

DATE: May 17, 2011 2:32:18 PM MDT

Utah Department of Agriculture and Food investigates equine herpes virus

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The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food is investigating cases of Equine Herpes Virus (EHV-1) within the state. There have been several cases of the disease in horses from surrounding states that returned from the National Cutting Horse Association's Western National Championships (NCHA) that was held at the Golden Spike Event Center in Ogden, Utah from April 29 to May 8.

This highly contagious disease which spreads rapidly can result in the death of the animal. If horses become infected with this disease that were not at the NCHA in Ogden, the state veterinarian will recommend at that time that all events involving horses, mules and burros be cancelled in Utah. Horses will still be allowed to travel into and out of the state (please call the state of destination before travel).

There have been cases of the disease in Colorado and Washington which resulted in the quarantine of the veterinary teaching hospitals in Fort Collins, Colo., and Pullman, Wa. This disease appears to be highly infectious and has resulted in numerous secondary cases.

- Horses have been euthanized after showing severe neurological signs associated with the disease.
- EHV-1 is not transmissible to people
- It can be a serious disease of horses that can cause respiratory, neurologic disease and death.
- The most common way for EHV-1 to spread is by direct horse-to-horse contact.
- The virus can also spread through the air, contaminated equipment, clothing and hands.

Symptoms include fever, decreased coordination, nasal discharge, urine dribbling, loss of tail tone, hind limb weakness, leaning against a wall or fence to maintain balance, lethargy, and the inability to rise. While there is no cure, the symptoms of the disease may be treatable. Horse owners should watch their horses carefully and call their veterinarian if any abnormal signs are observed:

- Voluntary isolation of those horses is encouraged with a minimum of two temperatures taken and recorded per day on each horse.
- Notify your veterinarian of your attendance at the competition.
- If there is any increase in body temperature or abnormal clinical signs in any of your horses, notify your veterinarian immediately.

Additional Resources:

- [A Guide To Understanding the Neurologic Form of EHV Infection](#)
- [USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service Resources](#)
- [American Association of Equine Practitioners Fact Sheet](#)

Up-to-date information will be posted at UtahEmergencyInfo.com and on the Department of Agriculture and Food's [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

Questions about the disease, not answered by the links above, may be submitted by clicking [here](#).

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