



West Nile Virus Fact Sheet



Mosquito Control

- Minimize breeding sites by draining any unnecessary standing water and cleaning water containers like birdbaths and plant saucers at least weekly
- Schedule pasture irrigation to minimize standing water
- Keep swimming pools optimally chlorinated and drain water from covers
- Stock water tanks with fish that consume mosquito larvae (local mosquito control may provide assistance) or use mosquito "dunk" available at hardware stores
- Stable horses during active mosquito feeding times (dusk/dawn)
- Use approved mosquito repellants containing DEET



SUMMARY OF WHAT HORSEOWNERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WNV

- West Nile Virus is not a contagious disease. It is spread by mosquitoes that have fed on infected birds.
- A mosquito cannot bite an infected horse and spread the virus to another horse or person.
- Horses are not known to spread WNV to people. Horses are considered to be "dead-end" hosts for WNV because it appears that they do not develop a sufficient viremia to transmit the virus from contact. Clinical signs are usually not apparent until 7-10 days post infection and viremia. *Regardless, it is very important that veterinarians and other animal health workers take standard recommended precautions for all contagious equine viral encephalitic agents such as rabies and other viral encephalitis agents when dealing with horses suffering from undiagnosed neurological diseases. (ALWAYS THINK RABIES!)*
- Treatment consists of supportive measures, and there is no specific cure.
- West Nile Virus is not analogous to Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Exotic Newcastle Disease (END). Both FMD and END are very contagious and spread with ease and rapidity.
- There will be no quarantines nor regulatory movement restrictions placed on WNV positive horses.
- Control of WNV in horses involves working with one's veterinary practitioner to establish both effective mosquito control and vaccination programs.

If you find a dead bird: You can help by calling **877-WNV-BIRD**. Note the bird's location, type and condition. The bird should show no signs of decomposition or maggot infestation.

On-line resources:

CDFA: www.cdfa.ca.gov HS: www.westnile.ca.gov

CDC: www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/qa/wnv_horses.htm

USDA: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/issues/wnv/wnv.html>

UCD Center for Equine Health: www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ceh/

CDFA Animal Health Branch Offices

Headquarters: (916) 654-1447, Redding: (530) 225-2140,

Modesto: (209) 491-9350, Tulare: (559) 685-3500,

Ontario: (909) 947-4462

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California Department of Food and Agriculture

CDFA - Animal Health and Food Safety Services