

Equine Medication Monitoring Program (EMMP) Advisory Committee  
September 20, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Item No.

**(1) Call to Order**

- a. The meeting was called to order on Tuesday, September 20, 2022, at 9:04am by Vice Chairperson Dr. Mike Tomlinson.

**(2) Roll Call**

**Present:**

Dr. Neil Gray, California Professional Horsemen's Association  
Ms. Nancy Harvey, Arabian Horse Association  
Ms. Jo Ann Jackson, California Draft Horse & Mule Association  
Dr. Jeanette Mero, American Endurance Ride Conference  
Ms. Kalia Mitchell, California Fairs and Expositions  
Ms. Jaclyn Pepper, California Dressage Society  
Dr. Russell Peterson, American Association of Equine Practitioners  
Dr. Chris Smith, Pacific Coast Horse Show Association  
Dr. Mike Tomlinson, U.S. Equestrian Federation  
Dr. Stephen Schumacher, U.S. Equestrian Federation (non-voting member)

**Absent:**

Ms. Jody Cutler, American Driving Society  
Mr. Robert Gage, California State Horsemen's Association  
Dr. Marta Grandstedt, California Veterinary Medical Association  
Ms. Cathy Hanson, Pacific Coast Quarter Horse Association  
Dr. Michele LaMantia, Pinto Horse Association of America, Inc.  
Mr. William Pettis, American Morgan Horse Association  
Ms. Rae Stambuk, California Reining Horse Association

**CDFA Present:**

Dr. Emily Nietrzeba, 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

**(3) Review of Minutes**

Minutes of the September 30, 2021 meeting were reviewed.

**MOTION #1:** Ms. Nancy Harvey motioned to approve the minutes as written and Dr. Chris Smith seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.

Minutes of the March 29, 2022 meeting were reviewed.

**MOTION #2:** Ms. Nancy Harvey motioned to approve the minutes as written and Dr. Chris Smith seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.

#### **(4) Advisory Committee Updates**

The EMMP advisory committee (EMMPAC) welcomed Dr. Neil Gray as the representative for the California Professional Horsemen's Association. The committee discussed that Ms. Sandy Arledge has stepped down as the EMMPAC chairperson after several years of dedicated service to the industry. Dr. Mike Tomlinson, current vice-chairperson, was nominated to become the new EMMPAC chairperson and Ms. Kalia Mitchell was nominated to become the new EMMPAC vice-chairperson.

**MOTION #3:** Dr. Chris Smith motioned to close the nominations and Ms. Nancy Harvey seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved. The nominees were thereby elected by acclamation.

#### **(5) Animal Health Updates**

##### **Equine Diseases**

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

So far in 2022, there have been thirty-eight (38) Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) cases in California. All of these cases have been Quarter Horses between the ages of three (3) to seven (7) years old, with either a confirmed or suspected history of unsanctioned racing. The majority of these cases are suspected to be due to iatrogenic transmission with the sharing of used needles as the primary method of disease spread. These thirty-eight (38) cases have been located on seven (7) premises throughout California with twenty-four (24) located at one premises in Tulare County. Two (2) additional EIA cases in California and one (1) in Colorado were purchased from this Tulare County premises as well.

To date in 2022, there have been 175 Equine herpesvirus (EHV) cases. Twenty-eight (28) of these cases have been Equine Herpes Myeloencephalopathy (EHM) cases and 147 cases were fever, respiratory or asymptomatic EHV-1 cases associated with an EHM case. These cases have taken place on thirty-one (31) total premises. The majority of these cases were involved in a large scale EHV outbreak that started in mid-February 2022 at a large show premises in Riverside County. On March 3, 2022, due to the large number of EHV cases, California state veterinarian Dr. Annette Jones sent out a letter of caution to the California equine community suggesting that all equine events be cancelled and any non-essential movement of horses should be avoided. At that time there were ninety-four (94) confirmed EHV cases associated with the outbreak and over 1000 horses quarantined in California. The last quarantine to be released associated

with this outbreak was on April 27, 2022. This outbreak caused a large disruption in the California horse show schedule and more than fifty (50) events were cancelled during this period.

After the EHV outbreak in spring 2022, there have been four (4) additional EHM incidents. The first of which was in Los Angeles County in June 2022, when a 20-year-old Quarter Horse gelding was colicky and dribbling urine then became neurologic the next day and was euthanized. One additional febrile horse on the premises tested positive for EHV-1 and the quarantine was released after fourteen (14) days. The second and third incidents were both in San Mateo County in June 2022 but were unrelated. The second incident was when a 19-year-old Thoroughbred mare displayed a fever and then became neurologic and was euthanized. One additional horse on the premises, a 15-year-old Irish Sport Horse mare, became neurologic and was also euthanized. No other cases were confirmed, and the quarantine was released after sixteen (16) days. The third incident was when a 7-year-old Holsteiner mare became neurologic and was sent to an offsite veterinary hospital. Five (5) additional horses on the premises, either febrile only or asymptomatic, tested positive for EHV-1 during quarantine. The quarantine was released after forty-five (45) days due to prolonged shedding for one horse on the premises. The fourth incident was in Merced County in August 2022, when an 8-year-old Quarter Horse gelding became neurologic and was sent to an offsite veterinary hospital. No additional cases were confirmed on the premises and quarantine was released fourteen (14) days after the positive horse left the premises.

So far in 2022, there have been eight (8) West Nile Virus (WNV) cases. The WNV positive horses were between one (1) to fifteen (15) years old, six (6) were unvaccinated and two (2) had an unknown vaccination status. Six (6) are alive and recovering and two (2) had to be euthanized due to severity of clinical signs. The horses have been located in Kern, Sacramento, San Luis Obispo, Tehama and Tulare counties.

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

Dr. Stephen Schumacher gave an update on the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF). USEF worked closely with CDFA during the Equine herpesvirus (EHV) incident at the Riverside County showgrounds. Since the outbreak, USEF has put together a panel with subgroups reviewing what happened and what can be applied to other events across the country. USEF does not have any regulatory authority over disease outbreaks, but they do provide assistance and support to competitions and state animal health officials during outbreaks. USEF is also looking into supporting biosecurity measures that event managers put into place and is looking into developing penalties for people who violate these measures. USEF would like to incorporate vaccination records into their entry forms in the future as well. Additional biosecurity measures in place for USEF include all horses entering a showgrounds will need to have a USEF identification number which will be recorded when they arrive so event

management knows which horses are on the premises. Also, horses that have been at a show where a disease outbreak has occurred will be put on an ineligibility list so they cannot enter a new USEF show until they meet certain requirements.

USEF brought forward the requirement in 2021 for certain disciplines to be microchipped in order to be eligible to compete. There was push back from some disciplines so the rule has been withdrawn for now and will be reviewed and voted on in the June 2023 USEF board meeting. If it is voted forward at this meeting, horses would be required to be microchipped in order to get points at any USEF event as of December 1, 2023. By December 1, 2024, horses would not be able to compete at USEF events if not microchipped. Microchips are highly beneficial for tracking during disease incidents, reuniting horses with their owners in the case of natural disasters and the biothermal microchips can be used as a quick and easy method of taking the horse's temperature.

USEF started using a stall side electronic data capture system for their drug testing program in January 2022 that they are currently using in conjunction with paper forms. They will soon be going to strictly electronic data capture in the near future.

## **(7) Program Updates**

### **Administrative Updates**

Mr. Lee Harrison gave an update on the EMMP testers. Currently there are five testers and three veterinarians actively testing for the program. The current compensation rates for veterinarians collecting samples, set in 2005, is \$30 per sample which is relatively low, so it has been difficult to get veterinarians to contract with EMMP. As the collection and testing of blood samples is integral to EMMP's testing program, the EMMPAC would like to increase compensation rates for contract veterinarians.

**MOTION #4:** Ms. Nancy Harvey motioned to increase the compensation rate per sample to \$50 per sample, along with a \$100 base allowance to cover travel and other associated costs. Dr. Neil Gray seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.

The EMMPAC also agreed that the number of blood samples collected would be contingent on the size of the event:

- For events less than 100 horses, a maximum of ten (10) samples can be collected;
- For events that have between 100-250 horses, a maximum of twelve (12) samples can be collected; and
- For events that have more than 250 horses, a maximum of fifteen (15) samples can be collected.

Dr. Nietrzeba discussed that EMMP is now collecting duplicate blood samples. There is an "A" and a "B" sample where the "A" sample is tested and the "B" sample is stored in case of an appeal and is requested by the appellant. There is

no significant increase for collection and storage of these duplicate samples and all samples are retained and discarded per contract and retention policies. This duplicate sample policy is currently in place for blood samples being collected and will be implemented shortly for urine samples.

### **Program Data Summary**

Ms. Katie Hatch presented the following program summary data for the 2021-2022 fiscal year (FY):

- A total of 1037 EMMP sanctioned events were registered, and 813 events were held (a slight increase from 2020-2021 FY).
- Seventy (70) events were tested by EMMP.
- A total of 142 urine samples and 75 blood samples were collected from selected horses at EMMP registered events.

### **Legal Update**

Dr. Emily Nietrzeba discussed the fee increase that was implemented. It went into effect as of June 1, 2022 but a grace period was extended through July 1, 2022 for events that had already been planned. The fee increase is helping to stabilize the financials of EMMP. The EMMPAC discussed the continued desire to increase the fee exemption limits as they have not increased in conjunction with the fee increases. This change would need to be sponsored by the equine industry via a state senator or political representative as this would be a change to the California Food and Agricultural Code (FAC).

The update in regulations to allow the new UC Davis CEM quarantine facility in Templeton, CA was approved, and the first quarantine mares were accepted at the facility in July 2022. There is a tentative plan to accept quarantine stallions at this facility in the future.

Dr. Nietrzeba also discussed a vesicular stomatitis virus (VSV) entry requirements regulation update in which susceptible animal species, including horses, will be prohibited from entry into California if exposed to a confirmed or suspected VSV premise within the prior fourteen (14) days. Additionally, during an outbreak, all susceptible animal species must have a certificate of veterinary inspection (CVI) within seven (7) days of entry, instead of the usual thirty (30) days, that states the animal is free from evidence of VSV. These changes will help to protect the health of California's animal population and prevent economic losses in the livestock industry in California. This regulation update is due to go into effect in 2023.

### **Financial Update**

Dr. Nietrzeba discussed the EMMP financial situation. Due to decreased expenditures and very conservative budgeting, EMMP had higher revenue than expenditures for the 2021-2022 FY. The expenditures for the 2022-2023 FY are likely to be slightly higher due to the desire to increase testing at shows, increased compensation for veterinarians collecting samples and resuming research projects. However, the increase in the EMMP testing fee as of June 1,

2022, will cover these increased expenditures and continue to reduce the EMMP deficit.

A revised EMMP budget for FY 2022-2023 was reviewed that included reinstating costs for research studies but a decrease in costs for laboratory testing due to limited sampling due to staffing limitations.

**MOTION #5:** Ms. Nancy Harvey motioned to approve the revised 2022-2023 fiscal year budget. Dr. Chris Smith seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.

There are currently fifty-seven (57) events held between January-June 2022 that have not paid their EMMP fees. EMMP will be following up with these event managers to obtain payments.

#### **(8) Research Proposal**

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 and from different sources, 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.

**MOTION #6:** Ms. Nancy Harvey motioned to approve funding for Dr. Hovey's study. Ms. Kalia Mitchell seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.

#### **(9) Committee New Business Discussion**

No new items were discussed. The next meeting is tentatively planned to be held on March 20, 2023.

#### **(10) Closing Comments**

Chairperson Dr. Mike Tomlinson adjourned the meeting at 11:35am.