

Equine Updates

Transylvania County, NC

Summer 2016

In this Issue

- S.C. Horses Confirmed to Have EEE
- Hay Testing and Evaluation
- Upcoming Events

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Horse owners urged to vaccinate horses after two S.C. horses confirmed to have EEE

North Carolina horse owners are urged to vaccinate their equine after two horses in Horry County, South Carolina contracted Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis within the past three weeks. EEE is a mosquito-borne disease that is preventable in equine by vaccination. Horry County is the northern-most coastal county in South Carolina and borders Brunswick County in North Carolina.

EEE causes inflammation or swelling of the brain and spinal cord and is usually fatal. Symptoms include impaired vision, aimless wandering, head pressing, circling, inability to swallow, irregular staggering gait, paralysis, convulsions and death. Once a horse has been bitten by an infected mosquito, it may take three to ten days for signs of the disease to appear.

“If your horses exhibit any symptoms of EEE, contact your veterinarian immediately,” said State Veterinarian Doug Meckes.

Meckes recommends that equine owners talk to their veterinarians about an effective vaccination protocol to protect horses from EEE and another mosquito-borne disease, West Nile virus. The combination vaccination initially requires two shots, 30 days apart, for horses, mules and donkeys that have no prior vaccination history. Meckes recommends a booster shot every six months.

Mosquitoes can breed in any puddle that lasts for more than four days, so removing any source of standing water can reduce the chance of exposing animals to WNV or EEE. Keeping horses in stalls at night, using insect screens and fans and turning off lights after dusk can also help reduce exposure to mosquitoes. Insect repellants can be effective if used according to manufacturers’ instructions.

People, horses, and birds can become infected from a bite by a mosquito carrying the diseases, but there is no evidence that horses can transmit the viruses to other horses, birds, or people through direct contact.

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Hay Testing and Evaluation

A hay sample is only as good as the sampling technique. Best results are obtained when a core sampler is used to sample the hay. These are available at the Transylvania County Extension office. Regardless of the sampling technique, you will want to obtain a sample from each unique lot of hay. A lot is considered hay from the same field and the same cutting that was cured and stored under the same conditions. If a core sampler is used, take cores from 10-15 bales or enough cores to fill a quart-sized plastic bag. Always sample from the end of square bales or the sides of round bales. After obtaining the sample, ship or deliver to the forage lab along with payment, if applicable.

For the submission form and mailing address, visit <http://www.ncagr.gov/fooddrug/forms/documents/ForageForm.pdf>



Upcoming Events:

Equine Nutrition Management Workshop

Speaker Dr. Marty Adams, Equine Nutritionist
Tuesday, July 19, 2016 6:30 P.M.

Rogow Room of Transylvania County Library
Contact Addison Bradley at the Transylvania County Extension Office for further information:
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