

Vaccines for RHDV-2

The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) has provided an update on the availability of vaccines for rabbit haemorrhagic disease virus type 2 (RHDV-2). In a statement on its website on October 28, the VMD reported that, on September 22, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) had issued a marketing authorisation, which is valid throughout the EU, for the vaccine Eravac, produced by Laboratorios Hipra.

The vaccine contains inactivated RHDV-2 virus (strain V-1037) and is licensed for use in rabbits intended for meat production. It is administered to rabbits by a single injection from 30 days of age, with protection beginning one week after vaccination. Further information about Eravac was made available on the EMA's website (www.ema.europa.eu) on October 20.

The VMD says it will accept applications to import unauthorised medicines into the UK to treat RHDV-2 if Eravac is not available or suitable. It notes that there are vaccines against RHDV-2 that are authorised in other EU countries and which have previously been imported by UK vets under the Special Import Scheme. These include Filavac VHD K C+V (France) and Novarvilap (Spain).

The VMD points out that no information is available about the safety and efficacy of these vaccines for pet rabbit breeds, including when they are used at the same time as other vaccines, such as classical RHDV or myxomatosis vaccines. It says that vets should use their clinical judgement in individual cases to decide the most suitable vaccination protocol, and should contact the vaccine manufacturer directly for further information.