



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Through: Dr Katie Flynn, KY State Veterinarian/Executive Director
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**2021 Occurrences of Equine Herpes Virus Type-1
Kentucky's Perspective and Position Updated: March 7, 2021**

OVERVIEW

In the past 7 days we have learned of multiple occurrences of EHV1 impacting equine events throughout the world. Additionally, as we are coming to the time of year that we historically see an increase in movement of equine exhibition and racing stock into Kentucky, I want to remind all associated parties that mitigating risk of disease introduction is a shared responsibility that requires commitment from each individual exhibitor, trainer, event managers, facility operators, veterinarians, and animal health officials. Facility managers and the managers of shows/exhibitions planned to be held in Kentucky should immediately review their biosecurity practices and if needed elevate their biosecurity plan to minimize opportunity of horses having direct or indirect contact with one another. Indirect contact would include common water and feed sources as well as shared equipment and congregating in common areas. The goal of a biosecurity plan is to prevent the transmission of infectious agents among individuals and the components of a successful program will include cooperation of management, facility layout, decontamination, and when applicable immunization. Each of these factors directly affects the success or failure of the program. Copies of the American Association of Equine Practitioners biosecurity guidelines can be downloaded at <https://aaep.org/site-search?search=biosecurity> or the Equine Disease Communication Centers website www.equinediseasecc.org. The documents provide good general guidance of practices that should be routinely implemented, and we encourage show managers to share these directions with all exhibitors. Additionally, our office is happy to assist facilities, show management and event veterinarians in evaluating their individual plans and when a need is identified, assist in adopting and implementing a defined plan.

FLORIDA STATUS

I did earlier today speak with the Florida State Veterinarian overseeing the EHV1 investigation and management of the disease incident in Ocala Florida. As of today, there continues to be a single barn on the Ocala facility with EHV1 cases confirmed by diagnostic testing. The barn remains under quarantine and activity on the premises is being monitored by animal health officials. Equine presenting with evidence or suspicion of illness are being isolated and tested.

FLORIDA (Marion County) > KENTUCKY MOVEMENT

We appreciate the proactive action taken by the Florida Department of Agriculture to mitigate further transmission of EHV1. With the epidemiologic investigation still in its early stages, the status of potentially exposed horses unknown, and the potential risk of fomite (human) transmission to other facilities during the days preceding the diagnosis, Dr. Flynn and I both feel we are justified in stipulating that in addition to our normal entry requirements, horses destined to KY from the Ocala area (identified as Marion County) be examined and a certificate of veterinary inspection (CVI) issued during the 72hr period preceding the horse's arrival at the KY destination. The examination and issuance of the CVI should be performed by a veterinarian familiar with the individual horse and the environment from which it originates and with confidence the horse has not been recently exposed to a reportable disease. We will continue to monitor the activity in Florida and plan to reevaluate the CVI 72hr CVI policy during the week ending Sunday, March 21st.

European Union EHV1 Concerns: Available Testing Options for Importing Horses

Importation and Preplanning

We continue to gather and assess information describing multiple outbreaks of Equine herpesvirus 1 impacting equine events in several European countries. Reports published yesterday suggest there are now six countries with confirmed cases: Spain, Germany, Belgium, France, Sweden and a case in Qatar that is apparently linked to the European outbreak.

USDA announced this past Friday that horses importing through federal quarantine facilities can be sampled while completing quarantine will be allowed to be sampled with those samples sent by permit to a USDA approved laboratory for EHV1 testing by PCR. To schedule and accomplish testing, horsemen should work with their importing broker/agent to arrange for the samples to be collected, submitted, and tested. USDA has advised us that results of the testing will be reported and shared before the horse releases from quarantine and that a positive result will not delay release of the animals so long as there is no fever or other symptoms detected. Our horsemen need to preplan and insure they have suitable space available to isolate and quarantine any horse that is reported positive. After the horse(s) arrives in KY, we will work with the farm and attending veterinarians to better understand as quickly as possible the individual animal's disease status and associated risk it may pose.