

VETERINARY MEDICINES

RESPONSIBILITIES OF HORSE OWNERS

The purpose of this information note is to act as a guidance document for horse owners in relation to the use of veterinary medicines on their horses.

1. HORSE MUST BE PROPERLY IDENTIFIED

Since July 2009 a horse must be identified by a passport and microchip prior to December 31st in the year of its birth or within 6 months of its birth, whichever is later. If you delay getting a passport for your horse until after it is 6 months old, the passport issued then will exclude horse from the food chain. If a passport is lost, all replacement passports will exclude the horse from entering the food chain.

Note: In accordance with Commission Regulation 504/2008, horses can be declared as not intended for human consumption (non-food-producing horse) by completing Section IX part (ii) of the horse passport. Horses are always considered food producing animals, unless Section IX part (ii) has been completed.

If you bring your horse to a vet for treatment and it does not have a passport, the vet must assume that the horse is intended for human consumption and will therefore firstly endeavour to prescribe medicines that are authorised for use in food producing horses or other food producing animals (ie contain substances listed in Table 1 of Regulation EU 37/2010).

In an emergency situation where the health or welfare of the horse or foal is at risk and there is no suitable alternative that is permitted for use in 'food' horses, your vet may prescribe and treat the horse and follow the following protocol:

- (a) Your vet will discuss the alternatives with you the owner of the animal at the time and explain that treatment with medicines with non-MRL substances will require that the animal will be permanently excluded from entering the food chain
- (b) At the time your vet administers the animal remedy, he/she takes the animals markings and inserts a microchip
- (c) The markings, microchip number details, description of horse and details of owner are then sent to the Horse Passport Issuing Organisation (HPIO) on the proviso that passport be issued directly to your vet.
- (d) You, the owner, must agree at the time of treatment that the animal will not enter the food chain and agree that the passport will be issued by the HPIO to the veterinary practitioner (written declaration by the owner/keeper)
- (e) Upon receipt of passport by your vet, he/she will sign Part 2 of Section IX
- (f) The passport will then be sent to you who must also sign Part 2 of Section IX.

2. HORSE CAN ONLY BE TREATED WITH AUTHORISED MEDICINES

Horse should only be treated with a veterinary medicinal product which has an Irish (VPA number) or European (EU number) marketing authorisation. If there is no suitable medicine authorised here or in the EU for a particular condition in equines, your vet may invoke the Cascade.

It is an offence to treat an animal with an unauthorised veterinary medicine and a horse owner can be prosecuted under Animal Remedies legislation if they import, supply, possess or administer an unauthorised animal remedy.

Any questions in relation to the use of veterinary medicines on your horse or whether a particular medicine is authorised should be directed to your vet.

3. RECORDS TO BE KEPT BY HORSE OWNERS

Where a medicine is prescribed by your vet for use on your horse, the prescription issued should always be held by the horse owner for 5 years in the case of a horse for human consumption.

Horses Intended for Human Consumption

A **dedicated** record must be kept by the owner/keeper of the horse of all medicines purchased and administered to the horse, the following details must be kept as per Schedule 7 of the European Communities (Animal Remedies)(No.2) Regulations:

- (a) date of administration
- (b) authorised name and quantity of animal remedy administered
- (c) identity of horse
- (d) date of expiry of withdrawal period
- (e) name of person who administered the remedy
- (f) name of prescribing veterinary practitioner if applicable
- (g) quantities unused or expired veterinary medicines which were returned

These records must be kept for 5 years. Where a prescription has been issued, this will suffice as a medicines record as long as all of the data from (a) to (g) are recorded on the script. If some of these fields ((a), (d) and (e) for eg) are not on the script they should be added.

Horses not Intended for Human Consumption

Where a prescription is issued in respect of a medicine for use in a horse not intended for human consumption, the prescription must be kept until the medicine is used. Apart from this requirement, the owner or keeper is not required to keep any records in respect of their horse that is not intended for the food chain.