

Equine Health Operational Plan

Fiscal Year 2018

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Veterinary Services

Veterinary Services (VS), Surveillance, Preparedness, and Response Services (SPRS) protects and improves the health, quality, and marketability of our nation's equines by preventing, controlling or eliminating equine diseases; conducting surveillance and monitoring; and promoting equine health. The SPRS Equine Health Program works in close cooperation with industry, State Animal Health Officials, and Federal partners to deliver high-quality and comprehensive equine health services. The SPRS Equine Health Program also works in partnership with VS' National Import Export Services (NIES) and Science, Technology, and Analysis Services (STAS) to provide comprehensive equine health services to the sector.

Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Priority Activities for the Equine Health Program

Objective 1: Prepare for and respond to high consequence equine diseases that threaten the equine population, industry, or public health.

- **Activity 1.1:** Plan, investigate, respond, and assist States and industry with the response to findings of EIA, EP, VSV, CEM, and other equine diseases of high impact or concern.
- **Activity 1.2:** Continue to assist National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) in approval, oversight, and inspection of over 450 approved EIA laboratories.
- **Activity 1.3:** Continue to assist NVSL efforts to improve diagnostic capabilities for *Taylorella equigenitalis* detection in swabs and semen.
- **Activity 1.4:** Continue the use of the approved high-dose imidocarb treatment program to eliminate transmission risk from known *Theileria equi*-infected horses permanently. Continue to support States in quarantine release of treated horses that meet the VS established criteria for release.

Objective 2: Conduct comprehensive disease and health monitoring and surveillance.

- **Activity 2.1:** Engage internal and external stakeholders and provide feedback on the draft Equine Comprehensive and Integrated Surveillance (CIS) Plan. Finalize the draft after receiving stakeholder input and post the Plan to the APHIS website.
- **Activity 2.3:** Issue VS Guidance Document 15201.1, "Approval of Laboratories to Conduct EIA Testing." Conduct educational and compliance outreach to laboratories and State and Federal officials. Begin collection of EIA testing data delivered via direct reporting from EIA-approved laboratories.
- **Activity 2.4:** In partnership with NIES, provide equine disease and epidemiologic expertise for the 2018 World Equestrian Games in Tryon, NC.

- **Activity 2.5:** Contribute equine expertise to VS' implementation of the Emerging Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Plan and the NLRAD Framework.
- **Activity 2.6:** Continue to support active EP surveillance testing in high-risk equine populations and issue national situation reports, as warranted.
- **Activity 2.7:** In partnership with public health authorities, assist the One Health Coordination Center, CEAH, and NVSL in providing national level information on zoonotic diseases that can affect equidae (such as rabies; glanders; West Nile virus; and Eastern, Western, and Venezuelan Equine Encephalitis).

Objective 3: Conduct education and outreach to provide science-based equine health and disease information to decision makers and stakeholders.

- **Activity 3.1:** Produce comprehensive reports and situation reports and serve as a clearinghouse for information on equine regulatory or high-impact disease outbreaks, such as EIA, EP, VSV, and CEM.¹
- **Activity 3.2:** Augment VS' mission of dissemination of equine disease, disease outbreaks, and biosecurity information by providing equine disease regulatory expertise for the EDCC. This industry initiative utilizes technology and modern media to ameliorate disease spread and minimize business and trade disruption by providing vetted information from State and Federal officials directly to organizers and owners.
- **Activity 3.3:** Coordinate USDA input and provide VS specific feedback and edits to the industry-developed National Equine Health Plan.
- **Activity 3.4:** Participate in select stakeholder meetings to share information, demonstrate scientific and regulatory expertise, as well as establish and maintain contacts to deliver high-quality and efficient customer service, including the following meetings:
 - U.S. Animal Health Association (USAHA); San Diego, California; October 12-18, 2017.
 - American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP): San Antonio, Texas; November 16-21, 2017.
 - Equine Sector Meeting; Washington, D.C.; February 15, 2018.
 - American Horse Council (AHC) annual meeting; Washington, D.C.; June 10-13, 2018.

Objective 4: Provide veterinary support and consultation to the APHIS/BLM Wild Horse and Burro Partnership.

- **Activity 4.1:** Provide expert consultation and veterinary support to the BLM in the areas of animal care, health, handling, research, and welfare, as requested.
- **Activity 4.2:** Coordinate partnership activities, conduct field activities, and advise BLM on a national and local basis.

¹ These reports are available on the APHIS Web page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-health/equine-health>.

Objective 5: Protect the health and well-being of equines through enforcement of CTESA regulations.

- **Activity 5.1:** Conclude a VS-level Business Process Improvement plan for VS' enforcement of CTESA regulations. Present recommendations to VS leadership and, following their guidance, develop an implementation strategy.
- **Activity 5.2:** Conduct compliance and enforcement of CTESA regulations as permitted under congressional appropriations legislation.
- **Activity 5.3:** Upon request, conduct outreach to State personnel, Livestock and Brand Inspectors, and Department of Transportation Commercial Truck Inspectors to increase awareness of CTESA regulations and ensure the humane and safe transport of equines for slaughter.
- **Activity 5.4:** Maintain enforcement of CTESA through rapid and thorough referrals for investigation of violations involving equine welfare or safety or purposeful attempts to circumvent regulations.

Objective 6: Prevent the introduction of foreign animal disease and facilitate trade.

- **Activity 6.1:** Participate in a multi-unit VS working group to review current import testing protocols (EIA, EP, Glanders, and Dourine) and recommend changes, as appropriate.