



United States
Department of
Agriculture

January 7, 2003

VETERINARY SERVICES MEMORANDUM NO. 591.59

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Subject: Veterinary Services Policy for the Quarantine and Testing of Horses
Imported into the United States for Special Events

Animal and Plant
Health Inspection
Service

To: Directors, VS Regions
Area Veterinarians in Charge, VS
State Veterinarians

Washington, DC
20250

I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines concerning the quarantine and testing of horses imported into the United States for special events

II. GENERAL

The following procedures and policies have been developed for handling imported horse shipments based on U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations; Title 9, *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR), Part 93. The cooperation of airlines, brokers, Veterinary Services (VS), and other Government agencies is necessary in making these policies work to prevent the introduction of animal diseases, to provide for the safety of animals and people, and to facilitate the clearance of aircraft.

To import horses, importers must provide the following:

- An import permit and health papers;
- Customs entry;
- Transportation of horses to the quarantine facilities;
- An enclosed inspection area approved by VS;
- A veterinarian to draw blood to submit to the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) for testing; and
- Animal handlers.

Prior notification to the VS area office of horses' arrival is the responsibility of the shipper, broker, and airline involved.

III. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS

A. **Health Certificates**

Horses must be accompanied by a proper veterinary health certificate issued by a salaried national veterinary officer from the government of the country of origin, or by a licensed veterinarian of the country of origin and endorsed by a Ministry of Agriculture official. This certificate must state the following:



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1. The animals described on the certificate have been in the country of origin during the 60 days preceding exportation;
2. Each animal has been inspected on the premises of origin and found free of any evidence of communicable diseases and, insofar as can be determined, exposure thereto during the 60 days preceding exportation;
3. Each animal has not been vaccinated with a live or attenuated or inactivated vaccine during the 14 days preceding exportation;
4. As far as it can be determined, no cases of African horse sickness, dourine, glanders, vesicular stomatitis, surra, epizootic lymphangitis, ulcerative lymphangitis, equine piroplasmiasis, Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis (VDD), or equine infectious anemia (EIA), has occurred on the premises of origin or on adjoining premises during the 60 days preceding exportation;
5. The horses have not been in any CEM affected countries as listed in 9 CFR 93.301 (c) (1). These countries are: Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Guinea-Bissau, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Member States of the European Union, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and the Isle of Man), and the non-recognized areas of the former Yugoslavia (Montenegro and Serbia). If the horses have been in one of these countries, the certificate must state that arrangements have been made for CEM testing, and that the horses have been granted a CEM waiver;
6. The horses have not been on any premises during the time such premises were officially found to be affected with CEM;
7. The horses have not been bred by or bred to any horses from premises affected with CEM; and
8. The horses have had no other contact with horses that have been found affected with CEM.

B. Initial Unloading and Disinfection

1. Arrangements must be made for immediate unloading of the horses from airplanes under VS supervision. Personnel must wear protective clothing capable of being cleaned and disinfected;
2. Carriers and/or brokers will make all arrangements, under the supervision of APHIS personnel, to dispose of excess feed, hay, straw, and manure aboard aircraft. These materials can be placed in plastic bags for incineration or for disposal in a landfill.
3. Horses will be transported from the port of entry to quarantine facilities under seal in leak-proof vehicles (vans) that have been cleaned and disinfected with an approved disinfectant. The following disinfectants are permitted:
 - Sodium carbonate (4 percent) plus sodium silicate (0.1 percent) in the proportion of one pound of sodium carbonate plus sodium silicate to three gallons of water;
 - Sodium hydroxide (lye) in the proportion of one pound in five gallons water;

- Sodium carbonate (soda ash) in the proportion of one pound in three gallons of water; and
 - Virkon S (Virkon S is not for use on airplanes. Review VS Notices and Memorandums for airplane disinfection);
4. Horses' hooves must be cleaned and disinfected with Virkon S or a sodium carbonate 4 percent solution at the quarantine site and before being loaded for transportation to the quarantine facility. Footwear of accompanying personnel must be inspected and disinfected if soiled;
 5. Horses from countries where FMD exists or horses in contact with horses from these countries are required to be sponged down with vinegar. This procedure may be performed at the quarantine facility;
 6. Horses must be free of ticks or other external parasites. Horses must be sprayed with a Delnav solution (one pint of Delnav to 25 gallons of water) or Atroban 32.5 percent EC (one pint to 100 gallons of clean water; this dilution gives a 0.53 percent concentration). The false nostril and external ear canal must also be examined and treated for ectoparasites; and
 7. Tack and accompanying equipment shall be subjected to VS inspection and disinfection upon arrival at the port of entry as a precautionary measure against the introduction of FMD or any other disease exotic to the United States.

C. Testing of Quarantined Horses

1. Arrangements must be made for immediate unloading of animals at quarantine facilities upon VS approval. Following the physical inspection and identification of horses, blood samples will be drawn for testing at NVSL, Ames, Iowa, for dourine, glanders, equine piroplasmiasis, and EIA. Any horse found to be positive for any of these diseases will be refused entry and immediately returned to the country of origin; and
2. Horses will be quarantined until negative test results are received. Horses from countries affected with VEE, screwworm, or African horse sickness will not be permitted to undergo private quarantine. While in quarantine, horses must be inspected daily by a veterinary medical officer, their temperatures must be taken and recorded, and they must be observed for clinical signs of disease.

D. Services Required to be Provided by the Carrier, Broker, Agent, or Owner

1. Cleaning and disinfection of equipment, supplies, stalls, and transport vehicles. This will be done under supervision of VS personnel;
2. Provision of leak-proof vehicles for hauling horses to quarantine facility;
3. Clearance of shipment (the broker or agent must provide this service); and
4. Provision of an animal handler to handle animals and accompany them to the quarantine facility.

E. Quarantine Facilities

1. VS and temporary quarantine facility operators must have a signed compliance agreement; all conditions listed in the agreement must be met by facility operators prior to the issuance of permits for horses;
2. Quarantine facilities must be capable of being cleaned and disinfected, and must be approved by a VS veterinarian before receiving animals;
3. Visitors are not allowed in quarantine areas at any time while horses are in quarantine. Facility personnel may not come into contact with other horses for five days. However, importers (or importers' authorized agents or veterinarians) may be admitted into the yards and buildings containing their quarantined horses at such intervals as may be deemed necessary and under such conditions and restrictions as may be imposed by the inspector-in-charge of the quarantine area. The inspector-in-charge of the quarantine facilities will prepare a list of the persons authorized to have access to the quarantine area and facilities. Only persons related to the training and care of the horses may have access to quarantined horses. Foreign veterinarians who have access to the quarantine area must have documents showing their accreditation in their country of origin. If any horses need veterinary care, such care will be provided by an accredited private veterinarian under the supervision of a VS veterinarian;
4. The quarantine area will be guarded 24 hours a day during the duration of the special event, the main gates of the area will be locked at all times. The access of personnel must be controlled until the last quarantined animal has departed. Guards are to be provided by the quarantine facility operator. All guards will abide by and enforce all orders and restrictions issued to them by the inspector-in-charge of the quarantine area; and
5. Quarantine facilities must be surrounded by a security fence. The fence must be maintained intact and in good condition. Entrance into this area will be limited to one gate for horses and vans and a second gate for personnel only. These gates will remain closed and guarded at all times during the entire stay of the horses.

F. Care of Quarantined Horses

1. Owners or agents of quarantined horses must arrange for the care, feeding, and handling of their horses from the time they arrive at the quarantine port until their release from quarantine. Feed and hay of U.S. origin may be fed to horses during their entire stay in the United States. Alternatively, horses may be fed foreign-origin feed. However, foreign-origin feed must be from sealed bags. These bags must have an intact label which cleared Plant Protection and Quarantine inspection. These bags must also be accompanied by a certificate stating that they were inspected and allowed entry. Vehicles used for supplying feed cannot enter the quarantine area;
2. Only bedding available at the special event will be permitted as bedding material. Foreign-origin hay or fodder must not be used as bedding, or otherwise, within the quarantine facility;

3. No manure shall be removed from the quarantine premises until the release of the horses producing the same. Waste effluents from the quarantine area should not come in contact with local horses. Waste may be buried under the supervision of a VS veterinarian; and
4. Horses in private quarantine will not be allowed outside of the quarantine facility building until all required entry tests are shown to be negative. These horses may be exercised in an area inside the quarantine building.

G. After Quarantine

1. After being released from initial private quarantine restrictions, horses subject to CEM isolation may be exercised and trained outside of the quarantine facility under the supervision of VS personnel or an accredited veterinarian. These horses may exercise/train with other horses under VS supervision or an accredited veterinarian;
2. Horses on CEM waivers must be returned to the country of origin following completion of the itinerary specified on the import permit. These horses may be eligible to remain in the United States if owners or importers apply for and receive new import permits that specify that stallions or mares will be moved to an approved State for CEM testing as appropriate or necessary. These horse must also meet other requirements listed in 9 CFR 93.301 (f)(6);
3. After quarantine, horses will travel from quarantine facilities to the aircraft under seal. VS personnel are required to supervise the loading and departure of the aircraft; and
4. If a horse dies or must be euthanized while in quarantine, the owner/operator of the facility must make arrangements for the proper disposal of the carcass. The owner/operator must also provide an area for necropsy or have an agreement with a local veterinary diagnostic laboratory for the necropsy to be conducted.

If you have questions regarding these policies and procedures, please contact the National Center for Import and Export at (301) 734-3277.

/s/

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Veterinary Services