

Horse News and Views



Outbreaks of the neurological form of herpesvirus (EHV-1) have occurred in standardbred horses in Truro, Nova Scotia, and Northville Downs, Michigan. Outbreaks of strangles (*Strep. equi*) have occurred recently in thoroughbred horses in Florida and Kentucky and riding horses in California. These outbreaks should not be a surprise to any horse owner, since these are common pathogens that circulate in the horse population. The horse population is highly mobile and, therefore, horse diseases can spread from one location to another in the time it takes to load and trailer a horse to a new location.

Barn/track operators can reduce their risk of introducing an infectious disease by requiring:

- a veterinary certificate stating that the horse(s) was not exposed to, or originate from, a barn or premise where an infectious disease was confirmed or suspected.
- the taking and recording of rectal temperatures for at least seven days after arrival. Horses with a fever must be examined by a veterinarian and the findings reported to the barn/track operator.
- when possible, a quarantine of 2-3 weeks in a separate barn/location to protect the resident horses.

The second line of defence is protecting horses from infectious diseases by vaccinating horses with vaccines that most closely mimic the circulating wild virus. Older vaccines may not provide protection against current strains of the virus(es). Your veterinarian will design a vaccination program for your horse which best suits its needs.

For more information on biosecurity and horse diseases visit the Ministry website at www.gov.on.ca/OMAF/english/livestock/horses/health.html

For further information contact Dr. Bob Wright (519) 846-3412 or visit our website: <http://www.gov.on.ca/omaf/english/livestock>



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