



The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

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PRESS RELEASE

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Symposium on Vector-borne Diseases: Increasing Tick and Mosquito Activity, Associated Public Health Challenges, and Mitigation Strategies

New Haven, CT - The Center for Vector Biology & Zoonotic Diseases at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) is holding a one-day symposium on Vector (tick and mosquito)-borne Diseases (VBDs) on Tuesday, May 10, 2022, in New Haven, Connecticut. This symposium has invited state and local government agencies, including DEEP, DPH, and departments of health, representatives from pest and vector control agencies, and other interested groups to explore recent developments in VBDs, emerging tick and mosquito vectors of human and veterinary diseases, range expansion of invasive tick and mosquito vectors in Connecticut and the Northeast, current and anticipated challenges the state and the region are facing/will face with VBDs as a result of climate change and other anthropogenic factors, control approaches, and recommendations for preparedness and mitigation of the VBDs. The workshop will run from 8:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.

Vector-borne diseases (VBDs) are parasitic, viral, bacterial, and filarial human illnesses transmitted by mostly arthropod vectors, including ticks, mosquitoes, fleas, and several other groups, and account for more than 17% of all infectious diseases, causing more than 700,000 deaths each year worldwide. Linked, in part, to a warming climate, VBDs are increasingly becoming a major public health concern in the U.S., where a total of 642,602 human disease cases were reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) during 2004–2016. Persistently warming temperatures may not only lead to the continued geographic range expansion of some vectors but may also extend their active season, thereby altering host availability and abundance; interactions among vectors, pathogens, and hosts; and the prevalence of infection.

Continuous monitoring of the impacts of climate change in order to promptly respond to emerging vector-borne disease threats. Through three surveillance programs, CAES currently monitors: 1) vector populations for distribution, abundance, and range expansion of existing tick and mosquito species; 2) exotic/invasive tick and mosquito species and associated diseases; 3) dynamics of activity of existing pathogens transmitted by tick and mosquito vectors to determine the risk of human infection; and 4) conducts investigations on tick and mosquito biology, ecology, and their roles in pathogen transmission and to target vector control interventions more effectively.

As public health remains a core mission of the CAES, leading subject matter experts will discuss vector and vector-borne pathogen surveillance, invasive and emerging vectors of public and veterinary health concerns, climate impacts on vector-borne diseases, and advances and challenges in vector control in this symposium.

Detailed information about the CAES tick and mosquito surveillance programs, personal protection measures, tick and mosquito control measures, and tick- and mosquito associated diseases can be found at the following websites:

<https://portal.ct.gov/CAES/Tick-Office/Tick-Office/Information-on-Submitting-Ticks>

<https://portal.ct.gov/caes/mosquito-testing/introductory/state-of-connecticut-mosquito-trapping-and-arbovirus-testing-program>

<https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/mosquitoes/index.html>

<https://portal.ct.gov/CAES/Fact-Sheets/Tick-Summary/Summaries-of-Tick-Testing>

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/CAES/DOCUMENTS/Publications/Fact_Sheets/Entomology/Active-Tick-Surv-Factsheet-Cantoni-2021-final.pdf

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