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BSPA BRIEFING NOTE- 1

**HORSE PASSPORT
LEGISLATION
&
REGULATIONS**

HORSE PASSPORT LEGISLATION & REGULATION 2003-2013

COMMISSION REGULATION EC 504/2008 WILL BE REPEALED IN THE FORTHCOMING LEGISLATION CHANGES

CONTEXT

- On the 1st July 2009 new EU Horse passport regulations concerning identification for horses came into force, in order to strengthen the previously existing regulations.
- Those earlier regulations came into force in December 2003 and placed an obligation on all horse/pony owners to have a passport for each animal covered by the definition "equadie".
- Thus all horses, ponies, donkies and mules were required by law to have a passport issued to them by an authorized Passport Issuing Organisation (PIO); under EU Commission Decision

CURRENT POSITION:

- 2008 **LEGISLATION** (EC 504/2008 **still in force but due to be repealed**)
- This legislation (from 01/07/2009) built upon the 2003 regulations. The main new features were that horse passports were to be linked to the equadie by a uniquely coded identification chip. A microchip or transponder.
- And required that all horses issued with a new passport after 30th June 2009 **MUST** be micro-chipped.
- Foals must be identified before 31st December of their year of birth or within six months of their birth, whichever is the later.
- **Horses not previously issued with a passport** should also be micro-chipped and their passports will be signed by the PIO as "NOT" intended for the Human food chain. Section IX.
- **Only** Veterinary surgeons were able **to** implant a microchip into a horse and they must first check to see if either the animal already has one implanted or that there is any evidence that one has been removed this was and still is done via scanning.
- **Zebra and other exotic equines were then included in the scheme.**
- **This remains the basis of our now familiar Horse passport regime.**

Consequently:-

- If the passport is not available or the vet does not know whether the equine is eligible for entry into the human food chain then the vet should not administer drugs not authorized for food producing animals and therefore **MUST** use an alternative product or permanently sign them out of the human food chain
- Owners and keepers with primary responsibility (i.e. those who take care of the animal on a day to day basis (Livery, trainers) **MUST** ensure their horses are correctly identified. They must be able to produce the Passport without delay in the event of Inspection or official request.
- Only owners may apply for a passport but the new 2014 regulations allow for a keeper to apply.
- The passport must accompany the horse at all times unless stabled or at pasture or moved on foot. Under these circumstances the passport can be made available within 3 hours.
- When a horse dies then the owner **MUST** send the passport back to the PIO within 30 days. The passport may be returned to the owner if requested once the passport processes are completed
- If the passport is not available when the vet is in attendance, then the owner is responsible for ensuring that the drugs administered are then recorded onto the passport.
- Failure to comply with the new legislation is punishable by a fine of up to £5000.

THE FUTURE:

The EU Commission has announced proposals in March 2013 to replace EU Legislation underpinning the current horse passport regime. Negotiations are still on-going around a provisional implementation date of 1st April 2014. However it is not yet known when those changes are likely to be agreed and implemented possibly slipping into 2015. **Our procedures and passport documents will reflect and incorporate any changes once the legislation is in place.**