



The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

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*Putting Science to Work for Society
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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Receives CDC Lyme Disease Grant for the Management of Ticks to Prevent Lyme Disease

New Haven, CT - The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) today announced that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has awarded a cooperative agreement (grant) for research to CAES on an integrated and individual tick management program to reduce the risk of Lyme disease. The lead investigator at CAES is Chief Entomologist Dr. Kirby C. Stafford III. The co-investigators from CAES are molecular scientist, Dr. Goudarz Molaei, and wildlife biologist, Dr. Scott C. Williams. Dr. Anthony DeNicola from White Buffalo, Inc. is another scientist who will be participating on the project. The project will provide \$300,000 each year for the three year project period from September 1, 2012 to August 31, 2015. Lyme disease continues to be the leading arthropod-associated human disease in Connecticut and the United States. There were 3,041 confirmed or probable cases of Lyme disease reported in Connecticut in 2011, which likely represents only 10% of the diagnosed cases.

“This grant will support critical field research on a very important public health problem in Connecticut and many other states” said Dr. Louis A. Magnarelli, Director of CAES. Dr. Stafford noted that “this funding will allow us to evaluate some the tick control strategies that we have been testing over the years in an integrated approach to reduce the population of the blacklegged tick (i.e., deer tick) that transmits the pathogens for three human diseases. Over 24% of the ticks from Redding that were tested last year were infected with the Lyme disease spirochetes.”

This study is being conducted in cooperation with the town of Redding, CT where various tick control measures will be evaluated singly or in combination on their ability to reduce the tick population in participating neighborhoods. Natalie Ketcham, the First Selectman of Redding, CT stated that “our

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community is pleased to be able to be part of this very important scientific study. Evaluating the effectiveness of tick control measures is a critical first step in the ultimate reduction in the incidence of tick-borne illnesses, which is a significant public health problem. We look forward to contributing in a positive way to a solution."

Information on the ticks, disease agents they transmit, personal protection measures, and tick management approaches can be found in the Tick Management Handbook at www.ct.gov/caes.

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