

Plan, Prevent, Protect – a new guide for horse owners

The UK's first guide to preventing equine contagious disease has been developed for horse owners by XLEquine practice members in collaboration with the Animal Health Trust (AHT). The booklet, called 'Plan Prevent Protect' is designed to give an introduction to the contagious diseases that can affect yard and the horses in their care.

These diseases are costly both to the welfare of horses, as well as in financial terms whether horses are a hobby, or a business. Diseases such as Equine Influenza and Strangles can affect race meetings, local shows and events. Other conditions such as Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) can lower the fertility of breeding horses.

The first part of the booklet discusses the most common



contagious diseases, as well as exotic ones that may become a

risk at some point in the future in the UK. Biosecurity is the cornerstone of preventing the entry of disease. A simple set of management practices can be implemented in every situation to decrease the chance of diseases entering a premises. It's really important to horse's well-being and it can be really easy to put a plan together in every circumstance.

Practical Guide

The second part of the booklet talks owners through how to design their own biosecurity plan. It talks about protocols for newly arriving horses, the importance of isolation facilities, and basic steps to take when travelling to shows and vaccination strategies.

The booklet centrefold has a risk assessment guide to be

completed in conjunction with the yard vet, giving owners an opportunity to sit down together and talk about the problems with disease control that are particular to their yard. From this, the vet can assess the yard, and determine the level of risk, then talk about the practical steps that should be taken to decrease the chances of contagious diseases entering the premises.

The final section deals with what to do in a disease outbreak; how to recognise the signs of a contagious disease, and how to manage the horses affected by it.

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