SIGNS AND STAGES OF EQUINE INFECTIOUS ANEMIA (EIA)

The **incubation period**, the time between a Horse being bitten by a vector (horse flies/midges) and demonstrating signs of EIA, ranges from **10 to more than 45 days** and is usually 21-42 days after transmission/exposure.

Following exposure, horses will often develop a fever before testing positive for the virus. During the initial stages of infection, the disease may go unrecognised, with horses showing only a **decreased appetite**. In such cases a diagnosis of EIA may only be made after recurrent periods of **fever**, anaemia, swellings, **depression** and **weight loss**. Horses may also appear to have **no visible symptoms** and may therefore only be diagnosed after a blood test.

In severe onset cases of EIA, horses may develop a **high fever, anemia** (due to a breakdown of red blood cells), **weakness, swellings** around the lower abdomen and legs as well as a weak pulse. Severely affected horses may **die** within 14 days.

Horses that have been chronically affected with repeated bouts of mild clinical signs may relapse into the more severe form of the disease some years after the original infection.

EIA may also cause pregnant **mares to abort** at any stage of pregnancy, whenever the virus first enters or re-enters the bloodstream. Often such infected mares will fail to carry a foal to full term; however, some may give birth to healthy foals which may not be infected.

For further information, please contact your Veterinary Surgeon.