

Billionaire Gerry Harvey and two additional NSW knackeries implicated in ex-racehorse slaughter scandal

New evidence released by animal protection group Farm Transparency Project (formerly Aussie Farms) reveals the ongoing slaughter of ex-racehorses in NSW in breach of the state's racing rules, with many sent directly from industry breeders including a stud owned by billionaire Gerry Harvey, owner of the prestigious 'Magic Millions' annual horse sale and retail giant Harvey Norman.

Hidden camera footage and documentation from an 8-week investigation into **Kankool Pet Food**, south of Tamworth, depicts branded thoroughbreds being killed on a weekly basis, including:

- Young unraced horses (one not even 2 years old);
- Ex-racehorses (one had last raced as recently as December last year, another October last year);
- Ex-breeding mares (including ex-racers who were 'retired' into breeding);
- Horses being picked up from, or delivered by, numerous local studs/breeders and a foster-mare facility, despite Racing NSW rules prohibiting the slaughter of NSW horses
- A total of 12 identified thoroughbreds and countless unidentified thoroughbreds

The full list of identified thoroughbreds and the implicated studs is available at:

<https://www.farmtransparency.org/editorials/225-racing-nsw-gerry-harvey-thoroughbred-slaughter>

Meanwhile, emails and other documentation obtained from **Highland Pet Food**, north of Armidale, identify four occasions in the last two years in which horses including "GH"-branded thoroughbreds were sent from the Gerry Harvey-owned Broombee Stud; and 89 horses sent from Tamac Farm Stud.

The footage at the Kankool knackery also reveals countless instances of illegal animal cruelty and a culture of disrespect and carelessness:

- Many animals requiring multiple shots with a firearm before death, including a large pig shot 10 times over 3 and a half minutes, and countless cows and steers having their throats cut open while still conscious and reactive
- Several sheep killed with a knife while fully conscious – no prior stunning
- Groups of animals – sheep, piglets, cows, horses – packed into the knockbox together at once, and picked off one by one in front of each other
- A worker posing for a photo with a shot but partially conscious steer, later lifting and lowering their severed head and joking about "who needs the gym?"

Andy Meddick, Victorian MP for the Animal Justice Party, has detailed the findings in a speech to the Victorian parliament and condemned racing as a "horse-killing industry".

Quotes attributable to Farm Transparency Project's Executive Director, Chris Delforce:

"I was horrified to see this footage and for our suspicions to be confirmed that this was still happening regularly in NSW despite all of the racing body's assurances. Clearly, the rule implemented by Racing NSW prohibiting this slaughter is nothing but a smokescreen designed to make them look good to the public while doing absolutely nothing to actually address this problem. In fact, while these knackeries are killing horses on a weekly basis, Peter V'landys is busy suing journalists for reporting on this exact issue. This industry is clearly incapable of, and uninterested in, regulating itself - so yet again it's come down to the brave work of whistleblowers and activists working with our organisation to investigate and expose this cruelty and corruption."

"If the Queensland abattoir is the racing industry's dark side, knackeries must be its pitch-black side – dodgy little facilities hidden away doing pretty much whatever they want, to any species they want, without scrutiny. They're

acting as the industry's clean-up operation whenever 'useless' horses need to be quietly disposed of, and with the involvement of so many industry figures – including one as high up as Gerry Harvey – it seems that this is a secret only to the race-going public. It would be pretty ridiculous at this point for Racing NSW to claim they don't know it's happening, and I think their apathy – if not complicity – should make a pretty big difference to anyone who still thinks that horse racing is just a bit of fun. This is something the public has every right to see, so that people can make an informed decision about whether this is a 'sport' they want to stand behind."

"Given the number of breaches of their rules we've uncovered, Racing NSW needs to take some serious responsibility and guarantee a full and open investigation, not an industry whitewash or passing of the buck. If their heavily promoted rules are actually useless for horses, that's something their supporters need to know."

"Wastage is just one of many welfare issues inherent to this industry – an industry already built on exploiting gamblers. They've shown they have no interest in doing right by anyone, so we're calling on all sponsors of Racing NSW and the wider horseracing industry to cut ties with this bloodsport, and for real sports with actual willing participants like the NRL to distance themselves by dumping V'landys as their Chairman. If Racing NSW want to cling onto any shred of integrity, they'll ban all of these breeders including billionaire Gerry Harvey, and fund the immediate retirement of any horses bred from those facilities or sold into NSW through Harvey's Magic Millions – but by no means will that make horseracing any more deserving of a social license that has already been steadily dwindling for some time."

"Meanwhile, Kankool Pet Food's slaughtering licence must be immediately revoked by the NSW Food Authority. This is a facility that has shown a complete disregard for the suffering of the animals it takes through its doors, and a level of cruelty beyond the legal standard. Many of its customers are greyhound trainers, an industry that is itself no stranger to cruelty and controversy, and which Australia can very easily do without. Another of their customers is Luddenham Pet Foods in Sydney, who were outed for killing ex-racehorses last year and have since been buying their horsemeat from Kankool. There is simply no excuse for anyone to send an animal, even an injured one, to a knackery – a business that sees animal cruelty as a business model."

Footage: www.farmtransparency.org/campaigns/finish-line-part2/videos

Photos and additional information: www.farmtransparency.org/campaigns/finish-line-part2

Contact

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