

1 August 2024

UPDATED AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS (AHS) VACCINATIONS

In light of the continuing shortage of the African horse sickness (AHS) vaccine, the SAEF issues the following updated directive for competition purposes:

- i) For competition purposes in the AHS infected zone, horses must have received at least one 1 and one AHS 2 vaccine between 1 June 2023 and 1st December 2025.
- ii) Horses residing in the AHS controlled area within the AHS free and surveillance zones of the Cape do not require AHS vaccination in order to compete in any of the zones within the AHS controlled area. However, should these horses leave the AHS controlled area, they will be required to have been vaccinated against AHS as described in i) above.
- iii) Horses residing within the AHS protection zone require AHS vaccination in order to compete both within the AHS controlled area and, within the AHS infected zone as described in i).
- iv) The only vaccine accepted for competition purposes is the Onderstepoort Biological Products vaccine, as it is currently the only registered vaccine against AHS in terms of the 'Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act 1947 (Act 36 of 47).
- v) **AHS vaccines must be supplied and administered by a veterinarian, who is required to sign and stamp the passport.**
- vi) The current AHS vaccine is an attenuated live vaccine supplied in two bottles AHS1 and AHS 2. The two vaccine bottles must be administered at least 3 weeks apart. If vaccines are given less than 3 weeks apart, both vaccines are invalidated, making the horse ineligible to compete and compromising its

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welfare. **Research has shown that leaving a longer interval between vaccines is better for producing greater immunity.**

- vii) In the AHS infected zone, it is strongly recommended that horses are not vaccinated during periods of high midge prevalence due to the risk of vaccine virus transmission by the midge vector.
- viii) AHS vaccination is only allowed in the AHS controlled area between 1st June and 31st October each year due to the transmission risk.

Kind regards



Sharlene Venter
Secretary General - SAEF

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