Disease surveillance

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Why is surveillance important?

- welfare and economic security of the industry
- defines background prevalence of disease in the horse population: ‘endemic’ diseases
- identifies incidence of new diseases in the horse population: ‘exotic’ diseases
- surveillance data is a pre-requisite for
  - defining health and welfare
  - benchmarking husbandry and preventive medicine
  - recognising endemic or exotic disease outbreaks
  - identifying sectors of the industry which need welfare and husbandry improvements
Exotic versus endemic disease

• which is more important?
• endemic diseases often less dramatic than exotic and some accepted ‘facts of life’ in the industry
  – WNV, AHS, EIA and piroplasmosis versus lameness, colic, strangles and influenza
• are endemic infectious diseases more important than non-infectious diseases?
• whose responsibility should surveillance be?
• passive versus active surveillance?
• how could endemic disease surveillance be done?
FEEVA survey 2008

• establish current status of disease surveillance and contingency planning across Europe
• questionnaire circulated to all FEEVA delegates
• 10 questions covering
  – exotic disease surveillance
  – endemic disease surveillance
  – industry consultation processes
  – veterinary profession preparedness
  – horse industry preparedness
  – public information resources
Exotic diseases

- government responsibility in all countries
- OIE List A diseases
- passive surveillance only
  - active serological surveillance for EIA in Latvia
  - similar scheme planned for Germany
- generic contingency plans in 5 countries
  - Austria, Denmark, France, Netherlands, UK
- disease-specific plans for EIA, AHS, WNV
- variable industry consultation and participation in contingency planning and legislation drafting
Endemic diseases

• government responsibility in Austria only
• some examples of industry-led surveillance schemes
  – small-scale passive surveillance schemes for infectious/contagious disease in France and UK
    • data from diagnostic laboratories (France & UK)
    • field data from practitioners (France)
  – surveillance for non-infectious diseases in UK
    • pilot scheme involving equine charities
    • syndromic surveillance from health records
    • proof of principle and rallying call to the industry
Syndromic surveillance (UK)

Syndromic disease surveillance: cumulative incidence May-July 08 (n=1641)
Next steps

• FEEVA-led international committee/working group on equine disease surveillance

• aims and outputs
  – identify and share best practice
  – identify and share information and other resources
  – provide ‘one voice’ on disease surveillance
  – offer advice and support to stakeholder groups
  – commission and coordinate work packages to facilitate development of policies and procedures
  – communication and information dissemination

• areas of focus?