

It is regrettable that the government is considering imposing a levy on all horse owners should another outbreak similar to Equine Influenza occur. We believe that a levy as currently proposed would be unfair to the majority of horse owners who are not responsible and have no control over, or accountability from, those who import horses.

Horses in this country are not part of the food chain and cannot be treated the same as other species, such as pigs, cows, sheep, chickens etc. There is currently no requirement for all horses to be registered and it is in part this unique ability for the average person to own a horse that makes effective application of a levy very difficult. The ease of ownership has contributed significantly to our high ranking on a world stage in equestrian sports. Adding a levy to all horse owners would limit the number of people able to start at grass roots level and so impact on their ability to progress and develop.

We also question the necessity of using imported shuttle stallions when viable alternatives exist that would minimise the chance of accidental exposure to this and other exotic diseases.

Yours sincerely,

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