January 15, 2020

Dear Equine Practitioner,

We hope you are having a good start to the winter and that 2020 will be a healthy year for you and your patients. Please take a moment to review this annual Coggins letter so that we can best meet your diagnostic needs.

Effective February 1, 2020 our price for the **EIA AGID test is $7.50.** This is a slight increase from last year while the price for the ELISA will remain unchanged. In addition to the official paper EIA submission form, our lab also processes EIA tests electronically with the USDA VSPS or Global Vet Link GVL.

In October 2019, the USDA released new guidance and requirements (VSG 15201.1) regarding “Approval for Laboratories to Conduct Equine Infectious Anemia Testing”.

There are many changes affecting laboratories, but changes that most affect you, the submitting practitioner, are summarized below:

1. It defines and requires the use of VS approved official EIA test forms
2. It provides a 6-month grace period for existing State and other forms not approved
3. It requires non-negative (e.g., positive, discrepant, suspect) samples be confirmed by NVSL
4. It requires laboratories accept samples only from state authorized Cat II Accredited veterinarians

The USDA has provided outreach to Federal and State officials, and approved EIA labs. They will be providing educational outreach to practitioners in the near future.

The following two pages provide more details on how the changes may affect you. Please share with your staff to help us make your EIA laboratory submission and testing as seamless as possible.

Thanks to all of our current clients for your continued patronage. If you are not already using the NHVDL for your Coggins testing, give us a call and set up an account today.

For over fifty years, clients have benefited from the quality, reliability and excellent customer service the NHVDL provides. Please don’t hesitate to contact us if there is anything we can do to better meet your diagnostic needs.

Kind Regards,

Robert Gibson, MPH
Managing Director
NH Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory
*** Important EIA Testing Updates ***

1. It defines and requires the use of VS approved official EIA test forms
   - The VS 10-11 FEB2018 is the approved (paper) form
   - VS 10-11 forms are available by contacting your Federal Official in Sutton, MA: Phone: 508-363-2290, email: vsma@aphis.usda.gov or NH Dept. of Agriculture, Markets and Food office at (603) 271-2404.

2. It provides a 6-month grace period for existing State and other forms not approved
   - Forms currently in use can be used until the grace period expires 15APR2020.
   - It is expected that other forms will be approved by the deadline, including paper and electronic (including USDA’s VSPS and commercial vendors such as GVL).

3. It requires non-negative (e.g., positive, discrepant, suspect) samples be confirmed by NVSL
   - Please plan accordingly; non-negative results are to be expected, which could delay the reporting of final results to your owners. If the animal has critical movement or entry requirements for an EIA test you should build in an extra 5 days.

4. It requires laboratories accept samples only from state authorized Cat II Accredited veterinarians
   - Your National Accreditation Number must be entered on your EIA submission form. Be creative if the form you are using has no specific field for it (next to your name, for example). Note: The NAN is a federal number; do not use your state license number.
   - It is the veterinarian’s responsibility to obtain/maintain CAT II Accredited status; use this link to check your status: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/nvap/ct_areavet. You enter your National Accreditation Number (NAN) and your last name; it results with your Accreditation Status (current or expired), Category (I vs II), all the States where you are authorized and your renewal date. Problems should be addressed with your NVAP coordinator https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/vet_accreditation/downloads/nvap_coordinator.pdf or federal official.
   - This link is useful to contact State Vets: http://www.equinediseaseacc.org/state-veterinary-offices to obtain authorization in other states.

- It is essential that submission forms are accurately completed at the time of submission. Any edits to the form once the specimen has been tested are limited to minor changes. Forms cannot be edited after 30 days. A new submission form and blood sample will be required.

- No field on the VS Form 10-11 may be left blank. If any field is “none,” write “none” or line through.

(over)
• **Information that is always required:**
  - Reason for Testing, Test Required, Date Blood Drawn.
  - Addresses and phone numbers of veterinarian, equine location, equine owner.
  - Veterinarian’s National Accreditation Number (NAN)
  - Veterinarian’s written or official electronic signature
  - Name of Animal (if has one)
  - Color, Breed, Date of Birth, Sex
  - Microchip, Breed Registration Number (if present)
  - Narrative description should be completely filled out, regardless of the use of photographs or line drawings - include distinctive markings, unique and permanent forms of identification, when present: brands, tags, tattoos, scars, cowlicks, or whorls and blemishes. Line drawings or photographs are valuable and recommended to help accurately identify equines.

• **Digital photographs** should be of high quality, sharp focus, adequate lighting, and proper perspective. They should include all 3 views including frontal, left side and right side. All body parts should be visible and no part covered or obscured. (No blankets)

• The location at time of blood draw is for the equine’s usual residence (farm/stable), do **not** use temporary locations such as the veterinary practice.

• Laboratories are required to verify your federal accreditation status; this is not a new policy and our lab has already done so for several years.

• Each equine entering NH is required to have a valid negative Coggins test completed within the last 12 months. The state recommends a negative test for every equine participating in an exhibition and a current negative Coggins test is a routine part of equine pre-purchase exams.

• Samples should be kept cool, non hemolyzed, and submitted promptly. No sample over 30 days will be tested. Samples which are severely hemolyzed, or of poor quality, may not be suitable for testing and a new sample may be required. For better serum quality, blood should be centrifuged prior to submission.

• Please write legibly and include a tube number on both the tube and form. Make sure the names on tubes and forms are in agreement.