

New records rule impacts Floridians who own horses

By KAREN VOYLES

Sun staff writer

Nearly a quarter of a million Floridians own horses and on Wednesday they will be required to step up their recordkeeping.

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has issued a new records rule that requires a written bill of sale for horses and it must include, among other things:

■ Name, address and signa-

ture of the purchaser and the owner.

■ Name of the horse, its sire and dam if known, its breed and registry status if known, its age if known.

■ Sale date and purchase

price.

■ A statement by the buyer that any warranties should be in writing as part of the bill of sale.

■ Any liens on the horse being sold.

The rule also gives horse buyers the right to see any medical documents for the horse.

Agriculture officials said anyone who does not follow the rule could be prosecuted for deceptive and unfair trade practices.

The department has calculated Florida's horse industry includes more than 244,000 owners, 300,000 horses and has a \$6.5 billion economic impact on Florida's annual gross domestic product.