

Biosecurity alert

Hendra virus – information for industry

30 June 2011

Overview

Biosecurity Queensland reported on 29 June 2011 that samples from a horse located on a property in Kerry, near Beaudesert, was tested and found to be positive for Hendra virus.

Biosecurity Queensland has quarantined two properties located in Kerry and Biddaddaba and is working with affected horse and property owners in conjunction with other government agencies to control the situation.

Current situation

There are 20 horses remaining on the property located at Biddaddaba, where the horse died on Sunday 26 June 2011. Biosecurity Queensland veterinarians have collected samples from all horses on this property.

It is expected that the properties will be quarantined for a minimum of 32 days as per protocol.

The movement of people on and off the quarantined properties is not restricted, however good biosecurity practices should continue to be observed.

Comprehensive information has been gathered to determine the movements of horses on and off the two properties in recent weeks (tracing).

Biosecurity Queensland is confident that the disease situation is under control.

Information about Hendra virus

Responses to cases of Hendra virus in horses is totally different to the response seen with the Equine Influenza response in 2007-8. The two viruses behave very differently.

There is no lockdown for the Queensland horse industry, and other than the two quarantined properties, the Queensland horse industry is not

subject to any movement restrictions for Hendra virus.

Reducing the risk

Horse owners can take the following steps to reduce the risk of horses becoming infected with Hendra virus. This advice is based on our current understanding of the virus

- Place horse water containers under cover and feed horses under cover.
- Do not place horse feed and water containers under trees, particularly if flying foxes are attracted to those trees.
- Do not use feed that might be attractive to flying foxes if they are known to be in the area. Fruit and vegetables (e.g. apples, carrots) or anything sweet (e.g. molasses) may attract flying foxes.
- If possible, remove horses from paddocks where flowering/fruited trees have resulted in a temporary surge in flying fox numbers. Return the horses after the trees have stopped flowering/fruited. If this is not possible fence off access to the trees, so that horses cannot graze or feed underneath.
- If it is not possible to remove horses from paddocks, try to temporarily remove your horses during times of peak flying fox activity (usually at dusk and during the night).

More information can be found on the fact sheet [What is Hendra virus?](#)

Research

Scientists from Queensland Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases are on-site and working with property owners to collect information on flying foxes in the area.

The scientists will also aim to collect samples from local flying fox colonies in an attempt to learn more about the transmission of Hendra virus.

Community engagement

Biosecurity Queensland and Queensland Health officers have been door knocking in the immediate vicinity of the affected areas, to provide further information to residents.

A mobile office is currently operating in and around Beaudesert. Representatives from Biosecurity Queensland and Queensland Health are available to provide information and answer questions regarding Hendra virus.

To find where the mobile office will be located next, visit the Biosecurity Queensland [website](#) for more information.

More information

Notify suspected Hendra virus cases by contacting Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 (during business hours) or the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888 (24-hour hotline). More information is available at www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au

For human related enquiries, contact the Queensland Health Hotline on 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

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