

Agriculture Newsletter Article (Submitted July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014)

Horse Owners: Vesicular Stomatitis (VS) is Near Jim Hogg County

Now into August, it feels as if summer is coming to an end. However, these 100+ degree days still rage on. When there is summer, there is always time for riding horses. Keeping your horse healthy and fit is an important factor to a successful partnership. For the equestrians who are on the road roping cattle, chasing barrels, or even buying new horses, you need to be aware of the outbreak of Vesicular Stomatitis (VS) in horses. As stated by the School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Wisconsin-Madison, "Vesicular Stomatitis is a viral disease causing oral sores to form on the lips, tongue, and gums of horses. Sores are also found to form around the coronary band that could eventually cause lameness". This virus is related and similar to Foot and Mouth Disease, commonly found in cattle. This disease is not only a risk to other horses, but also humans. Spread by direct contact with the virus. The virus could be passed from animal to animal by sharing of tack (bits, halters, etc.), feed and water buckets, stalling panels, or other areas shared by infected animals. Information below is from an email sent by Dr. Dennis Sigler, professor and extension horse specialist at Texas A&M University, College Station.

"From the Texas Animal Health Commission, July 11, 2014 --

"On July 10, the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC)...[has on record], 10 premises in seven Texas counties have been confirmed with VS. Those counties include: Kinney, Hidalgo, San Patricio, Nueces, Jim Wells, Bastrop and Travis counties. *Note: The Kinney county premises has been released from quarantine.*

The newly identified infected premises is currently under quarantine by the TAHC. Affected horses will be monitored by regulatory veterinarians while under quarantine. Premises are eligible for quarantine release 21 days after all lesions have healed. There is no known exposure to other horses around the state, or at any equine events."

If you are traveling with your horse, take extra caution in known infected areas of Texas. This disease is transferrable to humans. It is important to prevent this disease from spreading further into Texas.

If you need any additional information contact your local extension office:

Sophie Judson  
Texas A&M Agrilife Extension: Jim Hogg County  
Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent  
P: 361-527-3737 E: sophie.judson@ag.tamu.edu  
Courthouse Annex, Suite 9  
Hebbronville, TX 78361