



**New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets
Division of Animal Industry**

10 B Airline Drive
Albany, NY 12235

www.agmkt.state.ny.us/AI/AIHome.html

518-457-3502

Dear Horse Owner,

With heightened concern about horse health due to disease events like the EHV - 1 incident in the western United States and much smaller equine health incidents here in New York, we need to be on guard against the diseases that affect horses. With this in mind, the Division of Animal Industry would like to offer the following suggestions for reducing your horses' risk of exposure to serious diseases of equines.

- Talk to your veterinarian before going to horse shows, fairs, and trail rides, etc. to determine the best vaccine schedule for your horses.
- Read about EHV-1/EHM and biosecurity at *reliable* websites like AAEP (American Association of Equine Practitioners) or USDA-APHIS-VS:
http://www.aaep.org/EHV_resourcesowner.htm
http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/content/printable_version/HorseBioSecurity_final.pdf
- Thoroughly wash and disinfect items (grooming tools, bits and other equipment) before and after using on your horse(s). When material like leather can't be properly sanitized, cleaning and allowing it to dry in direct sunlight may be best.
- Use separate halters, leads, grooming equipment and tack for each horse.
- If visitors to your farm do not have clean clothing or footwear, provide disposable boots and coveralls.
- Change your clothing and footwear after working with your horses.
- Do not share equipment with other people at horse shows, fairs, trail rides, etc.
- Whenever possible, stable with at least one empty stall between your horse(s) and other horses.
- If hand washing stations are not available, keep hand sanitizer or disposable gloves available at all times.
- Disinfect vehicles and trailers prior to entering barn and pasture areas if they have been offsite or have been used for nonresident animals.
- Horses returning from veterinary hospitals, competitions, and other events at which horses come together should be isolated upon return for at least 3 weeks before mixing them with the resident animals.
- Broodmares present a special risk for EHV-1 and if your operation does include breeding, pregnant mares should generally be managed separately from the rest of the horse operation. Talk to your veterinarian.
- Be sure to have your veterinarian check your horses if any illness is noted on *any* animals after returning home.

We hope these suggestions are useful. Protecting the health of New York's equine population requires a team effort from owners, event organizers, veterinarians, and the State. The Division of Animal Industry is available to work with you and your veterinarian to help reduce the risks of infectious diseases to your herd.

Sincerely,

David Smith, DVM
State Veterinarian