

GUIDELINES FOR VETERINARIANS CALLED TO INVESTIGATE RESPIRATORY DISEASE AT A HORSE EVENT IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Equine Influenza has not been detected in Western Australia.

Industry and government remain on high alert for equine influenza and recognise the potential for introduction of the virus to Western Australia with contaminated personnel and horse gear.

Biosecurity guidelines have been developed for horse events in Western Australia. These guidelines indicate that if horse(s) are detected with respiratory disease, the event organiser is required to call a veterinarian to assess the horse(s).

The following guidelines should be followed when investigating cases of respiratory disease at a horse event in Western Australia.

1. Ensure that you have sampling gear and are familiar with sampling procedures (procedures and lab submission forms available on the DAFWA website
http://www.agric.wa.gov.au/content/pw/ah/equine_influenza_visiting.pdf)

(Note: the viral transport medium is best kept frozen, but can still be used if thawed and re-frozen, or kept at ambient temperature for a day. What is most critical is that the swab is kept cold after collection).

2. Ensure that you have biosecurity gear and are familiar with biosecurity procedures (see http://www.agric.wa.gov.au/content/pw/ah/equine_influenza_visiting.pdf)
3. Collect details of owner and horse on attached form:
4. Clinically assess the sick horse(s)
5. Collect history including any:
 - contact with personnel or introduced horse gear within the previous 7 days from infected properties or areas in the eastern states.
 - history of respiratory disease in horses at the property of origin
6. Assess the index of suspicion based on the attached form for discussion with the DAFWA veterinarian on the Emergency Animal Disease hotline who will assist in making the assessment.

No Suspicion

Low index of suspicion

Sample the horse (10 ml clotted blood plus nasal swab), and call the Emergency Animal Disease hotline (1800 675 888) to arrange sample submission.

If you have concerns or wish to consult DAFWA, please call the Emergency Animal Disease hotline (1800 675 888).

Inform the event organiser/animal health officer (steward) about your actions. The decision on whether to send the horse home is dependent on the event organiser's policy and contingency plan.

High index of suspicion

Sample the horse(s) as described in the sampling procedures

- 10 ml clotted blood
- nasal swab into virus transport medium (or in a few drops of normal saline as last resort)

Call the Emergency Animal Disease hotline (1800 675 888) immediately

- arrange submission of samples
- the DAFWA veterinarian will advise whether the event should be cancelled and horses already present should be placed in lock down (quarantine) or whether the event should continue.

Inform the event organiser/animal health officer about your actions

Assessment of Index of Suspicion for Equine Influenza

To be used as a guide to assess the probable index of suspicion for EI and for discussion with the emergency animal disease hotline veterinarian (1800 675 888).

Clinical Signs	√
Off-feed or depressed	
Dry, hacking cough	
Bilateral nasal discharge (watery, mucous, mucopurulent or purulent)	
Temperature (< 38.4°C)	
Temperature (38.4 – 39°C)	
Temperature (> 39°C)	
In-contact horses have the above clinical signs	
History	
Recent contact (last 7 days) at the property of origin with horses from the infected eastern states	
Recent contact (last 7 days) at the property of origin with people who've had horse contact in the infected eastern states	
Recent contact (last 7 days) at the property of origin with tack or horse equipment from the infected eastern states	
Recent contact (last 7 days) at the property of origin with horse transport vehicles from the infected eastern states	
Previous history of respiratory disease in this or in-contact horses	
Vaccination for EI	

High index of suspicion should be considered if:

- Clinical signs suggestive of EI (in order of importance - dry hacking cough, bilateral nasal discharge and fever (> 39°C)), and
- more than 1 horse with clinical signs at the property of origin, and there maybe a
- recent history of contact with horses, people, tack or vehicles from the infected eastern states

CALL EMERGENCY ANIMAL DISEASE HOTLINE PHONE 1800 675 888

Low index of suspicion should be considered if:

- Variable clinical signs of respiratory disease with mild fever, and
- no clinical signs in in-contact horses, and
- no history of recent inter-state contacts

Details to be collected from owner

Owner's Name:		
Postal address:		
Phone:	Home:	Work:
	Mob:	
Horse currently residing at		
Normal Location of horse (if different from above)		

Animal's Details

Name of Horse:	
Brand or Microchip	
Description (Age, sex, breed, colour):	

Clinical Signs, Onset:

History: including recent contact with horses, people, tack or vehicles from the infected eastern states, number of horses affected, previous history of respiratory disease and vaccination status:

Vet Name:
Contact Details:
Date: