



Publication of:
The
Responsible
Animal Care
Society

TRACS

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Animal Care
Society)*

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HORSES IN CRISIS

This September, TRACS was able to finance the rescue of 75 PMU foals from Manitoba...thanks to the Peter R.U. Stratton Esq. fund, as well as the tireless hands-on work of Helen Meredith (United Pegasus Foundation). These youngsters are currently in sanctuaries in the U.S., where they await adoption. But this year, horse rescue efforts have not been restricted to foals. Plans are well underway for a large rescue of mares used in the **PMU** (Pregnant Mare Urine) industry. Recently, we were astounded to hear that Wyeth Pharmaceuticals had, without warning, terminated contracts with 1/3 of existing **PMU** farms, due to decreased demand for the hormone replacement drug **Premarin**. Sales of the **Premarin** family of drugs plummeted last year...on the heels of shocking news that women taking **Prempro** (**Premarin** and **progesterone**) are at increased risk for conditions such as heart attacks, strokes, blood clots, breast cancer, ovarian cancer, and Alzheimer's disease.

In addition to the ended contracts, remaining **PMU** farms have seen a 50% reduction in urine quotas. What this means is that thousands of pregnant mares are suddenly at risk as farms close down and ranchers proceed to dispose of their animals. TRACS is committed to salvaging as many of these displaced horses and their unborn foals as possible. We are networking with rescue organizations in the U.S., and are coordinating a B.C.-based effort as well. Since Wyeth has made billions of dollars from industry horses over the past six decades, we encourage readers to contact the company and politely but firmly request that they cover transport costs from farms to sanctuaries. Thus far, the pharmaceutical giant has committed to compensating farmers for some of their expenses, including transport to the nearest sales (auctions). Such a move does not benefit the horses. With up to 20,000 mares, foals, and stallions flooding the market, we can predict that recreational buyers and rescue organizations will barely make a dent in the population. Feedlot operators will buy the majority of horses entering auction sales.

Please see News Flash on page 8 for Wyeth Pharmaceuticals contact information.

Feedlot nightmare

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE HORSE SLAUGHTER INDUSTRY?

While helping the feedlot horses (see story page 5), we learned some important facts about the livestock industry. Equines, in particular, are supposedly protected by a federal "recommended code of practice" that covers feedlot maintenance, transport, and slaughter. This is a voluntary set of guidelines only, and some undercover videotapes in our possession show the rules being violated repeatedly by those working within the industry. In spite of the code's specific statement that the use of electric cattle prods is unacceptable, these are liberally used when loading horses. Double-decker cattle liners do not have the head clearance required to humanely load and transport horses, yet the industry does not adhere to this recommendation. In addition, we were shocked to find that heavily pregnant mares, suckling foals, and a crippled horse had passed through an auction into the hands of a feedlot operator who, in turn, would not hesitate to ship them to Fort Macleod, Alberta, for slaughter. Once there, high fences hide from public view a sea of horses--all ages, colours, and breeds--who await their fate. No exception is made for the pregnant mare whose foal will also die on the slaughterhouse floor when she is killed. No thought is given to the fact that crippled horses should not be shipped, nor be forced to stand in crowded pens.

We say--*enough is enough*. The horse slaughter industry needs to be exposed for its animal welfare violations, and TRACS is actively working with other organizations and individuals to achieve *an end to the ongoing nightmare*. The following article, submitted to us for publication, summarizes the concerns.

Feedlot nightmare

(continued from page 1)

LIVESTOCK ABUSE: WHO'S REGULATING THE REGULATORS? by Belinda Lyall

"Another one for Rocky Point Ranch," the auctioneer announces. "Put your hands together, folks." A few people clap, unaware that the auction's main killer buyer has just purchased another horse. Tonight, "Ted" focuses on the young and strong, repeatedly outbidding people who want a riding horse. He must secure his quota in order to fill a double decker cattle liner and cut transport costs to the slaughterhouse. Some of the horses will bring him less than \$50 in profit. Quantity is the goal.

He gets "Sky," a 4 year old registered thoroughbred filly; a Peruvian Paso colt; an Arab filly; several young range horses; a pregnant mare; a 2 year old Clydesdale... "Another one going to a good home," the auctioneer says smugly. Ted ensures that prices don't get too low, adding several thousand dollars profit to every sale.

The killer buyers and auction owners are at the bottom of a long, brotherly food chain, which culminates with the Minister of Agriculture. Horse slaughter, a largely unknown industry, is expanding in Canada. It is self-regulated by those who stand to profit the most. Woe to anyone who disrupts the smooth flow of commodity to market...

After the sale, amongst the dark livestock pens, two women are accosted by the auctioneer and two police officers. One of the women has been recognized. The RCMP threaten her with criminal charges and force her to leave the property. Her crime? Asking too many questions.

Months previously, she witnessed 50 horses - a dozen of them wild, pregnant mares near term - being electrically prodded onto a double decker cattle liner. She called the RCMP to ask about transport laws and was referred to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. The former meat inspector there stated that he personally monitored "Hilly Auction" and they were not acting illegally. He then reported the woman. She received threatening phone calls from the auction and a registered letter stating that she was banned from the property.

It was not until much later that she realized she had witnessed several violations of The Recommended Code of Practice For The Care and Handling of Farm Animals (located at: www.carc-crac.ca). A lawyer also confirmed that without a legal document, she could not be prevented from attending sales. The woman and her rescue group were back to save another horse.

The police escort her to the parking lot and order her to get in her vehicle and leave immediately. Then they track down her friend. She is also evicted, and told she'll be charged if she's ever caught aiming a camera towards the auction yard from the highway. Previously, the women had video-taped a loading, and knew they were legally entitled to film from public property. A human rights suit is now being considered.

In the US, humane investigator, Gail Eisnitz, writes in her book, *Slaughterhouse*, of atrocities beyond belief being the norm at abattoirs across North America. Despite video tape and recorded conversations with hundreds of plant workers - who described animals being savagely brutalized and dying in agony on a regular basis - she was stonewalled by the media. To this day, a conspiracy of silence has prevented her findings from reaching the public. Shows like "Frontline" and "60 Minutes" dare to raise the ire of the meat industry with stories about listeria and E. Coli - threats to human health - but will not touch the issue of the animal torture that is an integral ingredient in modern meat.

In B.C. a brand inspector defended a feedlot owner from Kelowna, who was investigated for having a horse with a broken leg in his yard. "What's wrong with that?" she said. "A broken leg can heal."

Obviously, with the agriculture industry monitoring itself, the current system will never ensure humane treatment of livestock. Citizens who complain about animal abuse are the industry's main threat.

A federal vet from the Vancouver International Airport does not deny that animals are being mistreated. "There are problems," he says. Nor does he report the woman who has contacted him. Instead, he warns her. "Be careful."

"A big thank you to Rocky Point Ranch," the auctioneer taunts as the sale ends. Although paranoid of being exposed by two women, he is undaunted by the people in the stands. Perhaps he thinks they will simply share his favourite joke?

The killer buyers have purchased enough horses to fill a cattle liner. Tomorrow it will come, and the horror that is to be the horses' final punishment for being born animals, will begin.

Animal News

ANIMAL CRUELTY LEGISLATION

How long will the Senate continue to hinder the enactment of Bill C-10B?

Laws must send a strong message that violence against any feeling creature--human or non-human--is unacceptable. Please help ensure that animal abusers in Canada receive that message loud and clear, by asking government officials to support Bill C-10B. Visit pm.gc.ca for contact information for the prime minister and visit canada.gc.ca to contact your MP and senator. Please consider sending a letter or making a phone call, as e-mail messages to legislators are often less effective. All correspondence should be respectful and polite in order not to detract from our efforts.

For more information on the bill, visit the Web sites of the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies at www.cfhs.ca and the Toronto Coalition for Anticruelty Legislation at www.anticruelty.ca.

FUR FLIES OVER "TRADITIONAL" WINTER HAT

RCMP Keeps Leg-Hold on Canadian Wildlife

Fur-Bearer Defenders' Lesley Fox met with the RCMP in Ottawa on September 16, 2003, trying to convince them to find alternative materials to the muskrat fur hat, part of the RCMP winter uniform.

She demonstrated today's traps and made copies available of Fur-Bearer Defenders' new 2 minute shocking video. This TV quality video graphically exposes muskrat trapping cruelty and how the animals have to suffer in order to become a hat for the RCMP.

The RCMP uses between 4500 and 6000 trapped muskrats each year – muskrats that suffer terribly to supply these hats. This contravenes the RCMP's own Core Values Statement which says that they are "guided by Compassion: demonstrating care and sensitivity in word and action".

This meeting came just a few months after public pressure influenced Britain's decision to seek alternatives for their bearskin hats. The UK has now issued a contract to find alternative material for the fur caps used by the Queens Foot Guards and other ceremonial regiments.

For more information, contact:
Lesley Fox, Acting Executive Director
Fur-Bearer Defenders (Association for the Protection of Fur-Bearing Animals); phone: (604)435-1850 or e-mail: fd@BanLegholdTraps.com

FUR-FREE ACTIVIST UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2003

News: Demark passes nation-wide ban on dog and cat fur

In September 2003, Denmark passed a ban that will make it illegal to import dog and cat fur and also to buy or sell dog and cat fur.

This ban was a positive development in Humane Society International's (HSI) efforts to ban cat and dog fur throughout the entire European Union.

Additionally, after an investigation by HSI revealing that the cat and dog fur trade is also making its way into Australia, HSI is currently calling on the Federal Government in Australia to prohibit the import of cat and dog pelts into Australia and to ensure that all fur products are labeled with species and country of origin so that consumers are not misled.

GREAT GIFT IDEA!

Anxious to beat the Christmas rush? Here's an idea that will delight the chefs on your shopping list...and will help the animals, too.

TRACS will send you a copy of **The Second Compassionate Cookbook** by Monika Penner for **FREE** with a gift membership or renewal! Additional copies can be purchased for \$12 apiece.

Contact Sinikka at:
(250)768-4803 or
tracs@shaw.ca.

Action Alert:

Send your letters to:
Gord Finck, Officer in Charge
Uniform & Equipment Program
RCMP
440 Coventry Road, Room 201
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0R2

"They are claiming now that they will be testing alternatives until Spring 2004, but they have been supposedly 'searching' and 'testing' since at least 1990, and they have never been willing to tell us which materials they are testing. This has clearly not so far been a whole-hearted search, and they have made no commitment as yet to replace the muskrat fur. We have spoken to many RCMP officers however, and all have been favourable to the change."
(Lesley Fox)

News from... **Canadian Coalition for Farm Animals**



credit: TRACS

Resources

CCFA, supported by the P.R.U. Stratton Fund, is proud to have developed resources that are a first for Canada – brochures and factsheets with a uniquely Canadian slant. The publications include brochures on battery hens, sow crates and general factory farming and general CCFA brochures. We have also comprehensive factsheets on egg, dairy, beef, pork, chicken, turkey and veal production, with a fish farming factsheet to follow. If you would like any of these resources to distribute publicly or for your own personal use, please log on to the CCFA website – www.humanefood.ca.

Another resource we have produced is our grocery store comment card, designed for consumers to drop off at their favorite grocery store. These ask pertinent questions about the source of and systems used in raising the animal products that they carry. It is very important that consumers ask questions – change in the horrific conditions in which farm animals are raised and slaughtered will only be brought about by a consumer outcry.

National Farm Animals Day

One of our most exciting projects is going to take place on April 10, 2004--to coincide with Easter (ham and eggs). We are spearheading a National Farm Animals' Day – a first ever for Canada. We will be asking our 22 member societies to participate in a day that will bring national attention to the plight of farm animals in Canada, particularly battery hens and pregnant pigs. We will be developing a package which will include banners, buttons, sample letters, ads and media releases, posters and other materials to enable groups or individuals to hold a great event. Of course, we will provide factsheets and brochures. We'll keep you posted!

Note: TRACS supports the excellent work of CCFA. A customer suggestion card is included with this newsletter...please fill it out and leave it in your grocery store's suggestion box or at the Customer Service Desk. Additional cards may be obtained directly from CCFA (phone toll-free 1-866-303-2232) or by calling TRACS at: (250)768-4803. Please phone Louise at (250)868-2880 if you can be available to help on National Farm Animals Day on April 10, 2004.

Meetings

Three representatives of CCFA attended an Agriculture Canada-sponsored meeting in Ottawa on June 26, 2003. This meeting was undertaken to determine a process to address farm animal welfare issues in the short, medium and long-term, and is the second in a series of meetings designed to deal with the problems arising from an increasingly informed public and changes in farm animal welfare standards in the EU and the US.

CCFA is determined to keep the focus of these meetings on farm animal welfare as opposed to providing a positive marketing opportunity for industry. Our consistent message to industry, government and academia is that the welfare of the 650 million animals raised for food in Canada is not being addressed by any current means, including the voluntary Recommended Codes of Practice, which enshrine cruel practices such as battery cages and sow crates. We stress that what is needed is auditable, third-party standards that have more input from the humane community and make producers accountable. Presently existing bodies such as the Expert Committee on Farm Animal Welfare are primarily comprised of industry and government interests with the result that the interests of farm animals are outweighed by the interests of industry. CCFA aims to change the balance so that farm animal welfare is the primary focus.

In July, the founding organizations of CCFA – the Vancouver Humane Society, Winnipeg Humane Society and Animal Alliance of Canada met at World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) in Toronto for three days of intense networking and strategic planning. In attendance was Philip Lymbery from the UK. Philip is now working with WSPA International, who was kind enough to make him available for consultation. It is truly encouraging that we are all able to work together on these important issues, and we are grateful to WSPA for making it possible.

CCFA representatives across Canada also met with two representatives from Compassion in World Farming, the effective UK organization that is responsible for the phasing out of battery cages and sow crates in Europe. This networking opportunity resulted in an exchange of ideas and information that will be valuable for future endeavors on both sides of the ocean.

A Promise To Keep

The young mare below was rescued by TRACS from a local feedlot. We thank Dr. A. Wales for his expertise...and, particularly, his reassurance that "Promise" can live comfortably in a proper sanctuary as a companion horse. Indeed, this youngster never ceases to amaze us with her adaptive capabilities; despite her congenitally deformed front legs, she loves to buck and play like a normal filly.

When I breathe deeply into her nostrils (a horse greeting), Promise's dark eyes reflect the growing trust between us. Perhaps she remembers the first time we said hello over the fence...the day when her life still hung in the balance as experts discussed her fate. On that afternoon, I touched her face and whispered, "We'll do the very, very best for you, little one. That's my promise."

Her soul-deep eyes seemed to understand...and I walked away, thinking about those words, not knowing then what the outcome would be.

Now, Promise awaits transport to a devoted sanctuary where she may stay for the short term at least. And what does the future hold? We are committed to meeting her every need, and won't stop searching until a permanent home is found for this special horse.

That's a promise....

[S. Crosland]

VICTIMS NO MORE....

In mid-August 2003, TRACS received a phone call from a Kelowna citizen who expressed concerns about ten horses that she and a friend had viewed in the local feedlot. Sure enough--amongst huge piles of fly-infested manure, bits of broken pipe, wire, and pieces of jagged cement--a small herd of horses awaited shipment to Fort Macleod, Alberta, site of Western Canada's equine slaughter plant. Of particular concern was the fact that two of the mares appeared to be heavily pregnant, and several of the animals were young foals between two and three months of age. In addition, a young mare with congenitally deformed legs was seen to be picking her way through the garbage in the feedlot...

Within two days, all ten horses were purchased and whisked away to safety. Veterinary evaluations were done, and TLC continues to be administered in large doses by the wonderful, caring people who have offered sanctuary to our feedlot horses.

Permanent adoptive homes are needed for these animals...and, because many of them are shy of humans, we are searching for guardians with lots of equine knowledge and expertise. Although the horses have come a long way in the past few weeks, extensive training and patience will be required in order to help them recuperate from their past experiences. *Allegedly they were amongst the many animal victims of B.C.'s fires...and ended up being dropped off at auction because a homestead had burned down.*

For adoption information, please phone (250) 768-4803 or e-mail us at tracs@shaw.ca. We are serious about finding the best homes possible for these animals, so please be prepared to provide a veterinary reference and to sign a firm adoption contract if you would like to proceed.

Donations of hay, straw, grain, and cash are gratefully accepted! Some of the horses may be staying with us over the winter and will need veterinary attention, as well as de-worming and hoof trims.

Most slaughter-bound animals don't get a second chance. We are glad that compassionate citizens intervened in this case, and that TRACS was able to help!

"Animals are not things, property or slaves. So, let's stop referring to an animal as 'it'...because that implies something inferior to a living, feeling creature...Neither are they 'living things'. They are living beings."

--The Blacker Family (New York)



photo credit: Bernie Piatelli

(continued next page)

Our sincere thanks are extended to: Bernie and Nick Piatteli and family, and Wendy Barr, for their ongoing, consistent help with hands-on care and hauling hay; Rod, Leanne, and Sara Cook for opening up their paddocks, on very short notice, to horses in need; Carol Pattenaude and Gaetan Gilbert for their boarding and trailering help; Rona (Revy) Home and Garden for their donation of feed pans; Lake Okanagan Resort Riding Stables, Winn Rentals, and Terry Balkan for loaning fencing; Gary Smith for help with assessment and training; Susan Booth for trailering and boarding assistance; Audrey Knapp and Ed Mineault for helping to load horses; Youth Against Animal Abuse for their fundraiser garage and lemonade sales; countless other people who have been on standby, offering to foster if homes cannot be found in the short term...and, unexpectedly, the unknown angels who sent two twenty dollar bills our way when they heard the news. *Thank you, all! We couldn't have done it without you!*



EXOTIC (PROHIBITED) ANIMAL BYLAW UPDATE

Thanks to all of you who supported this TRACS initiative! As a result of your letters and phone calls, Kelowna and a part of the Regional District (Westside and Peachland) recently adopted a new bylaw that prohibits the keeping and sale of certain difficult-to-care-for species of animals. This is a stronger bylaw than previous legislation (our "circus" bylaw), which only banned the practice of exotic animals being used in displays or performances, and was restricted to the City of Kelowna. Good work, everyone!

EMERGENCY RESPONSE NETWORK

Another issue demanding immediate attention was the fire situation in our province. As homes burned and acreages were damaged, pets and livestock had to be moved quickly out of harm's way. TRACS was involved in coordinating the placement of many local animals. As a result, we have managed to build up a database of foster homes throughout B.C., and will continue to network with other organizations until a workable system is in place. Disaster often strikes suddenly...and it makes sense to draw up a province-wide emergency preparedness plan that can be shared by anyone involved in helping animals. If you can assist with fostering or transporting animals in event of a crisis, please contact Sinikka Crosland (TRACS contact info on page 1).

CAN YOU SPARE AN HOUR A MONTH FOR THE ANIMALS?...

If so, please phone our new volunteer coordinator, Louise Adams, at: (250) 868-2880. Your time, talent, and energy can help in so many ways! Whether you like to write letters or work at fundraising, educating, etc...there is a place for *you* in our growing organization. Call today!

Story of Lisa

It all began back in 1970 when a family living in Westview had a house fire and needed a temporary home for their young pet goat, whom they had purchased from a Park Royal Easter display.

Lisa came to us in Norgate and in time, to our joy, became a part of our family for keeps. All went well until Lisa matured and made her presence known throughout the neighbourhood by her periodic bleating as she searched for a mate. Living in fear that she would be taken by the authorities, we came to the unhappy decision that Lisa should be enjoying life on a farm where she could be with her own kind. We gave our beloved pet over to a rural guardian...only to learn that it was not to be a permanent residence. We were devastated, but luckily my husband was able to locate her whereabouts and bring her home. We were soon to learn we were in for double trouble when we realized that Lisa was pregnant! In time, we were the proud guardians of two does, mother and daughter. Now, for sure, we were living on borrowed time, and realized that we had to make a move, especially when the younger Norgate School pupils were brought over to our yard on field trips. It did not help matters when Giblets, the rooster our children had brought home from a class project, commenced crowing....

The search was on for acreage, and we were indeed fortunate when we located an ideal setup for animals and humans in the Langley area. Our 1972 moving day was a memorable experience. We pulled out of Norgate with our U-haul loaded with two goats, one dog, one cat, wee mice, gerbils, guinea pigs, budgies, aquarium, caiman, Giblets, tropical plants...and a small Bantam hen placed in our care at the last moment by one of the moving van men. A mini Noah's Ark! Eventually, our acreage became a refuge for critters large and small in need of TLC.

In her lifetime, Lisa gave us one more kid...a son. She lived for 13 years, then finally was laid to rest where she once so happily roamed. She not only taught us the joy of being goat caregivers, but introduced us to the lifestyle of hobby farming, which has been a rewarding experience for the past many years. We learned to respect all living creatures and never practiced the "accepted" methods of debeaking, crowded quarters, tail-docking without anesthesia, dehorning, or any other inhumane acts inflicted on farm animals. Our association with all of our pets taught us to become vegan vegetarians.

Hoover,

You came to us from nowhere, it seemed: a feisty "older" Cocker Spaniel with an attitude, abandoned on a mountain top...and somehow you found your way to Windybrae Sanctuary seven years ago. Once here, you imprinted yourself forever into our hearts. Loving, persistent, and strong-willed, you became "best friends" with a little girl named Carmen.

You left us on July 28, 2003, yet your throaty seal-pup bark still echoes through our home at times when we least expect it. Carmen and the rest of your human family will never forget you.

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

The TRACS Board of Directors welcomes Linda Janicki, and bids a temporary farewell to Monika Penner, who has indicated that she will join us again in the future. All the best, Monika...and we hope to see you back soon!

Your current board:

President – Sinikka Crosland

Vice-President – Madelon Keij

Treasurer – Connie Mahoney

Secretary – Grant Rice

Director – Linda Janicki



Good-bye Hoover

NEWS FLASH - October 29, 2003**CONTACT WYETH PHARMACEUTICALS RE: HORSE RESCUE**

I just had a conversation with Steve Tasher, Senior VP for Wyeth Pharmaceuticals. He stated that the PMU farmers have received payment for the care and veterinary treatment for their horses, to cover the current year, and that they are receiving an additional "substantial payment". Also, Wyeth has established an "Equine Placement Fund", and the company is "concerned that the horses be placed in good homes". Then I asked about the possibility of Wyeth working with rescue groups, paying for transport to sanctuaries rather than just to sales, where feedlot operators can purchase the horses. Mr. Tasher responded that he does not feel comfortable working with rescue groups that have attacked Wyeth in the past. I replied that the best PR for the company could be achieved right now by ensuring the safety of the horses, and that equine rescue organizations across the continent could be instrumental in helping the "Fund" with the hands-on work of finding homes.

Mr. Tasher did not dispute this. Instead, he stated that organizations and individuals could write to him with their suggestions, and he would share them with the board. He said that he is willing to listen to all feedback.

So what we need now is a flood of letters offering to help with placement of horses if transport costs are paid by Wyeth. It would be reasonable to expect that adoptive homes would cover the other costs (initial price charged by the farmer, Coggins test, and border fees)...but the price per mare will be substantially lower if the transport costs are covered and, therefore, more will be salvaged. (Note: I am willing to coordinate an organized rescue through my network of contacts.)

Please write to: Mr. Steve Tasher, Senior Vice-President
Wyeth Pharmaceuticals
Five Giralda Farms
Madison, New Jersey 07940, U.S.A.

You can fax your letter (attn. Mr. Steve Tasher, VP) to: (973) 660-7111.

For the animals,
Sinikka Crosland
Ph/fax: (250)768-4803 tracs@shaw.ca

*****Please circulate this message widely!*****

TRACS Membership Form

Join with a local group of animal loving people!
Help TRACS continue its work by becoming a member and receive our quarterly newsletter as part of your membership.

Mail to :

**TRACS
PO Box 26097
Westbank, BC
V4T 2G3**

(Special Offer! We will send you a copy of **The Second Compassionate Cookbook** by Monika Penner for **FREE** with a gift membership or renewal!)

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

City: _____ Prov: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____

I am enclosing the following for annual membership:
(pls. Check)

\$ 15 for Individual Membership: _____

\$ 20 for Family Membership: _____

I am further supporting your
work with a donation: \$