



Alberta Thoroughbred Micro-chipping Project

The C.T.H.S. (Alberta Division) is very pleased to announce that the Minister of Alberta Agriculture and Forestry has approved funding under the *Growing Forward 2* Traceability Pilot Program in order to support the C.T.H.S. pilot project entitled, "Alberta Thoroughbred Micro-chipping."

Length of project: August 1st, 2015-February 28, 2018

Project Manager: Heather Matheson-Bird, B.Sc.

Introduction

The Alberta Thoroughbred Micro-chipping Project is actively involved in investigating an alternative implantation site and developing accompanying software for the management of microchipped horses. Although microchips are not currently a requirement to register a Thoroughbred they will become a requirement of registration for foals of 2017 or later.

The implant site the Alberta Thoroughbred Micro-chipping Project is using the nasal area (above the dorsal aspect of the orbicularis oris muscle and underneath the depressor septi muscle). This is a new location to chip horses and initial trials are showing promise. This location will be safer and easier to manage for both horses and handlers.

Objectives of the Project:

- Standardized method of identification and location that can be used as the Canadian industry standard for equine identification and management.
- Integration of microchips and software into breed organizations and comingling events.
- To implant Thoroughbred foals born over the next three years in Alberta with a microchip and assist breeders in adopting and integrating new management technologies such as software and chip readers into their business.
- To provide a template for other breed organizations and associations to adopt and follow in the future.
- To move the industry towards a high standard of equine identification and management.



Procedure/Timeline:

January 2016 – May 2016:	Information sent to all stakeholders Microchipping of foals at larger co-mingling sites <i>Alberta Thoroughbred owners and breeders are encouraged to obtain Premise Identification numbers</i>
Spring and Summer 2016:	Microchipping at Northlands Development of software program
January 2017 – May 2017:	Microchipping of foals at larger co-mingling sites
Ongoing:	Development of software program Training sessions for qualified individuals
February 28, 2018:	Project Completion
March 26, 2018:	Final Report Due to Alberta Government and Growing Forward 2

For further information regarding the Alberta Thoroughbred Microchipping Project please feel free to contact one of the following individuals:

Heather Matheson-Bird, Project Manager, Cell # 403-554-7542 or heather@ccr01.com

Adrienne Herron, Traceability Systems Specialist/Provincial Equine Specialist, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, 403-755-2047 or Adrienne.herron@gov.ab.ca

Jean Kruse, Manager C.T.H.S. (Alberta Division) 403-229-3609 or JKruse@cthsalta.com



Frequently Asked Questions:

What are the advantages of microchipping in the nasal area?

- a). The nasal area offers a convenient and behaviourally appropriate location as horses often investigate new objects and situations with their noses.
- b). This location makes scanning horses in stalls, trailers and out in fields quick and easy.
- c). Horses can be scanned without actually being caught, or needing to be haltered making it safer for handlers as you don't need to get close to bite and strike zones.
- d). The nasal area is also quick to heal and offers excellent tissue for the microchip to adhere with preventing any migration issues.
- e). There is no need for any preparation of the nasal area prior to implanting the microchip.

What kind of microchip is the project using?

The project will be using Datamars Slim Microchip T-SL. This microchip is smaller than traditional microchips and is delivered with a user friendly 14 gauge syringe style applicator. This is the same microchip being used by the Jockey Club. For manufacturer's information: <http://www.datamars.com/products/companion-animal-id/slim-microchip/>

Will this replace tattooing?

The Jockey Club has indicated that all Thoroughbreds registered in North America will need to be microchipped by 2017 however they have not indicated that this will replace the current method of tattooing. As the technology is adopted and tested it may be possible to move away from the traditional ID methods used such as tattooing.

Microchipping is less expensive than tattooing and doesn't require any sedation to perform.

Is there a cost to have this done?

There is no cost to be involved with this pilot project.

Will we also have to microchip in the neck like The Jockey Club is asking us to do?

The Jockey Club is aware of the Alberta Micro-Chipping Project. The Jockey Club will accept the implant area of either the nasal area or the nuchal ligament. We encourage owners to note the location of the microchip when submitting the microchip number to the Jockey Club.



Who will be doing the microchipping?

For the purposes of the pilot study, microchips will be assigned and implanted by people trained and designated by the project. As the project progresses we expect the number of individuals being able to implant the microchip to increase.

How will I read the microchip in my Thoroughbred?

Microchips can be read with an ISO 11785 compliant microchip reader. You must ensure that the reader you select is ISO 11785 compliant and that it can detect ISO compliant 11784 134.2 KHz radio frequency devices

Will we need to purchase a reader?

No, you will not need to purchase a reader. They are currently available at Alberta Agriculture and Forestry Field offices, County offices and Livestock Identification Services (LIS) offices throughout the province. The CTHS (Alberta Division) will also have readers available to lend out to breeders on a limited basis.

If the owner of a microchipped Thoroughbred doesn't know its name or pedigree can the C.T.H.S. help identify the horse using its microchip number?

Yes. Not only will you be able to identify the Thoroughbred that has been microchipped part of the Pilot Project involves developing software that owners, breeders and trainers will be able to use as a management tool keeping track of such things as health, medication, breeding and ownership records.

Once the microchip has been implanted what other steps are required?

Once the microchip is implanted, you should log onto Interactive Registration on The Jockey Club website and report the microchip number using the online Microchip Requesting, Reporting and Lookup module. Microchip numbers are not associated with a specific horse until reported to The Jockey Club by the owner or breeder. If you do not have access to IR, you can call the Registry for assistance at (800) 444-8521.