

Equine Medication Monitoring Program (EMMP) Advisory Committee
March 26, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Item No.

(1) Call to Order

- a. The meeting was called to order on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, at 9:02am by Chairperson Dr. Mike Tomlinson.

(2) Roll Call

Present:

Dr. Stephanie Flowers, California Veterinary Medical Association
Mr. Robert Gage, California State Horsemen's Association
Ms. Sofia Goss, California Fairs and Expositions
Ms. Nancy Harvey, Arabian Horse Association
Ms. Kathy Hobstetter, California Professional Horsemen's Association
Dr. Jeanette Mero, American Endurance Ride Conference
Ms. Jaclyn Pepper, California Dressage Society
Dr. Russell Peterson, American Association of Equine Practitioners
Mr. William Pettis, American Morgan Horse Association
Ms. Rae Stambuk, California Reining Horse 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
Ms. Cathy Hanson, Pacific Coast Quarter Horse Association
Ms. Landy Hedlund, Pacific Coast Cutting Horse Association
Ms. Jo Ann Jackson, California Draft Horse & Mule Association
Dr. Michele LaMantia, Pinto Horse Association of America, Inc.
Dr. Chris Smith, Pacific Coast Horse Show Association

CDFA Present:

Dr. Joshua Kloeppel, Staff Veterinarian, Equine Programs
Ms. Katie Hatch, Research Scientist, Equine Programs
Mr. Lee Harrison, Agricultural Program Supervisor, EMMP
Ms. Christina Murphy, Management Services Technician, EMMP
Dr. Mandy Murray, Branch Chief, CDFA Animal Health Branch

Others Present:

Dr. Nicola Pusterla, UC Davis Large Animal Clinic

(3) Review of Minutes

Minutes of the October 10, 2023 meeting were reviewed.

MOTION #1: Ms. Rae Stambuk motioned to approve the minutes as written and Dr. Russ Peterson seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved. Chair abstained from voting.

(4) Advisory Committee Updates

The EMMP advisory committee (EMMPAC) welcomed Dr. Joshua Kloeppel as the new staff veterinarian for equine programs for CDFA. The committee also welcomed Ms. Sofia Goss as the representative for California Fairs and Expositions and Ms. Kathy Hobstetter as the representative for the California Professional Horsemen's Association.

(5) Research Presentation

Dr. Nicola Pusterla from the UC Davis Large Animal Clinic gave a presentation on a research project he conducted regarding infectious respiratory diseases. There was a large scale Equineherpesvirus-1 (EHV-1) outbreak in 2022 which significantly impacted the California horse show industry, and this research project was in response to that incident. Respiratory pathogens such as EHV-1 are very common and the severity of clinical signs depends on many factors including the host, environment, pathogen, and the ability of the pathogen to be spread via subclinical shedders. Subclinical shedding is influenced by several factors including demographic (age, use of horse), time of year, vaccination status and endemic situation.

During this study, nasal swab samples were collected at two separate shows, not involved in an outbreak, from seemingly healthy horses. At these shows, 1.8% and 2.2% of horses sampled tested positive for a respiratory pathogen (equine rhinitis B virus, streptococcus equi, and equineherpesvirus-4) on nasal swabs. However, respiratory pathogen detection is higher during an outbreak. During the 2022 EHV-1 outbreak, 9.8% of horses tested for return to competition tested positive on nasal swab for a respiratory pathogen (EHV-1, EHV-4, equine influenza, equine rhinitis B virus or streptococcus equi).

Environmental sampling was also conducted during this study where the stalls were swabbed using environmental sponges. At the two shows not involved in an outbreak, 4.7% of stall samples tested positive for a respiratory pathogen (EHV-1, EHV-4) at one show and 2.2% at the other event (EHV-1, EHV-4, equine influenza, equine rhinitis B virus or streptococcus equi). During the 2022 outbreak, stall samples were collected from the event grounds when the EHV-1 incident was ongoing and 13.8% of samples were positive for EHV-1. Additional environmental samples were taken from this show grounds in 2023 and 2024 and little to no samples tested positive for a respiratory pathogen due to infectious disease protocols put in place.

(6) United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) Update

Dr. Stephen Schumacher gave an update on the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF). USEF has eight rules going forward to be reviewed at the June board meeting. The first rule being brought forward is related to cruelty and abuse. This rule would allow USEF to pursue these cases even if they happen outside of the competition environment.

Of the eight rules, five of them are related to the isolation and biosecurity plans as biosecurity will soon be its own chapter under USEF rules. One of which being that competitors must adhere to the competition's isolation and biosecurity plan, as well as state and federal rules and regulations. Additionally, competitors will now be required to report any fevers to the event veterinarian or event management. Another rule that USEF is putting forward would require competitors to take each horse's temperature twice daily while at an event.

(7) Animal Health Updates

Equine Diseases

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

In May 2023, Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV) was confirmed in California for the first time in over forty years. This was due to an incursion of vectors (black flies, sand flies and midges) from Mexico into California due to an unusually wet winter in the 2022-2023 winter season. The outbreak was from May 2023 through January 2024 and had 316 premises and 19 counties affected. There is a possibility in 2024 that the vectors that carry VSV will come back in the spring this year and cause an expansion year. Clinical signs include excessive salivation, refusal to eat, fever, and vesicles (lesions) on the mouth, nose, ears, coronet bands and inguinal areas.

Since the last EMMP advisory committee meeting, there has been one (1) EHM incident in December 2023 in Contra Costa County. The incident was when a 22-year-old Quarter Horse mare displayed mild neurological signs. The horse tested positive for EHV-4. There were fourteen (14) exposed horses on the home premises with no additional cases.

In 2023, there were six (6) Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) cases. The first was in March 2023 in Fresno County when a 21-year-old molly mule tested positive on routine testing for interstate movement. The mule was euthanized, and the five (5) exposed equids tested negative. Natural transmission (via insects) is suspected in this case. The second case was in June 2023 in Los Angeles County when a 5-year-old racing Quarter Horse gelding tested positive. The gelding was euthanized and the eight (8) exposed equids tested negative. The third set of cases was in Riverside County in September 2023 when a 4-year-old racing Quarter Horse gelding tested positive and was euthanized. Out of the twenty-four (24) exposed horses, three (3) additional horses tested positive for EIA and were euthanized. All of these racing Quarter Horse cases were suspected iatrogenic transmission.

In 2023, there were thirty-one (31) total cases of West Nile Virus (WNV). The age range of infected horses was 1-23 years. Of the thirty-one (31) cases, fifteen (15) were unvaccinated, four (4) were under vaccinated, nine (9) were vaccinated and

three (3) had an unknown vaccine status. Twenty-two (22) horses are alive and recovering, eight (8) horses died or were euthanized and one (1) had an unknown status. Cases were located in Butte (1), Fresno (2), Kern (2), Kings (1), Madera (1), Merced (2), Napa (1), Orange (1), Placer (1), Riverside (4), Sacramento (3), San Bernardino (1), San Joaquin (2), San Luis Obispo (2), San Mateo (1), Santa Clara (1), Siskiyou (1), Stanislaus (2), Tulare (1) and Yuba (1) Counties.

(8) Program Updates

Administrative Updates

Mr. Lee Harrison gave an update on the EMMP outreach. A new poster was recently added in the show packets that go out to event managers. It states that California law supersedes organizational rules so that even if a medication is allowed under an event's hosting organization, it can still be prohibited under the California Equine Medication Rule. The poster includes a QR code for the EMMP website. The advisory committee suggested adding a second QR code that goes straight to the Drug and Medication Guidelines.

Mr. Harrison also updated that the EMMP drug testers are currently being reclassified to an Agricultural Technician III in order to hopefully attract more candidates for open positions and retain current employees.

Program Data Summary

Ms. Katie Hatch presented the following program summary data for the 2023 calendar year (CY):

- A total of 1062 EMMP sanctioned events were registered, and 800 events were held.
- Eighty-two (82) events were tested by EMMP.
- A total of 77,151 horses were entered into EMMP events.
- A total of 226 urine samples and 111 blood samples were collected from selected horses at EMMP registered events.

Legal Update

There were seven (7) drug violations in 2023. Five (5) of these were for prohibited substances and two (2) were permissible medication overages.

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 advisory committee needs to identify a sponsor to move forward with this code change. The California State Horsemen's Association has created an ad hoc committee looking into getting a state senator's endorsement to get the process started.

Financial Update

Mr. Harrison presented the current projections for the end of the fiscal year (FY). The advisory committee was presented with a budget proposal for the 2024-2025 FY.

MOTION #2: Ms. Rae Stambuk motioned to approve the 2024-2025 FY budget and Ms. Kathy Hobstetter seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.

(9) Research Update

Dr. Russ Hovey from the UC Davis Animal Science Department is working on the EMMPAC approved study on "Implication on teff hay consumption and potential synephrine detection in blood and urine". Dr. Hovey got two cuttings of teff hay from last season, did validation analysis on the hay and is planning on doing the feeding part of the study this spring/summer. He also is planning on obtaining more hay samples this season.

EMMP is currently looking into funding a second research project.

(10) Committee New Business Discussion

No new items were discussed. The next advisory committee meeting is planned for September or October 2024.

(11) Closing Comments

Chairperson Dr. Mike Tomlinson adjourned the meeting at 11:27am.