



AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS TRUST

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AHS Vaccination Campaign 2008

The Trust's third annual AHS vaccination campaign has been concluded. The main objective is to raise the level of immunity against the virus by supplying and administering free AHS vaccinations to horse owners in the indigent population. To date, the areas targeted are those deemed to pose a serious threat to the formal, high value equine sectors as well as South Africa's AHS Controlled Area (export zone).

An indirect benefit of the vaccination campaigns has been to raise awareness of the disease and via a network of State and Private veterinarians, volunteers and other interested parties, to leave behind the knowhow and responsibility of continuing the programme in subsequent years. Hence, this year's campaign focused on the Eastern Cape and in particular the immense challenge that the Transkei poses to the equine communities south of the Kei River.

The AHS Trust acknowledges the contribution made by the following organizations: Racing South Africa, Onderstepoort Biological Products (OBP), Cape Breeders Club, Provincial State Vet Departments and private Veterinarians, Equine Research Centre, University of KZN and local equine volunteers. A detailed report on this year's campaign will be available on the AHS Trust website in due course.

Outbreak Status AHS 2009 (early reports)

Suspected cases of AHS have been reported in the Newcastle (KZN) and Mpumalanga areas which is in keeping with recent trends. Samples have been collected and are in the process of being analysed. Due to the current and forecasted climatic conditions an increase in the number of cases is anticipated.

Now that South Africa is entering its high risk season, the AHS Trust recommends the following to all horse owners:

- Implementation of **preventative measures** such as:
 - Stabling between dusk and dawn
 - Regular application of repellents
 - Regular monitoring of temperatures
- **Reduce** the number of **non-essential movements** of horses
- **Never to move horses away from known outbreak areas** as this potentially can perpetuate the outbreak by introducing virus into new areas
- **Report all suspected cases** immediately to your local veterinarian (State and Private) and via the AHS Trust website: www.africanhorsesickness.co.za

- **The Department of Agriculture official case reporting form can be found on the abovementioned website**

Horse Movements into AHS Controlled Area

The single greatest threat to South Africa's export status is the introduction of AHS virus by the movement of infected horses into the AHS Controlled Area (in the Western Cape) from other parts of the country.

2010 might be the focus for the world's football community, but it also marks two prestigious international equestrian events. Dubai's new Meydan Racecourse will be opened in what promises to be a spectacular Dubai International Racing Carnival in January and the Altech FEI World Equestrian Games is scheduled to take place in Kentucky USA in September. The cream of South Africa's equine athletes are being aimed at these events and Kenilworth Quarantine Station, South Africa's world class export facility, is preparing to accommodate their every need. Maintaining South Africa's AHS Free status is, therefore, essential to assist in this process.

As a reminder, horses wishing to enter the AHS Controlled Area from areas suspected of being infected with AHS virus will be affected by movement restrictions imposed by the South African State Veterinary Authority.

Thus all horse owners or those in positions of responsibility should make provision for such movement restrictions which could include a 21 day step-wise movement in Beaufort West.

For further detail, please contact:

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Road Blocks

As a new initiative to assist State Vet Boland monitor movements during the next AHS high risk season, the AHS Trust, in association with the Department of Transport in the Western Cape, will stage random roadblocks at strategic points within the AHS Controlled Area.

For general enquiries and information, please contact:

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Donations

All donations, no matter how small, are gratefully received. If you would like to make a contribution, please contact AHS Trust Secretariat, Sheila de Villiers, on the contact details provided above.

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