

February 22, 2012

## Important Information Regarding the Use of the Prohibited Substance GABA – Ingredient in Commercial Product “Carolina Gold”

From the USEF Communications Department

**Lexington, KY** - Tasked with protecting the welfare of equine athletes and ensuring the balance of competition, the USEF Equine Drugs and Medications Program consistently monitors new products and product claims. From time-to-time products appear on the equine supplement market making claims of their effects on the performance of horses in competition.

Recently, reports of the use of a product called "Carolina Gold" have been brought to the USEF Equine Drugs and Medications Program. One of the principal constituents of this product is gamma aminobutyric acid (GABA), an inhibitory neurotransmitter.

While initially not considered a forbidden substance, the use of GABA as a "calming supplement" does violate the spirit and intent of the Equine Drugs and Medications Rule. During recent research and administration trials involving "Carolina Gold," many adverse reactions were documented. The nature of these reactions has prompted immediate action from the USEF Equine Drugs and Medications Program.

Effective immediately, "Carolina Gold" or any other product containing GABA is considered a forbidden substance under USEF rules. Further, because there are no recognized medical uses for this substance, the use of a Medication Report Form to report its administration is not applicable.

The detection of GABA is being actively pursued by the USEF Equine Drugs and Medications Program and will be implemented without delay or notice. No further announcements will be forthcoming regarding the use of “Carolina Gold” or GABA. All positive findings will be forwarded to the USEF Hearing Committee. Trainers and veterinarians involved in the sale or use of this substance may be subject to fines and/or suspensions.