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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Equine instructors face off against medical experts over horse meat

Chicago (EWA) – In a press release today titled “Equine Scientists Debunk Horsemeat Health Risk Claims”, United Horsemen (UH), an extremist pro horse slaughter group, cited a letter from four equine instructors ostensibly written to the *Journal of Food and Chemical Toxicology* complaining about the accuracy of the landmark study that found that the meat derived from horses administered the carcinogen phenylbutazone (PBZ/bute) is being shipped to the European Union for human consumption.

In an embarrassing attempt to discredit the peer reviewed [paper](#), *Association of phenylbutazone usage with horses bought for slaughter: A public health risk*, the instructors cherry picked facts to make their case, but merely succeeded in demonstrating the risk of offering a professional opinion outside of one’s area of expertise.

None of the authors of the UH letter are medical doctors and they provided no information that is contrary to the mandate by the EU and FDA banning Phenylbutazone in all food producing animals, including horses.

The letter begins by stating the paper’s authors did not cite the levels of Phenylbutazone (PZB, bute) in the study horses. But there are no acceptable levels. One only needs to prove the administration of bute at any time in the horse’s life to make the horse ineligible for human consumption. The paper by Drs. Marini (PhD/MD neurology), Dodman (PhD/DVM) and Blondeau (PhD in neuroscience), did exactly that. The study proved without doubt, through tracing race track drug records, that horses given bute are making their way into the food supply.

In the letter, the equine scientists/instructors pasted revelations, such as the rapid rate at which bute disappears from the blood stream, ignoring the fact that the same information was presented in the study paper, and omitting details like the fact that phenylbutazone metabolizes into oxyphenylbutazone (also linked to blood dyscrasias such as aplastic anemia) which persists much longer, or that phenylbutazone is taken up in injured tissue where it may later be released back into the bloodstream.

The letter concludes by casting McCarthyisms on all who were mentioned in the paper, incorrectly stating, for example, that EWA’s John Holland (who provided historical data on the slaughter industry) was “linked to PETA”.

If these equine instructors intend to put a plug into the growing wellspring of revelations about the dangers of US horse meat, they will have their work cut out for them. A recent [paper](#) issued by Irish Veterinarians further cement the dangers of bute and the disciplinary action to veterinarians for sending an animal to slaughter that has been administered bute.

The paper states "The difficulty with phenylbutazone is that it, or its metabolite, can cause aplastic anemia in children. If a child were to consume an animal-based product containing even the minutest amount of bute or its metabolite [oxyphenylbutazone] then the child may develop aplastic anemia."

In addition, the paper warns, "It is a statement of fact that if the European Commission on its audit of this country find evidence of bute use in animals not excluded from the food chain, then the product will immediately lose its license Europe-wide. If samples prove positive for phenylbutazone or its metabolite in equine meat of Irish origin, it will be traced back, and the prescribing veterinary practitioner will be in the firing line of prosecution."

Only a week ago [*Food Production Daily*](#) exposed the risk of tainted horse meat in an article titled *Tainted US horse meat puts world consumers at risk*.

"US horses are not raised as meat animals", said EWA spokesperson Vicki Tobin, "It is just that simple. If we want to keep sending our horses to slaughter, we will have to give up most of the effective medications we currently enjoy."

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The Equine Welfare Alliance is a dues-free 501c4, umbrella organization with over 200 member organizations and hundreds of individual members worldwide. The organization focuses its efforts on the welfare of all equines and the preservation of wild equids. www.equinewelfarealliance.org