

New Equine ID Legislation 2009

On 1st July 2009 new EU regulations regarding new identification for horses will be brought in to strengthen existing regulations.

Current Legislation

- The existing horse passport regulation states that all owners must obtain a passport for each horse they own (including ponies, donkeys, and other equidae)

New Legislation

The new legislation, from 1st July 2009, builds upon this and the main new feature is that horse passports are to be linked to the animal by a uniquely coded identification microchip

- The new Horse passport regulations 2009 come into force on 1st July 2009
- All horses issued with a new passport after 30th June 2009, must be micro-chipped. Foals must be identified before 31st December of the year of its birth or within six months of birth, whichever is later
- Other adult horses not previously issued with a passport should also be microchipped and their passports will be signed as not intended for the food chain
- Ponies on Dartmoor, Exmoor and the New Forest do not need to be identified unless treated by a vet, as long as they stay within the designated area. Special arrangements are in place for when these ponies are moved from these areas to the first holding of destination.
- Owners of adult horses and ponies in these areas will be required to microchip their animals if treated by a veterinary surgeon
- Only Veterinary Surgeons can implant a microchip into a horse and they must check the animal for an existing microchip prior to implantation and any evidence that a microchip has been removed
- Zebra and other exotic equines are now included in the scheme
- If the passport is not available or the vet does not know whether or not the horse is eligible for entry into the food chain the vet should not administer drugs not authorised for food producing animals and must use an alternative product
- Owners and keepers with primary responsibility (a person who takes care of the animal on a day to day basis e.g. Full Livery, Racehorse trainers etc) must ensure their horses are correctly identified and be able to produce the passport without delay in the event of an inspection
- Only owners can apply for a passport
- The passport must accompany the horse at all times unless stabled or at pasture or moved on foot when the passport can be made available within 3 hours

- When a horse passes away, the owner must send the passport back to the PIO to be recorded within 30 days – the passport may be returned to the owner once the process is completed if requested
- If the passport is not available when the vet is in attendance - the owner is responsible for ensuring that the drugs administered are recorded on the passport
- Failure to comply with the new legislation is punishable by a fine of up to £5000

For further information please visit Directgov (citizen facing):

www.direct.gov.uk/horsepassports

Or the Defra website