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Biosecurity Guidelines for Horses

1.) New Horses who appear healthy: Regardless of where they may be coming from, but especially in situations where a new horse's medical history is unknown, caution should be used as new horses are introduced to an existing herd.

- If possible, a new horse should be kept out of touching distance with other horses on the property for 2 weeks. This means that they should not be able to touch noses, or share hay, water buckets or salt blocks with others. Ideally, personnel caring for horses on the property should clean and handle the new horse last during this transition period.
- Updating a new horse's vaccinations and/or de-worming treatment if needed is beneficial once they have been on the property at least a week and otherwise appear to be in good health. It is important to remember, however, that vaccines will take 2 weeks before being able to provide adequate disease protection.
- If a horse becomes sick AFTER their arrival on the farm, please follow the guidelines below.

2.) New Horses who appear sick or those who become ill within an existing herd: Symptoms to watch for that may indicate infectious disease include, but are not limited to; lethargy, loss of appetite, a rectal temperature at or above 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit, white/yellow or otherwise opaque nasal discharge, coughing, diarrhea, and difficulty walking coordination, neurological signs of any kind).

- If signs of illness are noted in a new or existing horse, it is strongly recommended that your veterinarian be contacted within 12 hrs of presentation, if not sooner depending on the severity, for further instructions on best course of action.
- Horses who demonstrate any of the above listed symptoms should be treated as contagious and placed in **Isolation** until proven otherwise.
- Handle horses showing symptoms of disease LAST or by a separate person than those caring for other horses on the farm.
- Keep in mind that nasal discharge, manure and other in- contact materials with the sick horse are capable of spreading disease:
 - Wear gloves and/or wash hands after handling sick horses.
 - Disinfect boots with dilute bleach and water or similar disinfectant solution.
 - Change clothes after handling sick horses.
 - Keep water buckets, feed tubs, cleaning supplies (brushes, pitch forks, wheel barrows), blankets, halters, lead ropes etc. separate from other horses.
 - Sick horses should not be able to have direct contact or share a common water or food source with any other horses during their time of illness.
 - Isolation protocols as listed above for a sick horse should remain in place for a minimum of two weeks after the last symptom of disease has resolved.

** This time frame may vary depending on the type of disease and directions given by your veterinarian.

3.) Monitoring and Treating those horses exposed: Despite your best efforts, there are many instances in which one or more horses are exposed to disease before isolation protocols can be implemented.

- Take the rectal temperature daily for 14 days post exposure to disease; if a horse's temperature rises above 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit, they should be moved into isolation and caretakers should follow the procedures listed above in 2.)
- If a horse exposed to disease begins to exhibit other symptoms of illness, they should also be moved into a quarantine level of care.
- Handling potentially exposed horses AFTER non-exposed horses is best practice if possible.

4.) Recommendations and Requirement for Horses who travel:

- Bringing your own water bucket, feed tubs, and cleaning supplies from home may cut down the risk of your horse's exposure as they travel.
- Avoid community water tubs, hay nets, and heavily populated grazing areas if possible where multiple horses are allowed to have contact.
- All horses who come in contact with outside facilities and/or horses away from home should be vaccinated for Influenza and Rhinopneumonitis (EHV-1 & EHV-4) every 6 months and *Streptococcus equi* (Strangles) once every year.
- These vaccines should be administered ideally no later than 2 weeks before traveling and showing. This allows a horse's immune system a chance to respond, offering the best quality of protection.

Further information concerning equine biosecurity can be found on the American Association of Equine Practitioners AAEP website Owners section, <http://www.aaep.org/custdocs/biosecurityguidelinesfinal030113.pdf>, and <http://www.equineguelph.ca/Tools/biosecurity.php>