

Media Release: African Horse Sickness case northwest of Beaufort West

8 April 2020

Last week, a horse died of African horse sickness (AHS) on a farm approximately 50km northwest of Beaufort West.

Clinical signs included severely swollen and reddened eye membranes and a swollen face, especially around the eyes. The owner noticed the horse was sick on the morning of Thursday, 2 April and it died that night. The horse was twelve years old, and though it, and the other horse on the farm, was vaccinated the first few years of its life, it has not been vaccinated in recent years.

There are no other reports of suspect AHS from the area. However, we urge horse owners to be vigilant for clinical signs of AHS. Other signs can vary from only a fever and poor appetite to severe breathing difficulty and fluid oozing from the nostrils. Please report any suspect cases to the local state veterinarian. Contact details are available on the Elsenburg website, on the Veterinary Services page.

The affected farm is not inside the AHS controlled area. However, movement restrictions into the AHS controlled area, from the affected area have been implemented, though no permits into the AHS controlled area are being issued currently, due to COVID 19 lock down, regardless of AHS area risk.

For more information on African horse sickness control in the Western Cape, visit the Western Cape Department of Agriculture website: <http://www.elsenburg.com/services-and-programmes/veterinary-services-0#s=Animal-Health-and-Disease-Control&d=African-Horse-Sickness>

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