

Wyoming Horse Council

Proposal for 6 month Equine Health Passports in Wyoming

Every state in the Union requires that all equines entering their State have a valid 30 day Veterinary Health Certificate before they can enter that State. Keeping the 30 day certificates up to date can become a burdensome and expensive requirement For horse owners. There is also consensus that because of the difficulties with the certificates, compliance is spotty at best.

Health Certificates do provide two important services to the health and safety of the equine population in the Wyoming. First, they do assure that the horse was in good health at the time of the inspection, but since they are valid for 30 days there is no guarantee the horse is healthy even 10 days later. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly they allow the State to track movement of horses when an equine disease outbreak occurs. In Wyoming that has been very helpful in the outbreaks of Vesticular Stomatitus we have seen in the past few years as well as the outbreak of Equine Herpes that originated in Ogden and the outbreak at Sunland Park in New Mexico this winter.

In three areas of the nation, the states have set up a six month Equine Health Passport system to replace the 30 day Health Certificate. All of the southern states from Texas to Florida are working together in two Regions with a Passport system, and the states of Montana, Idaho, Oregon and Washington have formed a Northwest Passport Region.

Each State has slightly different rules, but since Montana is closest to Wyoming we will describe their system.

In Montana the horse owner obtains a Health Certificate from their Veterinarian and then submits a form to the Montana Livestock Board for the Passport. The Passport is valid for 6 months. A lifetime brand inspection and a current EIA (Coggins) test is required along with a \$5 fee per horse. When a horse with a valid passport travels to a state in the Passport Region they are required to notify the State they are entering, and in Montana the owner calls the Livestock Board on a 24 hour hot line and obtains an import #. No additional Health Inspection is required. The Montana Livestock Board is setting up a data-base program so the horse owner will soon be able to obtain an import number over the internet.

The Montana State Veterinarian does reserve the right to require additional health inspections in the event of a disease outbreak.

The Wyoming Horse Council is proposing that the Wyoming Livestock Board join the other 4 states in the North West Region so that Wyoming equines can travel to those 4 states under a Passport. The Wyoming Horse Council also believes if we work with the Horse Councils in Colorado, Nebraska, Utah and South Dakota it would be possible to develop passport programs in those states also.

The Wyoming Livestock Board is working to revise their import rules this spring, so this effort is timely. If you as an individual or as an equine organization believe Equine Health Passports would be a benefit for Wyoming we would appreciate a letter of support so we can show the Livestock Board that the horse industry would support this change. If you have any questions contact Bill Gentle at 307 634 1743.

Please send your letter or e-mail of support to either :

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