



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Directorate Animal Health, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
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Reference: 12/1/8/8/P

To: All equine owners, role players and industry members

RE: OUTBREAK OF CONTAGIOUS EQUINE METRITIS (CEM) IN GAUTENG PROVINCE AND CEM SURVEILLANCE MEASURES

On 16 January 2017, a CEM positive horse was identified in Gauteng province. This is the first positive CEM case identified since 2013 and the bacterial strain has been typed as the same strain as the 2011 outbreak. This recent outbreak has serious consequences for South Africa but we remain confident that it can be effectively traced, contained and eradicated. Investigations into this matter and measures to contain and treat the affected horses are underway under the direction of the responsible state veterinarian. A Press Release for the 2017 CEM outbreak has been attached to this letter.

We would like to request your cooperation and support in investigating the possible source and spread of the infection and raising awareness of the importance of obtaining a CEM clearance certificate for all stallions prior to any breeding, even if on your own property or horses. Please also note that semen collection and Artificial Insemination (AI) should not be undertaken without a valid CEM clearance certificate for the donor stallion. If semen is presented for AI without a CEM clearance certificate, the semen should not be used unless it tests negative for CEM.

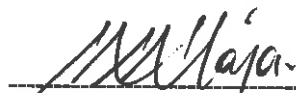
With regard to CEM surveillance, the 2017 outbreak is a serious setback in the proposed way forward for CEM in South Africa. The priority now has to be to comprehensively determine the extent of the outbreak, treat all infected horses and conduct further thorough surveillance before a self-declaration of CEM freedom with the OIE can be considered again. It is therefore vitally important that all infected horses are found as soon as possible. As a component to achieving this; the reversion to yearly testing for CEM for all stallions was contemplated. After consideration however, it was felt that, provided there was sufficient compliance and cooperation, the current two yearly testing could be effective for this purpose and would be more acceptable to the equine industry. Thus, it has been decided to continue

with the current surveillance testing regime as communicated in the letter "Review of Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) surveillance protocol and the validity extension of CEM clearance certificates" dated 10 May 2016.

While the current surveillance protocol remains in place until further notice, this will be reconsidered again once the extent of the outbreak has been reliably determined. We welcome your constructive comments and will communicate any further developments as they arise.

Thank you for your kind support.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Mpho Maja
DIRECTOR: ANIMAL HEALTH
Date: 2017-03-06



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Media release

16 February 2017

CONTAGIOUS EQUINE METRITIS (CEM) OUTBREAK JANUARY 2017

Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) was first confirmed in South Africa in 2011 and due to compliance and support from horse owners, societies and veterinarians, the extent of the outbreak was quickly determined and the affected horses treated. Since 2013 no new cases of CEM were reported in South Africa.

Unfortunately, in January 2017, a donor stallion in the Gauteng Province tested positive for CEM as part of the routine surveillance programme for this disease. The strain in this case has been identified as the same one detected in the 2011 outbreak. Further investigations are ongoing under the direction of the State Veterinarian. The cooperation of all horse owners in this regard is requested.

Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) is a highly contagious venereal disease of equines and zebra caused by the bacterium *Taylorella equigenitalis*. It is associated with economic losses due to its detrimental effects on equine reproductive efficiency and the costs related to the treatment and testing for the disease. CEM is mainly transmitted by both natural and artificial breeding but can also be transmitted by direct or indirect contact e.g. through shared grooming equipment, halters and even clothes and people. Horses that contract CEM may remain infected for life and treatment for the disease is difficult and expensive.

Horse owners are reminded of the importance of obtaining a CEM clearance certificate for all stallions prior to any breeding. The current surveillance measures prescribed in the DAFF letter dated 10 May 2016 remain in place as follows:

- All existing CEM clearance certificates are valid for two years from the date of issue;
- All new CEM clearance certificates will be valid for a period of two years from the date of issue;
- For semen donation, stallions will require an annual CEM clearance certificate.

The situation will be updated as more information becomes available. Detailed information on CEM can be found on the DAFF website on the following link: <http://www.daff.gov.za/daffweb3/Branches/Agricultural-Production-Health-Food-Safety/Animal-Health/information/dahpolicy>.

The cooperation of all members of the horse industry is appreciated.

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Reference: 12/1/8/8/1

To: All individual horse owners
Breed Registering Authorities
Breed Societies
Artificial Insemination and Breeding Centres
Press and Media
SAVA
SAVC
SAEVA
SANEF
SAHRA

RE: REVIEW OF CONTAGIOUS EQUINE METRITIS (CEM) SURVEILLANCE PROTOCOL AND THE VALIDITY EXTENSION OF CEM CLEARANCE CERTIFICATES

Following the letter issued from this office titled "Contagious Equine Metritis Annual Screening to Continue in South Africa" dated 16 September 2015, we would like to advise you of amendments made to the CEM surveillance protocol in South Africa.


The Directorate Animal Health (DAH) has undertaken to review the existing CEM surveillance protocol with the aim of formulating a refined standard that will assist South Africa in its endeavour of self-declaration for CEM freedom. This decision was taken following feedback from the equine industry regarding the existing surveillance protocol.

Targeted surveillance in stallions over the past 4 years has indicated no new positive cases of CEM, allowing us to adopt the following interim measures to encourage compliance with the current CEM surveillance protocol which will be vital in South Africa's self-declaration of CEM freedom;

- The validity of all existing CEM clearance certificates will be extended to a period of 2 years from the date of issue
- All new CEM clearance certificates issued will be valid for a period of 2 years from the date of issue
- For semen donation, stallions will require an annual CEM clearance certificate

In the interest of the animal health status of South Africa, the continued co-operation of all members of the horse industry in applying and promoting the required screening and control measures for CEM is much appreciated.

Kind regards,



Dr Mpho Maja
DIRECTOR: ANIMAL HEALTH
Date: 2016 -05- 1 0

CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL

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SUBJECT: REVIEW OF CONTAGIOUS EQUINE METRITIS (CEM) SURVEILLANCE PROTOCOL AND THE VALIDITY EXTENSION OF CEM CLEARANCE CERTIFICATES