

# Govt bans slaughter of donkeys

## TORORO

By Faustine Odeke

The Government has banned the sale and purchase of donkeys for slaughter at animal markets across the country and has also ordered the immediate closure of all donkey slaughter facilities.

Pius Wakabi Kasajja, the agriculture ministry permanent secretary, in a circular dated August 18 to the Tororo chief administrative officer, said the measure is intended to preserve the donkey for the welfare of communities that depend on it.

"It has been established that trade in donkeys for slaughter is growing quite fast because of the lucrative market for donkey hides in China," the circular reads.

"This has unintended negative consequences mainly on poor households and the women and youth that depend on donkeys for transporting water, firewood, construction materials, people, farm produce, livestock feed and for transporting harvests to the market," the document reads.

"Donkeys remain the cheapest, most convenient and consistent means of transporting goods in the rural areas of eastern and north eastern Uganda, where the terrain is inaccessible by other

## *Buyers and sellers of more than three donkeys will need verification*

modes of transportation" the circular read.

Wakabi said the buyers and sellers of three or more donkeys will have to verify whether they are intended for agriculture purposes and make an undertaking that they will not sell the animals for the period of six months from the date of the purchase.

He added that the monitoring committees at the district level will be set up to implement the directive, which also prohibits donkeys purchased from animal markets to be sold outside the country without permission of the monitoring committee.

The circular that was also copied to the resident district commissioner, LC5 chairperson, district production officer and the district veterinary officer, serves as a directive to close

the Tororo Donkey Meat Processing Factory located in Oriyoi village on the Tororo-Malaba highway.

Cattle traders in Karamoja have turned to dealing in donkeys because of the lucrative nature of the new trade.

Currently, trade in donkeys is booming in the pastoralist communities of Karamoja in Uganda and Turkana in Kenya.

High demand for donkeys comes from Chinese traders who deal in donkey products in Tororo.

Chinese buy donkey hides which they boil to produce gelatine, one of the key ingredients in a medicine called *ejiao*. *Ejiao* is used to treat conditions such as anaemia, heavy menstruation, as well as dry coughs.

On a good day, one can sell four donkeys for about sh4m.

Trade in donkeys has greatly affected the prices of other livestock such as cows, goats, sheep and camels.

Although the National Environmental Management Authority closed the Tororo-based Hua Cheng Uganda Company Ltd in May over failure to observe proper waste management, the operator has continued to import donkeys which are said to be slaughtered daily at night without permission.

## Scope of Work for

### Background to CBS:

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