

Our Legislative Committee Chair, Ken Carpenter, predicts little change for most of us in Wisconsin when the new US Department of Agriculture rules are put in place on March 11th. These rules will improve the traceability of livestock during a disease breakout. This new plan will simply replace the existing 30-day Health Certificate that we are familiar with for most interstate transportation of equine.

Horse ID Requirements Increase For Interstate Travel

by: Ken Carpenter Legislative Chair

Starting March 11, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) officials will implement the Animal Disease Traceability Program (ADTP) to improve their ability to trace livestock during a disease outbreak.

The new system applies to all livestock including horses, mules and donkeys crossing state lines. And while the ADTP's primary purpose is to track disease outbreaks among cattle, it's expected to be an important tool in containing equine outbreaks as well.

The ADTP shouldn't require drastic changes for horse owners, as most states including Wisconsin already require a health certificate to travel over state lines. Each horse will need a state-approved identity document prior to movement, such as the commonly used Interstate Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (ICVI), for interstate travel. This will replace what is commonly called a Health Certificate that lasts for 30 days.

"Basically, instead of it being every state having [an individual health certificate] requirement, the USDA just made it a national requirement. If you're following the rules now, you won't have to change too much," said Ben Pendergrass, legislative director at the American Horse Council. "As with any new legislation, there's going to be some confusion. The USDA has stated that because they anticipate confusion, and there's going to be the process of educating people, that they're not going to really enforce the rule for at least a year so that people have time to understand [it]."

To be properly identified on an ICVI, horses must either have a description (including, but not limited to, name, age, breed, color, gender, distinctive markings, brands, tattoos, scars, cowlicks, blemishes or biometric measurements), an electronic identification (such as a microchip), a non-ISO electronic identification, digital photographs, or a USDA backtag for horses being transported to slaughter.

Your vet can issue an ICVI at roughly the same cost as the traditional 30-day health certificate. In the event of a disease outbreak, these documents will be used to trace horses that have been at the site of the outbreak and the horses that have come into contact with them.

Because the USDA has given individual states the ability to approve other methods of movement documentation besides an ICVI, such as an owner-shipper statement, Coggins test or brand certificate, it's best to pick up the phone. Call the destination state prior to traveling and ask for current import requirements.

The rules for moving horse and other equine within Wisconsin are unchanged

Equines moving within Wisconsin need to meet the requirements of the destination.

Fair or exhibition: Equines must have proof of a negative EIA test since January 1 of the current year. Check with the fair or exhibition organizers to find out if they require additional paperwork or testing.

Organized trail ride or training seminar: Equines must have proof of a negative EIA test since January 1 of the current year. Check with the ride or seminar organizers to find out if they require additional paperwork or testing.

Personal trail ride: No paperwork or testing required.

Sale or transfer of ownership: Equines must have proof of a negative EIA test since January 1 of the current year. A CVI is not required.

Boarding or private training: No paperwork or testing required by the State. Check with the trainer or boarding facility owner to find out if they require paperwork or testing.