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All equine practitioners should be aware of the requirement of testing for equine infectious anemia (EIA) for interstate shipment, which is found in the USDA Uniform Methods and Rules (UM&R) for EIA. The UM&R recommends a twelve-month testing interval for horses, and includes among the categories of horses that must be tested several categories in addition to horses being shipped interstate. Horses that are being entered in exhibitions or competitive events, horses changing ownership and horses being sold through sale markets or auction barns must also have a negative EIA test within the most recent 12 month period. Enclosed you will find a copy of the current EIA UM&R.

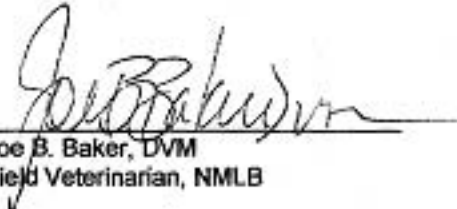
EIA is a lentivirus that historically was thought to be spread primarily by biting insects. However, in more recent times it has been realized that the greatest risk of spread may well be iatrogenic, via contaminated needles, syringes, I.V. sets and horse blood and serum which are often harvested from dog or horses by owners or trainers and given to "boost" performance horses.

EIA cases are found periodically in almost every state, but generally cases are most common in the southern tier of states with the prevalence highest in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Oklahoma. New Mexico has significant movement of horses into the state from several of these states, particularly because of the horse racing industry, and thus the relative risk for New Mexico is increased somewhat.

In 2008 a horse at Ruidoso Downs was found positive for EIA and the running of the All American Futurity and the All-American yearling sale were at risk of being cancelled. When all was said and done, all of the track horses had to be tested negative to be able to leave the track and almost 40 horses on premises neighboring the Downs were quarantined for over a month and tested twice during that time. The infected horse had come to New Mexico for the race meet after being trained in Texas. There was some suspicion that the horse had also been taken into Mexico for training at some point.

Texas is not the only state with EIA issues affecting New Mexico. We periodically receive requests from other surrounding states to trace EIA-exposed horses that have come into New Mexico. To help prevent this type of problem in the future the New Mexico Livestock Board has stepped up its monitoring for negative EIA testing on imported animals, and negative testing for the other categories of horses mentioned above. NMLB wants horse owners in the State to be aware of the testing requirement for exhibitions and competitions and will be monitoring such events for compliance.


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