

## **Infectious Disease Outbreak Biosecurity**

### Infectious Disease Transmission

- Nose-to-nose contact between horses
- Aerosol (airborne) transmission
- Contaminated fomites such as water troughs, buckets, grooming tools, tack, handlers, etc.
- Transmission can occur from horses with no obvious symptoms

### Biosecurity Guidelines During an Outbreak

- Stop all movement of horses on and off the premises.
- Monitor rectal temperatures twice daily and any horse with a fever (>101.5) should be isolated.
- Do not fill water buckets by submerging the water hose in each bucket.
- Adequately disinfect all potentially contaminated facilities and equipment. Surfaces should be cleaned with a foaming soap agent to remove organic material, rinsed, and then thoroughly soaked in an appropriate liquid disinfectant used according to the manufacturer's guidelines and allowed to dry. Some commonly used products include bleach, quaternary ammonium compounds, phenolic compounds, potassium peroxymonosulfate, and accelerated hydrogen peroxides.
- Many disinfectants are inactivated by organic material such as dirt or manure, so it is important to clean surfaces and equipment before disinfecting.
- Use of a power washer creates risk of aerosolization of bacteria and should be avoided.
- Special attention should be paid to community surfaces such as water, hay, and feed containers.
- Create 3 color-coded groups that are separated from nose-to-nose contact:
  - Red group: Horses that have shown one or more clinical signs.
  - Orange group: Horses that have had direct or indirect contact with an infected horse in the red group and may be incubating the infection.
  - Green group: Horses that have had no known contact with affected animals.
- The rectal temperature of all horses should be measured twice daily, and any febrile horse should be moved to the red group.
- Separate buckets and other equipment should be used to ensure that indirect mixing between groups does not occur. Eliminate all sharing of water and disinfect water and feed buckets daily.
- Wherever possible, dedicated staff should be used for each color-coded group. If separate staff are not an option, staff should always move from the lowest risk to highest risk groups (from green to orange to red groups in that order and not back again).
- Disposable or dedicated clothing and boots should be used when caring for sick and exposed horses. If separate boots or disposable boot covers are not used, a disinfectant foot bath should be used to disinfect boots prior to leaving the "sick" area. Foot baths should be refreshed regularly.
- Frequent hand washing and/or use of hand sanitizer is recommended, or disposable gloves can be used.
- Even if all animals on the property have already been exposed to the sick animal, it is still worthwhile to isolate the symptomatic animal – don't think "all is lost, they are already exposed anyway". The infective "dose" and frequency is significant, and some animals may be resistant to the infection after a small amount of contact but will fall ill with repeated contact with the sick animal.

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### Preventing an Outbreak: Biosecurity Guidelines for Receiving New Horses

- Limiting exposure is the best method of prevention of an outbreak on a farm.
- Quarantine new arrivals for at least 3 weeks and take rectal temperatures twice daily.
- New arrivals can be screened with a Respiratory PCR Panel and/or infection level test (SAA).

### Preventing an Outbreak: Biosecurity Guidelines for Horse Shows and Events

- Take your horse's temperature before leaving your home property. If your horse has a fever, stay home and call your veterinarian.
- Do not use community water troughs or buckets!
- If using the facility's water source to fill your buckets, fill directly from the faucet. Do not submerge a hose in a water bucket.
- Avoid nose-to-nose contact with other horses.
- Event officials should consider a brief inspection of horses on arrival to identify signs of clinical disease such as nasal discharge or fever.