

Equine Medication Monitoring Program (EMMP) Advisory Committee  
September 30, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Item No.

**(1) Call to Order**

- a. The meeting was called to order on Thursday, September 30, 2021 at 2:00pm by Vice Chairperson Dr. Mike Tomlinson.

**(2) Roll Call**

**Present:**

Ms. Jody Cutler, American Driving Society  
Dr. Marta Grandstedt, California Veterinary Medical Association  
Ms. Cathy Hanson, Pacific Coast Quarter Horse Association  
Ms. Nancy Harvey, Arabian Horse Association  
Ms. Jo Ann Jackson, California Draft Horse & Mule Association  
Ms. Mari Naten, California Dressage Society  
Mr. William Pettis, American Morgan Horse Association  
Ms. Sarah Rajoy, California Professional Horsemen's Association  
Dr. Mike Tomlinson, U.S. Equestrian Federation  
Dr. Stephen Schumacher, U.S. Equestrian Federation (non-voting member)

**Absent:**

Ms. Sandy Arledge, Chair, California Farm Bureau Federation  
Mr. Robert Gage, California State Horsemen's Association  
Dr. Michele LaMantia, Pinto Horse Association of America, Inc.  
Dr. Jeanette Mero, American Endurance Ride Conference  
Ms. Kalia Mitchell, California Fairs and Expositions  
Dr. Russell Peterson, American Association of Equine Practitioners  
Dr. Chris Smith, Pacific Coast Horse Show Association  
Ms. Rae Stambuk, California Reining Horse Association

**CDFA Present:**

Dr. Emily Nierzaba, Staff Veterinarian, Equine Programs  
Ms. Katie Hatch, Research Scientist, Equine Programs  
Mr. Lee Harrison, Agricultural Program Supervisor, EMMP  
Ms. Nancy Ragen, Management Services Technician, EMMP  
Dr. Anita Edmondson, Branch Chief, Animal Health Branch

**(3) Adoption of Agenda**

The public agenda for this meeting was reviewed.

**MOTION #1:** Ms. Nancy Harvey motioned to approve the agenda and Dr. Marta Grandstedt seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.

#### **(4) Review of Minutes**

Minutes of the March 25, 2021 meeting were reviewed.

**MOTION #2:** Ms. Nancy Harvey motioned to approve the minutes as written and Mr. William Pettis seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.

#### **(5) United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) Update**

Dr. Stephen Schumacher gave an update on the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF). There has been a rule in place for a few years that in order for horses to compete in events hosted by USEF and the United States Hunter Jumper Association, the horse must be microchipped. USEF is planning to move forward with a staged process in order to require microchips in the rest of the disciplines that USEF regulates. USEF will be hosting a series of webinars to educate different groups about the benefits and requirements of microchipping.

The number of events being tested by USEF has been returning to normal (pre-COVID) levels. Inspectors from USEF have been attending shows observing the facilities.

#### **(6) Animal Health Updates**

##### **Equine Diseases**

Dr. Emily Nietrzeba and Ms. Katie Hatch presented California's equine health updates on the following topics: Equine herpesvirus (EHV), West Nile Virus (WNV) and Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA).

Since the last Equine Health advisory committee meeting, there was one (1) Equine Herpesvirus Myeloencephalopathy (EHM) incident. In July 2021, a 6-year-old Warmblood mare attending an event in Sonoma county displaying neurological signs was confirmed positive for EHV-1 non-neuropathogenic strain. The eighteen (18) other horses from the trainer's barn were transported back home under permit to their Sacramento county home premises. The index case was euthanized due to severity of clinical signs. In total in this incident at the Sacramento county premise, there was one (1) confirmed EHM case (EHV-1 positive with neurologic signs), one (1) confirmed asymptomatic EHV-1 case, one (1) confirmed febrile-only EHV-1 case, and four (4) presumptive positive cases that were subsequently confirmed negative. No clinical signs from any additional horses from the Sonoma County event were reported and the quarantine was released for the Sacramento county home premises after eighteen (18) days.

Dr. Nietrzeba discussed the 2021 equine West Nile Virus (WNV) cases. So far, there have been eleven (11) cases of equine WNV confirmed in California in 2021. The positive horses in 2021 to date were located in Amador County (one case), Fresno County (two cases), Kings County (one case), Merced County (one case), Sacramento County (two cases), San Joaquin County (two cases), Stanislaus County (one case), and Yuba County (one case). Seven (7) of these horses were unvaccinated, two (2) horses had unknown vaccine history, and two

(2) horses were vaccinated for WNV. Nine (9) horses are alive and/or recovering, one (1) horse died, and one (1) horse was euthanized.

Ms. Hatch discussed the increase in the number of Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) tests done in California compared to 2020. Comparing the number of Coggins run in January-August in 2020 to 2021, there was a 17.7% increase which is slightly above 2019 levels. In 2020 there were sixteen (16) discrepant ELISA tests for EIA where the horse tested positive on ELISA but later tested negative on AGID (confirmatory test for EIA). As a reminder, horses cannot travel or be issued a health certificate with pending EIA results. There was an increase in the number of veterinarians using services for submitting electronic EIA tests.

## **(7) Program Updates**

### **Administrative Updates**

EMMP testers are returning back to testing and EMMP is actively looking for additional testers. The EMMP mobile app has been completed and the newest version is being moved into production shortly. The iPads are going to be distributed to testers in early December and training for use is planned for January 2022.

### **Program Data Summary**

The following EMMP program summary data for the 2020-2021 fiscal year (FY) was presented to the committee members:

- A total of 734 events were held (significantly less than previous years due to COVID-19).
- Fifty-two (52) events were tested by EMMP.
- The highest number of events by event type were hunter/jumper events then dressage and open (multi-breed/multi-discipline) events. Note, these numbers are based on event type listed by the event manager at the time of event registration.
- A total of 94 urine samples and 84 blood samples were collected from selected horses at EMMP registered events. Numbers are expected to increase in 2021-2022 FY due to EMMP testers going back out in the field.

### **Legal and Legislative Updates**

Four (4) violation cases have been processed by EMMP in 2021 to date. Of the four (4) cases, one (1) was a prohibited drug detection violation in a urine sample, two (2) were permissible overage drug detection violations in blood samples and one (1) was a failure to submit. The prohibited drug detection was dismissed, one of the permissible overage violations has been paid while the other is awaiting payment, and the failure to submit case is pending. All violations in 2021 have happened at Hunter/Jumper events.

The regulation changed passed for forms to be incorporated into regulations with the form information instead of the version dates. This allows CDFA to make formatting or minor changes without going through a full regulation change. If

there are any major content changes, CDFA still must go through a regulation change.

The fee increase to \$14 is still on track to become effective January 1, 2022. The regulation change packet is due to be open for public comment in early October. EMMP would appreciate the advisory committee's help in disseminating the legislative updates to their organizations' members.

### **Financial Update**

The committee discussed the 2020-2021 fiscal year (FY) revenue and expenditures for EMMP. While EMMP is still at a deficit overall, the financial situation is slowly moving in the right direction. The fee increase on January 1, 2022 to \$14 should assist in this process as well. With the projected budget, EMMP is hoping to resume research projects with the laboratory in the 2022-2023 FY. There are thirty-three (33) unpaid events from January 1-June 30, 2021. The advisory committee agrees with the general direction of the budget and would like to formally discuss the budget for the 2022-2023 FY at the next meeting.

### **Laboratory Update**

The contract for testing at the UC Davis Maddy Equine Analytical Chemistry Laboratory (EACL) is up for renewal in 2022. The contract is a four (4) year contract and current sample testing will continue along with transitioning to a new more extensive non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) screening. There are additional add-on tests available from EACL if EMMP would like to pursue those.

The committee also discussed the possibility of collecting a secondary "B" sample for testing as well as doing possible surveillance testing. The "B" samples would be stored and would be available for independent testing in the event of a contested drug violation. This would also make it consistent with USEF and the California Horse Racing Board (CHRB) who collect "B" samples. There would be additional storage costs as well as logistics to determine including the potential regulation changes and the length of time to store the samples. The surveillance testing would potentially be for bisphosphonates and anabolic steroids. As of now, EMMP would not be able to pursue a detection violation for these substances so a regulation change would need to happen to add these substances to the list so a violation would be enforceable.

**MOTION #3:** Request for EMMP to gather more information on the costs of collecting and storing a "B" sample as well as what the timeline would be for potential regulation changes for a "B" sample. Dr. Marta Grandstedt motioned, and Ms. Jody Cutler seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.

### **Research Update**

Dr. Nietrzeba gave an update on the cannabidiol (CBD) study performed. Blood and urine samples were collected prior to and for seventy-two (72) hours post

drug administration. CBD was readily absorbed with the parent drug being detectable in blood at all time points after administration. The metabolites were also detectable at certain timepoints in blood and at all time points in urine. The elimination half-life observed was approximately ten (10) hours.

Dr. Russ Hovey, a UC Davis Animal Science professor, gave a presentation on a potential future research project on “Implication on teff hay consumption and potential synephrine detection in blood and urine”. Teff hay is a high yielding, quick producing hay that is water efficient which makes it ideal for California’s climate. It also is low in soluble carbohydrates, high in protein, highly palatable and has minimal waste. However, the substance synephrine can be found in teff hay. Synephrine is similar to ephedrine and can show up on drug screens. The proposed studies would like to look at the levels of synephrine in teff hay at various stages of growth, the pharmacokinetics of horses after ingesting teff hay, what the accumulation levels of synephrine would be in the horses and how quickly it clears out of the horses’ systems. The committee is interested in the project and would welcome a formal proposal and budget from Dr. Hovey to vote on approval for research funding at the next spring meeting.

**(8) Committee New Business Discussion**

No new items were discussed. The next meeting is planned to be held in March or April 2022 to be held as a hybrid of in-person and via Zoom. A poll will be sent out to determine the date.

**(9) Closing Comments**

Vice Chairperson Dr. Mike Tomlinson adjourned the meeting at 2:21pm.