slaughter**

What are horse auctions?

In Canada, the local horse auction is the primary place where people buy and sell horses. Generally held at rural livestock markets on a weekly or monthly basis, horse auctions are the place where people conduct the commercial trade in equines. But there is a darker side to horse auctions.

What kinds of horses are auctioned at these sales?

Thousands of horses are auctioned each year, including healthy pleasure horses and ponies, racehorses who didn't make it at the track, draft horses, donkeys, mules, and others.

Who buys all these horses?

While some people looking for inexpensive riding horses and ponies do purchase them at auction, the majority of horses sold at auctions are purchased by "kill buyers" who represent federally licensed horse slaughterhouses across Canada. Please find out more at the Canadian Horse Defense Coalition at www.defendhorsescanada.org.

Do most unwanted horses go directly to the slaughterhouse?

Most do, but not all. Some horses are purchased by middlemen who take them home, fatten them up, and send them to slaughter weeks or months later. Some horses end up going from one auction to another, changing hands numerous times, before they ultimately end up at the slaughterhouse.

Because kill buyers are paid by the pound for the horses they deliver, they look for healthy horses in good body condition, as well as horses in poor condition who can be fattened up.

What conditions are auction horses in?

Their conditions vary greatly. Some horses are in excellent health, with beautiful coats and hooves, and manes that are well-maintained. Sometimes their owners are present, fussing over them and looking for buyers who will provide good homes. Others have been trucked to auction by anonymous haulers from farms where they received little to no care. Often, these horses suffer from extreme neglect.

How do horses end up in this condition?

The reasons are varied. Some people do not realize the responsibility, cost, or time involved in caring for horses. Owners may not be aware of the horse's specialized requirements, nor can they afford proper veterinary care. The winter months are particularly bad for neglected horses because they are not able to graze on pasture. Denied necessary sustenance and in a weakened condition, these horses are often just loaded onto trailers and shipped off to auction for sale to the killers.

Aren't auctions regulated in some way?

There are no federal laws specifically addressing horse auctions. While some provinces have vague laws regulating the operation of livestock markets, few address the care or treatment of horses at auction. Horses are not required to be provided with food or water. Cruelty happens before and after auctions, with the auction providing the only public place where people can observe the horses' condition. In addition, auctions indirectly promote neglect by providing outlets for the sale of abused or simply unwanted horses. Without auctions, irresponsible horse owners and unscrupulous dealers would have no place to sell their horses.



What awaits horses transported for slaughter?

Slaughter-bound horses come from many sources, but all fall victim to the horsemeat industry to satisfy diners from overseas in Europe and Japan. Overcrowded feedlots, poor transport conditions and cruel treatment at slaughter plants are concerns that are widely documented and continue to horrify many Canadians who believe that this industry must be abolished on humane grounds.

Find out more at www.defendhorsescanada.org.

What can you do?

Every horse owner needs to plan for the entire life of his or her horse. Carefully locate a caring home for your horse, if you can no longer keep it. A horse who can no longer live comfortably due to age or illness should be humanely euthanized, rather than suffer the hardships of auctions and a trip to the slaughterhouse.

Please contact the Canadian Horse Defense Coalition at www.defendhorsescanada.org to find out more.

