

## Incidence of Equine Piroplasmosis Confirmed

The Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Food has today confirmed the occurrence of equine Piroplasmosis in a number of thoroughbred horses in an equine facility in county Meath.

Piroplasmosis is a tick-borne protozoan disease of horses, mules, donkeys and zebra. It is caused by blood parasites – *Theileria equi* and *Babesia caballi* and gives rise to anaemia and jaundice in affected animals. The disease is not readily contagious and has no Zoonotic implications and therefore no public health concerns arise.

The disease became a notifiable disease in Ireland in July 2009. It has not been officially reported in this country before although it is understood that a previous incursion did take place. The disease is present in Mediterranean countries but is not present in the US, Canada, the UK or Australia.

The facility in question has been served with a movement restriction notice and epidemiological investigations are underway to establish the origin of the disease and the extent of the spread if any to other locations.

The Department has been in contact with industry representatives who have been informed of the current state of play. A meeting with industry representatives has been arranged to discuss the implications for animal movement and the measures appropriate to address the threat posed by the disease.

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