Oklahoma Veterinary Medical Association  

Position Statement  

on Unwanted Horses and Horse Slaughter.

The Oklahoma Veterinary Medical Association's position on unwanted horses and horse slaughter are directly in line with the American Veterinary Medical Association's position and reflected in the following:

Just as at the AVMA, we are extremely concerned about the welfare of unwanted horses and increasing numbers of horses being abandoned, abused, and neglected. There are more horses than there are homes for them, and we need solutions. To develop short- and long-term solutions that are viable and sustainable, cooperation among a variety of groups will be necessary. We're confident that if breeders, owners, horse rescuers, and other stakeholders can collaborate and cooperate, this welfare problem can be effectively addressed.

Until suitable short- and long-term solutions to address the welfare issues associated with unwanted horses are in place, we believe that none of the options for dealing with unwanted horses - including slaughter - should be eliminated. We would prefer to see horse slaughter cease in the U.S. when and if there are NO MORE unwanted horses to justify its continued existence, but that's not realistic at this time. Note that the OVMA, just as the AVMA does not equate horse slaughter with euthanasia. The Panel on Euthanasia that drafts the AVMA's Guidelines on Euthanasia considers euthanasia, depopulation and slaughter to be different activities. All must be conducted as humanely as possible, but the circumstances surrounding them and the desired outcomes are sufficiently different that the Panel believes they need to be considered separately. Accordingly, the guidance documents on depopulation and humane slaughter produced by the AVMA to supplement its guidelines on euthanasia are supported by OVMA.

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