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Investigation at Sugarcreek Auction **January 16-18, 2009** **External Report**

Location:

102 Buckeye Street
Sugarcreek, Ohio 44681
330-852-2832.

Owner:

Leroy Baker

Market schedule:

Friday 1 pm

Humane Society:

Tuscarawas County
PO BOX 92
New Philadelphia, OH 44663

1. Observations:

Upon arrival at the auction we noticed that there were by far not as many horses for sale than during our previous visits; we counted 55 horses in the pen area. In two of the pens, there were 33 horses that Baker had bought the week before. All of them had the green USDA slaughter tag attached and access to food and water.

It was a very cold day and the horses that had been in the barn overnight were covered with ice. One horse inside the “kill pen” was dead.



Baker tried to get his bobcat started to push the dead horse out of the barn, but he was unable to start it due to the freezing temperatures. By 2pm all the horses were sold. Baker bought 18 horses and Bauer bought 20 horses. All the horses were crammed into the two pens behind the auction ring. The agitated animals were kicking and biting each other. How easy would it be to avoid this for humans and animals dangerous situation by just dividing the horses into more pens?

3.48pm:

The blue Sugarcreek truck arrived at the auction and pulled close to the barn to charge. Baker's other trucks were also in the parking lot. Bauer loaded his horses and left the premises. The bobcat finally started and Baker pushed the dead horse out of the barn into the back parking lot.



Green slaughter tag still attached

At 5 pm, everyone had left the auction and there was no more activity.

1/17/09

Baker's horses were still in the pens. We observed several horses with yellowish nasal discharge. One horse had an ear injury which was bleeding heavily and appeared to be fresh.



Horse with nasal discharge



Workers arrived to feed the horses; the dead horse was still lying in the parking lot. After the workers left, there was no more activity for the day.

1/18/09

6pm:

A red Sugarcreek truck with the single deck trailer backed up to the loading ramp. All lights were turned on inside the barn and we could see the workers moving the horses to the loading ramp. At 7.18pm the truck left the premises. One pen of horses remained in the barn.

Conclusions:

- It appears that Baker has changed his schedule and is no longer transporting horses immediately after the sale;
- The conditions for the horses at the auction remain poor. The handling is still rough and the pens are overcrowded after the sale. Again, one dead horse and one injured horse were found. No veterinary care was observed.
- The dead horse was left in the parking lot for days.