FORT COLLINS - The equine section at the Colorado State University Veterinary Teaching Hospital continues to accept equines with emergency health problems. The hospital and equine section of the hospital is not and has not been under quarantine due to the outbreak of equine herpesvirus 1.

The hospital also remains open to all other animal patients.

In response to the outbreak, the following steps were implemented by the equine section of the hospital earlier this week:

- The Veterinary Teaching Hospital is following best practices to limit contact among horses from multiple locations by rescheduling non-emergency equine and camelid appointments as a precaution and courtesy to clients. The hospital continues to admit equine patients for any kind of emergency and is releasing equines and other animals that have been successfully treated for any health problem.

- Anyone with an equine emergency is encouraged to call the Veterinary Teaching Hospital prior to coming to the hospital at (970) 297-5000.

- The hospital has added additional layers of precautions to keep equine patients free from exposure by preventing infectious disease in the hospital’s equine unit to keep patients free from infection.

- Horses brought into the hospital are routinely and carefully screened for symptoms and their recent history of travel and contact with other horses is closely reviewed to rule out possible exposure to the disease. Any horse that may have been exposed to the virus is being held in a separate isolation unit away from the main equine hospital and other equine patients that are coming and going as a measure to protect all patients from potential exposure to any infectious disease.

- The isolation unit where horses that may have been exposed to the disease are treated is specifically designed for treating infectious disease cases, such as equine herpesvirus 1 cases. The unit is not physically connected to the main hospital and horses in the main hospital are not exposed to horses in the isolation unit.

Hospital leadership will monitor the outbreak and reassess when it is appropriate to accept non-emergency appointments on an ongoing basis.

The equine herpesvirus, called EHV-1, is contagious between camels and horses but cannot be spread to humans or other animals treated at the hospital such as cats and dogs. EHV-1 may cause only mild, flu-like illness in many cases, but some horses may become seriously ill with respiratory or neurologic disease. EHV-1 may be fatal in some severely infected horses. The
most common way for EHV-1 to spread is by direct horse-to-horse contact. The virus also can spread through the air, contaminated equipment, clothing and hands.

Symptoms in infected horses include fever, decreased coordination, nasal discharge, urine dribbling, loss of tail tone, hind limb weakness, leaning against a wall or fence to maintain balance and lethargy. They may become unable to get up or stand. While there is no cure, the symptoms of the disease may be treatable.

Colorado State University veterinarians are recommending that all horse owners restrict transportation of their horses and restrict access to their horses and grounds until the current outbreak subsides. Horse owners also are advised to consult with their veterinarian about EHV1 biosecurity and health concerns.

Anyone with questions about appointments and available veterinary care at the Colorado State Veterinary Teaching Hospital should call (970) 297-5000.

**B.W. Pickett Equine Center events update**

Separate from activity at the CSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital, CSU’s B.W. Pickett Equine Center, on the university’s Foothills Campus, remains temporarily closed to visiting horses and has so far cancelled three events that would have brought horses together from multiple locations. The Equine Center is a separate, unrelated facility from the CSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital and is located about 4 miles away.

The Equine Center is home to classes and educational activities offered by the CSU Equine Sciences Program, an undergraduate degree program for students pursuing careers in the horse industry. The center houses a herd of CSU-owned horses, which numbers fewer than 10 in the summertime; it includes arenas for riding and horse events, multiple horse barns and boarding facilities.

The Equine Center is also a well-known venue that hosts a variety of events organized by outside groups. These include riding clinics, rodeos and horse events for youngsters. Participants in these events often bring their own horses to the center. Horses owned by CSU have not been exposed to EVH-1. Restricting movement of horses to and from the CSU Equine Center is in keeping with guidelines from the CSU College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences and is meant to prevent inadvertent spread of disease from potentially infected horses visiting the center. This step also protects horses kept adjacent to the center that are part of the CSU Equine Reproduction Laboratory.

Temporary closure of the facility to visiting horses affects at least three events that had been scheduled at the Equine Center in May: a jumping clinic, a reining clinic, and a Colorado Pro Rodeo Association event called Rodeo Rocks the Fort. These three events have been cancelled. The fate of events scheduled later in the summer will be considered based on how the current equine herpesvirus outbreak develops.

Temporary closure of the Equine Center to outside horses also signals to the horse industry and to horse owners the serious nature of the current outbreak.