

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE EQUINE PASSPORT

FOR HORSE OWNERS

What is the Equine Interstate Movement Permit Program or "Passport Program"?

- This is a cooperative, voluntary program developed by participating states in the Southeast designed to ease the health certificate requirements for certain horses that move interstate. It is recognized only among those participating states.

Is this a new program?

- No. In the past, other states throughout the country have entered into regional agreements with varying provisions for participation. The Southern Animal Health Association, which is a collection of 14 southeastern states, began a voluntary program that first began in January, 2004. Tennessee passed rules joining the program effective January, 2006.

What were the requirements prior to this program for horses to move across state lines?

- Most states have always required a valid health certificate (Certificate of Veterinary Inspection) along with a current negative test for Equine Infectious Anemia (Coggins test). In order to be legal, these documents are still required for Tennessee horse owners to transport their horses to non-participating states. By definition, a health certificate is only valid for 30 days from the date of examination of the horse.

Why this program? What is the value of this to the horse owner?

- This program recognizes the higher health status provided by many horse owners that participate in trail rides, fairs and exhibitions. Participating states will waive the requirement to obtain a health certificate every 30 days for entry into their state, provided the horses have obtained an equine "passport" issued by regulatory authorities in their home state. Horse owners using this program are only required to obtain the passport every six months, and are not subject the costs of obtaining a health certificate every 30 days.

Is there a benefit for the state regulatory authorities?

- As mentioned above, states recognize that most horse owners entering these events are very conscientious regarding providing appropriate veterinary care for their animal. In recognition, relaxing the health certificate decreases the economic impact to the horse owner. In turn, regulatory authorities obtain more accurate identification for the individual animal for which the passport is issued. In almost every instance, digital

photographs or unique identifier microchips are far superior than a written description or drawing, which most horses have traveled legally on in the past.

Why are horses part of the National Animal Identification System that requires microchipping or other forms of identification in my horse?

- The primary purpose of a national identification system is to address animal health emergencies. The national program affects all livestock groups, including horses. While the initial focus has been on food livestock, other industry groups are expected to develop their own national identification plan for future participation. Horses are susceptible to several diseases which are foreign to the United States and would possibly be a cause for concern in regard to human and horse health.

Does this mean I'm going to have to get an eartag in my horse?

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How do I obtain an equine passport?

- In order to obtain a passport, complete the [application form](#), arrange for an initial health examination for your horse on which a health certificate can be issued and insure that your current EIA test (Coggins test) is valid for the entire six month period that you are seeking a passport for. All forms should be submitted to your veterinarian for inclusion in the application that your veterinarian will forward to our office. Please apply for your passport well in advance of any planned out-of-state trips in order to allow adequate time for processing the application and return.

How much does it cost?

- Currently, the Tennessee Department of Agriculture does not charge for issuing a passport. There will be associated costs for the health examination and health certificate along with any required EIA testing to be performed on the horse. Please visit with your veterinarian regarding costs for the services.

FOR VETERINARIANS

What should I tell horse owners regarding the Equine Interstate Movement Permit Program?

- The Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA) recently promulgated rules that allow the implementation of the Equine Interstate Movement Permit Program, or "Equine Passport." This program recognizes the better-quality of health care provided by horse owners that participate in fairs, exhibitions, and trail rides with their animals. As a result, participating states have waived the requirement for a 30 day health certificate, contingent upon compliance with the restrictions that have been agreed upon between Southeastern states taking part in the program. The movement permit is valid for six months.

What states are in the program?

- To date, the following states participate in the program: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia.

What are the procedures involved in submitting an application?

- Completed applications must be submitted through an accredited veterinarian. Horse owners may complete the application printed from the TDA web page and submit it to their veterinarian. In addition to the completed form, the veterinarian must submit a current health certificate and a negative EIA test form (i.e. Coggins or VS 10-11 form) that is valid for the complete duration of the "passport". The veterinarian is encouraged to forward the "pink and canary copies" of the issued health certificate as part of the submission. Under consignee or the destination address box, list "Equine Interstate Movement Permit Program". The health certificate should list only the horse(s) that are being submitted for a "passport" document. Other horses moving on a 30 day health certificate must travel on a separate certificate that lists the specific destination, as has been the requirement in the past.

Can I provide a photocopy of the EIA test results rather than the original?

- Yes. However, the submitting veterinarian must countersign the photocopy attesting that the EIA test form reflects the test results from the horse for which the application is based.

What other application documents must be submitted?

- Additional unique identification is required as part of the program. Approved forms of identification include a unique tattoo (i.e., registry tattoo), unique brand, unique ID number such as is encoded on an implanted microchip or three digital photographs of the horses submitted in low resolution ".jpeg" format.

How do I submit the photographs?

- Low resolution jpegs may be submitted to our office on a compact disc with hard copies of the other application documents, or can be e-mailed to our office at animal.health@tn.gov. Please include the owner's name and address, the veterinarian's name and address and the health certificate official number linking the photographs to the health certificate for which the application is based.

What types of photographs should be submitted?

- Three different photos are required and must include an image of the entire left side, the entire right side and a front view, framed to include the head from the ear tips to the lower lip.

What microchips should be used?

- On a long-term basis, Tennessee will adopt a microchip standard (currently 134.2 kHz) to be compliant with the recommendations offered by the equine species working group of the National Animal Identification Program. The program is designed to reduce the costs to horse owners when they choose microchipping as a form of official identification for their horse. Until 134.2 kHz microchips are readily available, co-payment will also be offered for 125 kHz microchips.

Are there any other restrictions?

- By agreement, an event [itinerary](#) must be kept throughout the duration of the passport.