



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, forestry & fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

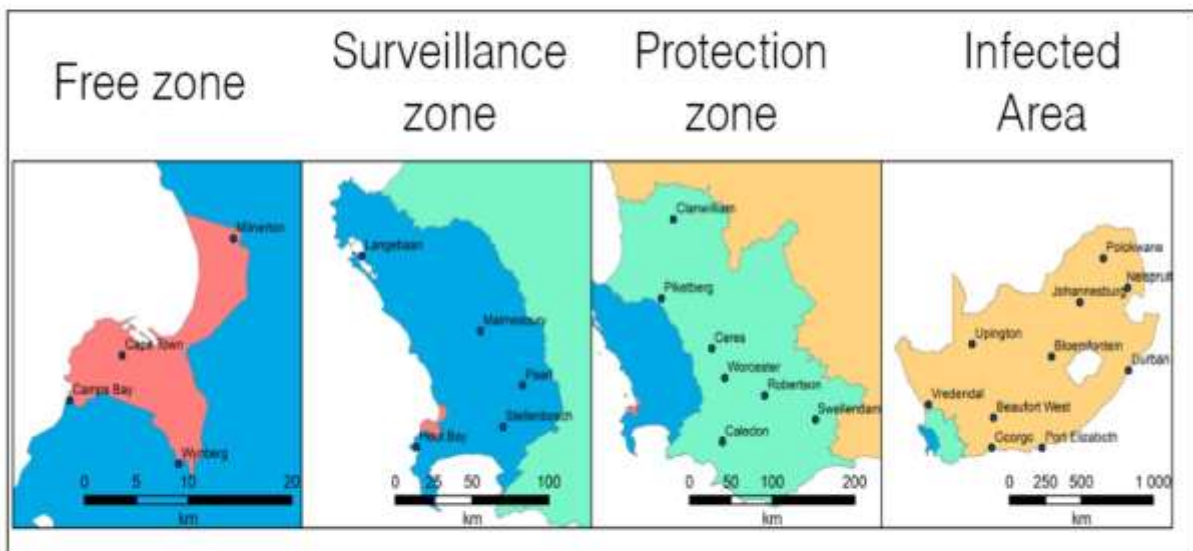
IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING VACCINATION AGAINST AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS (AHS) IN SOUTH AFRICA

AHS is a controlled animal disease in terms of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84) and certain measures have been prescribed for AHS control. Please take note of the following:

Zoning

Certain parts of the Western Cape Province have been legislated as the "AHS controlled area" in terms of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84). The AHS controlled area is considered low risk for AHS and is made up of three zones: the AHS protection zone, the AHS surveillance zone and the AHS free zone. The rest of South Africa, outside the AHS controlled area, is considered endemic for AHS and is known as the AHS infected zone. Please contact your local Animal Health Technician (AHT) or State Veterinarian (SV) to find out what AHS zone your animals are in.

The map below is kindly supplied by the Equine Health Fund and shows a detailed view of each control zone:



(Red= AHS free zone, blue=AHS surveillance zone, turquoise= AHS protection zone, orange=AHS infected zone)

Vaccination

Always ensure that your animals are vaccinated by the correct person, at the correct time of year, with a vaccine registered in terms of the Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act 1947 (Act no 36 of 47) and according to the AHS zone they are in. Always handle, store and administer vaccine carefully according to the manufacturer’s instructions and ensure that it is kept cold until it is given to the animal.

Regulation 1 of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84) states that an “*efficient remedy means a remedy, approved by the director under section 1(6) of the Act*”. Section 1 of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84) states that a ‘*remedy*’ means any stock remedy which has been registered under the Fertilizers, Farm Feed, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act, 1947 (Act 36 of 1947), including any medicine or veterinary medicine as defined in section 1 of the Medicines and Related Substances Control Act, 1965 (Act 101 of 1965.”;

The only vaccine currently registered in terms of Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act 1947 (Act no 36 of 47) for AHS and therefore the only “efficient/effective remedy” as described above is the live virus vaccine produced by Onderstepoort Biological Products (OBP).

Please see the below excerpt from Table 2 of the Regulations to the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84) regarding vaccination against AHS.

Excerpt from Table 2 of the Regulations to the Act regarding vaccination for AHS

Animal Disease	Controlled Veterinary act to be performed in respect of-	
	Susceptible animals	Contact animals
1	4	5
<i>African Horse sickness</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>All equines in the Republic except equines in the African Horse sickness free zone and the African Horse sickness surveillance zone as described in Table 1, shall between the ages of 6 and 12 months, then between the ages of 12 and 18 months and then again once every year thereafter be immunized with an effective remedy by the responsible person; Provided that the director in a particular case may determine that such immunization must be carried out by an officer or veterinarian.</i> <i>Equines in the African Horse sickness free zone and surveillance zone as described in Table 1 shall only be immunized with the written permission of the director.</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Contact animals in a controlled area shall be isolated and immunised as determined by the director.</i> <i>Contact animals outside the controlled area shall not be moved into a controlled area without the permission of the director.</i>

On 26 March 2015, the period of vaccination was reduced to the low midge activity period of the year in order to decrease the risk of midge transmission of vaccine virus. Ensure that all administrations of vaccine are given within the correct period as described in the table below:

Table 2 showing AHS vaccination times per AHS zone each year

AHS Zone	Vaccination Period
AHS free zone	Permission for vaccination will only be given from 1 June 31 October each year
AHS surveillance zone	Permission for vaccination will only be given from 1 June to 31 October each year
AHS protection zone	All equines in this area must be vaccinated within the period of 1 June to 31 October each year
AHS infected zone	Strong recommendation is made to vaccinate during the period from 1 June to 31 October each year

The following bullet points describe the control measures for vaccination against AHS:

- In the AHS infected zone all equines must be vaccinated every year against AHS with a vaccine registered in terms of the Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act 1947 (Act no 36 of 47) such as the OBP AHS vaccine. It is strongly recommended that vaccination against AHS only take place between 1 June and 31 October each year.
- In the AHS Protection zone all equines must be vaccinated every year between 1 June and 31 October against AHS with a vaccine registered in terms of Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act 1947 (Act no 36 of 47) such as the OBP AHS vaccine. All administrations of vaccine must be given within this period.
- In the AHS Free and Surveillance zones equines may not be vaccinated against AHS with any remedy, whether *registered* or not, without written permission from State Veterinarian: Boland. Permission will only be given to vaccinate from 1 June to 31 October each year. All administrations of vaccine must be given within this period. If permission is granted, vaccination may only be performed by a veterinarian. To apply for permission to vaccinate or to obtain more information please see www.myhorse.org.za or contact SV: Boland (svboland@elsenburg.com) or send an email to vaccinate@myhorse.org.za.

Vaccination against AHS must be performed by a veterinarian in the following circumstances:

- For movement subject to state veterinary control (e.g. from the AHS infected zone to the AHS controlled area or from the AHS protection zone to the AHS surveillance or AHS free zone), vaccination against AHS must have been performed with a vaccine registered in terms of Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act 1947 (Act no 36 of 47) by a veterinarian, not more than 24 months prior to movement and not less than 40 days prior to movement and recorded in the passport of the horse by the veterinarian.
- Where permission to vaccinate against AHS is given in the AHS surveillance or free zones.
- Where export certification requires vaccination against AHS, vaccination must be performed and recorded in the passport of the equine by a veterinarian

(Table 2, Regulation 1 and Section 1 of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84))

Movement of equids subject to AHS control

According to Regulation 20 (1) (A) (vii) of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84), movement of equids from the AHS infected zone to the AHS controlled area or to a zone of higher AHS control in the AHS controlled area is subject to state veterinary control and you will need a veterinary movement permit. Please see www.myhorse.org.za or contact SV: Boland (svboland@elsenburg.com) or email move@myhorse.org.za to apply for a permit or to obtain more information. (*Regulation 20 of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84)*)

Reporting of AHS

According to Section 11 and Regulation 12 of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84), if you are concerned that your animals may have AHS or if an equid dies suddenly with signs that suggest AHS may be involved, you must report this to your local AHT or SV immediately. If you have had a case of AHS on your property you should also inform your neighbours and anyone who brings equids to your property. This will help ensure they can take the precautions to keep their animals safe. (*Section 11 and Regulation 12 of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84)*)

How can I help prevent my equids from getting AHS?

- Vaccinate your equines against AHS every year with a vaccine registered in terms of the Fertilizers; Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act 1947 (Act no 36 of 47).
- Take precautions to help prevent midges, the AHS vector, from biting your equines by doing the following:
 - Put your equines in stables or shelters from two hours before sunset to two hours after sunrise;
 - Spray your equines with a registered insect repellent and insecticide as per the manufacturer's instructions;
 - Midges gather and breed in moist or muddy areas. Eliminate midge breeding areas by removing pools or puddles of standing water, siting compost or dung heaps away from the equines and managing muddy areas e.g. around leaking taps and water troughs;
 - Do not allow equines to graze on wet, marshy land at the high risk times of the day if possible;
- Ask your neighbours and the owner or manager of any property you take your equines to if there have been any cases of AHS so you can take extra precautions to keep your animals safe;
- If you are concerned that your animals may have AHS, contact your private veterinarian or AHT or SV immediately.