



The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **West Nile Virus Expanding Throughout Connecticut: Positive Mosquitoes Found in 17 Towns**

**New Haven, CT** – The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) has identified West Nile virus (WNV) infected mosquitoes in 17 Connecticut towns this season: Branford, Bridgeport, Darien, Fairfield, Greenwich, Hartford, Ledyard, Milford, New Canaan, New Haven, Norwalk, Stamford, Stratford, Wallingford, West Haven, Westport, and Woodstock. There are no reported human cases of WNV so far this season.

“We are seeing a sharp rise in the numbers of mosquitoes carrying West Nile virus, especially in coastal Fairfield and New Haven counties and in the metropolitan Hartford area,” said Dr. Philip Armstrong, Medical Entomologist at the CAES. “We anticipate further geographic spread and build-up of West Nile virus in mosquitoes, with increased risk of human infection, from now through September.”

“The recent heat waves and high humidity have provided favorable conditions for the mosquitoes that transmit West Nile virus,” said Dr. Jason White, Director of CAES. “We urge everyone to prevent mosquito bites by using insect repellent and covering bare skin, especially during dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.”

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

- Minimize time spent outdoors between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Consider the use of mosquito repellents containing an EPA-registered active ingredient, including DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-methane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone when it is necessary to be outdoors.
- 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 loose-fitting and made of tightly woven materials that keep mosquitoes away from the skin.

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- Be sure door and window screens are tight-fitting and in good repair.
- Use mosquito netting when sleeping outdoors or in an unscreened structure and to protect infants when outdoors.

No human or horse cases have been reported with WNV-associated illnesses acquired in Connecticut this season. One hundred seventy-three human cases of West Nile virus, including four fatalities, have been reported in Connecticut residents since 2000.

### **Connecticut Mosquito Management Program**

The response to mosquito transmitted diseases in Connecticut is a collaborative inter-agency effort involving the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES), the Department of Public Health (DPH), the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Pathobiology at the University of Connecticut (UCONN). These agencies are responsible for monitoring mosquito populations and the potential public health threat of mosquito-borne diseases.

The CAES maintains a network of 108 mosquito-trapping stations in 88 municipalities throughout the state. CAES begins mosquito trapping and testing in June and continues into October. Positive findings are reported to local health departments and on the CAES website at <https://portal.ct.gov/caes>.

For information on WNV and other mosquito-borne diseases, what can be done to prevent getting bitten by mosquitoes, the latest mosquito test results, and human infections, visit the Connecticut Mosquito Management Program web site at <https://portal.ct.gov/mosquito>.

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