

**Question for written answer E-003089/2013
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Horsemeat imports from Canada and Mexico to the EU

According to EU import requirements for food of animal origin from non-EU countries, only horses with a known medicinal treatment history, and which on the basis of medicinal treatment records can be shown to have satisfied the appropriate veterinary medicine withdrawal periods, may be slaughtered for export to the EU.

Between 2010 and 2012, the EU's Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) carried out several audits in Canada¹ and Mexico². These audits consistently found that the systems implemented for the identification of horses, the food chain information and the reliability and authenticity of affidavits concerning the veterinary treatment of horses, particularly those of US origin, are insufficient to guarantee the application of standards equivalent to those provided for by EU legislation.

The primary reason for this is that US horses are typically not raised for slaughter. Consequently there is no mandatory record-keeping on veterinary medical treatment, and substances such as Phenylbutazone, banned for use in food-producing animals, are in widespread therapeutic use

Given the findings of the FVO audits, could the Commission explain why it has apparently not yet taken appropriate action to ensure that meat from horses of US origin is no longer placed on the EU market?

¹ Final report of an audit carried out in Canada from 23 November to 06 December 2010 in order to evaluate the operation of controls over the production of fresh meat, meat products, minced meat, meat preparations and casings for human consumption destined for import to the European Union under the auspices of the agreement between the European Community and Canada on sanitary measures to protect public health and animal health in respect of trade in live animals and animal products. DG (SANCO) 2010-8522- MR FINAL.

Final report of an audit carried out in Canada from 13 to 23 September 2011 in order to evaluate the monitoring of residues and contaminants in live animals and animal products, including controls on veterinary medicinal products. DG (SANCO) 2011-8913-MR FINAL.

² Final report of a mission carried out in Mexico from 22 November to 03 December 2010 in order to evaluate the operation of controls over the production of fresh horse meat and meat products intended for export to the European Union as well as certification procedures. DG(SANCO) 2010-8524 – MR FINAL.

Final report of an audit carried out in Mexico from 29 May to 08 June 2012 in order to evaluate the operation of controls over the production of fresh horse meat and meat products intended for export to the European Union as well as certification procedures. DG (SANCO) 2012-6340-MR FINAL