



Arizona Department of Agriculture

1688 W. Adams Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007
(602) 542-4373 FAX (602) 542-5420

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACT: Laura Oxley, 602-542-3244

HORSE VIRUS PROMPTS QUARANTINE **Racing Continues at Turf Paradise**

(Phoenix) Today, the Department of Agriculture quarantined horses at Turf Paradise after an incident concerning a very contagious virus. The quarantine requires all horses at the track to stay and for no horses to come onto the property for 21 days.

The quarantine follows three horses coming into the state from Dona Ana County, New Mexico where five horses were diagnosed with Equine Herpes Virus last week. The New Mexico Livestock Board issued a quarantine for several locations, but the horses at Turf Paradise left before the restrictions were in place.

Turf Paradise immediately isolated the three horses following that disease report and monitored for clinical signs. The track is also requiring strict biosecurity measures for all horse owners and personnel at the track.

“This virus type can cause severe neurological symptoms, which one of the horses that came from New Mexico developed,” said Acting State Veterinarian Sue Gale, DVM. “The case is not confirmed by testing yet, but is considered to be probable case of the virus.”

Equine Herpes Virus is highly contagious among horses but poses no threat to humans. The symptoms in horses may include a fever, nasal discharge, wobbly gait, hind-end weakness, dribbling of urine and diminished tail tone.

The virus is easily spread by airborne transmission, horse-to-horse contact and by contact with nasal secretions on equipment, tack, feed and other surfaces. Caretakers can spread the virus to horses if their hands, clothing, shoes or vehicles are contaminated.

“If horse owners notice these symptoms, they should contact their personal vet,” said Dr. Gale. “If veterinarians see a horse with these symptoms, they need to report the case to the state veterinarian.

Officials at Turf Paradise say the track will remain open and that there is no concern for people who attend the races. Officials with the Department of Agriculture, Racing Commission, and Turf Paradise will continue to work together to resolve the issue.

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