Sale Price and Race Performance in Horses Previously Diagnosed With *Lawsonia intracellularis* Infection

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Equine proliferative enteropathy from *Lawsonia intracellularis* infection significantly affects sale price as yearlings, but it does not affect future athletic potential based on race performance. Author's address: Hagyard Equine Medical Institute, 4250 Iron Works Pike, Lexington, Kentucky 40511; e-mail: mfrazer@hagyard.com. © 2009 AAEP.

1. Introduction

Although treated horses typically survive equine proliferative enteropathy (EPE), the long-term effects of the disease on the horse are unknown. The goal of this retrospective study is to evaluate how horses infected with *Lawsonia intracellularis* (LI) compared with non-infected horses after resolution of the disease.

2. Materials and Methods

Medical records of Thoroughbred horses diagnosed with LI infection between January 2002 and January 2008 at Hagyard Equine Medical Institute in Lexington, Kentucky were reviewed. Each horse included in the study had a clinical presentation characteristic for LI infection and hypoalbuminemia. Each horse included also tested positive for LI infection through fecal polymerase chain reaction, serum immunoperoxidase monolayer assay (IPMA), or both. The sale and race records from these horses were compared with the average sale and race records of all progeny by the same sire as the affected horse.

3. Results

One hundred sixteen horses met the initial criteria. Thirty-six of those horses were sold at public auction as yearlings, and their sale price was significantly lower than the average of their sire's other progeny. Thirty of 36 horses raced, and their monetary earnings were not significantly different from the average of their sire's other progeny.

4. Discussion

Although yearlings diagnosed with LI do not command the same sales prices as other 1-yr-old horses, their athletic potential as adults does not seem to be adversely affected by the disease.