

AgNews



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
2320 South DuPont Highway, Dover, DE 19901

To: Newsroom Directors and Assignment Editors

For Immediate Release:
December 29, 2008

Contact Anne Fitzgerald
800.282.8685 (DE only)
302.698.4520
302.242.4092 (Cell)

Number of pages: 1

Delaware Equine Herpesvirus (EHV-1) update

Both premises were inspected the week of 22 December to ensure biosecurity protocols are in place, and to review the temperature charts in each barn. Animals in the quarantined barns will continue to have body temperatures monitored every 12 hours for the duration of the quarantine period. According to Dr. Heather Hirst, Delaware State Veterinarian, no horses on the farms are showing clinical signs of EHV-1. "While the continued health of animals on both premises is promising, we are certainly not at a point where vigilance can be relaxed. We must maintain the highest level of biosecurity and observation for new cases in order to protect Delaware's equine population and our vital racing industry," said Dr. Heather Hirst.

Dr. Hirst continued, "I want to commend the practicing veterinarians of Delaware, the Delaware Veterinary Medical Association, the Delaware Equine Council, and Dover Downs for their efforts in providing open communication during the EHV event." Dr. Janice Sosnowski of Delmarva Equine Clinic organized two meetings in December with the help of Dover Downs management. The first meeting was for veterinarians and track officials, and Dr. Amy Johnson of New Bolton Center was invited to speak to the group about EHV-1. The second meeting was for horsemen, and its intent was to describe best management practices for controlling the spread of EHV-1 in Delaware. Approximately 50 horsemen attended, and detailed handouts were provided describing biosecurity protocols.

Dover Downs has implemented new, stricter biosecurity measures to reduce the chance of spread of EHV-1 and other infectious organisms. These new policies include: disinfection of the starting gate between each race, regular disinfection of the receiving (ship in) stalls, and regular disinfection of the paddock. "I have been truly impressed with the level of cooperation we've encountered among all members of the equine racing industry. This is not something we should take for granted," said Dr. Hirst.

###