

Patricia D. Hastings

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To: "NJinPAS Mosquito" <NJinPASmosquito@AESOP.RUTGERS.EDU>
Sent: Thursday, October 07, 2004 1:36 PM
Subject: West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis Update

Update on West Nile Virus & EEE activity in NJ Equine industry courtesy of Nicholas Polanin
 Agriculture & Resource Management Agent for Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension of Somerset County, and
 State Master Gardener Program Leader

New Jersey Department of Agriculture Memo

To: Large Animal Practitioners

From: Dr. Nancy Halpern

Date: October 4, 2004

Re: **West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis Update**

From June 15, 2004 to present (September 30, 2004), a total of 5 horses have been positive for West Nile virus (WNV). Two horses died, two were euthanized and the other remains alive. The two horses that died were pregnant mares 7 and 8 years of age. Of the two horses euthanized, one was a 10 month-old colt while the other was a 7 year-old gelding. The horse remaining alive, an 8 year-old gelding, and the euthanized gelding were the only animals that received at least one WNV vaccination. The geographic distribution of the equine cases include two horses from Burlington County and one horse from each of the following counties: Gloucester, Salem and Mercer. On a national level, there are a total of 759 equine cases within the United States with 483 being localized to the southwest (California, Nevada, and Arizona). Also to date, New Jersey has a total of 85 positive avian species from 15 counties, and 251 positive mosquito pools from all counties except Warren and Middlesex. At this time last year, 118 horses were positive for WNV and there was over 2000 cases reported nationally. Thus far, there have been six confirmed equine cases of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and one suspect EEE case. All horses died or were euthanized and one was simultaneously infected with WNV. Only two of the horses had a vaccination history, although veterinary administration could not be confirmed. The age distribution was from 10 months of age to >20 years of age; three of the infected horses were older than 20 years. Camden and Gloucester Counties had two cases of EEE while single cases were located in Atlantic and Burlington Counties. The one suspect case was located in Camden County and was classified "EEE suspect" because it was positive on serology but the brain could not be acquired for a definitive diagnosis. Last year at this time, 6 horses (located in Burlington, Atlantic, Camden, Gloucester, and Camden Counties) were diagnosed with EEE.

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture anticipates the arboviral season will continue into the middle of November. Veterinarians are encouraged to complete and forward to the NJDA the neurologic disease worksheet whenever samples from New Jersey equine are submitted for WNV or EEE testing. (The Division of Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory currently conducts EEE and WNV testing free-of-charge.) **Veterinarians are also encouraged to continue to educate their clients that EEE or WNV infected horses are dead-end hosts. In other words, EEE and WNV infected horses are not contagious and cannot spread the disease.**

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