Horse Importation – Overview and Issues

Equine Diseases Forum
Denver, CO
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Safeguarding Animal Health
Discussion Topics

• Overview of equine import procedures
• Mandatory testing
• Release criteria
• Limitations
• Future of regulatory changes

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Importing Animals into the U.S.

- National Import Export Services (NIES)
- Animals, semen and embryos
- Horses, cattle, swine, birds, certain wildlife/exotics/reptiles
- Government certification, testing in country of origin
- Quarantine and testing in the US
- Prohibitions on import from certain countries

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How many horses are we importing?

2013 figures:

- total equids imported – 22,849
- Horses from Canada – 14,325
- Horses from Mexico – 2229
- Imported by air – 6245

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Importing Horses

- Official government endorsed health certificate
- Quarantine upon arrival in the US
- 3 (minimum of 42 hours), 7 or 60 days
- Tested for dourine, glanders, piroplasmosis, and EIA
- Refuse entry
- Import allowed from any country
§93.308 Quarantine requirements. (a) Except as provided in this section and in §93.324 [horses from MX], horses intended for importation into the United States from any part of the world shall be shipped directly to a port designated in §§93.303 and 92.324 and be quarantined at said port until negative results to port of entry tests are obtained and the horses are certified by the port veterinarian to be free from clinical evidence of disease.
Electronic Code of Federal Regulations

• http://www.ecfr.gov
• Click on Simple Search on left
• Retrieve by CFR Citation
• Title 9, Part 93, Subpart C
Release Criteria

- Negative results on mandatory tests
- Written protocol for testing; retesting; holding cohorts
- “Free from clinical evidence of disease”
  - Normal temperature – taken 2x/day
  - No nasal discharge, swollen ln’s, normal appetite, normal manure
- No additional testing unless medically necessary

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Issues for further evaluation

- Most imported horses are quarantined for 42 hours – 3 days
- Possibility that horse is incubating a disease
- Holding horses potentially exposed to non-regulated diseases
- Significant expense to importer when horses are held
- Differences among States in diseases of concern
- Strangles, EHV

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The future of regulations

• Entire overhaul of import regulations
• Less prescriptive
• Move specifics out of CFR
• Use guidance documents for specifics
• More flexible
• Better able to keep up with scientific advances
• Formal rulemaking process with comment period
Contact Information

Dr. Ellen Buck – Equine Imports
National Import Export Service
USDA, APHIS, VS
4700 River Road, Unit 39
Riverdale, MD 20737

Phone: 301-851-3361
Fax: 301-734-6402

ellen.m.buck@aphis.usda.gov