

4 JANUARY 2008

## EQUINE INFLUENZA

### CHIEF VETERINARY OFFICER COMMUNICATION # 20

## FOR ALL VETERINARIANS

### Update on movement requirements for horses including foals

The current equine influenza (EI) control and eradication program places restrictions on movements of horses, particularly from higher risk areas, e.g. red and purple zones, to lower risk areas, e.g. green and amber zones. I am writing to advise you how some of these requirements relate to the movement of foals. I recommend that you are proactive in advising your clients of these requirements and encouraging them to urgently seek vaccination of their foals where appropriate.

Many horse movements require evidence of the immune status of the horse. The immune status of young foals can be difficult to determine as a positive antibody result can indicate that the foal has been infected, is recovered and has the same immunity as a recovered adult horse, or simply that the foal has received colostral antibodies from its dam and has some degree of short-term protection.

Before certifying a foal as recovered you must have clear evidence that the foal was infected with EI, e.g. date that infection was confirmed on the property, a history of clinical signs in the foal itself and positive serology.

If a proposed foal movement is contingent on immunity and you do not have clear evidence that the foal has been infected and is recovered, the foal must be vaccinated as soon as possible.

If a recovered mare is being moved to a lower risk area and is accompanied by a foal that is not certified as recovered, owners should be aware that the mares will have to undertake the same periods in isolation or quarantine as that required for the foal.

Applications for vaccination are available on the DPI external website under 'Forms and templates' at: <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/horse/influenza/information/vets>. In the Purple Zone the application may be made to the LDCC using the form: 'Vaccination request for horses in the Purple Zone'. In other zones the appropriate form is entitled 'Vaccination outside buffers and the purple zone', and the application will need approval as a movement vaccination which will be at owner's expense.

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (4 January 2008). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of New South Wales Department of Primary Industries or the user's independent adviser.