



Notice to all equine vets involved in Artificial Insemination of equines in Ireland.

Background

Semen is regularly used by our equine industry to allow access to a wider variety of stallions and increased genetic diversity which would otherwise be inaccessible due to logistics.

To ensure this is done in a safe manner compliance with EU legislation is vital. For a comprehensive list of relevant legislation please see [here](#).

Why is this important?

Ireland is currently free of Equine Infectious Anaemia (EIA), Equine Viral Arteritis (EVA) and Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM). All these diseases could potentially either be brought to Ireland or transmitted within Ireland in infected semen. Any of these diseases entering Ireland would have severe and lasting consequences for both our equine health and welfare but also equine trade.

	Introduction to Ireland	Transmission in Ireland
EIA	Asymptomatic carrier horse Blood or blood product Contaminated equipment (veterinary, dental, farm)	Administration of infected blood products Contaminated veterinary, dental or farm equipment Mare to foal via placenta or colostrum (Transmission via semen is uncommon but a risk) Insect vectors (biting flies)
EVA	Recently infected horse shedding disease Shedder stallion Chilled/frozen semen	Direct transmission at mating AI with semen from infected stallions Contact with aborted fetuses. Respiratory route
CEM	Carrier animal Chilled/frozen Semen	Direct transmission at mating or teasing Indirect transmission during teasing AI with semen from infected stallions Indirect transmission via staff, veterinarians

Illegal importation of semen is a significant risk to Ireland!

How to know if the semen is legally imported?

All semen legally brought into Ireland either from another EU Member State or from a third country (anywhere outside of the EU) needs to be accompanied by the appropriate health certificate, either an Intra-Community Health Certificate if it is from an EU Member State or an equivalent health certificate from a third country. These documents are signed by an Official Veterinarian to certify that the semen was collected and stored according to the legislation in an EU approved equine semen collection centre (list is available on the EU commission page) and that the donor horse fulfilled all the animal health certification criteria. These documents must be kept on file for a

minimum of 3 years. Additionally, all importers of equine semen must be registered with TRACES in order to allow the exporter to complete the export certification process.

What does that mean for you?

All documentation should be checked by the vet prior to insemination. If the documentation is not available for inspection, or there is any doubt about the validity of the paperwork, **DO NOT** inseminate the mare, and consult with your local RVO for further guidance.

Take Home Message

You wouldn't inject this without a label...



...so don't insert this without papers!

For further information please contact:

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Email: livbrsi@agriculture.gov.ie

A comprehensive information note is available on:

[gov](http://gov.ie) - Animal Breeding (www.gov.ie)