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Subject: FIRST CASE OF EEE REPORTED IN NEW JERSEY FOR 2004

News Release**FIRST CASE OF EEE REPORTED IN NEW JERSEY FOR 2004**

1-Year-Old Horse in Cumberland County was Euthanized on August 4 , 2004

NJDA Press Release for Immediate Release August 11, 2004. Contact Jeffrey Beach(609)292-8896

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(TRENTON) – New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Charles M. Kuperus announced today that the illness of a 1-year-old thoroughbred mare in Cumberland County has been attributed to infection with Equine Eastern Encephalitis (EEE). This is the first diagnosis of EEE, a mosquito-borne virus, in a horse in New Jersey this year.

The horse's owner reported that the horse became ill on August 3, and its condition steadily declined. The animal was humanely euthanized on August 4. Samples were sent to the New Jersey Diagnostic Laboratory, which confirmed EEE. In 2003 there were eight confirmed cases of EEE, two of them having concurrent West Nile Virus infections.

EEE is a rare but serious disease that causes an inflammation of the brain tissue. Young horses lacking the protection afforded by vaccination are particularly susceptible to infection. EEE has a significantly higher risk of death than West Nile infection.

"An effective equine vaccine for EEE has been available for many years," said Secretary Kuperus. "Horse owners should contact their veterinarians now if their horses are not already up-to-date on their vaccinations against EEE. It is important to note that the vaccine for West Nile virus does not protect horses against EEE, or vice versa."

West Nile Virus and EEE, like other viral diseases affecting horses' neurological systems, must be reported to the State Veterinarian at 609-292-3965 within 48 hours. This information is essential to ensure the initiation of mosquito control efforts to protect other horses and humans from the virus.

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