

1 July 2011

Hendra virus confirmed in NSW horse

On Friday 1 July 2011, samples from a horse were tested at the State Virology Laboratory at Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute, Camden and found to be positive for Hendra virus by PCR testing of blood samples.

Samples from this horse have been forwarded to Australian Animal Health Laboratory in Geelong.

The horse was from a property near Wollongbar on the NSW North Coast.

This incident is not linked to the case earlier this week at Beaudesert in Queensland.

The horse was reported as becoming suddenly ill and a private vet visited on Tuesday 28 June 2011.

The horse was depressed, with incoordination, wide based stance, fever, respiratory distress and congested mucous membranes. The neurological signs became worse on 29 June and the horse was euthanased very early on 30 June 2011.

The local Livestock Health and Pest Authority and Department of Primary Industries were advised that the horse was suspected to be infected with Hendra virus early on 30 June 2011.

The property has been quarantined and staff from the Department of Primary Industries and the Livestock Health and Pest Authority are working with property owners in conjunction with other government agencies.

Restrictions are in place on the quarantined property and apply to the movement of the remaining horse and other items onto and off the property.

No other movement restrictions for Hendra virus are in place for horses in NSW.

The movement of people onto and off the quarantined property is not restricted, however good biosecurity practices should continue to be observed.

There are no neighbouring properties with horses and the only other horse on the property appears well.

Hendra virus is not related to Equine Influenza virus. Hendra virus is not considered to be highly contagious between horses.

Horse owners are urged to review their biosecurity procedures and contact their veterinarian if they suspect Hendra virus. Horse event organisers are encouraged to review their biosecurity plans.

Notification of suspect Hendra

Report all suspected cases in horses to the local Livestock Health and Pest Authority, an inspector with the Department of Primary Industries, or the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.

Further information

Further information on Hendra may be found at:

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/horses/health/general/hendra-virus>

Contact details for NSW Public Health Units are available at:

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/publichealth/Infectious/phus.asp>

Ian Roth

Chief Veterinary Officer NSW

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (1 July 2011). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of NSW Department Primary Industries or the user's independent adviser