

Patricia D. Hastings

From: "Patricia D. Hastings" <hastings@AESOP.Rutgers.edu>
To: "MAINPAS" <mainpaspartners@AESOP.Rutgers.edu>; "NJinPAS Mosquito" <NJinPASmosquito@AESOP.Rutgers.edu>; "NJinPAS Advisory Committee" <NJinPASadvisory@AESOP.Rutgers.edu>
Cc: "Lynne Richmond" <lynne.richmond@ag.state.nj.us>
Sent: Friday, September 15, 2006 2:22 PM
Subject: First 2006 Cases of EEE and West Nile Virus in Horses Reported

September 14, 2006: News for immediate release from the NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE; PO Box 330 Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0330; <http://www.nj.gov/agriculture>. Contact: Lynne Richmond (609) 292-8896; Internet: lynne.richmond@ag.state.nj.us

FIRST CASES OF EEE AND WEST NILE VIRUS IN HORSES REPORTED
Two Horses Dead in Burlington and Middlesex Counties

(TRENTON) – New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Charles M. Kuperus today announced that the death of a 6-year-old mare in Burlington County has been attributed to Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and the death of a 14-year-old mare in Middlesex County was caused by West Nile virus. These are the first two deaths to occur from these equine illnesses this year.

Both horses were not vaccinated for the mosquito-borne infections they succumbed to. The Middlesex County horse became ill on September 6th and was euthanized on September 7. The Burlington County horse became ill on September 8th and was euthanized on September 9th.

Secretary Kuperus said even though we are seeing less and less cases every year, owners still need to be diligent in vaccinating their animals.

“We strongly recommend that horse owners take preventative steps to protect their animals from the potentially deadly diseases of West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis,” said Secretary Kuperus. “It is important to note, that the vaccine for West Nile virus does not protect horses against EEE and vice-versa, so both vaccines are necessary to keep the animals safe.”

There were no cases of West Nile virus in horses and four cases of EEE in 2005. That is compared with six cases each of West Nile virus and EEE in 2004. One horse had both diseases that year. In 2003, there were 150 cases of West Nile virus and eight cases of EEE.

West Nile virus is a viral disease that affects horses’ neurological systems. Horses contract the virus when infected mosquitoes bite them. The disease cannot be spread from horse to horse or from an infected horse to humans or domestic pets.

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) is a rare but serious disease that causes inflammation of the brain tissue and has a significantly higher risk of death than West Nile infection.

For more information about West Nile virus and EEE in horses, visit the New Jersey Department of Agriculture web site at www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/ah/diseases/equine.html.

Effective equine vaccines for West Nile virus and EEE have been available for several years. Horse owners should contact their veterinarians now if their horses are not already up-to-date on their vaccinations against both EEE and West Nile virus.

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.

####

Patricia D. Hastings
Northeast IPM Center NJ SNP Coordinator/RCRE NJ School IPM Outreach Coordinator
Assistant Pesticide Safety Education Program Coordinator
Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension
Department of Extension Specialists
Pest Management Office
New Jersey, the Garden State!
hastings@aesop.rutgers.edu; phone: 732-932-9802 (messages); 732-932-4271 (direct after 4pm)
PMO websites @ www.pestmanagement.rutgers.edu