

COMMISSIONER ALERTS HORSE OWNERS OF CONTAGIOUS HORSE DISEASE

CONTACT: FOR RELEASE:

Jessica Chittenden Immediately, Thursday

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DISEASE**

Nine New York Horses Potentially Exposed to Contagious Equine Metritis

New York State Agriculture Commissioner Patrick Hooker today alerted horse owners and breeders to the potential exposure of their horses to Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM), a contagious venereal disease of horses. Currently, there are nine known stallions outside of New York State that have tested positive for CEM and that have potentially exposed hundreds of other horses, including nine mares in New York State.

Contagious Equine Metritis can be spread when horses are bred, or congenitally from mares to their foals. While natural breeding is more likely to spread the infection, horses involved in artificial breeding can also be exposed to CEM. Infected stallions seldom, if ever, show outward signs of infection, but may act as carriers of the disease.

To date, there are nine mares in New York and approximately 300 other potentially exposed horses in 37 other states. As potentially exposed horses are identified, they are placed under strict restrictions by state and federal animal health authorities, pending three consecutive negative test results. The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and USDA veterinarians have quarantined the nine exposed mares in New York State and have begun testing. None of the potentially exposed mares in New York State or other states have tested positive for CEM at this time.

There are nine stallions that have tested positive for CEM. Used for breeding purposes, these stallions are suspect for possibly exposing mares to CEM. Following are the names of the known stallions that have tested positive for CEM:

- Gentlemen Send Roses, a Paint Horse from Indiana
- Hot Lopin Sensation, a Quarter Horse from Kentucky
- Indian Artifacts, a Quarter Horse from Kentucky
- Invited Back, a Paint Horse from Indiana
- Nanning 374, a Friesian from Wisconsin
- Potential Asset, a Quarter Horse from Texas
- Potential Investment, a Quarter Horse from Kentucky

- Repeated in Red, a Quarter Horse from Kentucky
- Zips Heaven Sent, a Paint Horse from Indiana

CEM may render mares infertile or may cause horses to spontaneously abort, however the disease can be treated with antibiotics and disinfectants. There is no evidence that CEM affects people.

New York farms owning mares, which have been bred to or have come into contact with any of the positive stallions, and who has not yet been contacted by state or federal animal health officials should contact the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets' Division of Animal Industry at 518-457-3502.

For more information and regular updates on Contagious Equine Metritis, visit http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom/hot_issues/cem/index.shtml