

NEIT and NZCAR - what veterinarians need to know about equine identification

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Introduction

The New Zealand Equine Health Association (NZEHA) and Companion Animal New Zealand (CANZ) teams will hold an information session regarding the microchipping and registration of equines in the National Equine Identification and Traceability (NEIT) system, as well as the New Zealand Companion Animal Register (NZCAR). Although these systems are fundamentally part of the same database, there are distinct differences in user interfaces and data collection purposes, leading to variations in governance, privacy settings, and data access as well.

Individual identification through microchipping and registration in these databases is a crucial element of disease and disaster preparedness. NZEHA strives to ensure the health and welfare of the equine population during emergency responses to high-impact disease outbreaks by improving response plans and meeting requirements set by the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH). An accurate understanding of the population at risk and its location, along with ownership information, will be integral to the disaster preparedness of equines. CANZ supports NZEHA in their biosecurity efforts while remaining focused on their primary objective of ensuring the safe reunification of companion animals with their owners.

Microchipping requirement

Focusing on the capture of horses into the MPI-approved National Equine Identification System, this session will be directed towards equine and production animal veterinarians, equipping them with essential knowledge about their role and how to assist breeders and owners in the process.

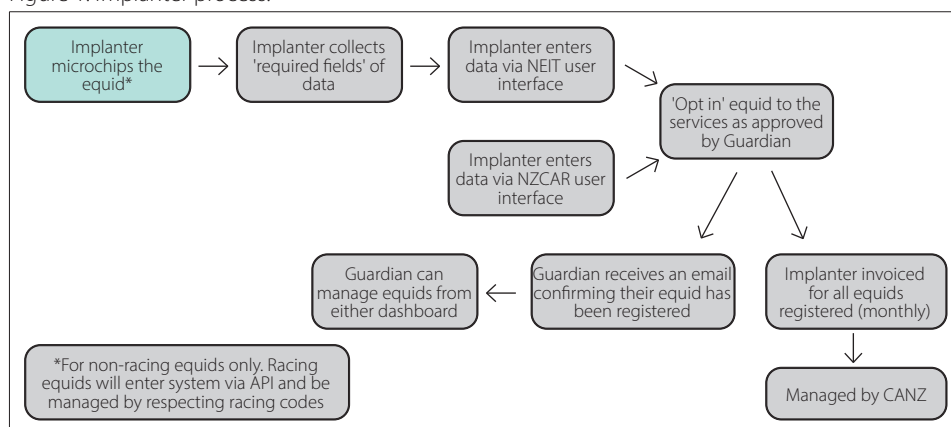
The session will emphasise the upcoming requirement for all foals to be microchipped within their first year, starting with foals born on or after 1 August 2025. Veterinarians will be encouraged to support owners and facilitate the rollout of this initiative across the equine sector by initiating the registration process. This step will be crucial for integrating the foals into the upcoming NEIT system.

Registration and charging process with an onscreen demonstration

The NEIT system will follow the same registration process as the New Zealand Companion Animal Register (NZCAR), which already includes horses but is primarily known for small companion animals, such as cats and dogs. For an upfront lifetime cost of \$15, equids can be easily registered through each organisation's portal, with a simple tick-box option allowing their details to be registered with both NEIT and NZCAR simultaneously.

The NEIT database will serve as a centralised database for equids for all biosecurity-related purposes. The processes for Standardbred and Thoroughbred will remain unchanged, with registration managed by the racing codes themselves; data migration systems will ensure that data integrates directly with NEIT without the need for double registration. Messaging to align all other equine studbooks (n=38) with rules and regulations has begun, with microchip implanters initiating the registration in NEIT. The presentation will feature an onscreen walkthrough of the NEIT system, providing attendees with a practical understanding of the registration process.

Figure 1. Implanter process.



An implanter on NEIT will have different access to implanters and other approved users on the NZCAR system. Once registered, the Guardian can update and manage their equids from either dashboard.

Because an equine consultation usually occurs in the field rather than in the clinic, the presenters are eager to learn from the audience if there are tools, we can develop to assist veterinarians in beginning the registration process on behalf of owners, as this is our preferred option for ensuring data accuracy and timely registration.

Resources

Resources are available on the websites of NEIT (www.neit.org.nz), NZEHA (www.nzeha.org.nz), NZCAR (www.animalregister.co.nz), and CANZ (www.companionanimals.nz).

CANZ has further developed EQuiChip resources, including a 'how-to' guide and a video highlighting the benefits of microchipping. Additionally, an upcoming video titled 'Giving Your Horses and Ponies a Good Life: A Guide to the Five Domains for New Zealand Pony Club Members' will be released shortly. These videos are accessible on the CANZ YouTube channel: @companionanimalsnewzealand341.

Conclusion

The session will highlight the collaborative effort needed among sector bodies, veterinarians, breeders, and owners to ensure the successful implementation of NEIT.