



Welcome to the first issue of the Equine Health Fund Newsletter. You will have received an update from the Equine Research Centre which explains the restructure of communications to horse owners/lovers about research, export strategies, international liaison etc. In this issue you will find the following :

- Important letter from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) pertaining to AHS vaccinations;
- Presentation to Parliament;
- Rider Exchange with China is on the cards;
- Equine Health Fund represented at the SAEVA Congress;
- How you can help in the fight against African horse sickness.



LETTER FROM DAFF PERTAINING TO AHS VACCINATIONS



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Reference: 12/1/8/33/1

To: All Provincial Directors and Dr Beverly Parker of the Wits Health Consortium for distribution to all stakeholders.

NOTICE OF RESTRICTED AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS VACCINATION PERIOD AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS CONTROL POLICY

Vaccination of horses against AHS is prescribed in Table 2 of the Regulations of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act 35 of 84).

Excerpt from Table 2 of the Regulations of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act 35 of 84) relating to AHS vaccination.

Animal disease	Nature, causal organism and symptoms	Susceptible animals	Controlled veterinary act to be performed in respect of- Susceptible animals
1	2	3	4
African Horse sickness	Viral disease transmitted by biting insects and characterised by high fever, respiratory distress, subcutaneous oedema and acute death	Equines and Zebra	<p>All equines in the Republic except equines in the African Horse sickness free zone and the African Horse sickness surveillance zone as described in Table 1, shall between the ages of 6 and 12 months, then between the ages of 12 and 18 months and then again once every year thereafter be immunized with an effective remedy by the responsible person; Provided that the director in a particular case may determine that such immunization must be carried out by an officer or veterinarian.</p> <p>Equines in the African Horse sickness free zone and surveillance zone as described in Table 1 shall only be immunized with the written permission of the director.</p>

The Onderstepoort Biological Products' (OBP) AHS vaccine is the only vaccine registered for use in South Africa in terms of the Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act, 1947 (Act No. 36 of 1947) and remains the only currently approved AHS vaccine in South Africa. It is a modified live vaccine and the package insert for this vaccine clearly states that vaccination should be performed in the early summer. This is part of a period of generally low midge activity; the entire period of which is thought to stretch from June to October each year.

Midge transmission of vaccine virus may be possible. In order to help prevent such occurrences and enforce compliance with the vaccine package insert, vaccination periods have been restricted as follows:

Table showing vaccination periods

AHS Zone	Adjustment
AHS Free Zone	Permission for vaccination will only be given from 1 June 31 October each year
AHS Surveillance Zone	Permission for vaccination will only be given from 1 June to 31 October each year
AHS Protection zone	All equines in this area must be vaccinated within the period of 1 June to 31 October each year
AHS Infected Zone	Strong recommendation is made to vaccinate during the period from 1 June to 31 October each year

There are two maps attached to this Notice, one showing the AHS Controlled Areas in relation to the entire country and one showing a detailed view of the AHS Controlled Areas. Owners are encouraged to use the maps or contact their local state veterinary office if unsure of their zone. The infected zone comprises all of South Africa outside of the AHS Controlled Areas of the Western Cape Province.

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*Subject: NOTICE OF RESTRICTED AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS VACCINATION PERIOD
AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS CONTROL POLICY*

Dispensation for vaccination outside of this time in the AHS Controlled Areas must be sought from the National Director of Animal Health by an application made via the local state veterinarian and Provincial Director. No application that has not been endorsed by the Provincial Director will be considered.

We thank you for your support and consideration in this matter

Kind regards



Dr. M Maja
DIRECTOR: ANIMAL HEALTH

Date: 2015-03-26

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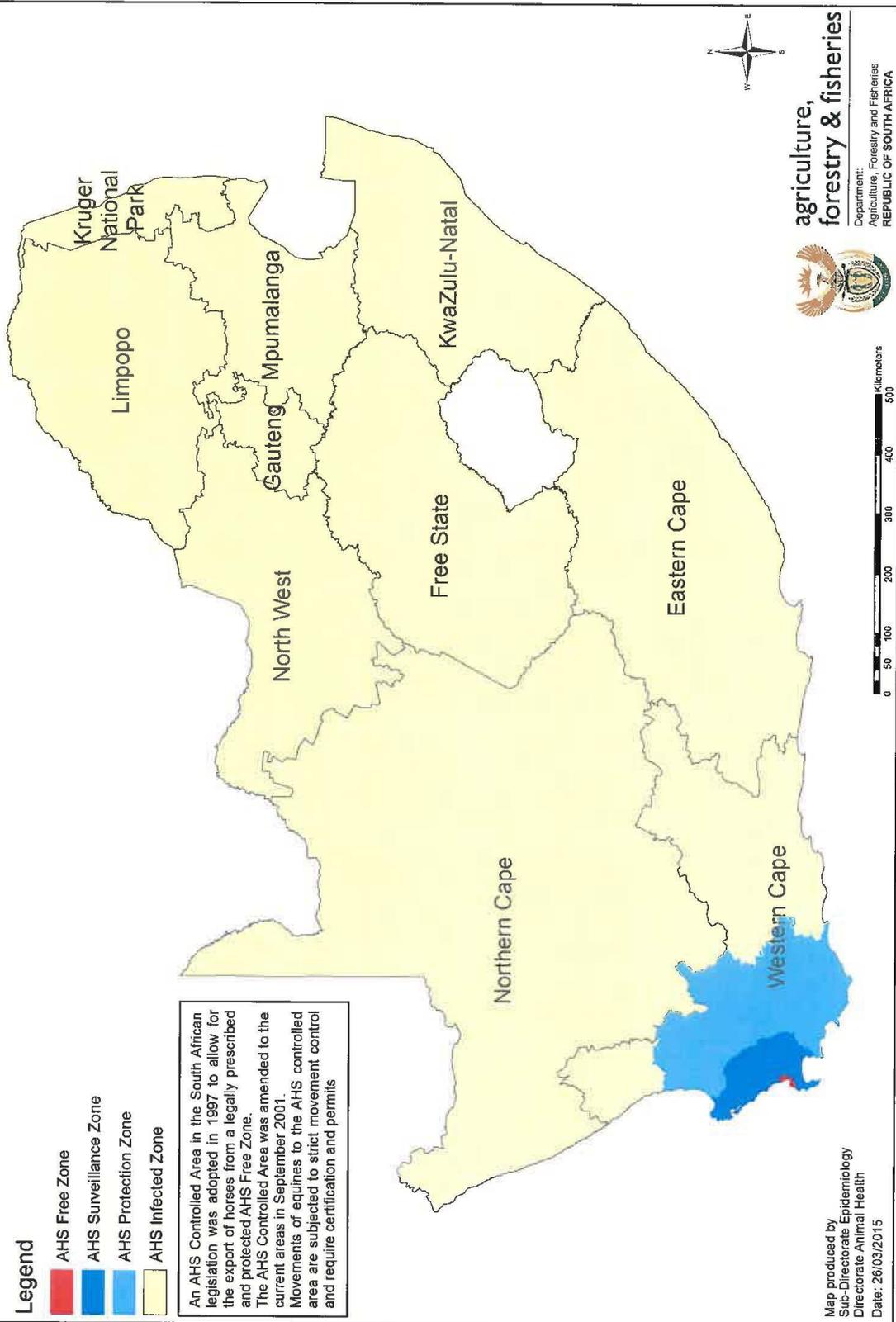
*Subject: NOTICE OF RESTRICTED AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS VACCINATION PERIOD
AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS CONTROL POLICY*

African Horse Sickness Control Zones

Legend

- AHS Free Zone
- AHS Surveillance Zone
- AHS Protection Zone
- AHS Infected Zone

An AHS Controlled Area in the South African legislation was adopted in 1997 to allow for the export of horses from a legally prescribed and protected AHS Free Zone. The AHS Controlled Area was amended to the current areas in September 2001. Movements of equines to the AHS controlled area are subjected to strict movement control and require certification and permits



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Map produced by
 Sub-Directorate: Epidemiology
 Directorate: Animal Health
 Date: 26/03/2015

AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS: THE EFFECT ON THE SA ECONOMY AND THE OLYMPIC GAMES

Representatives of the equine industry, Mr Larry Wainstein, Mr Vumile Gqomose and Dr Bennie van der Merwe (who also serves on the Equine Research Centre Management Committee and the Horse Import Export Task Team) were given the opportunity to enlighten the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Agriculture on the challenges South Africa faces with African horse sickness (AHS) and the effect this disease has on the South African economy and the possibility of South Africa hosting an Olympic Games.

Dr van der Merwe, who conducted the presentation, highlighted the impact that AHS has on the ability of SA to export horses at their full value – for instance SA horses are sold for 25% of their value owing to the onerous export protocols that are a result of AHS. It was also pointed out that the ability of SA to host the Equestrian Olympics is an integral part of the bid process and without a plan in place by 2017, the chance of a successful bid for the 2024 Olympics is unlikely. The plan depends on SA's ability to manage African horse sickness and a high level task team that includes representatives from for e.g. the Departments of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Sport and Recreation; Trade and Industry; Science and Technology, needs to be formed urgently.

A new generation vaccine for AHS, that is internationally recognised and validated, would go a long way to solving the AHS problem. A vaccine candidate (as well as a highly sensitive PCR diagnostic test) has been developed by the Equine Research Centre, University of Pretoria but funding is needed to complete the process. Just 10% of the R500 million promised by Government to Onderstepoort Biological Products will go a long way to solving the problem.

RIDER EXCHANGE WITH CHINA ON THE CARDS



LtoR : Ulrich Sanne, Bob Neill, Jim Ye, Ian Sanne, Chang Wei, Niel Kirstein, Dineo Molomo, Henning Pretorius, Clem dos Santos, Wessel Strauss, Ingeborg Sanne, Jenny Neill

In an exciting development, at a meeting with key representatives from China, who are keen to find investment opportunities as well as set up an rider invitational exchange programme with South Africa, commitments were made by both parties to make this happen. This meeting was facilitated by Prof Ian Sanne of Equine Health Fund.

The Chinese delegation included Chang Wei of the Beijing Horse Society and Jim Ye, car race circuit owner keen on investing in horse race tracks and equestrian facilities in South Africa. They are interested in the invitation of riders to compete at major events, particularly in the disciplines of Endurance, Show Jumping and Dressage. The South African contingent at the meeting included Dineo Molomo, Acting President of SAEF who committed to engage with Wei and Ye to ensure that these opportunities are acted upon. Also present at the meeting were Niel Kirstein (VP Endurance), Bob Neill (Chairman SA Showjumping) and Jenny Neill and Ingeborg Sanne (International Liaison for Dressage), who all pledged support for the initiative.

It is therefore very likely that international competition between the two countries will commence in the near future. Other opportunities discussed were the export of South African horses to China, and a competition between riders from China, UAE, France and South Africa.

EQUINE HEALTH FUND PARTICIPATES AT SAEVA CONGRESS STELLENBOSCH, FEBRUARY 2015



*LtoR : Esthea Russouw, N-J Freeman, Camilla Weyer, Phillippa Burger
(absent, Bev Parker and Danielle Pienaar)*



The Equine Health Fund took the opportunity to raise awareness of its activities at the recent SA Equine Veterinary Association (SAEVA) Congress held in Stellenbosch in February.

Considerable interest was shown in the efforts of EHF, with many delegates taking copies of the EHF Prospectus and Horse Export Strategy documents to peruse. Some were willing to pledge donations to the fund there and then, and we thank Hobday Equestrian Enterprises, EquiFeeds, Coenraad de Bruin, Glen Austin Equine Clinic, Crowthorne Veterinary Clinic and Helen Tiffin for their pledges.

YOU WANT TO HELP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST AHS? HERE'S HOW YOU CAN

The Equine Health Fund's (EHF) main purpose is to raise much needed funding to support the fight against African horse sickness and other equine diseases. If you read the Prospectus contained in the EHF website, www.equinehealthfund.co.za, you will see what a huge undertaking this will be.

There have been several requests from horse lovers wishing to contribute to this fight, and we are happy to provide you with two options :

1. Payment made directly to the Equine Health Fund. To do this, donors should complete the attached Donation Form, and e-mail proof of payment, together with the completed form to nfreeman@witshealth.co.za, and this will ensure that the funds go to the rightful project. We recommend that any donation under R1000 be paid this way.
2. Should you wish to make a larger donation (>R1 000), for which you require a Section 18A Tax Exemption Certificate, this will need to be done to the Equine Research Centre via the University of Pretoria. To make a donation, please send your details : Full Name, ID No., Postal Address (in the case of a company making the donation, also give the company name) to nfreeman@witshealth.co.za. Nora-Jean (N-J) Freeman will then forward your details to the relevant department at the University of Pretoria. Shortly thereafter you will receive a letter from UP giving you a Donor Number and a Reference Number which you need to use when making the payment. This will make sure that the funds are allocated to the Equine Research Centre. You will receive a Section 18A certificate soon thereafter.

Should you have any further queries, please don't hesitate to contact N-J Freeman.

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nfreeman@witshealth.co.za*