



The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

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*Putting Science to Work for Society
Protecting Agriculture, Public Health, and the Environment*

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Update: West Nile Virus Positive Mosquitoes Detected in 12 Connecticut Towns

New Haven, CT – The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) announced today that mosquitoes trapped in 12 towns have tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV) so far this season. The towns include: Branford, Glastonbury, Greenwich, North Branford, North Stonington, Orange, Plainfield, South Windsor, Stamford, Stratford, West Haven, and Westport.

"We continue to see increases in the number of mosquitoes carrying West Nile virus with expansion into several new locations throughout the state," said Dr. Philip Armstrong, Medical Entomologist at the CAES. "This is the critical time of the year when virus activity reaches its peak in the mosquito population."

"Historically, August and September are the months when the majority of human cases occur and represent the greatest risk for acquiring West Nile virus infection," said Dr. Theodore Andreadis, Director of CAES. "Now is the time to take precautions to prevent mosquito bites."

To reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes residents should:

- Minimize time spent outdoors between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Be sure door and window screens are tight-fitting and in good repair.
- Wear shoes, socks, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt when outdoors for long periods of time, or when mosquitoes are more active. Clothing should be light colored and made of tightly woven materials that keep mosquitoes away from the skin.
- Use mosquito netting when sleeping outdoors or in an unscreened structure and to protect small babies when outdoors.
- Consider the use of mosquito repellent, according to directions, when it is necessary to be outdoors.

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No human or horse cases have been reported with WNV-associated illnesses acquired in Connecticut this season. One hundred thirty one human cases of WNV illness, including three fatalities, have been diagnosed in Connecticut residents since 2000.

The State of Connecticut Mosquito Management Program is a collaborative effort involving the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection, the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Agriculture, and the University of Connecticut Department of Pathobiology and Veterinary Science. These agencies are responsible for monitoring the potential public health threat of mosquito-borne diseases.

The CAES maintains a network of 91 mosquito-trapping stations in 72 municipalities throughout the state. Mosquito traps are set Monday – Thursday nights at each site every ten days on a rotating basis. Mosquitoes are grouped (pooled) for testing according to species, collection site, and date. Positive findings are reported to local health departments and on the CAES website at <http://www.ct.gov/caes/mosquitotesting>.

For information on West Nile and eastern equine encephalitis viruses and how to prevent mosquito bites, visit the Connecticut Mosquito Management Program Web site at www.ct.gov/mosquito.

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