

Summary of article on www.isibless.de including the findings of Dr. Susanne Braun and Dr. Björn Steinbjörnsson:

- Braun and Steinbjörnsson have performed a comprehensive study of 84 horses at different locations over a period of time .
- Breathing rate: normal = 8-16/min ... 90% of examined horses: >20.
- 100%: abnormalities in trachea, >40% pathological bronchial and lung abnormalities.
- 100%: fluid secretions from both nostrils (early stages: clear, later stages of examination: white fluid).
- 0% of examined horses would have passed vet checks for sale of competition.
- Braun & Steinbjörnsson contacted authorities (MAST, ...) early on and shared all of their data/findings/conclusions, fearing that such a widespread epidemic could not be dealt with by vets alone, but asking for a coordinated strategy to combat infection throughout the entire horse population in Iceland.
- *Observation by isibless*: Chief horse vet at MAST, Dr. Sigríður Björnsdóttir, continuously played down the level of importance (e.g. lecture in Germany on 27 May): This is not a serious disease. // The horses will get through this rather quickly and will be stronger afterwards. (result: MAST did not allow any medical treatment out of the ordinary for what appeared to be an extraordinary outbreak ...).
- While even after another meeting in Mid-May there was no active cooperation with Icelandic authorities (Braun/Steinbj. continued to transparently share their documentation in order to avoid questions about them developing something which they would then be able to „market“ exclusively), the two vets turned to world-renowned academic research centers like Justus-Liebig-Universität in Giessen (Germany) and to virology professionals in Hannover and shared with them the tests and samples they had taken from the sick horses at different locations in Iceland.
- out of 10 markers for viral infections, 6 could be excluded right away, herpes EHV 1 and EHV 4 could only be traced as antibodies, but the main finding was LIVE viruses of the EHV 2 and EHV 5 types. These could even be extracted from the samples in order to grow new living "cultures" of the virus in the lab.
- these objective findings at a renowned academic institution of impeccable reputation very clearly refutes the claims of MAST and Dr. Björnsdóttir that it is allegedly no virus, not serious etc. // Important to note: EHV 2 and EHV 5 can be treated, if medical treatment with established substances is permitted (which it is not at present ... Susanne and Björn have applied to both have licensed medication be made available - NO by MAST/Keldur - and also some new substance which would be provided on short notice by the University of Hannover to be tested and used - NO by MAST/Keldur.

- Other well-connected sources in the West of Iceland have confirmed to isibless that very recently (in June) another four horses have died (2 adults, 2 foals), and pathological findings of the exact same viruses have been made!
- prominent breeder Freyja Hilmarsdóttir (Votmúli), after being presented by isibless with such black-on-white facts from the University of Giessen: "All we want is for our horses to get healthy again. I have no idea why our authorities behave the way they do: either they are lying to us all the time, or they are simply very incompetent. Why would they prevent vets from using any means of important and effective treatment? All this is politics, and those ladies and gentlemen should be ashamed of themselves. Apparently, they have no idea what is really going on here. Unnecessarily, our horses have to suffer really badly!"
- *Observation by isibless*: Something nobody knows right now is why the horses all over Iceland have this immune deficiency at the moment. Whether it is the volcanic ash or something else, can only be speculated about at present.
- what can be proven, though, is that the disease is in fact serious and is viral, and that bacteria like streptococcus zooepidemicus can only add a secondary infection to an already weakened organism and produce additional symptoms like coughing or yellow/green secretions from the nostrils.
- *Observation by isibless*: every horse that leaves Iceland e.g. to represent this country at the World Championships has Cylexis and other medication available, why for the regular horses in Iceland one cannot even allow to begin therapy (both with the established medications as well as new forms of research provided by the University of Hannover ... and theoretically available on demand after a green light by Icelandic authorities), is hard to understand.
- Steinbjörnsson (who has taken time off work to join Susanne Braun in this effort): I hope that we will be allowed to start treating our horses soon. They need to become capable of efficiently building antibodies against these diseases. There is a way to help, and I can only ask and hope that our authorities will give us permission to do so!"
- *Observation by isibless*: any horse with just the slightest mouth injury may be disqualified from competitions, but with such lung and respiratory problems, they will be "fit to compete" (or be exported again in Mid-August)?
- potential follow-up illnesses and consequences for fertility, allergies, sick foals etc. have not yet fully been analyzed, should definitely be looked at, though, in order to be better prepared when something like that occurs (again).
- *Observation by isibless*: no idea why MAST and Keldur have such little interest in continued dialogue with these two vets. After being denied access to the medications they had asked for, now they have received in writing - late last week - an official order from the chief veterinarian in Iceland to stop any kind of research relating to this matter. They are now only allowed to treat acute illnesses but not to further examine and probe anything related to this current "hrossapest". That appears to be the last straw for the authorities to demonstrate their power over those who have questioned them and who have - objectively - proven them wrong.

- *Observations by isibless*: Why do the horses need to suffer from the vanity and political powerplay of those who have demonstrated over the course of the past few months that they have not shown the greatest far-sightedness and the greatest competence to deal with this issue properly? Susanne Braun and Björn Steinbjörnsson (who have done all the research on their own time and money, spending not a single krona of taxpayer money) have now told isibless that they will abide by the ruling of the Icelandic authorities and they will cease any examinations for the time being ... still holding out hope for a change of heart at MAST.
- Asked by isibless about why MAST is not letting the two vets work freely and why the Icelandic authorities are not permitting the effective treatment of sick horses, Sigríður Björnsdóttir has not responded.