



## SAFEGUARDING HORSES

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Promoting responsible Phenylbutazone use

## Why has the EU introduced Equine Passports?

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**TO COMPLY WITH EUROPEAN LEGISLATION,  
PHENYLBUTAZONE MUST NEVER BE  
ADMINISTERED TO HORSES INTENDED FOR  
HUMAN CONSUMPTION.**

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Under **EU law**, all horses are classed as animals for human consumption.

That means **strict rules and regulations** must be enforced to **prevent pharmaceutical residues entering the human food chain**. Something that is only achievable if drugs and medicines are rigorously controlled, and treatment is completely transparent and traceable.

For that reason, it is now mandatory for every horse in the UK and Europe to have its own **Equine Passport**.

## What difference will the Equine Passport make?

Without a valid Equine Passport, it will be illegal to sell or move your horse to a new keeper; to export your horse; to slaughter it for food; or to use it in competition or for breeding.

As an owner, you will be responsible for obtaining a passport for every horse you own. Once acquired, the passport remains valid for the entire lifetime of the animal.

## Why is the Equine Passport scheme so important?

Equine Passports are crucial if the misuse of certain substances and a ban on a range of medically useful drugs are to be avoided.

## What do I have to do before using phenylbutazone based products?

Owners have to declare, in Section IX of the Equine Passport, whether a horse is intended for human consumption or not.

You can only use phenylbutazone if your horse is not intended for human consumption.

Once declared **not for human consumption**, the horse **must not** enter the food chain under any circumstances.

If a passport is lost, a duplicate is issued and the horse is automatically categorised as **not intended for human consumption**. This avoids the possibility of drugs entering the food chain as a result of earlier treatment.

## What are the benefits of complying with the Equine Passport scheme?

By complying with the Equine Passport regulations, you are:

- Exercising responsible ownership
- Looking after the welfare of your horse
- Contributing to ethical standards in food production
- Safeguarding the long-term health of your horse
- Maximising the use of veterinary equine treatments
- Guaranteeing more choice and options for equine pain relief and other common conditions
- Enhancing public and regulatory confidence in the Equine Passport scheme
- Protecting the human food chain from harmful substances

## What if I don't comply?

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**CURRENTLY, APPROXIMATELY 70% OF EQUINE VETERINARY MEDICINES IN THE UK ARE NOT AUTHORISED FOR THE TREATMENT OF HORSES INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION.**

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Many substances used in commonly prescribed equine medicines can only be given to animals **not intended for human consumption.**

These include some wormers and antibiotics, plus anti-inflammatory drugs, such as Equipalazone<sup>®</sup>, that contain phenylbutazone.

**Without the adequate controls** offered by the Equine Passport scheme, it is **highly likely that some of these drugs will be withdrawn from use** because of the risk of them passing into the human food chain.

This, in turn, will:

- Prevent the use of commonly prescribed equine drugs for pain relief and other conditions
- Limit the range of treatments available
- Affect efficacy of treatment
- Impact on the health and welfare of horses everywhere

Always consult and follow your veterinary surgeon's instructions when administering **prescription only medicines**.

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**HORSE OWNERS IN IRELAND SHOULD SEEK  
ADVICE FROM THE HORSE PASSPORT AGENCY  
OR THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
FISHERIES AND FOOD FOR INFORMATION  
SPECIFICALLY RELATING TO THEM.**

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## More information is available at:

[www.defra.gov.uk/rural/horses/topics/passports.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/horses/topics/passports.htm)

[www.vmd.gov.uk](http://www.vmd.gov.uk)

[www.horsepassportagency.org](http://www.horsepassportagency.org)

[www.agriculture.gov.ie](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie)

[www.horsepassportagency.ie](http://www.horsepassportagency.ie)

## Details of all UK Passport Issuing Organisations (PIO) can be found at:

[www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/id-move/horses/horsepassport.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/id-move/horses/horsepassport.htm)

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