

Action Plan following horse meat fraud

Issues identified	Envisaged actions	Timing
1. Food fraud	To map existing tools and mechanisms to fight food fraud, with a view of developing synergies and contacts amongst competent authorities.	March - June 2013
	To promote the involvement of Europol in food fraud investigations where and as appropriate.	March - June 2013
	To ensure a procedure for the rapid exchange of information and alerts in cases of violations which may constitute a fraud (similar to what the RASFF does for serious risks).	Second half 2013
2. Testing programme	To assess and present the results of the ongoing DNA monitoring and, if necessary, undertake appropriate follow-up measures.	As of 15 April 2013
	To assess and present the results of the ongoing monitoring of horsemeat for residues of phenylbutazone and, if necessary, undertake appropriate follow-up measures.	As of 15 April 2013
	Following the delivery by EFSA and EMA by 15 April 2013 of a joint statement on the risks related to the presence of phenylbutazone in meat, to consider appropriate follow-up measures	April 2013
3. Horse passport	<p>Member States to report on the measures through which they enforce Union rules on horse passports (Commission Regulation 504/2008) in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the rules on the identification of horses and the measures taken to prevent that meat from unidentified horses enters the food chain, in particular by verifying how the passport of treated horses is completed following administration of phenylbutazone; the obligation to regularly perform official controls and to increase the level of controls where there are indications of possible non-compliances (as in the present case); 	end April 2013

Issues identified	Envisaged actions	Timing
	To present a draft to the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (SCoFAH) to amend Commission Regulation 504/2008 in order to make mandatory the recording of horse passports in a central national database, based on Animal health and Zootechnical legislation.	March - June 2013
	To transfer the issuing of horse passports entirely to the competent authorities and thereby reduce the number of passport issuing bodies in the forthcoming proposal on Zootechnics.	Second half 2013
4. Official Controls, implementation and penalties	<p>To propose in the forthcoming review of the Official controls Regulation (Regulation 882/2004) requirements so that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. where financial penalties are used in relation to intentional violations of food chain law, they are at a level which is sufficiently dissuasive and higher than the economic gain expected from the fraud; b. Member States include in their control plans and perform regularly mandatory unannounced official controls (including inspections and testing) directed at combating food fraud; c. the Commission can impose (not only recommend) coordinated testing programmes in specific cases, in particular in case of fraud. 	March - June 2013
	To prepare an overview report on horse meat hygiene by the Commission Food and Veterinary Office (FVO).	March 2013
5. Origin labelling	<p>To adopt a Commission report on the possibility to extend mandatory origin labelling of all types of meat used as ingredient in foods.</p> <p>To proceed, based on this report, to any necessary follow up action.</p>	Autumn 2013
	To adopt implementing rules on the mandatory origin labelling of unprocessed meat of sheep, goat, pig and poultry, based on the Regulation on food information to consumers.	December 2013

Issues identified	Envisaged actions	Timing
	To adopt implementing rules to prevent misleading use of voluntary origin labelling in foods, based on the Regulation on Food information to consumers.	December 2013
	<p>To adopt Commission reports, based on the Regulation on Food information to consumers, on the possibility to extend mandatory origin labelling to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • other unprocessed meats not already covered by mandatory origin labelling rules, such as horse, rabbit, game meat etc.; • milk; • milk as an ingredient in dairy products; • single ingredient foods; • unprocessed foods; • ingredients that represent more than 50% of a food. 	December 2014

The European and Mediterranean Stud Book Liaison Committee

23rd May 2013

Mr T. Borg
Rue de la Loi 200
B – 1049
Brussels

Dear Commissioner

We are writing on behalf of the 33 Approved Thoroughbred Stud Books which form the membership of the European and Mediterranean Stud Book Liaison Committee (EMSBLC) regarding the proposals under consideration by the Commission for the preparation and issue of horse passports. This Committee operates under the direction of the International Stud Book Committee (ISBC), which comprises all 69 Approved Thoroughbred Stud Books worldwide.

The issue of passports for all Thoroughbreds is currently carried out in accordance with Article 15 (2.1) of the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities' International Agreement on Breeding, Racing and Wagering – see attached – which states that *'The Stud Book Authority certifying the Thoroughbred, being the only Authority permitted to issue the original passport or any subsequent duplicates, must produce a passport which certifies:...'.*

Our concern in writing is to ensure that the current high standard of Thoroughbred passports and the speed of their production is not compromised by any move to a central issuing organisation. We are confident that Thoroughbred passports are already compliant with EU legislation and exceed any standard that you may be considering. Security measures variously adopted by Thoroughbred Stud Books already include the use of a riveted structure, security printing (with built in deliberate error), a hologram, and embossed spine and rivets. Indeed, we are planning discussion of possible further enhancements to the current procedures at the next meeting of the ISBC in October this year.

Any centralised production process would need to meet the time critical demands of the Racing and Bloodstock Sales industries internationally, which often involve a same-day turnaround service. In addition, the Thoroughbred passport includes pages specific to the Bloodstock industry and is contained within a colour-coded cover, the colour of which is changed annually by international accord. All this is in place to facilitate the essential free movement and trade in Thoroughbreds worldwide and you will appreciate that we are anxious to ensure that nothing is done which might disadvantage Thoroughbreds within the EU in this regard.

You will appreciate from the above facts that disruption to the European Thoroughbred Racing and Breeding industry in its trade with the rest of the world will be minimised if the current procedures for passport production for Thoroughbreds were to remain in place. However, we fully appreciate the issues which you are facing regarding the equine sector at present and therefore would suggest that a solution could be for us to indicate that a central detail page(s), issued by and under the supervision of each country's single passport issuing body, must be incorporated by Stud Book Authorities according to your instructions.

Your five-point Action Plan includes proposals to make mandatory the recording of horse passports in a central national database. We are confident that all those members of EMSBLC within the European Union can readily and accurately provide records of Thoroughbred horses for you and we will maintain communication with them to assist you in this process.

We would appreciate your thoughts on the above matters and would also reaffirm that we are available at any time to assist you as you finalise your proposals.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Paul Greeves". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" being more prominent than the last name "Greeves".

Paul Greeves
Co-Chairman, EMSBLC

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "R. Devolz". The signature is highly stylized and cursive, with the first name "R." being followed by a large, flowing "Devolz".

Dr Roland Devolz
Co-Chairman, EMSBLC

c.c. Alf-Ekbert Füssel

Article 15 (RACING / BREEDING) - IDENTIFICATION OF HORSES

The control of a horse's identity is one of the prime considerations in the operation of racing, breeding and health management. It is necessary that identity control should be made at the horse's first public race start as well as for every horse coming from abroad, and recommended for every claiming or selling race. This identity control has to be performed as well at every stage of breeding operations (covering, registration of foal, etc.). It is as well recommended before public sales.

The official papers which allow a horse to be identified can be separated into two categories :

1. Export Certificate:

The Export Certificate or Electronic Notification of Export (including markings) is sent directly or made available on a website by the exporting authority to the relevant authority of the country to which the horse is exported when the exportation is permanent, or when the period of export exceeds the period for which the clearance notification or the endorsement of the document of identification is valid (see [Articles 3](#)).

This Electronic Notification of Export must be accepted by the Approved Stud Book Authority of the country to which the horse has moved. In the exceptional case where an original document is needed, this fact is to be stated at the time of notification of export.

2. Passport:

2.1 The Stud Book Authority certifying the Thoroughbred, being the only Authority permitted to issue the original passport or any subsequent duplicates, must produce a passport which certifies:

2.1.1 the authenticity of the pedigree, the age, sex and colour.

2.1.2 the markings, photographs (if applicable) or other characteristics used to identify the Thoroughbred which should include all permanent identifying markings such as leg markings, face markings and hair whorls and may include other identifying characteristics such as night eyes/chestnuts, brands, tattoos, scars and microchips or other such electronic devices,

2.1.3 the parentage of the Thoroughbred based upon typing of genetic factors present in blood, hair and/or other biological samples

2.1.4 the Breeder and,

2.1.5 the Stud Book volume and page number where the Thoroughbred is recorded, or the Stud Book volume where the horse will be recorded in the future, or, if the Stud Book is recorded electronically, where to access the appropriate Stud Book record.

2.1.6 Additional pages for vaccinations and administrative endorsements.

2.2. The document should be printed in the principal language of the issuing Authority. It is a requirement that the principal information held within the document is also translated into English.

2.3 The document must always accompany the horse and should only be altered by, or with the express permission of, the issuing Stud Book Authority.

2.4 The loss of the document must be notified to the issuing Authority who are the only party permitted to issue a duplicate copy.

2.5 The document of a dead horse should be returned to the relevant Authority of the country in which it died.

3. Horses of Ambiguous Sex

3.1 For the purposes of this Article, 'Ambiguous sex' is the term used to describe the situation where the externally visible sexual characteristics of a horse are contradicted by its genetic makeup/internal organs.

- 3.2 When a Stud Book Authority comes by evidence of ambiguity in the sex of a horse, it should:
- Advise its Racing Authority
 - Require the owner to return the horse's passport.
 - Suitably amend the horse's passport to indicate the ambiguity of sex.
 - Whenever relevant, inform the Stud Book Authority which registered the horse as a foal.

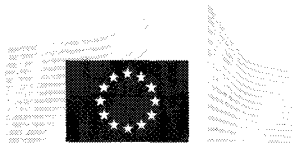
3.3 When a Racing Authority comes by evidence of ambiguity in the sex of a horse within its jurisdiction, it should:

- Advise its Stud Book Authority
- Require the horse's owner or trainer (as appropriate) to alert the Racing Authority if they intend to make an entry to race in another country, prior to making such entry.
- On receipt of such an alert, notify the Racing Authority of the country in which it is intended to race the horse of the relevant facts in its possession as to the ambiguity of the horse's sex.

3.4 A Racing Authority may, on the basis of information received as to the ambiguity of a horse's sex, impose whatever restrictions it considers appropriate on its freedom to take part in races, or in specified race types.

Agreed by :

ARGENTINA	FINLAND	MAURITIUS	SERBIA
AUSTRALIA	FRANCE	MEXICO	SLOVAKIA
AUSTRIA	GERMANY	MONGOLIA	SLOVENIA
AZERBAIJAN	GREAT BRITAIN	MOROCCO	SOUTH AFRICA
BAHRAIN	GREECE	NETHERLANDS	SPAIN
BARBADOS	HONG KONG	NEW ZEALAND	SWEDEN
BELGIUM	HUNGARY	NORWAY	SWITZERLAND
BRAZIL	INDIA	OMAN	SYRIA
BULGARIA	IRELAND	PANAMA	THAILAND
CANADA	ISRAEL	PARAGUAY	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
CHILE	ITALY	PERU	TUNISIA
CHINA	JAMAICA	PHILIPPINES	TURKEY
COLOMBIA	JAPAN	POLAND	UKRAINE
CROATIA	KAZAKHSTAN	PORTUGAL	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
CYPRUS	KENYA	QATAR	UNITED STATES OF
CZECH REPUBLIC	KOREA	ROMANIA	AMERICA URUGUAY
DENMARK	LEBANON	RUSSIA	UZBEKISTAN
DOMINICAN	MACAU	SAUDI ARABIA	VENEZUELA
REPUBLIC	MALAYSIA		
ECUADOR			



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH AND CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
Veterinary and International Affairs
Animal Health

Brussels,
SANCO/G2/AEF/kh(2013)2102234

Subject: Identification of Thoroughbred horses

Dear Mr Greeves,

Thank you and Dr Roland Devolz very much for your letter of 23 May 2013 to Mr T. Borg, Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy, who asked me to reply on his behalf.

You rightly referred to the action plan agreed by the Commission in response to certain food related issues that also concern the identification of *equidae*.

This action plan foresees to carry out an evaluation of the current situation, a mid-term adjustment of the current identification rules for *equidae* and a long-term reinforcement of the traceability of *equidae* in basic legislation.

The inquiry with Member States on the application of Regulation (EC) No 504/2008 of 6 June 2008 implementing Council Directives 90/426/EEC and 90/427/EEC as regards methods for the identification of *equidae*, identified certain cross-cutting problems, including the characteristic, quality and management of identification documents.

The Commission intends to address those issues by reviewing and updating Commission Regulation (EC) No 504/2008, as necessary, taking into account best practices developed in certain Member States or sectors of the horse industry.

To improve the quality of passports issued by the various passport issuing bodies, the Commission intends to discuss and eventually propose certain key format requirements

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that will, however, not exceed what you have described as current standard in the Thoroughbred industry.

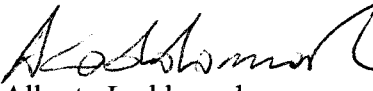
In all inquiries carried out by the Commission into the application of Regulation (EC) No 540/2008 and the audits carried out by Commission services in Member States, the large number of passport issuing bodies was identified by the competent authorities as a major obstacle for the development of a reliable system for the identification of *equidae*.

The Commission therefore intends to propose the remaining very few Member States that have not yet established a central database to establish one in order to accelerated access to essential information on *equidae* recorded in the various databases established in Member States for registered *equidae*, in accordance with Council Directive 90/427/EEC on the zootechnical and genealogical conditions governing intra-Community trade in *equidae*, and for *equidae* for breeding and production, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 504/2008.

It is common practice for all breeding animals of species other than *equidae* to register them in herd books under the appropriate animal health identification requirements, and the practical execution of passport issuance can be delegated by the competent veterinary authorities to approved, efficient and properly supervised bodies. Taking this into account, the Commission intends to present in the next few months a proposal for new legislation on animal breeding to the European Parliament and to the Council. This proposal would require *equidae* to be identified in accordance with animal health legislation before being entered or registered for entry in a studbook or with an international organisation managing horses for races and competitions.

I wish to reassure you that the Commission remains committed to reduce administrative burden and unnecessary red tape while at the same time ensuring food safety and the protection of human and animal health.

Yours sincerely,



Alberto Laddomada
Head of Unit

Cc: Dr Roland Devolz, Co-Chairman, EMSBLC (rdevolz@France-galop.com);
CAB Mr T. Borg, Mr. P. Testori Coggi, Mr B. Van Goethem