

## Catering supplier says 'Neigh' to horsemeat

By now everyone knows that there has been horse meat found in beef products across the country and in Ireland. Local people gave us their opinions on the scandal.

A young mother told us that she would not eat horsemeat herself because she likes horses and would find it difficult to eat the meat because of this. She would not give her child any horse meat even if it was labelled as such.

Two other people who worked in local business also described having strong feelings about not eating horsemeat as they have kept horses themselves and see them more as pets rather than a source of meat.

All the members of the general public we spoke to felt that it was important to make the testing of meat products better and stricter so that it is clear what is in any meat product.

Even though no horsemeat has been found in the county, the Oxfordshire catering company who supply the school with food products decided to take beef off the menu for school dinners as a precaution. They swapped beef meat for lamb and replaced beef burgers with chicken burgers.

Our Catering Assistant Nikki told us that this hadn't given her any problems with the menu and Parents and Governors hadn't made any comments due to the prompt response of the catering company.

Due to the comments from the public, we felt it would be interesting to see the responses from our students so we took a cross section of Key stage 3 and 4 students and asked them to tell us how they felt.

Owen in KS3 said that although he had not really noticed a change to the dinner menu he thought it was a good idea to be cautious and take beef off the menu for a while.

Jemima, also in KS3, said that as horses are her favourite animal then no way would she ever eat horsemeat, even if it was labelled as that.

It was a slightly different story in KS4 as Louise told us she would try horsemeat if she knew what it was, and as a teenager with a healthy appetite, Mark said that 'Food is food and I wouldn't be bothered if I ate horse'.

So it seems that people feel that we should be cautious about what we eat but that testing is important and that we should always know what we are about to eat so we can make an informed decision.

It remains to be seen whether this story will continue to gallop along or whether it will slow down to a trot and eventually pull up but it seems we are all agreed that we should not gamble where our food is concerned.

Report compiled by BBC School News Reporters: Chris, Christopher, Daniyal, Matt, Michael and Tom.