



ATHRA Guidelines To Combat *Phytophthora*



PHYTOPHTHORA (pronounced FY-TOFF-THORA) are soil and waterborne fungi that kills a wide variety of native plant species, fruits, vegetables, nuts and ornamental plants.

Phytophthora cinnamomi (*Pc*), also known as cinnamon fungus, is the most common and destructive species, and requires immediate action to stop its spread.

This disease can be spread by all bush user groups, including bush walkers, mountain and motor bike riders, park management vehicles, four wheel drives etc., and native and domestic animals, including horses. The disease in moist soil and plant material sticks to human footwear, tyres of vehicles, and of course to horses hooves, easy boots, bandages and similar products.

ATHRA clubs and members can help minimize the risk of spreading Phytophthora by following these guidelines:

- Contact your local Parks & Wildlife Office (or the equivalent body in your respective State) for information on suitable horse riding areas.
- Park your car and float in designated car parks or on sealed surfaces where possible.
- Keep to designated horse riding trails at all times.
- Avoid riding when the soil is wet or muddy.
- Avoid using bandages and boots, unless covered with all-purpose bandage or boot covers.
- Start and finish your horse ride with clean bandage covers, all-purpose boots, easyboot or similar product (ie free of all soil and plant material). Keep them as clean as possible during the ride.
- Remove soil from your horse's bandage covers, all-purpose boots, easyboot or similar product and disinfect them before entering or leaving an area. Do not take them home to clean.
- Some horse trails or sections of National Parks may be closed due to serious infestation or high risk of spread. **OBEY TRAIL CLOSED SIGNS** – penalties may apply.

How to clean your horse's hooves –

ATHRA members and other horse riders are encouraged to carry a hygiene kit to clean their horse's hooves. This hygiene kit can be kept in a float, or carried with the club first aid and ride kit. It can be used after a ride or carried with you on extended rides.

A hygiene kit should contain –

- Hoof pick with brush attached or a separate stiff brush
- Small spray bottle
- Bottle of disinfectant - ATHRA recommends a solution of 10% household bleach mixed with 90% drinkable water. (Use eye protection & rubber gloves when preparing solution).



Cleaning procedure –

1. Select a hard, well drained site such as a road.
2. Remove your horse's bandage covers, all purpose boots, easyboots or similar product, and place near your horse for cleaning.
3. Thoroughly clean the hoof using the hoof pick and brush.
4. Using a spray bottle, apply the disinfectant solution of 10% household bleach and 90% drinkable water to the entire foot and work into crevices and cracks with a clean brush.
5. Spray a small amount of disinfectant on the pastern and hold foot up for 10 seconds.
6. Return the foot to the ground after 10 seconds and repeat process with all remaining feet and allow to dry.
7. Remove soil and plant material from your horse's bandage covers, all purpose boots, easyboots or similar product using the hoof pick and brush, then spray them with the disinfectant solution.
8. Clean and disinfect the hoof pick and brush after each use.
9. Wash hands to neutralize the disinfectant solution.
10. Monitor your horse's feet if using the disinfectant solution on a regular basis.

Note: Always start your ride with clean footwear. If you need to dismount in a *Phytophthora* infested area, clean your footwear using the hoof pick and brush, and spray with the disinfectant. Re-clean your horses feet.

When riding in suspected infested areas riders can further assist the prevention of the spread of *Phytophthora* by riding only on hard and compacted ground such as management tracks etc.

These guidelines will remain under ongoing review and will be subject to changes as developments occur.

ATHRA enthusiastically encourages all horse riders to adopt the above procedure when riding in known or suspected infested areas to help stop the spread of *Phytophthora*.

For more information please contact the relevant Government Department in your State.

*ATHRA hopes the information contained in these guidelines is of assistance to readers and that it in some way helps to minimize the spread *Phytophthora* but ATHRA does not guarantee that these guidelines are without flaw of any kind or are wholly appropriate for your particular use and therefore disclaims any liability for any error, loss or consequence which may arise from reliance on any information in these guidelines.*

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