



# agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:  
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Reference: 12//1/8/33/1

## THE USE OF VACCINES AGAINST AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS (AHS) IN SOUTH AFRICA

It has come to our attention that the use of AHS vaccine not registered in terms of the Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act 1947 (Act no 36 of 47) is being suggested by certain groups. The Director Animal Health (DAH) would like to clarify and inform you of the current prescriptions for AHS vaccination in terms of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84) and Regulations. Please note the below and disseminate this information:

Vaccination of horses against AHS is prescribed in Table 2 of the Regulations of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84). The following is an excerpt from Table 2 of the Regulations of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act 35 of 84) relating to AHS vaccination.

Animal disease	Nature, causal organism and symptoms	Susceptible animals	Controlled veterinary act to be performed in respect of-
1	2	3	Susceptible animals 4
African Horse sickness	Viral disease transmitted by biting insects and characterised by high fever, respiratory distress, subcutaneous oedema and acute death	Equines and Zebra	All equines in the Republic except equines in the African Horse sickness free zone and the African Horse sickness surveillance zone as described in Table 1, shall between the ages of 6 and 12 months, then between the ages of 12 and 18 months and then again once every year thereafter be immunized with an <b>effective remedy</b> by the responsible person; Provided that the director in a particular case may determine that such immunization must be carried out by an officer or veterinarian.  Equines in the African Horse sickness free zone and surveillance zone as described in Table 1 shall only be immunized with the written permission of the director.

Table 2 of the Regulations of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act 35 no of 84) clearly states that an effective remedy must be used for vaccination against AHS. A "remedy" is defined in Section 1 (6) of

the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84) as "any stock remedy which has been registered under the Fertilizers, Farm Feed, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act, 1947 (Act 36 of 1947), including any medicine or veterinary medicine as defined in section 1 of the Medicines and Related Substances Control Act, 1965 (Act 101 of 1965)";

In addition to the prescripts above, since 26 March 2015 the DAH has defined the period in which horses may be vaccinated against AHS each year as follows:

<b>AHS Zone</b>	<b>Adjustment</b>
<b>AHS Free Zone</b>	Permission for vaccination will only be given from 1 June 31 October each year
<b>AHS Surveillance Zone</b>	Permission for vaccination will only be given from 1 June to 31 October each year
<b>AHS Protection zone</b>	All equines in this area must be vaccinated within the period of 1 June to 31 October each year
<b>AHS Infected Zone</b>	Strong recommendation is made to vaccinate during the period from 1 June to 31 October each year

From the above it follows that


1. The only AHS vaccine that is registered for use in South Africa in terms of the Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act, 1947 (Act No. 36 of 1947) and therefore complies with the prescription of an "effective remedy" in terms of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84) and Regulations is the Onderstepoort Biological Products' (OBP) African Horse Sickness Vaccine for Horses, Mules and Donkeys (Reg. No. G 0116 (Act 36/1947)). **The OBP AHS vaccine thus must be used for the yearly compulsory vaccination** of all horses, mules and donkeys in the AHS infected zone, being the whole of South Africa except the AHS free and surveillance zones in the Western Cape Province (WCP). In addition, for purposes of obtaining a state veterinary movement permit for movements subject to AHS veterinary movement control, only the OBP AHS vaccine will be accepted and must have been administered at least 40 days before the movement by a registered veterinarian and certified in the valid passport of the equine.

2. All restrictions and requirements for permission related to vaccination for AHS in terms of Table 2 of the Regulations and the DAH prescription of the vaccination period also apply to any other unregistered vaccine against AHS - even if the person administering the vaccine and the veterinarian prescribing this compound are satisfied that it is used in accordance with the relevant legislation regarding the control of medicines and conduct of veterinarians. Thus, in the AHS free and surveillance zones of the WCP, written permission must be obtained from the Director: Animal Health prior to the application of any component / bottle of any AHS vaccine, irrespective of whether it is the OBP AHS vaccine or an unregistered vaccine. Such permission shall be considered by the DAH subject to all the applicable legislation and, should it be granted, will be restricted to the period between 1 June and 31 October each year. Application for permission must be made via the local state veterinarian and Provincial Director of Veterinary Services.

It should be noted that the use of any unregistered vaccine against AHS is firmly discouraged by this office as the quality, efficacy and safety of such products has not been subject to scrutiny by the relevant Registration Authority. Further information on the use of compounded medicines and the legal requirements for the use of such medicines can be obtained from the South African Veterinary Council website ([www.savc.org.za](http://www.savc.org.za)).

We would like to thank you for your support in trying to control AHS in South Africa.

Yours sincerely,



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**Dr. M Maja**  
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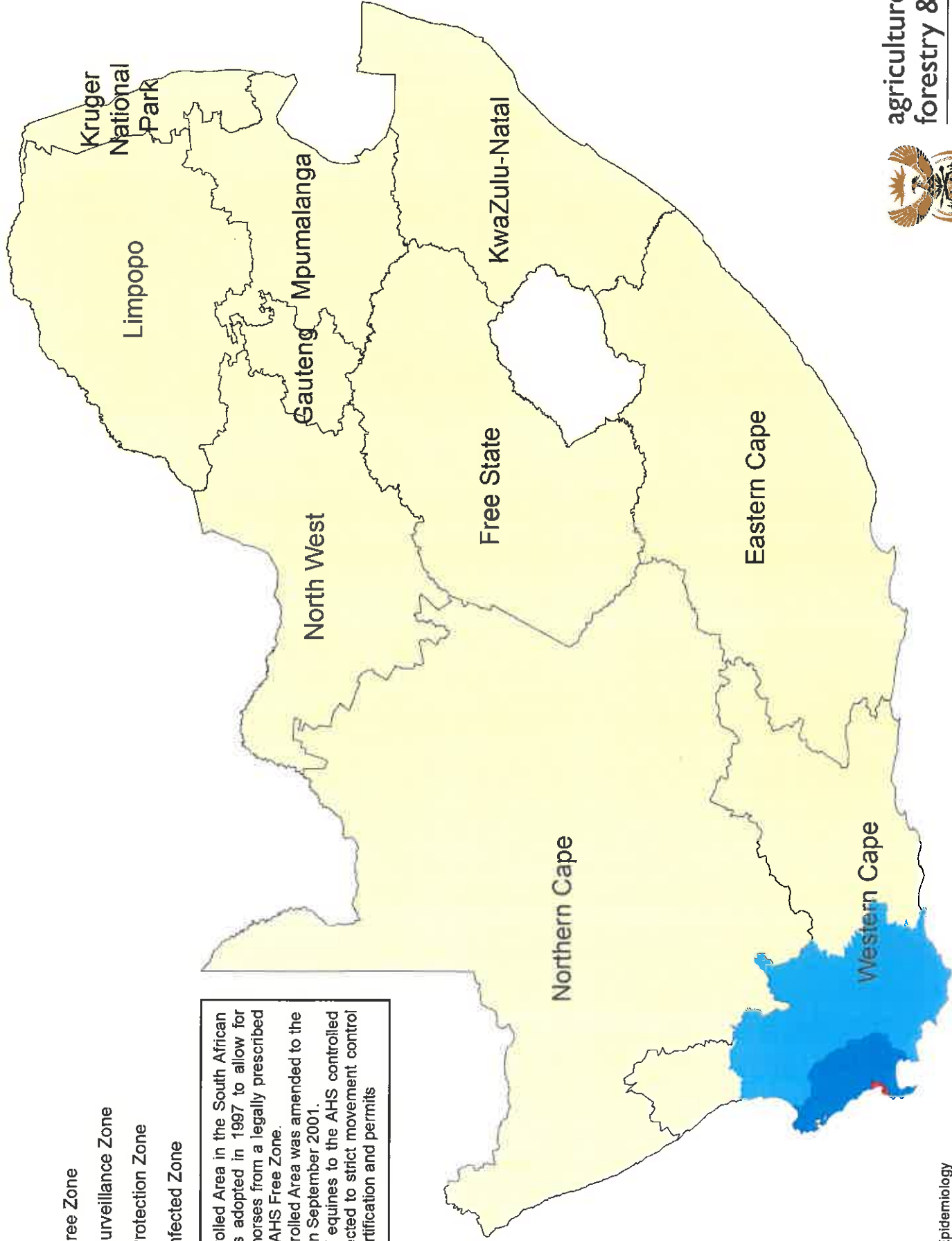
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# African Horse Sickness Control Zones

## Legend

-  AHS Free Zone
-  AHS Surveillance Zone
-  AHS Protection Zone
-  AHS Infected Zone

An AHS Controlled Area in the South African legislation was adopted in 1997 to allow for the export of horses from a legally prescribed and protected AHS Free Zone. The AHS Controlled Area was amended to the current areas in September 2001. Movements of equines to the AHS controlled area are subjected to strict movement control and require certification and permits



Map produced by  
Sub-Directorate Epidemiology  
Directorate Animal Health  
Date: 26/03/2015



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