



How Does a Slaughter Horse Cross the Border?

1. While at the Kill Buyer feedlot

- Kill Buyer attaches green USDA slaughter tag, microchips the horse (Mexico only), and fills out owner shipper paperwork.
- The number on each slaughter tag is entered into the form, together with a description of each horse – its color, breed and sex.
- Kill Buyer certifies that the horse was:
 - able to put weight on all four legs
 - is not blind
 - is older than six month of age
 - able to walk without assistance; and
 - if a mare, that she is not likely to give birth during the trip.
- Kill Buyer fills out a health certificate
- Vet must sign off on the certificate that the horses were inspected.
 - In reality, most loads never see a veterinarian. The paperwork is simply faxed to the vet office, where it is signed and returned. No vet actually inspects the horses.

2. Horses are transported to selected border – Mexican or Canadian

2a. Mexican Border: Horses can only be legally transported across the border via export pens sanctioned by Mexican authorities

- Horses are unloaded at the export pens
- Horses are moved across a scale and their weight is recorded
- A Mexican veterinarian from Senasica (Sagarpa) checks to see if the paperwork matches the horse and if the horse is fit for transport.
- Shipment rejected by Mexican veterinarians:
 - Mexican veterinarians do not accept horses with severe injuries, stallions, or horses covered in ticks.
 - Horses that are **rejected** are taken off the load and remain in the pens for the Kill Buyer to pick up again.
 - **The fate of these horses is dire.** They are of no value to the Kill Buyer. Even the minimum protection from the Commercial Transport of Equines to Slaughter regulations do not apply anymore, since the horse is technically no longer a slaughter horse.
 - Usually the Kill Buyer hauls the horse back to his feedlot, where he has a Reject Pen.
 - Reject horses usually receive no vet care, so some of them just die in the pen and are then buried on the premises.
 - The Kill Buyer might try to immediately reshipe the horse (some vets are less strict); AA has seen horses that have been **shipped and rejected up to five times.**
- Shipment accepted by Mexican veterinarians:
 - Once the vet clears the load, the trailer is sealed with the *veterinary seal* of the MX authorities.
 - The trailer may not be opened again until the truck gets to the plant, so if something happens en route (such as a horse going down and being trampled by other horses), the driver is not allowed to open the trailer.



2b. Canadian Border

- There are no export pens
- Horses go straight to the CFIA inspection station. Once the veterinarian clears the load, the trailer is sealed and can only be opened at the slaughter plant.
- At the Sweetgrass, MT border, all horses are unloaded, inspected and reloaded.
- At the Champlain, NY border crossing, horses are not unloaded, but inspected while inside the trailer
 - This gives the veterinarian a very limited view of the horses which means there is a high risk that injuries, sickness or final stage pregnancies go undetected.
- If the trailer has a horse that is rejected, the entire transport must turn around to unload that single horse and then return to cross the border. New paperwork must also be filled out.