

EN
E-002049/2013
Answer given by Mr Borg
on behalf of the Commission
(16.4.2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the problem highlighted by the Honourable Member, although it is not in a position to quantify it. Based on the outcome of audits in the Member States that identified shortcomings in the implementation of the current system of traceability of horses, the Commission has prepared an Action Plan that envisages to propose the mandatory recording of horse passports in a central national database and more stringent rules for and a reduction in the number of passports issuing bodies.

2. Horses and other equidae born in the EU are by default intended for the food chain, unless individual animals are declared as not being intended for slaughter for human consumption in their passport. In the latter case, strict rules are in place to ensure their safe disposal and the correct handling of their passports after death.

3. The Commission estimates that the production of horsemeat in the EU amounts to approximately 50 to 55 thousand tons per year, with a self-sufficiency of about 65%. In addition, the EU imports about 30 thousand tons of horsemeat per year.