

News Release — For immediate release

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Une version française est également disponible
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Import Suspension Announced for Horses from Texas Entering Canada

Ottawa, ON—The Breeds & Industry Division of Equine Canada would like to inform all stakeholders that due to the outbreak of equine piroplasmiasis in the state of Texas, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has asked the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to suspend the issuance or endorsement of export certificates for horses and other equines originating from the state of Texas.

The imposed restrictions on the import of equidae into Canada from Texas are effective immediately. The CFIA has confirmed that the import restriction only applies to live horse, donkey or mule imports and not to equine semen or equine embryo imports.

The USDA has also been asked to provide supplementary certification for horses and other equines from other states as follows: "During the previous twenty-one (21) days, the animal(s) in this shipment has/have not been in the State of Texas."

Current import requirements for horses entering Canada may be found using the CFIA Automated Import Reference System (AIRS) at <http://airs-sari.inspection.gc.ca>. To determine specific import requirements for each horse, specific parameters that refer to each horse's circumstances will need to be entered and customized import requirements will be provided.

Equine piroplasmiasis (EP) is caused by two parasitic organisms, *Babesia equi* and *Babesia caballi*. It is primarily transmitted to equidae by ticks but this bloodborne disease can be spread mechanically from animal to animal by contaminated needles or surgical instruments.

Once infected, an equine can take 7 to 22 days to show signs of illness. Mild forms of the disease cause equines to appear weak and show lack of appetite. More acute cases can occur where EP is not common and the animals have not built up a resistance to the disease. Signs of the acute phase include fever, anemia, jaundiced mucous membranes, a swollen abdomen, laboured breathing, central nervous system disturbances, roughened-hair coats,

constipation, colic, and hemoglobinuria—a condition which gives urine a red color. In some cases, death may occur. Equidae that survive the acute phase of infection may continue to carry the parasites for long periods of time. These animals are potential sources of infection to others through tick-borne transmission or mechanical transfer by needles or surgical instruments.

EP is not endemic to the United States or Canada and some other countries but it is present in the Caribbean, South and Central America, Eastern and Southern Europe, Africa and the Middle East. The greatest risk for introduction of this disease is through the trading of animals or international equestrian sports where infected and non-infected animals are in contact. If an outbreak of EP occurs in a country such as the USA, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) must be notified and made aware of the steps that will be taken to eradicate the disease. (*Source: USDA*)

About Equine Canada Breeds & Industry Division

Equine Canada Breeds & Industry Division provides a structure for the more than 40 breed organizations operating in Canada to unite as a coalition under the national federation of Equine Canada. It provides a forum from which to seek and exchange information between Equine Canada, Canadian stakeholders, the Government of Canada and foreign entities. The Breeds & Industry Division works to promote and assist a vibrant equine industry and to affect policy in Canada. Breed organizations and industry partners share resources and expertise with unity of purpose to increase the long-term profitability of Canada's equine sector and ensure its future viability. Visit www.equinecanada.ca for complete information about the Equine Canada Breeds & Industry Division.

About Equine Canada

Equine Canada is Canada's national governing body for equestrianism. A member-driven, charitable institution, it is the executive branch of the Canadian Equestrian Team, and the national authority for equestrian competition; the national voice for recreational riders; and the national association for equine welfare, breeding, and industry. Equine Canada is recognized by the Government of Canada, the International Equestrian Federation (FEI), and the Canadian Olympic Committee as the national organization representing equestrian sport and equine interests. For more information about Equine Canada, please visit www.equinecanada.ca.