

EIA cases confirmed in Nebraska horses

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The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) has confirmed 12 cases of equine infectious anemia (EIA) in one horse herd located in Northwestern Nebraska. State Veterinarian Dr. Dennis Hughes said EIA affects only horses, mules and donkeys, and is usually fatal to these animals. No other animals or humans can be infected with this disease.

EIA is a blood borne disease and is typically transmitted by biting insects (such as horseflies and deerflies), but also can be transmitted from horse to horse through infected needles. There are no treatment options for infected horses, Hughes said.

Horse owners are encouraged to take biosecurity precautions to reduce the risk of infection in their herds, including: implement control measures, including husbandry practices, that reduce biting insects, such as horseflies and deerflies; follow the rule of one horse-one needle; and additions to herds should have a negative Coggins test before being allowed to intermingle with other equine. For more information related to actions to further protect horses visit: www.nda.nebraska.gov.

EIA symptoms include: fever, depression, weight loss, swelling and anemia. Producers with horses, donkeys or mules that exhibit these symptoms are urged to contact their veterinarian immediately.

Dr. Hughes reminds those who are importing horses into Nebraska for show/exhibition or other reasons to follow Nebraska's horse import regulations, which includes the requirement of a negative Coggins test—the test utilized to determine the presence of EIA. Producers with questions about import regulations should contact NDA at (402) 471-2351.