

The cases of neurological EHV-1 in OR, totaling 4 to date, all appear to be associated with a regional high school equestrian team event held in the Willamette Valley about 3 weeks ago. There have been a total of four horses diagnosed with neurotropic EHV-1, all attended the OHSET event. No Washington horses were at that event. Three stable mates of the index case did attend a trail riding clinic at the Oregon Horse Center on April 25-26. There were 14 Washington horse owners with horses at the clinic. We sent out a letter to make them aware that there was a possibility that their horses could have been exposed to the disease, and recommending that they report any untoward signs in their horses to us. None of the stable mates ever developed any signs of illness and we have received no reports of ill horses from the WA owners we notified.

We have ratcheted up our entry requirements for horses from Oregon, in light of the situation. We are requiring a statement on CVI or passport that the animals are free from clinical signs or known exposure to any infectious disease, and are requiring an entry permit number to be recorded on the CVI/passport. We also want each horse's temperature recorded on the document. It is wise for the CVI to be issued as close to departure for WA as possible. Be aware that we also have special restrictions and requirements in place for horses from NM, AZ and UT due to vesicular stomatitis.

As far as Washington horse owners and event planners...I have suggested that event planners require a temperature record on each horse brought to the event grounds that documents temperature for the 3 days leading up to entry onto the grounds, and continues with daily temperature recorded during the event. It is also prudent for the event organizers to have the ability to isolate any sick horses quickly to minimize spread of disease agents. This means physically isolating them, AND logistically isolating them as well (don't have same caretakers, no foot traffic from isolation area to exhibition barns, etc). The reality is that protecting our livestock from diseases at shows and events relies on the integrity and diligence of all involved. E.g., if temperature logs are required, owners should actually take the horses' temperatures and record them accurately, and event organizers should actually review them at check-in! Owners must be willing to withdraw from an event (or tell their children that they cannot go to the show) if any of their stock are ill. This does not mean just the stock entered in the event...it also means other livestock at home as well.

The biggest problem with the EHV-1 situation is that the onset is often exacerbated by stress, so the animals get to the event and THEN break with signs. As we have seen from past outbreaks at racetracks and at the cutting horse event in Utah a couple of years ago, outbreaks can potentially involve a LOT of animals.

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