

Equine anemia found in Oregon

Equine infectious anemia is a blood-borne disease in horses that veterinary officials in Oregon would like to stop at the border. But it is here—confirmed in 11 cases this year—and now the focus is on making sure the problem isn't any larger. That's why non-veterinarians associated with horses are being asked to get involved.

"We suggest that any gathering of horses at shows, fairs, trail rides, rodeos—whatever sort of exhibition of horses takes place in Oregon—that the management of those events requires negative Coggins tests on all horses which are participating," says Andrew Clark, state veterinarian with the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

The Coggins test is the serologic test approved for diagnosis of equine infectious anemia—EIA for short. State and federal officials can't require testing for horses that travel within the state even though such tests are mandatory for interstate travel of horses.

Cases of EIA are common in other states, primarily in the southeastern U.S. In Oregon, an infected horse may show up once or twice each year. But 11 cases is relatively high, according to an Oregon Department of Agriculture news release. A saddle horse from the Warm Springs Reservation tested positive for EIA last fall. Since then, 308 horses from the affected area have been tested with the 11 coming up positive. The original animal was discovered because its owner was taking it out of the state.

"Most of the animals we are dealing with traveled throughout Oregon for one reason or another to the racetrack, rodeo, that kind of thing," says Barb Progulski, federal veterinary officer. "We don't know where these animals got infected."

Why all the concern over a virus that doesn't spread all that quickly?

"It can make a lot of horses sick and impede their performance," says Clark. "It can make the horse virtually worthless as it doesn't have much strength or stamina. Basically the disease diminishes the worth of the horse and the value to the owner."

There are essentially three

degrees of EIA infectiousness. Some horses exposed to the virus develop acute symptoms and die within two to three weeks. Others develop a chronic condition that is often marked by lethargy and anorexia. But a majority of horses with the disease are called inapparent carriers, surviving as reservoirs of the infection. They are the biggest concern.

"That horse is not showing you any symptoms at all and nobody knows the animal is sick," says Clark. "So no one does anything to prevent contact with other horses and that can be a real problem."

If you know your horse is sick, chances are the animal is not going to travel and won't be exposed to other horses. But the horse with no symptoms can very easily be taken to locations where other horses are gathered, making it relatively easy for EIA to be spread by biting insects.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) writes about the transmission of EIA in one of its fact sheets:

"It is most frequently transmitted between horses in close proximity by large biting insects, such as horse flies and deer flies. The bites from these flies stimulate defensive movement by the horse, which often results in an interruption of the blood feeding. When interrupted, the fly is motivated to complete the feeding as soon as possible and attacks the same or a second host and feeds to repletion. In this manner, any infective material from the blood of the first host which is present on the mouthparts of the insect can be mechanically transmitted to the second host."

The disease can also be transmitted by using one needle on multiple horses.

Alternatives for an infected animal are limited. A horse testing positive is isolated and retested to make sure. If confirmed as having EIA, the horse is either euthanized, sent to a slaughterhouse or it can be quarantined on the premises away from other equine—usually more than 200 yards away from other horses or in a screened stall that will prevent flying insects

from traveling to and from other hosts.

ODA's Animal Health Laboratory in Salem is geared up to complete the Coggins Test of all samples that are provided. The lab normally completes about 7200 tests each year for horses that are traveling interstate. But since there is no requirement for testing horses that never leave Oregon, the sampling is not truly representative of the state's horse industry, said the release.

"You can see how there can be an in-state reservoir of infection that has not been disclosed because horses that never leave Oregon never get tested," says Clark.

Tribal officials have been very forthright and cooperative in this issue, says Clark. Even though the current cases are confined to the Warm Springs Reservation, state officials are quick to avoid pointing any fingers.

"Because the horses that have tested positive have been traveling to many places within the state, we really do not know where the infection came from," says Clark.

The state veterinarian is hopeful that horse organizations and exhibition managers will follow the advice to have participating horses tested for EIA, even though it isn't required by law. It may help answer questions as to where other areas of infection in Oregon might exist.

If it is present in other locations, now would be a good time to find out. Horse shows, rodeos, and fairs will arrive soon. So will the season of flies and biting insects that can spread the virus to even more horses in Oregon.

For more information, contact Dr. Andrew Clark at (503) 986-4680.

Quilt show to be held at Athena

Athena's first quilt show will be held on Saturday, May 30, from noon to 5 p.m. at the Dudley House and gardens at 50413 Wildhorse road in Athena. Cost for admission is \$3.

The show is being put on by the Caledonian Games Association. For more information, call Sue Friese, chairman, at (541) 566-3880.

A variety of quilts will be on display in the house and in the garden. Pipers from the Weston-McEwen High School pipe and drum will be performing at noon. Later on a quartet of Athena musicians will perform.

Refreshments will be offered. Donations for the "Welcome to Athena" sign that is being replaced by the Caledonian Games will be accepted. The Caledonian Games will be held July 11 and 12.

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Noxious weeds require attention

As summer approaches, attention needs to be focused on controlling the spread of noxious weeds, says Dave Pranger, with the Morrow County Weed Control District.

Noxious weeds are mandated to be controlled in Morrow County by the county court and include the following: Yellow starthistle, Rush skeletonweed, Scotch thistle, Dalmation toadflax, Tansy ragwort, Musk thistle, Purple loosestrife and Spikeweed.

By law it is the landowners responsibility to keep these weeds from going to seed each

year, says Pranger. Penalties for noncompliance may include fines along with the cost of treatment by the county, he says. State law also includes the possibility of a quarantine which would halt the movement of livestock or other products such as hay from entering or leaving the affected area until it is inspected and found clean of noxious weed seed, Pranger added.

The Morrow County Weed Control District can assist landowners with identification and control methods. Those seeking help or more information may contact the office at 989-9502.

Family dynamics workshop planned

Family dynamics and the creative development of community-based supports will be the focus of a family community relations workshop and symposium beginning on Friday, May 29, at Pioneer Hall at Blue Mountain Community College.

The goal of the event is to explore and facilitate supportive, reciprocal relationships, said a BMCC news release. Community partnerships include employers, schools, churches, daycare providers, social service providers, professional organizations, legislators, service groups and families.

The workshop is a collaborative community effort initiated by social science department at BMCC. The partners include: Head Start of Umatilla Morrow County, Umatilla County Commission on Children and Families, Homestead Youth Lodge, KidSafe, the East Oregonian, BMCC Phi Theta Kappa, BMCC Associated Student Government and BMCC continuing education.

Concurrent workshops will be held from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m. on topics including substance abuse, youths at risk, housing resources, parenting, preventing problem behaviors, single parenthood, employers' perspective, disability issues and family-school relations. All sessions will be held in Pioneer Hall.

Stephanie Coontz, "one of the nation's foremost social historians" will wrap up the first day with a keynote presentation at 7 p.m. in the Pioneer Hall Theater. Among Coontz' credits are two books regarding the American family, "The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap" and "The Way We Really Are". Coontz teaches history and family studies at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Wa. She serves on the advisory board to the National Family Index of Family Circle and is a faculty scholar for the National Faculty. In 1995 she received the Dale Richmond Award from the American Academy of Pediatrics for her "outstanding contributions to the field of child development."

On Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1

p.m., participants will share ideas on community mobilization and action planning. Coontz will open the morning by discussing community support research. This will be followed by preliminary community action planning.

Local government representatives, including Senator David Nelson, Representative Bob Jonson, Mayor Bob Ramig and Tribal Leader Antone Minthorn will present their perspective on family-community needs.

The final activity for the day is the development of action plans to carry planning strategies forward.

Other speakers at the symposium will include Martha Miller, Carondelet/Lourdes Alcohol/Drug Treatment; Bob Ehman, attorney; Bob Resner, Senior and Disabled Services Division; Glenda Cole, Adult and Family Services manager; Elisa Doebler-Irvine, Homestead Youth Lodge; Paul Kershnik, USDA Rural Development manager; Cheryl Price, Umatilla/Morrow Head Start; Yvonne Iwasa and Debbie Skousen, Treasure Valley Community College; and Wilma Hepker, Walla Walla College.

Participants who are interested may receive one college credit for participating in the workshop. For more information regarding course credit or workshop information contact the BMCC Continuing Education office at 541/278-5762.

College tax credits now available

The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 created new tax credits for students (or their parents) who attend college or vocational schools in 1998. These credits can be claimed on 1998 tax returns filed in 1999.

"Therefore, as tuition and fees are paid in 1998, be sure to keep the records that substantiate the amounts you paid," said Carol Michael, Oregon State University Extension home economist in Morrow and Umatilla counties.

During the first two years of college, a scholarship tax credit, called the HOPE tax credit, allows parents or students to deduct 100 percent of the first \$1000 of tuition and mandatory fee expenses, and 50 percent of the second \$1000 of tuition and mandatory fee expenses.

The credit applies to classes starting on or after January 1, 1998, according to Alice Mills Morrow, Oregon State University Extension family economics specialist.

For education beyond the first two years of college or vocational school, the "Lifelong Learning Credit," available after July 1, 1998, allows the deduction of up to 20 percent of the first \$5,000 in tuition and fees for undergraduate and graduate school, and for classes to acquire or improve job skills.

Both credits are phased out for taxpayers with modified adjusted gross incomes between \$40,000 and \$50,000 (between \$80,000 and \$100,000 for joint filers).

Morrow advises keeping good records of 1998 expenses for tuition and fees. As more details about the tax act become available, parents, students and their tax advisors can make decisions about what credits they may claim.

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We would like to invite Jonas' friends and family to an Open House after graduation on May 30th, 635 Hager Street, Heppner.

Come Share With Us At Willow Creek Baptist Church



Worship Service on Sundays at 11 a.m. Meeting in the 7th-day Adventist Church 560 North Minor, Heppner

And a big WELCOME to our new pastor and his wife Brent and Jennifer Waldrep



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