



RHDV2 Rabbit Calicivirus

A new strain of the rabbit calicivirus has been confirmed in a single wild rabbit found on a Marlborough farm.

The strain of Rabbit Haemorrhagic Virus Disease – called RHDV2 – is widespread in Europe and Australia, but this is the first time it has been found in New Zealand.

The virus affects rabbits and the European hare. It has no impact on human health or other animals, but we can't rule out a potential risk to pet rabbits.

It's not currently known how widespread the virus is in New Zealand. This virus can spread rapidly, so there is a chance it is already prevalent in the wild.

Initially, MPI is purchasing 1,000 doses of the latest vaccine for this strain. We expect the first shipment to be in the country next week.

Veterinarians can request a vaccine order form via email sent to exports@asurequality.com

Pet owners should talk to their vet for specific advice, or to request an appointment for a vaccination.

We are working to secure a longer-term supply based on demand.

In the meantime, there are a number of practical steps people can take to minimise the risk to their pet rabbits:

- **Keep them separate from wild rabbits.**
- **Wash hands between handling rabbits.**
- **Control insects around pet rabbits as they can spread the virus between rabbits.**
- **Avoid cutting grass and feeding it to pet rabbits.**
- **Thoroughly clean and disinfect cages and equipment.**

Talk to your vet about specific advice.

**For more information, call MPI on
0800 00 83 33 or email info@mpi.govt.nz**