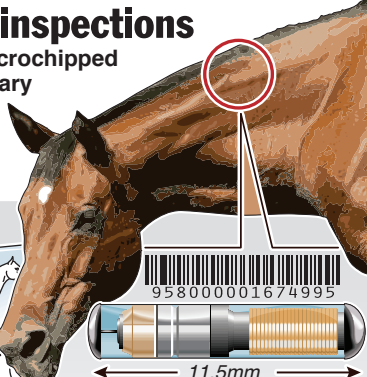
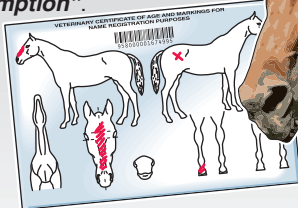


Scam to pass food chain inspections

Horses must have a passport and be microchipped to ensure that those treated with veterinary medicines do not enter the food chain. By forging passports, criminal gangs can pass off non-edible horse meat as fit for human consumption

Passport declaration: "Not intended for human consumption".

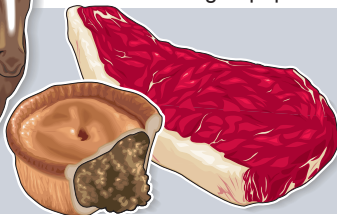
Vet must check passport and declaration of every horse before treatment. If horse is not signed out of food chain, only medication suitable for food-producing animals can be used



Microchip: Unique read-only number correlates to passport. Horse must be accompanied by passport if moved within EU

Microchip scanner: Abattoirs must scan all horses, match them to their passports, and check they are suitable for human consumption

Irish connection: In 2010 Ireland faces huge debt and has glut of unwanted horses. Criminal gangs believed to have re-chipped and illegally exported up to 70,000 horses with forged papers



Food chain: Unwanted horse bought for €12 in Ireland sells for €500 as edible horsemeat or €2,000 if sold as beef



Sources: Ulster Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Horse Passport Agency

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