

## VETERINARY IRELAND PRESS RELEASES

21 August 2008

In response to queries in relation to the LANTINUS / DENIS LYNCH matter Veterinary Ireland has issued the following statement.

Veterinary Ireland is the representative organisation for the veterinary profession with over 1,000 members throughout Ireland. More than 200 of these would be involved in the organisation's Equine Group which deals with horses – although many of these vets would do other work as well.

In the first instance the organisation has no direct knowledge of the facts of this particular case, LANTINUS. We would presume that when 'due process' is complete that more information will become available and then a more informed comment can be given.

On the more general front Joe Collins, a member of Veterinary Ireland's Equine Committee and President of the Federation of European Equine Veterinary Association (FEEVA) said that, "I can state categorically that we would not condone the use of any prohibited substance in a manner which was designed to enhance the performance of an animal and give them an unfair advantage in competition. It remains to be seen whether this was the case in this situation. Similarly, we strongly support the policy of the FEI which is designed to safeguard the welfare of horses in competition", he said.

"As an organisation I can say that we have become increasingly more concerned over recent years about the dwindling range of medicines which are available for treating horses. This has been exacerbated in recent years with new EU regulations which deal with horses and medicines – where horsemeat might go for human consumption. While this is not usual practice in Ireland, it is more common in some other EU member states and so we have to comply with the new Community-wide regulations. We have worked closely with the Department of Agriculture and Food in developing a veterinary Code of Practice on this".

"We would therefore fully appreciate the difficulties which restrictions on the use of certain drugs place on vets and horse owners as they develop treatment programmes for injured animals. The vets approach at all times will be to avoid unacceptable suffering to the horse – using the optimum available medicine for the purpose. The vet and horse owner have to take into account not just the general medicines regulations – but in the case of competing horses the additional regulations for their sport".

"As a final word we would be aware that the tests which are being used on samples taken are becoming more and more sensitive and are now picking up minute traces of medicines in animals long after their therapeutic effect has finished. It might be that this is a possible explanation in this current unfortunate episode", Mr Collins concluded.

For further information:

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