



NEWS RELEASE

Texas Animal Health Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Equine Diseases Contained on Smith County Premises

AUSTIN – Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) confirmed Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) in nine racing Quarter Horses located on a Smith County premises on January 31, 2019.

Through subsequent testing, seven of the EIA positive horses and one additional horse on the property were confirmed positive for a secondary infectious disease, Equine Piroplasmiasis (EP).

The Smith County premises remains in compliance with TAHC rules which require owners to maintain EIA and EP exposed horses in a quarantine zone of no less than 200 yards from unexposed equine and retest exposed animals until cleared. Permanent quarantine and treatment are available options for EP positive horses while EIA positive cases must remain quarantined for the life of the animal.

EIA is an incurable, infectious viral disease spread through blood-to-blood contact, not through close proximity or casual contact. The virus can be transmitted from an infected equine to a “clean” equine by biting flies, the use of unsterilized or contaminated medical instruments, or through a blood transfusion. The most common clinical sign of acute EIA is fever, which often precedes the development of other signs. In chronic cases, symptoms such as weight loss, weakness, anemia and swelling of the lower legs, chest and abdomen may occur. For more information on EIA please visit:

www.tahc.texas.gov/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure_EIA.pdf

EP is a blood-borne protozoal disease that affects horses, donkeys, mules and zebras. EP is currently not considered endemic in Texas or the U.S.; however, isolated outbreaks of the disease have occurred. Like EIA, EP can also be spread directly between animals by transfusions and blood-contaminated instruments such as needles. Cases of EP can be mild or acute. Symptoms of acutely affected equine include fever, anemia, jaundiced mucous membranes, swollen abdomens, and labored breathing. For more information on EP please visit:

https://www.tahc.texas.gov/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure_Piroplasmiasis.pdf

For information on biosecurity measures you can take to keep horses healthy, visit:

www.tahc.texas.gov/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure_BiosecurityEquine.pdf

Further updates on EIA cases will be posted on the Equine Disease Communication Center (EDCC) website:

www.equinediseasecc.org/alerts/outbreaks

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