



August 7, 2013

Ms. Heather Clemenceau

Dear Ms. Clemenceau:

Thank you for your letter sent to my attention on July 6, 2013 in regards to equine traceability issues and the impact they may have on horsemeat shipments from Canada. I appreciate the opportunity to provide you with some clarification surrounding these issues.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) recognizes the importance of traceability for the horse sector and endorses its development and its implementation by the entire equine sector. The horse industry in general would benefit from a national equine identification system as it would enable better disease management and support global sales of horses and their products. Both Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the CFIA have offered to provide technical support to Equine Canada and the Horse Welfare Alliance of Canada in the implementation of a horse identification and traceability system or other instruments which would support the management of sanitary and market access issues. The equine sector is currently outside the scope of the proposed traceability regulations, scheduled to come into force in 2015 or 2016.


As you are aware, the European Union (EU) is an important market for Canadian horsemeat exports, which were valued at \$36 million in 2012. Through the Canada – EU Veterinary Joint Management Committee, Canada and the EU maintain an ongoing dialogue on sanitary issues in order to facilitate trade in live animals and meat products, while safeguarding animal and public health. Horsemeat is one issue being discussed in this dialogue. Any future amendments to the EU's import conditions that would change, restrict or prohibit the export of Canadian horsemeat to the EU would be reflected and available on our website with a link to the appropriate chapters in the Meat Hygiene Manual of Procedures.

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It is important to note that the EU continues to regard the Canadian Equine Information Document (EID) system as equivalent to their passport system, and we expect it will do so after July 31, 2013. The CFIA will continue to work with the equine industry towards the implementation of Canada's horsemeat export action plan in order to not stop exporting equine meat products to the EU markets.

Again, thank you for taking the time to write.

Regards,



Dr. D. Ian Alexander  
Chief Veterinary Officer for Canada  
Executive Director, Animal Health Directorate

c.c.

Eric Aubin  
Dr Parthi Muthukumarasamy  
Dr. Claude Boissonneault  
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