



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SUSPECTED EQUINE HERPES CASES REPORTED IN TENNESSEE

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The Tennessee Department of Agriculture has received reports of suspected cases of Equine Herpes Virus (EHV-1) infection in horses that participated in a recent trail ride in Tennessee.

Six to 8 suspected cases of the neurological form of EHV-1 have been reported to the state veterinarian's office. Horses are being treated, isolated and monitored by their attending veterinarian.

The horses may have been exposed to EHV-1 during the Bucksnot Trail Ride held April 23–30 in Humphreys County. The event drew approximately 100 horses from multiple states. The movement of horses that attended the event is being restricted on a case by case basis.

TDA animal health officials are working with event organizers, neighboring state veterinarians and private veterinarians to identify other horses that may have been exposed or are exhibiting symptoms.

As a precaution, State Veterinarian Charles Hatcher recommends that horse owners who participated in the Bucksnot event work with their veterinarian to restrict movement and to monitor their horses. Hatcher also recommends that isolation and monitoring continue for 28 days if any clinical signs of disease are observed. Veterinarians should report suspected neurological cases of EHV-1 to the State Veterinarian's office at 615-837-5120.

Equine Herpes Virus is highly contagious among horses but poses no threat to humans. The symptoms in horses may include a fever, nasal discharge, wobbly gait, hind-end weakness, dribbling of urine and diminished tail tone. The virus is easily spread by airborne transmission, horse-to-horse contact and by contact with nasal secretions on equipment, tack, feed and other surfaces. Caretakers can spread the virus to horses if their hands, clothing, shoes or vehicles are contaminated. The virus can cause aborted foals and can be fatal in some cases.

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The State Veterinarian also recommends that horse owners practice good biosecurity such as using your own trailer and equipment, not letting your horses touch other people's horses, disinfecting shoes and equipment, washing hands after helping others with their horses and limiting access to your farm. A downloadable brochure about horse biosecurity is available from the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services at http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/content/printable_version/HorseBioSecurity_final.pdf.

Additional Resources:

A Guide To Understanding the Neurologic Form of EHV Infection

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nahss/equine/ehv/equine_herpesvirus_brochure_2009.pdf

USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service Resources

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nahss/equine/ehv/>

American Association of Equine Practitioners Fact Sheet

http://www.aaep.org/pdfs/control_guidelines/Equine%20Herpes%20Virus.pdf

Animal health updates and alerts are also available on the Tennessee Department of Agriculture's website at www.tn.gov/agriculture.

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