

BIOSECURITY GUIDE: KEEPING YOUR HORSES HEALTHY

Anytime horses or owners leave the farm to compete, breed, train, or go to a veterinary hospital they can be exposed to a variety of disease agents, increasing the risk of spreading diseases such as Equine Herpes Myeloencephalopathy (EHM), Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA), Equine Piroplasmiasis, and Equine Viral Arteritis (EVA).

Establishing and following sound biosecurity practices is the cornerstone for reducing the likelihood of disease in your horses.

Leaving the Stable

Take all precautions to minimize exposure to others.

- When moving your horses, use your own trailer. Do not haul your horse with horses from other farms.
- If you must use someone else's trailer, be sure to clean and disinfect it before loading your horse.
- Do not let your horse come in contact with other horses. Be sure to prevent nose-to-nose contact.
- Do not share equipment (e.g., needles, water and feed buckets, brushes, or sponges).
- Wash your hands after helping other people with their horses.
- Do not let other people pet your horses, especially those with horses at home or people who have been out of the country in the past 2 weeks.

Returning to the Stable

You must protect the horses that didn't travel from being exposed to new germs that can be passed from your horse(s) and you.

- Clean and disinfect tack, boots, equipment, and grooming supplies before returning.
- Upon your return, you should shower and put on clean clothes and shoes.
- If possible, keep horses that were off the farm separate from your other horses for at least two weeks. Prevent any nose-to-nose contact.
- When feeding and doing chores, work with the returning horses last. Wear boots and coveralls, and remove them before working with your other horses.
- Wash your hands.

Adding a New Horse

This is the most common way for infectious disease to enter your farm.

- Keep new horses separate from your other horses for 30 days. Do not use the same pitchforks, grooming tools, or feed and water buckets on any horse but the new one.
- Work with the new horse last each day, or wear boots and coveralls that you can remove before working with the other horses.
- Always wash your hands with soap and water, and blow your nose after working with the new horse. You could carry germs to your other horses in your nose.



Making a Footbath

A footbath allows people to sanitize their shoes as they're wiped across a mat covered with disinfectant.



Supplies:

1. A low plastic pan or bin, wide enough to fit an adult's foot and shallow enough to step into easily
2. A plastic doormat (the "fake grass" mats work well).
3. Bucket or mixing container
4. A good, multipurpose disinfectant such as Tek-trol or One stroke Environ
5. Water

Directions:

1. In the bucket, mix the disinfectant with water according to the label instructions. Set aside.
2. Put the doormat in the plastic pan.
3. Add the disinfectant to the pan, enough to cover the mat.
4. Ask visitors to walk through the footbath, wiping their feet on the mat. When the liquid starts to get dirty, empty the tub and refill with the disinfectant mixture.



TAHC encourages horse owners to consult with their private veterinarians about core vaccines to supplement the integrity of their biosecurity plans.

