GUIDELINE – GUIDE TO COMBATTING PHYTOPHTHORA

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INTRODUCTION

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

Phythophthora 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 horse's hooves, easy boots, bandages and similar products.

ACTIONS

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

- Contact your local Parks and 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.

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A hygiene kit should contain –

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

Cleaning procedure –

1. Select a hard, compacted site such as a road.

2. Wearing gloves and using a spray bottle, spray the disinfectant solution of 10% household bleach and 90% drinkable water onto your horse's legs from the knee down, spraying any bandage covers, all-purpose boots, Easyboots or similar product, thoroughly wetting any accumulated soil and plant material.

3. Wait 10 seconds for each leg. Remove any boots and spray till wet any soil in boots and any soil on and under the horse's feet, wait 10 seconds before returning each foot to the ground.

4. Thoroughly clean each foot using the hoof pick and brush.

5. Spray the entire foot and work into crevices (frog etc.) and cracks with a clean brush.

6. Wait 10 seconds before returning the foot to the ground and repeat the process for all remaining feet.

7. Spray the hoof pick and brush till wet after each use, wait 10 seconds.

8. Wash disinfectant solution off skin and clothing. If you need to neutralize the bleach rub dirt into the affected area.

9. 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 horse's 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 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.

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DISCLAIMER

ATHRA hopes the information contained in these guidelines is of assistance to members and that it may in some way help to minimize the spread of Phytophthora, however 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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