

Horse Passports

All horses, ponies, donkeys, zebras and their crosses must have an equine passport. The only exceptions are listed wild and semi wild ponies in designated areas of Dartmoor, Exmoor and the New Forest.



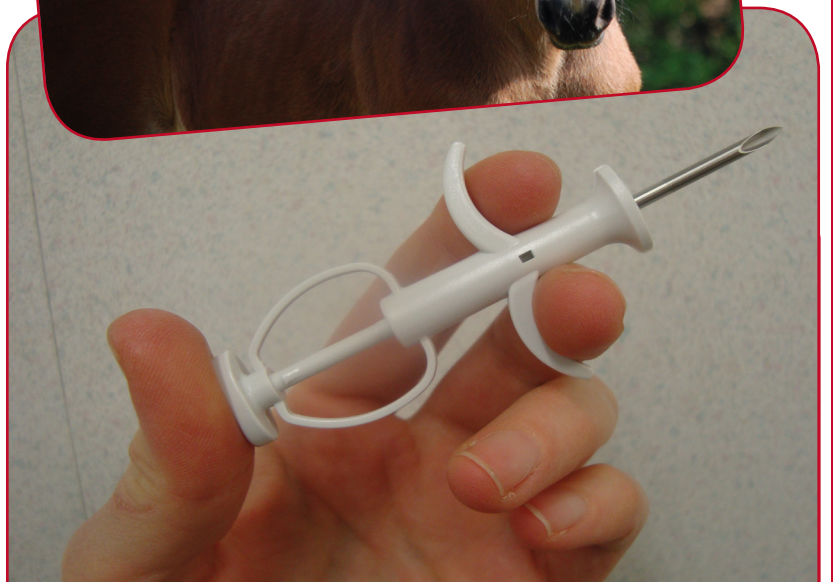
Mandatory Microchipping

From July 2009 new EU regulations came into effect concerning horse passports. When applying for a passport, microchipping has become mandatory, in an effort to make horse identification and the passport system more robust.

A microchip can only be implanted by a qualified veterinary surgeon. Foals need to be microchipped before 6 months of age, or by 31st December in the year of their birth, whichever is later. All foals born in the UK must now be microchipped before an owner can apply for an equine passport.

Passport application forms can be obtained from your veterinary surgeon or a passport issuing organisation (PIO) relevant to the breed. After implanting the microchip the vet completes the relevant section on the passport application form, marking the site of implantation. The unique number of the microchip may replace the need for completion of the silhouette diagram on some passports, depending on the requirements of each PIO.

Other methods of identification such as freeze branding and DNA verification do not replace the need for microchipping.



A MICROCHIP INJECTOR

A microchip is a small implant, about the size of a rice grain, inserted by injection into the tissue on the left side of the neck.

KEY POINTS

- A microchip must be implanted by a qualified veterinary surgeon.
- Foals need to be chipped before 6 months of age or by 31st December in the year of birth, whichever is later.
- After microchipping, an owner can then apply for a passport through a PIO relevant to the breed of horse.
- An older horse with an existing passport does not need to be microchipped, unless applying for a replacement passport

Together at all times

- A horse should be with its passport at all times.
- It is an offence to move a horse without its passport unless in a medical emergency.
- The passport must be available at the time of treatment if the horse is being given veterinary medication and for recording vaccinations.
- Part II of Section IX of the passport must be signed by the owner if substances not permitted for human consumption such as phenylbutazone (bute) are to be administered, supplied or prescribed.
- In the event of death or euthanasia of the horse then the passport should be returned to the PIO within 30 days of the date of death.
- More information regarding the full current guidelines can be found at www.defra.gov.uk.
- Local trading standards officers can ask to see a horse's passport and failure to produce it can lead to a fine of up to £5000.
- People who keep horses for others (e.g. livery yard owners, breeders, trainers) must make arrangements with each owner to ensure that passports are readily available. It is an offence to have responsibility for an animal which does not have a passport.



IMPLANTATION OF A MICROCHIP



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