The Export of American Horses to Mexico for Slaughter
August-November 2013

1) Export from Presidio, Texas

All of the Presidio export pens are privately owned, operated by three different companies:

C4 Cattle Company/ Baeza Cattle Company/ Ruben Brito

Horses from Presidio are delivered to the following EU approved Mexican slaughter plants:

Inter Meats, S.A. DE C.V.
Avenida Universidad 602 Int. 19 Unidad Ganadera
Aguascalientes, AGS. Mexico 20130

Empacadora de Carnes de Fresnillo
Avenida Plateros No. 480
Colonia Centro, C.P. 99040
Fresnillo, Zacatecas

Empacadora de Ganadera de Camargo
Carretera Panamericana Km 64
Colonia Agricola Industrial, C.P. 33750
Cd. Camargo, Chihuahua

Carnicos de Jerez
Carretera Jerez – Sanchez Roman Km 27.5
C.P. 99380
Jerez, Zacatecas

The following kill buyers are known to deliver horses to these export pens:
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME:</th>
<th>LOCATION:</th>
<th>DISTANCE TO PRESIDIO:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Triple Crown Ranch</td>
<td>Meeker, OK</td>
<td>705 Miles</td>
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<tr>
<td>George Baker</td>
<td>Stroud, OK</td>
<td>724 Miles</td>
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<td>Beltex Corporation</td>
<td>Morton, TX</td>
<td>354 Miles</td>
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<td>Mc Daniels &amp; Sons</td>
<td>Brookston, TX</td>
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<td>Dennis Kunz</td>
<td>Willard, UT</td>
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<td>Ryan Simon</td>
<td>Cannon Falls, MN</td>
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<td>Dennis Chavez</td>
<td>Los Lunas, NM</td>
<td>500 Miles</td>
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<td>M &amp; M Livestock</td>
<td>Forney, TX</td>
<td>605 Miles</td>
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<td>Jimmy Fowler/Tina Pack</td>
<td>Mabank, TX</td>
<td>633 Miles</td>
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<td>Bill Richardson</td>
<td>Whitesboro, TX</td>
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<td>Cecil White</td>
<td>Welch, OK</td>
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<td>Joe Simon</td>
<td>Perkins, OK</td>
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<td>Joe Rios</td>
<td>El Paso, TX</td>
<td>255 Miles</td>
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<tr>
<td>O’Dwyer</td>
<td>Nocona, TX</td>
<td>573 Miles</td>
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**Observations:**

**8/17/13**

Animals’ Angels investigators visited the export pens in Presidio again to check how the situation for the horses has developed. Since it was a Saturday, there was very little activity at the pens, only some empty MX transport trailers were parked on the premises. A group of approx. 25 horses was left in the Brito pens and many of them were in deplorable condition. Investigators noted severe emaciation, eye infections, open wounds, missing eyes, large tumors and swollen knees. One bay mare, slaughter tag # 6302, was extremely thin and appeared very weak. She was standing in an awkward position and tried not to move. Also visible was a chestnut with a profusely bleeding neck injury.
Based on the slaughter tags visible, several of these horses were brought to the pens by kill buyers Dennis Chavez from Los Lunas, NM and M & M Livestock from Forney, TX. Public documents indicate that multiple horses from their transports were rejected by Mexican authorities during the previous week and were likely left behind to be picked up and returned with their shipper.

While there was water in the pen, there was no shelter or any food available and the horses were observed searching the ground for something to eat.

8/19/13
Investigators did not observe any US trucks arrive that day, however, public documents indicate that Triple Crown Ranch from Meeker, OK delivered 2 loads of horses to the pens. George Baker from Stroud, OK delivered 2 loads.

The documents also show that 9 Triple Crown Horses (Slaughter tags 8700, 8711, 8712, 8714, 8669, 8680, 8687, 8688, 8692) were rejected by Mexican authorities as well as 8 of the Baker horses. The inspection records show that these horses were severely malnourished, blind, injured, suffering from colic and abscesses.

Investigators checked the landfill, which is burying all the horses that die at the export pens, for fresh carcasses. They found one bay horse, which appeared to have been dead for a while, since it was quite bloated. Landfill records obtained by Animals’ Angels show that the landfill receives an average of 35 dead horses each month from the pens.
At 1:17pm, a red Moreno truck with single deck trailer backed up to the loading ramp in the back of the C4 pens. The loading ramp was very steep. At the same time, a yellow Moreno truck with a double deck trailer started to load horses at the Baeza pens. The floating deck inside the double deck trailer was lowered and horses were only loaded onto one level. The truck left at 1:35pm and started heading to the border. After a while, the yellow truck returned without the trailer, indicating that he dropped the loaded trailer in Mexico and then returned to pick up another trailer.

At 2:50pm, the red Moreno truck drove to the US custom broker and parked. Shortly thereafter, the yellow Moreno truck, a white Autotransportes del Conchos truck pulling an open roof trailer and a white/tan Transportes Unidos truck with a double deck trailer followed. At 3:20pm, the first truck headed to the border and crossed. (License Plate 496 WL) The lower part of the aluminium body of the trailer was completely boarded up, making it impossible to see the horses inside the trailer.

At 4:00pm, all other trucks followed. Investigators observed the horses in the open roof and the double deck trailer and noticed that both trailers appeared to be very crowded. Based on the
slaughter tags visible on the horses inside the double deck trailer, they had been brought in by George Baker. Their final destination was the *Eduardo Crosby Stege* slaughter plant in Juarez, which is not approved by the European Union.

4:20pm: The trucks arrived on the Mexican side of the border. (*Moreno* truck with red cab (license plate 671 STA) and *Autotransportes del Conchos* truck with white cab, license plate 964 AP 9, *Moreno* truck with yellow cab (trailer license plate 957 UA 5)) The yellow truck with the canvas top trailer then drove to a parking lot where already two more trailers loaded with horses were parked and unhitched the trailer. Afterwards, the truck left. The trailers were parked in full sun and the temperature had risen to 104 degrees Fahrenheit.

4:36pm: Different trucks arrived and reconnected to the parked trailers. Investigators talked to the drivers and were informed that the two white *Moreno* trucks would be heading to the Aguascalientes slaughter plant and the other truck would be heading to Camargo.

5:00pm: All the trucks left the parking lot. Investigators decided to follow the two *Moreno* trucks heading to Aguascalientes.
6:40pm: Along the way, the Moreno trucks caught up with the white Autotransportes del Conchos truck with the open roof trailer.
6:50pm: The trucks arrived at the Zoosanitaria checkpoint. Investigators filmed the horses inside the open roof trailer. They were able to confirm now that the trailer was indeed very overcrowded. They also noticed that one of the horses had a larger injury on his cheek. All the horses were standing. Several still had auction tags attached, which showed that they had been shipped to slaughter immediately after being bought at a sale. USDA slaughter tag numbers USHO 4418, 4426, 4407 and 4434 were visible, indicating that the horses might have been shipped by Joe Rios from El Paso, TX.

10:15pm: The trucks arrived at the next Zoosanitaria checkpoint in Jimenez. Investigators tried to film the horses inside one of the aluminium trailers, however, all the lower holes were covered with wire mesh, which made filming extremely difficult. One horse was observed with cuts on his legs.
All trailer had the blue SENASICA seals placed on the doors, which may only be broken by plant personnel upon arrival at the plant. The drivers therefore have no access to the horses.

8/20/13

03:44am: The trucks pulled into the Santa Clara Zoosanitaria checkpoint, which is the last checkpoint before the slaughter plant. Investigators filmed the horses inside the trailer again and noticed that a horse was down in the trailer pulled by one of the Moreno trucks.

The driver tried to get the horse up by poking & hitting it with an iron bar as well as a golf club, but the horse did not get up. Investigators observed him hit the horse several times over the head. After all these attempts failed, he decided to get out an electric prod and prodded the suffering horse four times. The driver was very nervous about being filmed. Finally, the horse was able to get back up.
After the horse was able to get back up, investigators filmed the other horses inside the trailer. Several had fresh cuts on their legs. Some were very thin. The trailer itself was very overcrowded.

The trucks continued driving and then briefly pulled over again at 5:13am at a road side cafe. 7:15am: The trucks stopped again approx. 50 miles away from the plant to check that all the horses were standing. An hour later, they arrived at the Aguacalientes plant. **Total transport time was 15 hours and 39 minutes. Total distance travelled: 651 Miles**
8/20/13 – Presidio Export Pens
It was a busy day and the trucks of kill buyers Dennis Chinn (Pratt, KS), Jimmy Fowler/Tina Pack (Mabank, TX – Transport Company: Larry Anderton), George Baker (Stroud, OK), Western Livestock (Diamond, MO) and Joe Rios (El Paso, TX – Trucking Company: Wayne R. West) were observed delivering horses to the pens.

The pens were very crowded and investigators noted that there was one a very limited amount of hay available for horses inside the Brito and C4 pens. At 12:30pm, the Mexican transport trucks started to arrive at the pens.

1:30pm: The loading of a Mexican truck with an open roof trailer observed in the afternoon at the Ruben Brito pens was extremely difficult to watch. The handling was rough, unprofessional and cruel. The workers forced the agitated, frightened horses up the steep ramp by hitting them with ropes and sticks. The horses were hit with full force over their heads and bodies. One horse fell on the ramp and injured his leg. There was absolutely no regard for the welfare of these animals.
At the same time, Mexican trucks were loaded at the Baeza pens. The loaded trucks pulled away from the ramp and parked, apparently to wait for the other trucks to load. They were parked there in full sun for at least one hour, adding unnecessary transport time to the already long journey of the horses confined inside. While observing the trucks, investigators noticed a group of pregnant mares and foals on the Baeza property. They were “grazing” outside the pen area in between trash, manure piles, barb wire and weeds, trying to find something to eat.

2:20pm: Investigators also checked the C4 pens. In close proximity of the pens, they found several horse skulls and a partial horse leg. A very thin horse was “grazing” outside these pens as well.
Inside the pens, they spotted a group of four horses, all in extremely poor condition. One of them had a horrific leg injury with bone exposure and was holding its leg up. The entire leg was swollen and the injury was covered in blood and pus. Two other horses in the pen also showed open wounds on their legs. All of them were very thin and covered in scars. They had been put together in a small pen with barb wire fencing with no shelter from the sun. The pen had access to water, but no food. Investigators documented their condition and then observed from a distance if they were going to be loaded for export to Mexico.

3:00pm: Mexican trucks from all pens started to leave and head towards the US Customs Broker. After a brief stop, they continued to the border. 3:20pm: A white/tan *Transportes Unidos* truck pulling a canvas top trailer parked at the border to get his paperwork checked. Investigators checked the conditions of the horses inside the trailer. Several of them showed old scars all over their bodies and a few had swollen knees. The trailer was very crowded. Ten minutes later, the driver returned with his cleared paperwork and the truck crossed into Mexico.
Investigators returned to the C4 pens to check on the injured horses. They were still in the pen and had not been loaded, indicating that they likely were rejected by the Mexican authorities.

Investigators called the Presidio County Police to file a complaint regarding the condition of the horses observed. When the police arrived they found the horses inside the pens as described. They ordered euthanasia of the paint horse with the horrific leg injury. The other horses were provided treatment of their injuries.

Animals’ Angels urged Deputy Chief Nunez to file cruelty charges against the pen owners, since the C4 pens have a history of letting animals in distress die without assistance. Unfortunately, Nunez refused since the pens had “complied immediately with all their requests”, ignoring the fact that improvement will likely never occur without punishment and incentive to change behavior.

8/23/13 Mexico – Santa Clara Zoosanitaria Checkpoint

10:40am: A horse transporter from Presidio arrived at the check point. It was a white Autotransportes Del Conchos truck (DOT 00556446; license plate 011 UC 8) pulling an open roof trailer with completely closed wooden sides. Transport documents revealed that this was a Dennis Chavez load with horses destined for the Jerez plant. The truck had crossed the border in Ojinaga and had been en route for 12 hours. There were 34 horses inside the trailer and at least two of them were foals.

Many of the horses inside the trailer were severely emaciated and appeared very weak. Investigators noted horses with abscesses, inflamed wounds, nasal discharge, swollen knees and eye infections.
Even the foal was extremely emaciated with his spine clearly visible and his hip bones protruding through the skin. These horses should have never been accepted for export by the Mexican veterinarians.

10/30/13 – Presidio

7:20am: A Blowing W Ranch truck with single deck trailer from Tecumseh, OK left Presidio empty.
8:42am: A O’Dwyer truck from Nocona, TX arrived in Marfa loaded with horses and started heading to Presidio.
9:37am Investigators noticed that the O’Dwyer truck has been stopped by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) along the road. The DPS officer checked log books, weight and condition of truck & trailer during a their 45 minute inspection.

10:25am: Montoya Trucking, the transport company for Dennis Chavez, left the pens empty.
12:50pm: A yellow Transportes Unidos truck with a double deck trailer left the pens loaded with horses. The floating deck inside the trailer was lowered and the horses were only loaded on one level. The trailer appeared very overloaded and the horses at the back end of the trailer were observed fighting. The truck made a quick stop at a truck repair shop and then started heading to
the Custom Brokers. After a ten minute stop there, he drove to the border and crossed into Mexico at 1:16pm. After a short while, the truck returned from Mexico to pick up another trailer.

3:10pm: Bill Richardson from Whitesboro, TX arrived at the pens loaded with horses.
3:20pm: All the Mexican transport trucks have finished their loading and start heading to the border.
4:09pm: The first Mexican truck crossed the border. The other trucks followed shortly thereafter. The yellow Transportes Unidos truck, which now pulled a red, canvas top single deck trailer, arrived at the border and parked. Investigators walked over to the trailer to check the conditions of the horses inside. They noticed immediately that two horses were down and were being trampled by the surrounding horses. One of them still had it’s head up, but the other one was completely down and lying flat on the trailer floor.
Investigators acted fast and ran into the border crossing to alert border officials about the situation. They requested that the truck would be rejected entry into Mexico and the driver told to turn the truck around and return to the export pens to unload the horses. While inside the office, investigators were shown the transport documents. They revealed that the horses on this trailer had been brought in the day before by Mike McDaniel and that 39 horses were in the shipment. The attached invoice showed that he had received $12,900 for these horses.

Border officials agreed to help and ordered the driver to turn the truck around. Border officials blocked the border crossing for all in- and outcoming traffic to give truck and trailer enough space to turn. Followed by the investigators, the truck returned to the Ruben Brito export pens.

At the pens, investigators approached one of the workers who was still present and urged him to unload the horses immediately. He refused at first, stating that the trailer had already been sealed.
and could not be opened. However, after looking inside the trailer, he agreed to unload and contacted pen owner Brito over the phone.

5:30pm: Meanwhile, the downed horses as well as the legs of the surrounding horses showed multiple bleeding cuts. After a while, Brito arrived and immediately threatened investigators instead of ensuring help for the suffering horses inside the trailer. Finally, he told his employee to open the trailer and to start unloading. Several of the horses were limping and/or had fresh injuries when they walked off the trailer. After all other horses had left the trailer, one of the horses that had been down was able to rise and slowly exited the trailer as well.

5:44pm: Despite the fact that the 2nd horse was still inside the trailer, Brito ordered the driver to pull away from the ramp and park in the back of the property. They left the horse and trailer there until a police car from the Presidio Sheriff’s Office arrived. Brito then claimed that investigators had been trespassing on his property and that he wanted charges filed. The officer, who appeared to be very friendly with Brito, did just that without listening to the investigators side of the story. At the same time, the truck had returned to the loading ramp and unloaded the 2nd downer.

6:00pm: Having to deal with the police and being ordered to leave, investigators were unable to see the condition of the horse after it had been removed from the trailer. Animals’ Angels has acquired the services of a Texas attorney to fight this injustice and has reported the incident to USDA. We believe that both the export pen owner Ruben Brito as well as the Presidio County Sheriff’s Department will have to deal with the consequences of their questionable conduct that day.
2) Export from Eagle Pass Export Pen, Texas

The export pens in Eagle Pass are operated by the Texas Department of Agriculture.

**Location:**
205 Industrial Blvd  
Eagle Pass, TX 78852  
Phone: (830) 773-2359

**Management/Pen Operator:**
Texas Department of Agriculture  
- Mr. Jon Garza (Director, Commodity Reporting & Livestock Exports)  
- Ricardo Perez, Pen Operator

**Veterinarian:**
Horses are inspected by a Mexican veterinarian prior to loading.

Additionally, Eagle Pass has the privately owned “Chula Vista” pens, operated by Raul & Albert Benavides’ (B&B Livestock). The facility serves as collecting station and as a facility to treat horses with injuries or ticks. The location of these pens is very remote. Animals’ Angels uncovered that several kill buyers now deliver horses straight to these pens to avoid official paperwork & inspection at the TDA pens.

B&B Livestock takes care of any injured/dead horses, fills out owner/shipper paperwork and ships horses fit for export to the TDA pens, which allows these kill buyers to operate anonymously and without the risk of getting caught when delivering dead/injured horses.

From Eagle Pass, horses are delivered to the following plants:

**Empacadora de Carnes de Fresnillo**  
Avenida Plateros No. 480  
Colonia Centro, C.P. 99040  
Fresnillo, Zacatecas

**Empacadora de Ganadera de Camargo**  
Carretera Panamericana Km 64  
Colonia Agricola Industrial, C.P. 33750  
Cd. Camargo, Chihuahua
Investigations & Advocacy

Carnicos de Jerez
Carretera Jerez – Sanchez Roman Km 27.5
C.P. 99380
Jerez, Zacatecas

The following kill buyers are known to deliver horses to these export pens:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Distance to Eagle Pass:</th>
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<td>Birdsong Farms</td>
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<td>Stanley Brothers</td>
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<td>Beltex</td>
<td>Morton, TX</td>
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<td>M &amp; M Livestock</td>
<td>Forney, TX</td>
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<td>O’Dwyer Investments</td>
<td>Nocona, TX</td>
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<td>Jason Bailey</td>
<td>Knoxville, TN</td>
<td>1258 Miles</td>
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<tr>
<td>B &amp; B Trading</td>
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Observations:

8/22/13
7:15am: A FX Farms truck from Antlers, OK was parked next to the pens. 15 minutes later a loaded Tres Trucking from Morton, TX, who hauls for Beltex via the Morton Feedlot, arrived.

8:07am: The FX Farms truck backed up to the loading ramp and started to unload. Shortly thereafter, a B & B Livestock truck packed full with horses arrived from the Chula Vista pens and started to unload.

8:18am: All trucks finished unloading. The B & B truck started to reload horses, which all appeared to be rejects. Several of them were very thin and some were limping.
A grey horse was observed with multiple, bleeding injuries of his head and both eyes. Another horse had cuts on his forehead. The truck finished reloading at 8:40am and left the premises. He drove straight to the Chula Vista pens, where he unloaded all the rejects.

There were already other horses inside the pens. All pens appeared to have access to water, but only very limited quantities of hay were visible. Some pens had shelter to protect the horses from the desert sun. Next to the manure covered loading ramp, a large tank with what seemed to be de-ticking solution was visible. There was a lot of trash scattered around the premises and the pens were overgrown with weeds.

The adjacent race track still appeared to be in use. While there, investigators noticed some guys on horseback riding on the track.
9:00am: Investigators observed an Ortiz truck (DOT 2401768) arrive at the TDA pens. The truck backed up to the loading ramp and started to load slaughter tagged horses. Investigators noted at least 7 horses with BLM freeze brands among the ones loaded, as well as many severely emaciated horses.

The sides of the trailer were broken and were missing pieces of aluminium, which can lead to horrific leg injuries.

The loading finished at 9:45 am and the truck left the pens and started to head north. The truck passed by the exit for the Chula Vista pens and continued his journey out of town. Driving next to the truck, investigators were able to confirm that all the horses were slaughter tagged. Given the direction the truck was heading it is possible that the horses were going to the Presidio export pens to avoid the stricter inspection in Eagle Pass.
4:40pm: The Mexican transport trucks started to load horses at the export pens. A burgundy *Charrito’s Auto Express* (USDOT 2173135) truck with a double deck trailer was among the first ones to load. Investigators noted that the sides of this trailer also had several holes. A yellow *Charrito’s Auto Express* truck pulled a “homemade”, former Dollar Store trailer with tiny air holes, which offered not enough airflow for the horses inside the trailer. A red *Acosta* truck (DOT 2199707) loaded an aluminium single deck trailer.

Two blue *De Luna* trucks (DOT 1485129) with canvas top stick trailers were the last ones to load. Both trailers appeared to be very overcrowded and the horses were fighting and kicking inside the trailers.

5:00pm: All trucks left the TDA export pens and started heading to the close by dry lot to wait for their paperwork to clear. They parked in full sun.
The trucks started heading to the border at 6:30pm. **There are two bridges at the Eagle Pass border crossing**, one for cars and on for trucks and commercial traffic. The trucks cross over the International Bridge and enter Mexico on the other side.

6:50pm: The burgundy *Charrito’s Auto Express (USDOT 2173135)* truck with the double deck aluminium trailer was the first one to cross the border. Fifteen minutes later, the yellow Charrito’s truck with the horrific “*Dollar Store*” trailer followed. The trailer still had the original Kentucky license plate (T299274) attached.

7:37pm: The red Acosta truck (DOT 21997072) crossed into Mexico.
7:40pm: The two De Luna trucks crossed the border and investigators decided to follow them.
7:56pm: The trucks pulled over at a truck stop for twenty minutes and investigators were informed by the drivers that they were going to an unknown location in Monterrey.

9:30pm: The trucks briefly stopped again at a customs checkpoint. The trucks continued their journey through the night at an extremely fast pace, sometimes driving as fast as 80 mph.
8/23/13
3:00am: The trucks pulled into the Tanque Escondido Zoosanitaria checkpoint. Investigators noticed that the Charrito’s Auto Express truck with the former Dollar Store trailer was also parked there. The driver informed investigators that he was heading to the Fresnillo plant. Since this plant imports a lot of meat to the European Union, investigators decided to follow his truck. They also checked the condition of the horses inside the different trailers. All of them were standing.

Arrival at the plant

5:40am: The trucks stopped to check the horses. Again, all of them were standing. An hour later, the truck arrived at the Fresnillo slaughter plant.

Investigators tried to gain access to the plant to watch the unloading, but were told to leave by a man who appeared to be the owner of the plant, speaking with a noticeable Belgium accent. Since nothing can be observed from the outside of the plant, investigators decided to return to the Santa Clara checkpoint to inspect horse trucks coming through.

Santa Clare Zoosanitaria Checkpoint

10:00am: Investigators documented conditions of horses inside a trailer pulled by a Transportes Unidos de Norteamerica truck (DOT 634763Z; licence plate 825-AP-9) According to information received from the driver, the transport came from the Juarez/Santa Teresa border crossing and was heading to Fresnillo. There were 32 horses loaded inside his trailer. Transport documents revealed that the horses originated from Dennis Chavez in Los Lunas, NM. One of the horses inside the trailer had a hoof injury. The truck drove together with two other trucks, altogether loaded with 97 horses.
Total transport time from Juarez to Fresnillo is approx. 17 hours. The driver also stated that there are no facilities to feed or water the horses along the way and that there were approx. 7-9 trucks per week delivering horses from Juarez.

8/24/13 – Eagle Pass Export Pens

Investigators returned to the TDA export pens to check if any horses had been left there over the weekend. The pen gates were closed and no employees were visible. Investigators noted a small group of horses in the back of the pens. Several of them were in poor condition and had a red “x” painted on their hips, a sign that they had been rejected for export to Mexico. One appeared to be pregnant.

The pen had shelter and access to food and water.
VIOLATION SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Texas Penal Code Title 9 / 42.09. Cruelty to Animals

(a) A person commits an offense if the person intentionally or knowingly: (2) fails unreasonably to provide necessary food, care, or shelter for an animal in the person's custody;

Observations:

+ No shelter available for the majority of the horses inside the Presidio export pens. The horses are inside these pens for 6+ hours and temperatures are known to exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

+ Horses with severe injuries are left to suffer in C4 & Brito pens without care.

Recommendations:

+ Install tarps for sun protection.

+ Pen management should advise and train employees to monitor all pen on a regular basis to ensure that horses in distress receive immediate care and (if needed) euthanasia. Since the pens have a long & well documented history of letting horses suffer and die without assistance, local law enforcement should file charges whenever another incident is reported.

2. Commercial Transport of Equines to Slaughter Regulations 9 CFR Sec 88

A. § 88.3 Standards for conveyances.

(a) The animal cargo space of conveyances used for the commercial transportation of equines for slaughter must: (1) Be designed, constructed, and maintained in a manner that at all times protects the health and well-being of the equines being transported (e.g., provides adequate ventilation, contains no sharp protrusions, etc.).

Observations:

+ Inappropriate conveyances are being used for transport. Trailers with open roofs and completely closed sides do not have proper ventilation and no protection from the elements.
“Homemade” trailers such as the former “Dollar Store” trailer observed in Eagle Pass offer not enough airflow for the horses inside the trailer.

+ Floors of several trailers were very slippery.

+ Trailer sides with holes were observed, which is extremely dangerous for horses.

**Recommendations:** Immediately cease and desist using inadequate trailers. USDA personnel should increase inspections at all export pens during afternoon hours and reject Mexican trailers not fit for transport.

**B. § 88.4 Requirements for transport.**

(b) During transit to the slaughtering facility, the owner/shipper must:

(1) Drive in a manner to avoid causing injury to the equines;

(2) Observe the equines as frequently as circumstances allow, but not less than once every 6 hours, to check the physical condition of the equines and ensure that all requirements of this part are being followed. The owner/shipper must obtain veterinary assistance as soon as possible from an equine veterinarian for any equines in obvious physical distress. Equines that become non ambulatory en route must be euthanized by an equine veterinarian.

(c) Handling of all equines in commercial transportation to a slaughtering facility shall be done as expeditiously and carefully as possible in a manner that does not cause unnecessary discomfort, stress, physical harm, or trauma. Electric prods may not be used on equines in commercial transportation to a slaughtering facility for any purpose, including loading or offloading on the conveyance, except when human safety is threatened.

**Observations:**

+ Horses were down inside multiple trailers and were being trampled by surrounding horses. No attempt was made by any of the drivers to obtain appropriate help for the suffering animals.

+ Electric prod was used on downed equine.
3. Mexican Animal Protection Law

Art. 4.2.12. The animals have to be checked regularly during transport in order to detect if some are lying on the trailer floor or have fallen down to prevent that they are trampled or suffer severe injuries such as bleeding wounds or bone fractures.

Art. 4.1.6. Endothermic species as birds or mammals may not be transported under extreme weather conditions.

Art. 4.3.9. If there is no trailer roof, there has to be another form of cover, such as for example a tarp to protect the animals from sun, cold and rain, if necessary.

Art. 4.2.9. The trailers may not be overloaded with animals.

Art. 5.5.2. The vehicles and trailers have to be of sufficient length so that the animals fit in comfortably.

Art. 5.5.6. Electric prods must never be used to move horses.

4. EU Laws & Regulations

Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport does not apply outside the European Union. However, the evidence obtained in Texas and Mexico reveals that transport conditions are far below EU standards. The following requirements of EC 1/2005 were not met:

Art. 3 e) The personnel handling animals are trained or competent as appropriate for this purpose and carry out their tasks without using violence or any method likely to cause unnecessary fear, injury or suffering; Annex I, Chapter III, 1.8. It shall be prohibited to: (a) strike or kick the animals;

Observations: Violent handling during loading – workers hitting the horses with wooden sticks, ropes and whips (also on their heads); downer horse on Mexican trailer was poked and hit with golf club, iron bar and electric prod.
Annex I, Chapter III, 1.9. The use of instruments which administer electric shocks shall be avoided as far as possible. In any case, these instruments shall only be used for adult bovine animals and adult pigs (…)

Observations: Electric prod was applied several times on downer horse.

Annex I, Chapter III, 1.3. Facilities for loading and unloading, including the flooring, shall be designed, constructed, maintained and operated so as to: (a) prevent injury and suffering and minimise excitement and distress during animal movements as well as to ensure the safety of the animals.

Observations: Steep loading ramps at C4 and Ruben Brito pens; loading ramp at Brito pens is dangerous for horses as the horses’ legs can slip through the gap between the ramp and the metal railing.

Art. 3 f) The transport is carried out without delay to the place of destination and the welfare conditions of the animals are regularly checked and appropriately maintained;

Observations: Long wait times at the border of Eagle Pass, trucks parked in the blazing sun for more than one hour with no ventilation and temperatures as high as 100°F; welfare conditions of the animals are not maintained during transport, as they do not get any water, food or emergency care.

Art. 3 g) Sufficient floor area and height is provided for the animals, appropriate to their size and the intended journey;

Observations: Overcrowded transport conditions (32 – 39 horses), which makes it almost impossible for the horses to stand up again once they fall; horses were observed biting each other and fighting for space.

Art. 3 h) Water, feed and rest are offered to the animals at suitable intervals and are appropriate in quality and quantity to their species and size.

Annex I, Chapter V, 1.4. c) Domestic Equidae may be transported for a maximum period of 24 hours. During the journey they must be given liquid and if necessary fed every eight hours;

Observations: More than 16 hours of transport without any water, food and rest; no water tank or food on board of trucks; no unloading of horses en route possible (trucks are sealed).
Art. 3. No person shall transport animals or cause animals to be transported in a way likely to cause injury or undue suffering to them. In addition, the following conditions shall be complied with: (b) the animals are fit for the journey;

Annex I, Chapter I, 2. Animals that are injured or that present physiological weaknesses or pathological processes shall not be considered fit for transport and in particular if: (a) they are unable to move independently without pain or to walk unassisted; (b) they present a severe open wound, or prolapse;

Observations: Transport of horses that were not fit for the journey (severely emaciated and weak horses, injured horses with large, open wounds); horses that had been rejected by Mexican veterinarians because of injuries or illness were not treated, but re-loaded and transported back to the US collecting station.

Annex I, Chapter I, 4. When animals fall ill or are injured during transport, they shall be separated from the others and receive first-aid treatment as soon as possible. They shall be given appropriate veterinary treatment and if necessary undergo emergency slaughter or killing in a way which does not cause them any unnecessary suffering.

Observations: Downers were not given appropriate help; no unloading, no separation, no veterinary assistance and no emergency euthanasia during transport; trucks are sealed by the Mexican veterinary authority and drivers are not allowed to break the seal, even in case of an emergency such as a horse going down.

Annex I, Chapter II, 1.1. Means of transport, containers and their fittings shall be designed, constructed, maintained and operated so as to: (a) avoid injury and suffering and to ensure the safety of the animals; (b) protect the animals from inclement weather, extreme temperatures and adverse changes in climatic conditions;

Observations: Holes in trailer sides put horses at risk of severe injuries; dividers which are not solid are likely to create hazards (e.g. broken legs); many trucks are open-roofed and offer no protection from sun and rain; some trailers are not suitable to transport animals at all since they only have very small holes in the sidewalls and do not provide sufficient airflow.

Annex I, Chapter III, 1.12. Animals shall be handled and transported separately in the following cases: (a) animals of different species; (b) animals of significantly different sizes or ages;

Observations: Mules and foals were loaded together with adult horses.

Annex I, Chapter VI. Additional provisions for long journeys (> 8h)
1.2. Animals shall be provided with appropriate bedding or equivalent material which guarantees their comfort appropriate to the species, the number of animals being transported, the journey time, and the weather. This material has to ensure adequate absorption of urine and faeces.

**Observations:** No bedding; slippery floors in several trailers; the floor of some trailers is covered with a metal grid which is very uncomfortable for the horses to stand on.

**Annex I, Chapter VI,** Additional provisions for long journeys (> 8h)
1.6. Equidae shall be transported in individual stalls except mares travelling with their foals.

**Observations:** The horses are not transported in individual stalls, but are packed together; if a horse falls down, it risks not being able to stand up again and being trampled.

**Annex I, Chapter VI,** Additional provisions for long journeys (> 8h)
3.1. Ventilation systems on means of transport by road shall be designed, constructed and maintained in such way that, at any time during the journey, whether the means of transport is stationary or moving, they are capable of maintaining a range of temperatures from 5°C to 30°C within the means of transport, for all animals, with a +/- 5°C tolerance, depending on the outside temperature.

**Observations:** No ventilation system on board of trucks and therefore no protection from hot temperatures (up to 40°C); insufficient airflow when stationary; some open-roofed trailers have completely closed sides – no airflow possible when parked (several stops at the border).

**CONCLUSION:**

**Transport conditions in the USA and Mexico remain unchanged and are still far below EU standards.** Transport distances of up to 3000 km in total are extremely long. During transport, the horses do not get any water, food or rest. Vehicles are inappropriate for the transport of horses and often hold high risks of injuries. Weak and injured horses that are unfit for transport are loaded. Horses that go down during transport do not get any appropriate emergency assistance, but are left to be trampled to death or forced up with electric prods. At the export pens in Texas, the majority of the horses do not have any shelter from the desert sun. Sick and injured horses are left to suffer instead of being treated or euthanized. Horses that have been rejected by Mexican veterinarians because of injuries/illness are re-loaded and transported back to the US collecting station or simply left to die in the pens. Approved transport trailers are sealed and may only be opened at the slaughter, the drivers have no access to the horses.