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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Food Safety Concerns Shut Down Natural Meat Company in Canada**

The Canadian Horse Defense Coalition is pleased to announce that Natural Meat Company (formerly Natural Valley Farms) in Neudorf, Saskatchewan, closed its doors in mid-February. No more horses are being slaughtered in that facility! The plant had been operating under contract with the Velda Group, a Belgian corporation that had transferred its operations to NVF after its Cavel slaughter house in DeKalb, Illinois was ordered closed in September 2007. The NVF complex had a design capacity five times greater than the Cavel operation and was a major part of Canada's horse slaughter industry.

According to the Director of Parliamentary Affairs for Canada, Natural Meat Company was shut down by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency for food safety concerns. At this time, we are attempting to clarify details surrounding the closure.

Graphic evidence of animal welfare violations was documented at Natural Valley Farms in June 2008. This footage was released to CHDC by undercover investigators and the concerns were aired on CBC's [No Country for Horses](#)<sup>1</sup> the following month.

In September 2008, CHDC Central Region Director, Twyla Francois, filmed horse blood from the slaughter plant being [illegally dumped](#)<sup>2</sup> on the banks of a nearby river from a tanker truck. Likewise, although the Velda / Cavel operation in DeKalb Illinois had been shuttered by a state law prohibiting horse slaughter, that plant had similarly been in continuous violation of sewer discharge standards. Shortly before its closing, the local paper featured a picture of a huge blob of black foam overflowing from its giant waste treatment tank.

**Further Good News from the U.S.**

We applaud the [Equine Welfare Alliance](#)<sup>3</sup> (Chicago) for serving as an intermediary between our efforts and the many wonderful grass roots groups involved in the state and federal initiatives in the US. On April 3, 2009, the governor of Montana issued an amendatory veto on a bill that had already been passed by the Montana House and the Senate and simply needed an official signature. That bill was intended to stop any citizen from launching a lawsuit that might prevent a horse slaughterhouse from being built in the state.

On April 2, 2009, CHDC had assisted U.S. horse defenders by supplying proof of the closure of Natural Meat Company for food safety reasons. Slaughter industry sources contacted through the EWA indicated that the plant had experienced problems with its waste treatment system similar to those that had plagued the Cavel plant.

This evidence then found its way into the hands of the governor. As a result of the veto, the amended bill will now go back to the legislature for consideration, thus opening up an opportunity for debate. With such strong evidence of food safety and environmental concerns, to say nothing of animal welfare violations that are inherent in the horse slaughter industry, it is clear that step-by-step progress for the horses is being made.

### **Remembering the Horses**

In order to commemorate the lives lost in Neudorf and to pay homage to the suffering that occurred there, the CHDC announced that it plans to visit the massive horse graveyard on site. The site is the resting place for former pets, race horses, rodeo horses, and other unfortunate animals who were sent to a fate that, in the words of CHDC senior investigator Twyla Francois, "none should ever have to endure".

The CHDC is dedicated to ending horse slaughter and abuse throughout Canada and intends to use the ceremony as an occasion to reaffirm its commitment to that goal.

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### **Links:**

<sup>1</sup>[http://www.cbc.ca/national/blog/special\\_feature/no\\_country\\_for\\_horses/no\\_country\\_for\\_horses.html](http://www.cbc.ca/national/blog/special_feature/no_country_for_horses/no_country_for_horses.html)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udbD6OeiUBY>

<sup>3</sup> [www.equinewelfarealliance.org](http://www.equinewelfarealliance.org)