

Plan to slaughter horses for human consumption met with distaste

By Ted Burnham, NPR

When the ban on slaughtering horses for human consumption was lifted in the U.S. last November, it was only a matter of time before someone applied to start the practice up again.

That person is Rick De Los Santos, a New Mexico rancher and owner of Valley Meat Co. If the USDA approves his application to have a former beef slaughterhouse inspected, it would allow the first slaughter of horses in the U.S. since 2007.

The meat would be exported to Mexico, one of many countries where eating horsemeat is nothing to flick your tail at. Horse is also eaten frequently in Europe and Asia. And the Canadian grocery chain Metro lists 22 recipes for horse meat on its website.

But Americans are historically averse to eating horses. A notable exception is the Harvard Faculty Club, which served chicken-fried horse meat until 1985. Americans have typically turned to horse consumption only in tough times. When beef rations became scarce during World War II, people turned to horse as a serviceable but inferior alternative. Republicans blamed President Truman for the shortage, labeling him "Horsemeat Harry."

Read the whole story