

Make Increased Biosecurity A Priority

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — Because of the recent terrorist attacks and the outbreaks of human anthrax, our nation is on a heightened state of security against the threats of bioterrorism. As individuals involved in animal industries we must be vigilant to these threats against our animals, our food supply, and the health of our nation.

Horse owners should heighten their awareness of the importance of biosecurity. The possibility of a biological attack on our food supply needs to be considered and a defense must be prepared. Horse facilities are considered low risk for terrorism because horses are not used for food or fiber.

However, horses do provide an effective media to harbor or transport some foreign diseases. The ability to transfer disease increases the importance of monitoring the herd. Many veterinarians have been schooled in the knowledge of biological organisms and can play an important role in maintaining the safety of our country.

What you can do producers, stable owners and farmers should check their livestock regularly and immediately report signs of unusual disease to your veterinarian, or the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. Also, producers are asked to report suspicious activities, intruders or circumstances to local police or sheriff's departments. License plate numbers and descriptions of trespassers should be recorded if possible.

Signs to watch for in livestock include:

- Sudden, unexplained deaths in a herd.

- Severe illness that affects multiple animals.

- Blisters around an animal's mouth, nose, teats, or hooves.

- Unusual ticks or maggots on the animals.

- Central nervous system disorders.

When a suspicious case is reported, a trained foreign animal disease diagnostician (FADD) will be dispatched to the premises to assess the situation, inspect the animals, collect samples, post quarantines, if appropriate, and take additional steps to protect animal and human health.

Samples from suspect animals should NOT be submitted to the Pennsylvania Veterinary Laboratory or any other laboratory. Samples should only be submitted by FADD to Plum Island or NVSL.

Suspicious cases can be reported to PDA at (717) 772-2852 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and after normal working hours at (717) 772-2852, or any other main office phone number.

After hour calls will be forwarded to a voice mailbox, and instructions will be given for leaving an emergency message that will cause the veterinarian on call to be paged. The USDA also has a 24 hour phone number: (800) 601-9327. Daytime calls can be made to the USDA Harrisburg office at (717) 782-3442.

Anyone reporting a case should be prepared to provide a description of the signs of disease, the species and number of animals involved, and the location of the animals.

John I. Enck Jr., V.M.D.
Director, PDA Bureau of Animal Health and Diagnostic Services

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MICHELLE KUNAPPU
Lancaster Farming Staff

LEESBURG, Va. — Every year thousands of spectators are drawn to watch race after race of Thoroughbreds battling to be the first to the finish.

At steeplechase contests, crowds gather to watch the tumult of horses flying full-tilt over jumps.

In fact, according to an insert provided by Morven Park races, millions of fans watched steeplechase races last year at 35 courses in 12

states. Horses won approximately \$4 million in purse money in those contests.

On October 12, 2002, Loudoun County's Morven Park hosted the 23rd annual races, a series of hurdle, flat, and timber races.

The event included national fences, a man-made fence used in major track steeplechase races.

The 54-inch high jumps are made from a steel frame and topped with plastic

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Grooms Joe Quevedo, above left, and Raul Ayala ready "Northern Cowboy" for the first race of the day, a 2.25-mile hurdle race. The horse is part of the Richard J. Hendriks Racing Stable, Fair Hill, Md. Horses wear foam surrounded by bandages to hold the foam in place to protect their legs from the jumps.



Ashley Holloway, owner and trainer of horses, walks one of her horses, along with jockey George Wood.

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