



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

APHA Briefing Note 30/20

Reminder – Compulsory Equine Microchipping in England coming into force

Date issued: 18 September 2020

Background

From 1 October 2020, it will be a legal requirement in England for all equines (horses, ponies and donkeys) regardless of age (except some semi-wild populations), to be identifiable with the insertion of a microchip. Failure to do so will be a criminal offence.

Microchipping has a number of benefits for both horses and owners. It can be beneficial if a horse is lost or stolen, as well as assisting with welfare cases i.e. to find an owner if a horse is abandoned or mistreated; tracking a horse through the food chain; and providing information to assist if there is a disease outbreak.

All microchips must be implanted by a vet, it is an offence for anyone to insert a microchip into an equine other than a vet.

Please see the press release for more information

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/equine-owners-urged-to-microchip-horses-ahead-of-1st-october-deadline>.

Action

The new regulations come into force in 2 weeks. OV's should remind all equine owners they come into contact with of the new regulations to ensure they are compliant.

If an equine is already microchipped, owners must ensure that its details are correctly recorded on the Central Equine Database, by accessing the online [Digital Stable](#).

To remind owners that microchipping has a number of benefits, both to equines and their owners. It greatly increases the chances of a horse being reunited with their owner if it is lost or stolen. It will also improve traceability, to ensure we have better control over any disease outbreaks. It is also a permanent link between the equine and its paper passport.