



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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West Nile Virus Rapidly Expanding Throughout Connecticut

New Haven, CT – The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) has now identified West Nile virus (WNV) infected mosquitoes in 20 Connecticut towns throughout the state. The towns include: Branford, Bridgeport, Darien, Farmington, Glastonbury, Greenwich, Guilford, Middlefield, New Canaan, New Haven, North Branford, North Stonington, Orange, Plainfield, South Windsor, Stamford, Stratford, West Hartford, West Haven, and Westport.

"We are seeing rapid build-up of West Nile virus within the mosquito population especially in Fairfield and New Haven counties with spread into new regions including Hartford County," said Dr. Philip Armstrong, Medical Entomologist at the CAES. "We are also detecting the virus more frequently in human-biting mosquitoes which substantially increases the risk of infection."

"The continued warm humid weather enhances mosquito biting activity and heightens the risk of acquiring West Nile virus infection," said Dr. Theodore Andreadis, Director of CAES. "We urge residents throughout the entire state to take simple measures to avoid mosquito bites such as using mosquito repellent and covering bare skin, especially at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active."

No human or horse cases have been reported with WNV-associated illnesses acquired in Connecticut this season. A total of 131 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

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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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