

Horsemen Representatives,

We are receiving laboratory reports identifying the drug CAPSAICIN in equine plasma samples. CAPSAICIN is the "Hot Pepper Extract" ingredient used in some topical equine applications such as Equi Block. It is a class two drug and when applied topically acts as an analgesic and nerve desensitizer. According to Dr. Soma, preliminary studies on this drug indicate that when applied topically it absorbed through the skin and will enter the blood stream. It is eliminated rapidly. Though PCTRL reports show low picoogram levels, Dr. Soma's studies indicate race day administration of this substance at these low levels. Reports from Veterinarians indicate that trainers are using these products in poultices and as a rub on joints.

Each currently racing Thoroughbred and Standardbred track have at least one finding for this substance. Verbal warnings will be issued to the trainer and that a future finding may result in a positive test.

We are seeking your support in curtailing the use of CAPSAICIN products. Dr. Soma's studies are preliminary, but given the potential dangers of the use of CAPSAICIN, we think it is important that you notify your horsemen that the use of these products containing CAPSAICIN may result in a positive test.

(from the Pennsylvania Harness Racing Commission)