

17 July 2011

## Current Situation

Staff from the Livestock Health and Pest Authorities and the Department of Primary Industries are managing three properties quarantined for Hendra virus incidents on the Mid and North Coast of NSW. They are continuing to work closely with NSW Health and government authorities in Queensland.

### Hendra virus confirmed at Lismore

A horse from a property near Lismore on the NSW North Coast was confirmed to be infected with Hendra virus late on 16 July 2011.

The horse, an 11 year old gelding, died suddenly on 14 July. Samples from the dead horse were collected by the Senior District Veterinarian with the North Coast Livestock Health and Pest Authority wearing full PPE and submitted to the state virology laboratory.

The dead horse was buried on the property.

There is a fig tree in the horse paddock and bats are seen occasionally.

The property has been placed in quarantine and is being managed by staff from the Livestock Health and Pest Authorities and the Department of Primary Industries.

This incident is not linked to the other recent cases in NSW or Queensland.

The affected horse had not moved off the property in the last 32 days. Restrictions are in place on the quarantined property and apply to the movement of horses and other items onto and off the property.

The other horse on the property appears well; it has been sampled and will be monitored twice daily. The risk to neighbouring horses is being assessed.

The infected horse was not handled in the days prior to its death.

### Hendra virus at Macksville

One property near Macksville on the NSW Mid Coast remains in quarantine.

One round of testing on all three horses on the property has been completed and all results are negative. The horses are being regularly monitored and remain well.

### Hendra virus at Wollongbar

The property near Wollongbar where two horses died of Hendra virus will remain in quarantine until a 10 day decontamination period has been completed.

## If you suspect your horse has Hendra virus

If you are concerned that your horse has Hendra virus, contact your private veterinarian. They will assess the horse and notify authorities if they suspect the horse is infected. If your vet is unavailable and the horse is deteriorating rapidly, please phone the emergency animal disease hotline on 1800 675 888.

There is a legal responsibility to report suspected Hendra cases to the local Livestock Health and Pest Authority, an inspector with the Department of Primary Industries, or the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.

## Horse biosecurity

Hendra virus could potentially occur wherever there are fruit bats and horse owners should be vigilant for signs consistent with Hendra virus infection.

Horse owners should practice good biosecurity, and not travel, work on or take unwell horses to other properties or equestrian events.

General biosecurity guidelines for event organisers are found at:

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/horses/management/general/horse-events>.

## Protecting horses from Hendra virus

Horse owners can take the following steps to reduce the risk of horses becoming infected with Hendra virus. This advice is based on our current understanding of the virus:

- Place horse water containers under cover and feed horses under cover.
- Do not place horse feed and water containers under trees, particularly if flying foxes are attracted to those trees.
- Do not use feed that might be attractive to flying foxes if they are known to be in the area. Fruit and vegetables (e.g. apples, carrots) or anything sweet (e.g. molasses) may attract flying foxes.
- Do not allow horses to access the area under trees that may be attractive to bats when the trees are flowering or fruiting. If possible, remove horses from paddocks when the trees are flowering and fruiting or, if this is not possible, fence or tape off the area under the trees.
- Alternatively, stable horses at high risk times when fruit bats are feeding or roosting in or around their paddocks.
- If it is not possible to remove horses from paddocks, try to temporarily remove your horses during times of peak flying fox activity (usually at dusk and during the night).

## Further information

Further information on Hendra including a new fact sheet ([Hendra virus - Protecting you and your horse](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/horses/health/general/hendra-virus)) may be found at: <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/horses/health/general/hendra-virus>

Information on the current situation in Queensland may be found at [http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/4790\\_2900.htm](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/4790_2900.htm).

**Ian Roth**

**Chief Veterinary Officer NSW**

© State of New South Wales through NSW Department Primary Industries 2011.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (17 July 2011). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of NSW Department Primary Industries or the user's independent adviser.