

## HOT BRANDING OF HORSES AND PONIES

Under the Equine Identification Regulation 504/2008 all foals born after 1<sup>st</sup> July 2009 will have to have a microchip inserted as a means of identification. In addition all equidae sold or taken to slaughter must have a passport linked to its microchip. Alternative methods of identification can be used, but only if they give the same scientific guarantees as a microchip.

**The BVA supports the position of its equine division, BEVA, that hot branding does not offer the same scientific guarantees as a microchip and should not be used as an alternative to the insertion of a microchip.**

Hot branding is generally carried out without analgesia and is undoubtedly a painful process. The BVA believe that the continued use of hot branding as a means of identifying certain breeds is unacceptable and should be banned on welfare grounds.