

HISTORY

The California equine industry sponsored legislation in 1971 to prevent misuse of drugs and medications in equines (horses, ponies, mules and donkeys) in public shows and sales. The resulting law, found in the Food and Agricultural Code (FAC) Sections 24000-24018, is known as the California Equine Medication Rule. The California Department of Food and Agriculture manages the Equine Medication Monitoring Program (EMMP), and monitors equines in public shows, competitions and sales through random collection of blood or urine for chemical analysis. To fund the EMMP, event managers collect a fee of \$14.00 for each equine being entered in a show/competition or being consigned to a sale.

EXHIBITOR AND CONSIGNOR RESPONSIBILITIES

An exhibitor or consignor for a registered equine event **must**:

- Comply with the California Equine Medication Rule
- File an accurate and complete Drug Declaration Form with the event manager when necessary
- Cooperate with EMMP personnel

CALIFORNIA EQUINE MEDICATION RULE

According to the California Equine Medication Rule, a therapeutic drug or medicine is a substance prescribed by a licensed veterinarian for the treatment of a diagnosed illness or injury. The rule classifies therapeutic drugs or medicines as prohibited or permitted.

PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

Prohibited substances that affect performance or disposition of equines include stimulants, depressants, tranquilizers, anesthetics, local anesthetics, sedative analgesics, anabolic steroids, corticosteroids, and soring agents. Use of therapeutic drugs or medicines other than under veterinary prescription for a diagnosed illness or injury is prohibited. **Prohibited drugs must be withdrawn 24 hours before competition or 72 hours before sale.** If a prohibited substance is administered for any non-therapeutic purposes, the animal must be withdrawn from competition until the substance is no longer detectable in an equine's blood or urine sample. An equine that has been given a prohibited substance or NSAID cannot be sold at a public sale for a minimum of 72 hours after administration of the prohibited substance or NSAID.

The California Equine Medication Rule prohibits the administration of any injectable substance into an equine within 12 hours of competition, except for a veterinarian administering the following:

- Polyionic fluids given within 6-12 hours of competition. (Note: Fluids with concentrated electrolytes are prohibited)
- Antibiotics (NOTE: Procaine Penicillin is prohibited).
- Dexamethasone injection exclusively for the treatment of acute urticaria (hives) within 6-12 hours of competition.

The veterinarian must file a Drug Declaration Form within one (1) hour of administration of these injectable substances.

PERMITTED SUBSTANCES

It is acceptable to administer therapeutic drugs and medicines to equines before and during shows and competitions provided the dose of drug does not exceed maximum allowable levels. The rule allows the use of only one nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) in equines. Detection of more than one NSAID in a plasma or urine sample collected from an equine in show or competition is a violation. When two NSAIDs are part of a veterinary therapeutic regime, administration of one of the NSAIDs must stop at least 72 hours before competition. All NSAIDs must be stopped at least 72 hours before a sale.

Emergency administration of Flunixin (Banamine®) by a veterinarian is allowable for the treatment of colic or an ophthalmic emergency provided there is a 24-hour withdrawal of the equine from competition after administration. A Drug Declaration Form must be completed by the veterinarian and filed with an event manager within one (1) hour of administration.

The nine **permitted** drugs, not to exceed maximum allowable levels, are: Dexamethasone (Azium®), Diclofenic Acid (Surpass®), Firocoxib (Equioxx®), Flunixin (Banamine®), Ketoprofen (Ketofen®), Meclofenamic Acid (Arquel®), Methocarbamol (Robaxin®), Naproxen (Naprosyn®), Phenylbutazone (Butazolidin®)

DRUG DECLARATION FORMS

A Drug Declaration Form (CDFA Form 76-027 or USEF Drugs and Medication Report Form) must be completed and filed with an event manager for any equine that has received a prohibited substance. An **owner/trainer** must complete and file a Drug Declaration for any equine that has received a prohibited substance within the three (3) days before the day being shown or within the five (5) days before the day of the sale (NSAIDs must also be claimed for sales).

SAMPLE COLLECTION

EMMP field personnel randomly select equines competing in or consigned to an event for sample collection. They collect urine samples from selected equines unless a licensed veterinarian is assigned to work with them, and then blood samples are collected. When an equine is selected, the owner or trainer must take it to a location designated by the EMMP representative for sample collection. Once in the designated location, the individual must remove themselves from the immediate proximity of the animal and avoid any activities distracting to the equine. **It is the responsible person's responsibility to submit the selected horse for sample collection.**

An EMMP representative may release a selected equine without sample collection if a reasonable attempt to collect a sample is made and the animal poses a safety risk.

Failure to submit a horse for sample collection or to cooperate with EMMP personnel is a violation and subjects the responsible person to civil penalties and possible suspension.

DRUG DETECTION INVESTIGATIONS

EMMP personnel seal collected samples and submit the samples for chemical analysis to the Maddy Equine Analytical Chemistry Laboratory. When the chemical analysis of a specimen is positive for detection of a drug or medicine, an EMMP investigation begins. The owner/trainer or consignor of the equine with a positive sample will receive a letter and Notice of Violation. The assessment of the civil penalty considers the type of drug detected.

- Civil penalties of \$100-\$10,000 for each offense will apply to the owner and/or trainer of an equine found to have a chemical analysis with a prohibited substance or permissible substance in violation of the rule.
- The owner and/or trainer may receive a suspension from all public shows and competitions for a period of not less than 90 days or more than one year for each violation.
- The owner of an equine found in violation of the rule may have to pay a penalty fee of \$50 to the public show or competition.

For additional information:

CDFA/EMMP: EMMP@cdfa.ca.gov
<http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal>

[Health/emmp/](#)

Event

Registration/Administration:

(916) 268-0609

Drugs and Medications:

Equine Veterinarian
EMMP@cdfa.ca.gov



**Animal Health and Food Safety
Services**

Equine Medication Monitoring Program



**Information for
Exhibitors
and Consignors**

January 2026