

African Horse Sickness a Possible Threat to Horses in Al-Baha

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Abstract : African Horse Sickness causes significant challenges to horse practitioners and owners in Africa and possibly in certain locations in the Arab Peninsula. The aim of this work was to observe a hot spot of epidemic in Al-Baha, Southwestern of Saudi Arabia that could be AHS. A five year-old horse farm that had eight horses with no history of clinical problems was visited in late October 2014. In August 2014, horses showed clinical signs of severe pain, congestion of mucus membranes, foam oozing of the nose, recumbency, difficult breath and ultimately death. The course of the disease averaged 2 days. The farm had no previous history of this episode. Other animals including camel, sheep reside the same farm sharing feeding and water sources however no obvious similar clinical problems were noticed among the two species. Five horses showed the clinical disease and all horses were lost. Veterinary help was not available for diagnosis or treatment. A follow up visit to the farm after one year indicated that the three remaining horses were healthy but were relocated to a different facility out the Al-Baha Region. The most likely cause of such clinical problem is African Horse Sickness, however clinical exam and sampling of other horses in the region is absolute must as well as examining arthropods.

Keywords : African horse sickness, horses, Al-Baha, Saudi Arabia

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