



Indiana Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders Association



PLANE CONTAINING HORSE FEED AND VET SUPPLIES LANDS IN PUERTO RICO

LEXINGTON, Ky. – A Swift Air flight carrying nearly 20 tons of hay cubes and veterinary supplies departed from Miami at 4:30 a.m. today and landed in San Juan, Puerto Rico at approximately 7 a.m. The plane, funded by The Jockey Club and Thoroughbred Charities of America’s Horses First Fund, is the result of a week-long effort undertaken by numerous equine groups to get aid to the more than 800 Thoroughbreds at the Camarero Race Track and to begin assisting other horses on the island.

The American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) Foundation, Thoroughbred Charities of America (TCA), The Jockey Club, Brookledge’s Horse America, Caribbean Thoroughbred Aftercare, and the Texas Equine Veterinary Association (TEVA) worked closely with Ranch Aid, a FEMA appointed organization that assists with logistics and care for large animals during natural disasters. The Humane Society of the United States also assisted by facilitating the federal approval of the shipment.

“There were many, many challenges but we are thrilled to see feed and vet supplies finally reaching the horses in Puerto Rico,” said Erin Crady executive director of TCA. “This effort would not have been possible without the incredible team work and support of so many organizations and people working tirelessly to get this plane into Puerto Rico.”

Finding an available aircraft to carry the feed and supplies was a daunting challenge given that most cargo planes are being utilized for humanitarian efforts. Thoroughbred Charities of America board member Terry Finley reached out to friend Vincent Viola, the owner of St. Elias Stables and a shareholder of Swift Air, who immediately put TCA in contact with Swift Air to ship the much-needed equine supplies.

The veterinary supplies and medications in route to San Juan were donated in part by MWI Animal Health and purchased by TEVA and delivery assistance by south Florida veterinary practice, Teigland, Franklin, and Brokken. The hay cubes were donated in part by Cargill/Nutrena and purchased by the AAEP Foundation. Additionally, two satellite phones were purchased by the AAEP Foundation and delivery assistance provided by south Florida Purina Animal Nutrition representative Shiela Conde.

“This is truly a team effort on the part of the equine industry, there are so many others involved with various efforts,” said Keith Kleine, AAEP’s director of industry relations. “First and foremost, we must thank our thousands of donors since Hurricane Harvey first hit Texas. The generosity has been incredible but sadly, much more is needed to support the horses impacted by Hurricane Maria. There are thousands of horses and caretakers in both Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands that need support.”

Additionally, Ocala Breeders’ Sales and Florida breeder Kim Heath organized five shipping containers of supplies and feed. The containers were transported from Ocala to Jacksonville, Fla. last Friday where they will be loaded on a cargo ship slated to arrive in San Juan on Friday.

Further relief efforts are being coordinated to provide ongoing support to the nearly 1,500 Thoroughbreds and thousands of other horses on the island of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Options for transporting some horses back to the U.S. mainland are also being evaluated.

Donations in support of the nonprofit organizations contributing to this effort can be made here:

[American Association of Equine Practitioners Foundation](#)

[Caribbean Thoroughbred Aftercare](#)

[Thoroughbred Charities of America – Horses First Fund](#)