

**Message to Members Engaging in Equine Practice
regarding CFIA Directive on
Slaughter of Equine for Edible Purposes**



March 8, 2010

The CVO has learned that in response to the European Community (EC) Directive, “Imports of equine meat from third countries” (Apr 17, 2009), the CFIA is preparing a document with new rules for equine owners’ documentation on their animals, effective July 31, 2010. The required “Equine Information Document” (also known as a Passport) will need to be completed by all owners before animals are either (a) presented for slaughter or (b) for sale if there is a possibility of slaughter, and must include medical treatment information for the preceding 6 months.

Veterinarians need to be aware that this requirement is coming into force for two key reasons:

1. affected owners will be contacting you for medical records in order to fill in the Passport; and
2. veterinarians will be required to include in their medical records withdrawal times for drugs administered to the animal if there is any chance that the horse may be slaughtered for food in the future.

While the *Veterinarians Act* already requires equine practitioners to provide withdrawal times for food-producing animals (section 31 of Ont. Reg. 1093), equine practitioners normally do not provide withdrawal times for horses; therefore this new records requirement placed on owners may require veterinarians to change their record-keeping practices. Further, manufacturers of drugs used in equine practice in Canada rarely have withdrawal time data to provide to veterinarians. However CFIA has indicated that a list of withdrawal times will be prepared and published by Health Canada’s Veterinary Drug Directorate (VDD), which veterinarians should reference for relevant data on drugs used in practice.

In the mean time, the CVO recommends that veterinarians should

- discern whether, at any point in the next six months, the client foresees the animal being sent for slaughter (veterinarians might be advised to survey their clientele in this regard immediately, since July 31 is only 4 months away);
- indicate in the medical record of such animals either
 - a withdrawal time based on the manufacturer’s data, if known, or
 - a statement that the withdrawal time is unknown;
- ensure the record includes the name of the drug, the Drug Identification Number (DIN), the dose given, and the date prescribed for all treatments; and

- provide a copy of the medical record notation to the owner after each administration of any drug, so that they have all information required for completing the Passport document.

The CVO will continue to monitor the development of the Directive. Veterinarians interested in reviewing the Passport requirements should see Annex E in Chapter 17 of the CFIA's Manual of Procedures for Meat and Poultry Products at:

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/meavia/man/ch17/annex.shtml>