Contagious Equine Metritis
Past, Present, and Future

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United States Animal Health Association
Committee on Equine

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What We Know

• When followed, current protocols and procedures are scientifically proven to prevent disease introduction.

• As evidenced by previous US incursions of disease, failure to follow protocols leads to the introduction and spread of disease.
CEM Incursions

- 1978: 2 TB stallions imported into Kentucky
- 1979: Trakehner stallion imported into Missouri
- 2006: Lipizzaner stallion imported into Wisconsin in 2004
- 2008: Multistate outbreak
- 2013: Lusitano stallion imported into California
Taylorella equigenitalis

• The ANATOMY and BIOLOGY is UNCHANGED

• Improvements in the CEM program have evolved as our understanding of the science and disease has grown.
Program History

• 1994 First Program Review
  • Imported Mares: Removed requirement for sinusectomy and replaced with swabbing and flushing the clitoral sinuses. Discontinued the required CF testing.
  • Imported Stallions: Discontinued treatment PRIOR to culture/breeding, added requirement of single post breeding CF test at Day 15 post breeding, amended test mare cultures to days 3, 6, and 9.

• 2003 CEM Focus Group Formed
  • Assembled to review proposals and recommendations USDA had received from various individuals and/or organizations
  • Imported Mares: Add cervix/uterine to sampling protocol, re-established collecting serum for CF testing
  • Imported Stallions: Add distal urethra to sites to be sampled
    • Test mares: Three sets of swabs and CF sample collected 21 days post breeding
2007 CEM Review

- Areas of review
  - Pre-Import Testing
  - USDA Approved Import Quarantine Stations
  - State Approved CEM Facilities and Procedures - Minimum Standards
  - Regulations and Policies
  - Laboratory Testing
  - Training
  - VS Support and Oversight
  - Liability
  - Research/New Ideas
  - Communications
Recommendations - Completed or Partial Complete

- Continue post-entry testing in the United States for equids from known CEM affected countries
  - Possible Action: Establish Criteria for determining CEM affected country and re-evaluating countries currently listed.

- Develop a centralized database and collect data.

- Finalize and publish the recommended minimum standards. (Currently in VS Guidance Document)

- Update list of approved laboratories, require training at NVSL for laboratory personnel and institute proficiency tests for laboratory personnel.

- Develop and conduct regular training courses for state and federal oversight personnel.

- Establish a full time position as CEM coordinator and program manager at HQ. (Partial completion as it is not a full time dedicated position).

- Increase communication on protocols and processes. (Monthly CEM coordinators calls)
Recommendations – Requiring Attention

• Conduct further research on the risk of importing equine semen from CEM affected countries.
• Further investigate whether minimum standards for state facilities, laboratories, accredited veterinarians, etc. should include a minimum level of activity to maintain approval status.
• Review, update, consolidate and re-issue all pertinent regulations and policies.
• Complete evaluation and validation of PCR procedures.
• Develop formal training and special designation for accredited veterinarians.
• Designate regional positions as technical experts to oversee CEM activities in the state.
• Specifically include CEM evaluations in the regular VS station reviews.
Current Federal Authority - Stallion Testing
9 CFR 93.301 (e)

• Stallion:
  • 4 swabs then after negative result - test breed 2 mares
    • NOTE: *No requirement for observation/monitoring of test breeding by state or federal official*
  • Treat for 5 days - treatment performed by accredited veterinarian and monitored by state or federal official.
  • Each test mare shall be cultured - 3 sets of specimens between 3rd and 14th day with negative results. 3 sets within a 12 day period with no less than 72 hours between each set. CF test must be done with negative results between day 21 and 28 post breeding.
  • Stallion released - all cultures and tests of specimens from mare are negative and stallion culture is negative
Current Federal Authority- Imported Mare Testing
9 CFR 93.301 (e)

• Compliment fixation test in the approved state
• 3 specimens collected on 3 separate occasions within a 12 day period with no less than 72 hours between each set
  • Accredited veterinarian to collect samples
  • Submit samples to NVSL or approved laboratory
• After 3 sets collected, accredited veterinarian shall manually remove debris and flush sinuses with ceruminolytic agent
  • 5 consecutive days wash external genitalia with solution of not less than 2 percent chlorhexidine in a detergent base
  • Coat with antibiotic ointment.
• Quarantine release: all cultures negative
  • Note: *No requirement for negative CF test*
Considerations for Future Advances in the CEM Import Quarantine Program

• Strengthen USDA oversight and monitoring
  • Request USDA conduct CEM approved state reviews
  • Purpose of reviews to assess:
    • States infrastructure and ability to oversee CEM quarantine
    • Assess protocols and procedures employed by the state
    • Assess the training needs for state facilities, accredited veterinarians, and coordinators
    • Identify weaknesses in national CEM import quarantine program.
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Questions?

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