



agriculture, land reform & rural development

Department:
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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To all Equine owners, managers, veterinarians, and other role players

START OF 2021 AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS VACCINATION PERIOD IN THE AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS CONTROLLED AREA

On 31 May 2021, the Director: Animal Health announced a delay to the start of the African horse sickness (AHS) vaccination period in the AHS controlled area due to the AHS outbreak in the AHS protection zone.

With due consideration of the outbreak of AHS within the AHS protection zone, the infective period of the AHS virus, as well as the decline of the more recent confirmed cases of Equine encephalosis virus, a decision has been made that AHS vaccinations within the AHS controlled area may commence as of **1 July 2021** under the legal requirements for each AHS control zone.

- AHS vaccination within the **AHS surveillance zone and AHS free zones of the AHS controlled area** will still require written permission as per the normal legal requirements. State vet Boland will begin issuing permissions to vaccinate from 1 July 2021 in June 2021. Applicants are encouraged to submit applications for permission to vaccinate to State Vet Boland at vaccinate@myhorse.org.za timeously.
- AHS vaccination within the **AHS protection zone** may commence as per the normal requirements on or after 1 July 2021. Please bear in mind that in certain circumstances movement may not be allowed within 40 days of vaccination and ensure that this is considered before proceeding with vaccination.
- Note that AHS vaccinations may not be administered anywhere in the AHS controlled area before 1 July 2021.
- AHS Vaccination will only be permitted in the AHS controlled area between **1 July 2021 and 31st October 2021.**

The information below has been included for ease of reference:

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING VACCINATION AGAINST AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS (AHS) IN SOUTH AFRICA

AHS is a controlled animal disease in terms of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84) and certain measures have been prescribed for AHS control. Please take note of the following:

Zoning

Certain parts of the Western Cape Province have been legislated as the “AHS controlled area” in terms of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84). The AHS controlled area is made up of three zones: the AHS protection zone, the AHS surveillance zone and the AHS free zone. The rest of South Africa, outside the AHS controlled area, is considered endemic for AHS and is known as the AHS infected zone.

The only vaccine currently registered in terms of Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act 1947 (Act no 36 of 47) for AHS and therefore the only “efficient/effective remedy” as described above is the live virus vaccine produced by Onderstepoort Biological Products (OBP).

Please see the below excerpt from Table 2 of the Regulations to the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84) regarding vaccination against AHS.

Excerpt from Table 2 of the Regulations to the Act regarding vaccination for AHS

Animal Disease	Controlled Veterinary act to be performed in respect of-	
	Susceptible animals	Contact animals
1	4	5
African Horse sickness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All equines in the Republic except equines in the African Horse sickness free zone and the African Horse sickness surveillance zone as described in Table 1, shall between the ages of 6 and 12 months, then between the ages of 12 and 18 months and then again once every year thereafter be immunized with an effective remedy by the responsible person; Provided that the director in a particular case may determine that such immunization must be carried out by an officer or veterinarian. 2. Equines in the African Horse sickness free zone and surveillance zone as described in Table 1 shall only be immunized with the written permission of the director. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact animals in a controlled area shall be isolated and immunised as determined by the director. 2. Contact animals outside the controlled area shall not be moved into a controlled area without the permission of the director.

On 26 March 2015, the period of vaccination was reduced to the low midge activity period of the year to decrease the risk of midge transmission of vaccine virus. Ensure that all administrations of vaccine are given within the correct period as described in the table below:

Table 2 showing AHS vaccination times per AHS zone each year

AHS Zone	Vaccination Period
AHS free zone	Permission for vaccination will only be given from 1 June 31 October each year
AHS surveillance zone	Permission for vaccination will only be given from 1 June to 31 October each year
AHS protection zone	All equines in this area must be vaccinated within the period of 1 June to 31 October each year
AHS infected zone	Strong recommendation is made to vaccinate during the period from 1 June to 31 October each year

This period can be amended by the Director from time to time should the risk for vector transmission change.

We would like to thank all veterinarians, horse owners, sporting bodies, insurers and other industry members for your adherence to the delay in vaccination. Your support of the combined efforts of veterinary services and the equine industry in protecting the AHS status of the AHS controlled area is invaluable.

Kind regards,

Dr. Mpho Maja
DIRECTOR: ANIMAL HEALTH