

## Basic Biosecurity Information Sheet

To safeguard the horse population within an establishment we recommend that the following basic steps are taken:

You should also be aware of disease prevention, identification and hygiene procedures.

### Vital Health Signs

The following are a set of **vital signs** for the normal healthy horse and appropriate examinations for general health:

- ✓ Temperature 36.5-38.5C
- ✓ Breathing rate 8-15 breaths/min
- ✓ Heart rate 25-45 beats/min
- ✓ Look for eye or nose discharges
- ✓ Observe how the horse is standing
- ✓ Check for consistency and number of droppings
- ✓ Check consumption from water buckets and feed bowl
- ✓ Assess horse's general demeanour

We recommend good records are kept in the yard diary and that rectal temperatures are taken twice daily (as it is a very good indicator of disease)

### Biosecurity

1. Isolate new arrivals for a period of at least 10 days or introduce horses from properties with a known high health status only. Isolate and pay particular attention to horses from sales /competition complexes, from unknown mixed population yards and those that have used commercial horse transport servicing mixed populations.
2. Verify the vaccine status of new arrivals.
3. Keep records of horse movements so that contacts can be traced in the event of a disease outbreak.
4. Regularly clean and disinfect stables between inmates and also clean and disinfect equipment and horse transport between journeys. Remember to remove as much organic material as possible before disinfection.
5. Maintain good perimeter security for your premises and maintain controlled access for vehicles and visitors.
6. Ensure that everyone understands the hygiene principles and thereby do not pass disease to horses at other premises
7. Eliminate the use of communal water sources. Instruct staff not to submerge the hose when filling water buckets
8. Horse specific equipment (feed and water buckets, head collars etc) should be clearly marked as belonging to an individual horse and only be used on that horse.

9. Any shared equipment (lead ropes, bits/bridles, chiffeys, twitches, thermometers, grooming kits etc) should be cleaned of organic debris and disinfected between horses.
10. Equipment that cannot be properly disinfected (like sponges or brushes) should not be shared between horses.
11. Cloth items such as stable rubbers, towels, bandages etc should be laundered and thoroughly dried between each use disinfectant may have to be used as part of the rinse cycle, e.g., Virkon.
12. Isolate horses at the first sign of sickness until an infectious or contagious disease has been ruled out.
13. Contact your veterinary surgeon if any of your horses show clinical signs of sickness.
14. Do not move sick horses except for isolation, veterinary treatment or under veterinary supervision. Attend to sick horses last (i.e., feed, water and treat) or use separate staff.
15. Provide hand washing facilities and hand disinfection gel for everyone handling groups of horses and provide separate protective clothing and footwear for those handling and treating sick horses.
16. The isolation/quarantine unit should have a changing area for staff so that clothing and footwear worn in the restricted area are not worn elsewhere.
17. Barrier clothing, waterproof footwear and disposable gloves should be used when working with sick and in-contact horses and after use they should be disposed of or laundered and disinfected.
18. When using disinfectants, always follow the instructions on the label. Select a Defra approved disinfectant and chose from the general order disinfectants that have documented effectiveness in the presence of 10% organic matter, works in the water hardness of the locale and is safe to use in the environment of horses and people.  
[www.archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/control/disinfectants.htm](http://www.archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/control/disinfectants.htm)
19. Stables, mangers and yards should be kept clean, free of standing water and thoroughly scrubbed and cleansed with an appropriate detergent/disinfectant after use and then allowed to dry.
20. Take care when using pressure washers as those set at greater than 120psi can produce aerosols that spread infectious agents through the air