

Veterinary

How 'at risk' is your yard?

VETS are urging horse owners to beef up their biosecurity measures, writes **Amy Mathieson**.

The threat of strangles, equine flu and equine herpes virus (EHV-1) remains strong in the UK.

Currently only around 38% of horses in the UK are vaccinated against flu, and after outbreaks of EHV-1 last year, vets fear biosecurity measures are below par at many yards.

As part of this, XL Equine launched a new booklet last week (13 May) — *Plan, Prevent, Protect* — in collaboration with the Animal Health Trust (AHT) to highlight the threat.

The booklet outlines main diseases, including signs and how to prevent them — such as implementing isolation boxes and not sharing equipment.

There is also a checklist that the vet can go through with the owner to determine how “at risk” their yard is.

XL Equine has 35 member practices across the UK who have free access to the booklet. Other vets can download it for £5.

“This will hopefully raise the bar and encourage other vets to up their game when it comes to promoting biosecurity,” said Dr



How clean and safe is your yard?

Andrew Waller, head of bacteriology at the AHT.

“This is a positive step for the equine community all round.”

Mark Tabachnik of Wright & Moreton Veterinary Surgeons said the booklet had been introduced due to “frustration” at the prevalence of strangles and that the group had been working on the booklet since last July.

“Owners need to make use of this with their vets, you can’t bury your head in the sand,” added Dr Richard Newton of the AHT.

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