



**To :** Woodbine Horsemen  
**From :** Steve Koch – Vice President of Thoroughbred Racing  
**Date :** February 25, 2013  
**Subject :** **Horse Welfare Policy**

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Woodbine Entertainment Group (WEG) is committed to the health and safety of its equine athletes. As such, WEG has been a long time financial and in-kind sponsor of both LongRun Thoroughbred Retirement Society and the Ontario Standardbred Adoption Society. Both organizations strive to find homes and/or a second career for retired racehorses for their respective breeds and if necessary first rehabilitate the horse. In addition, WEG was instrumental in garnering industry support for the Ontario Racing Commission (ORC) to put in place a Directive to provide both organizations with up to 0.5% of pari-mutuel wagering based on breed.

With respect to the issue of horse euthanasia, WEG recognizes that this is an alternative to having a horse suffer from malnutrition and lack of care. Some owners do not have the resources to provide the proper care for their animals nor do the adoptive agencies have the resources to address the needs of every horse.

Horse slaughter in Canada is legal and is regulated by Agriculture Canada. WEG does not, however, support the inhumane treatment of horses going for slaughter. We have spoken with elected officials in this regard, including our local Member of Parliament who wrote directly to the Minister of Agriculture on this issue.

It is the responsibility of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to investigate and take appropriate action to ensure the humane slaughter of animals at federally regulated abattoirs. The Minister of Agriculture in his response to WEG's concern indicated: "For horses originating in the U.S. for slaughter in Canada, the CFIA and the U.S. Department of Agriculture have recently established mutual assistance in enforcing our respective regulations that govern the humane transportation of slaughter horses. Regulations and operational policies under the *Meat Inspection Act* set standards for humane handling and slaughter of food animals in federally registered abattoirs".

**An Owner or Trainer who is found to cause horses previously stabled in Ontario to be sent to slaughter will be denied stabling privileges at Woodbine.** Overcrowded feedlots, poor transportation and cruel treatment of the horses prior to and at the time of slaughter are unacceptable. Horses must be protected from unnecessary suffering.

Stephen I. Koch  
Vice President – Thoroughbred Racing