



**Primary
Industries**

SAFETY ALERT

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HENDRA VIRUS: IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE HORSE INDUSTRY

It is important that all sectors of the horse industry understand the risks posed by Hendra virus. Hendra virus is carried by flying foxes (fruit bats), and may cause fever, respiratory and/or nervous illness when it infects horses. While horses rarely become infected, infected horses may infect humans, and the disease has severe consequences. It is usually fatal in horses, and four of the seven people known to have become infected have died, despite intensive therapy in hospital.

Minimise the risk to yourself and your horse by:

- preventing horses from eating or drinking feed or water that may be contaminated by body fluids from fruit bats roosting, feeding or flying overhead and
- knowing the signs of Hendra and what to do if you suspect infection.

The following links provide information on Hendra virus that will assist you to understand the disease and how to minimise the risk of infection. NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) strongly recommends that you pass this information on to your members and industry contacts and/or staff who may handle horses.

Hendra factsheet

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/info/hendra>

A Primefact on Hendra virus is available on the NSW DPI website at

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/horses/health/general/hendra-virus>

CSIRO, the organisation responsible for identifying the virus has published summary information at

<http://www.csiro.au/science/Hendra-Virus.html>

The Queensland Government Primary Industries and Fisheries website provides comprehensive information on Hendra virus

http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/4790_2900.htm

Signs of infection in humans

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/infectious/hendra.html>

This list is to assist you to find information on Hendra virus. Additional information may also be found at other sites.

If you suspect that your horse may be infected with Hendra virus you should call your private veterinary practitioner as soon as possible.

In addition, you are legally obliged to report your suspicion to:

- an inspector working for the NSW DPI at <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/aboutus/about/contact>, or
- your local Livestock Health and Pest Authority at <http://www.lhpa.org.au/contact>

If one of the above cannot be contacted and the matter is urgent, please call the NSW DPI Hendra alert for the horse industry v1 01.07.2011

Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888

For further information or assistance relating to human health please contact:

- your local doctor or nearest Public Health Unit at
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/publichealth/Infectious/phus.asp>