



HOT BRANDING OF HORSES

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Background

FVE reckons that hot branding is still widely used in some European countries as a method of identification of horses.

FVE however considers that other methods of permanent identification are available, from traditional methods such as the use of silhouettes, to those using modern technology such as DNA typing and microchip implantation. These methods are less invasive, do not have the animal welfare implications associated with hot branding and are, in addition, more reliable and secure. Techniques other than hot branding can therefore be employed which are appropriate to the value of the horse and the relative importance of unique identification.

FVE nonetheless recognises that hot branding is considered the best and most appropriate means of identification in certain circumstances, such as for instance the identification of New Forest wild ponies.

Position

The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) considers that hot branding is a mutilation and that hot branding should not be considered until all alternatives have been exhausted.

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