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Identification of horses in Europe

Based on the collaborative work of FEEVA and FVE



FEEVA Position on Identification and Registration of horses (2010)

- 1. FEEVA considers that electronic identification of horses in combination with the passport and diagram is the method of choice to identify the horse.**

FEEVA recognizes that hot branding and tattooing are a mutilation. FEEVA considers that electronic identification should be used to replace hot branding, freeze branding and tattooing.

2. FEEVA considers that a **central national and preferably one European Union (EU) database related to the microchip registration**, should contain all the **necessary information** to guarantee reliable access concerning the horses status (life number, microchip number, food versus non food producing status, name and address of the owner and location of the horse), in order to ensure the food safety of the consumer and to be an essential aid in disease control strategies.

Direct electronic access to this information must be possible. Furthermore, these databases must be up to date, registration of dead horses must be eliminated and multiple registrations of the same horse be avoided.

Survey update 2011 based on data of 24 countries

- 24 European countries
- EU: 20
- Non EU: 4

Implementation

- Has Identification of Equidae Regulation (Commission Regulation 504/2008) been implemented in your country?
- 4 no
- Hu: has just started (new system)

Hungary

- Central Agricultural Office (Ministry of Agriculture)
 - „Owner” of central database („Lóinform”)
- Association of Hungarian Horse Breeding Organisations (AHHBO)
 - Members: Different Horse Breeding Organisations
 - Organising registration of all equidae not belonging to any specialised breeding organisation or studbook
 - Handling of central database, exclusive access to database
 - Responsible for identification and passport issuing
- Vet: transponder
- Owner: passport handling and notify animals' death (vet proof)

Alternative identification methods

- No: 10
- Hot branding, freeze branding
- Hu:
 - **Microchip**: breeding organisations: hungarian sport horse & thoroughbred, horses not belonging to any (hot branding can be additional)
 - **Hot branding**: „traditional” horse breeding organisations (Babolna-Arabian, Szilvasvarad-Lippizaner, etc.)



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Who is authorized to use these methods?

- Veterinarians
- Breeding association personnel
- Government officials
- Hu: officials of AHHBO



Who will be authorized to identify horses in your country under this Regulation?

- Veterinarians
- Stud book, breeding association personnel
- Government officials
- Trained lay people
- Hu:
 - Hot branding: stud book personnel, officials of AHHBO
 - Microchip: officials of AHHBO + veterinarian
microchipping considered to be a surgical procedure
microchip is handled by the official of the breeding association



What type(s) of information will be held on the microchip?

- Unique equine life number (UELN) only
- Microchip number links to a database
- Microchip number links horse to passport

Database?

- Central database: 9 (registered horses, not all horses registered)
- Various databases: 4
- Various databases linked: 1
- None
- Hu: „Lóinform”, theoretically every horse is registered and included in the central database (w/wo microchip)

Who is responsible for submitting, entering & updating the information on the central database?

- Owners
- Veterinarians
- Studbooks, Passport issuing organisations
- State agencies
- HU: Passport issuing organisation (AHHBO) when a passport is issued. Owners/keepers are required to notify when the horse dies.

In your country, which horses are seen as 'registered horses' according to Council Regulation 90/426/EC?

- All horses identified & registered: 13
- Only horses registered with certain studbooks, eg. Trotter, thoroughbreds, Arabians, etc.: 3
- Hu: all horses are identified & registered
„registered”: within studbooks or breeding organisations
„non-registered”: data are handled by a general breeding authority (AHHBO)

In your country, do the existing regulations make provision for the suspension of the passport by your competent authority in the event of an outbreak of notifiable/reportable disease?

- No: 7
- Yes: 7
- Hu (Cz): Existing regulations do not stipulate equine passport withdrawal or suspension, but restriction of movement for particular horses can be imposed on their owner by other regulations in place

Conclusions

- Use of electronic identification is spreading in Europe
- Traditional Breeding Associations insist on hot branding
- Central database is missing