

Ohio Oral Rabies Vaccination Program – August 2010

At-a-Glance

Background Rabies is a viral disease that affects animals and people and is still virtually 100 percent fatal. Raccoon-rabies variant (RRV) is of particular public health concern because it can infect so many domestic animals and people. Ohio's effort to keep RRV from spreading throughout Ohio began in 1997. A new vaccine that could be eaten by wild animals was used to create a barrier of immunized raccoons along Ohio's borders with Pennsylvania and West Virginia. This strategy was very successful and in subsequent years many other states including Pennsylvania and West Virginia also began programs. This multistate oral rabies vaccination (ORV) effort is coordinated by the United States Department of Agriculture's, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (USDA-APHIS). Other cooperators involved in the Ohio effort include the Ohio departments of Health and Natural Resources (ODNR), The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine, Dynamic Aviation and local health departments (LHDs).

Baiting Area ORV baits will be distributed in 14 northeast Ohio counties including Ashtabula, Columbiana, Geauga, Jefferson, Lake, Mahoning and Trumbull, and parts of Belmont, Carroll, Cuyahoga, Harrison, Monroe, Portage, and Summit. The immune barrier runs along Ohio's border with Pennsylvania and West Virginia from Lake Erie south to the Ohio River. The western edge is I-77 in Cuyahoga County

Start Date Baiting is slated to begin Aug. 24. Aerial baiting in rural areas should take 10 days, weather permitting. Vehicle and helicopter distribution of ORV baits in urban and suburban neighborhoods is expected to take about 30 days, from Aug. 26 through Sept. 24, but may be extended depending on weather conditions. The base of operations is Youngstown-Elser Metro Airport in North Lima, Ohio.

Bait Distribution Baits are delivered at a density of about 75 to 150 baits per square kilometer. Most of the baits will be delivered by specially equipped white Beechcraft King Air planes. They will fly over rural areas along north-south flight lines at an altitude of about 500 feet. An ODNR helicopter will also be distributing baits in targeted urban and suburban areas, parks and preserves. Ground teams, consisting of LHD personnel, will be delivering vaccine-laden baits in urban and suburban areas, mostly by vehicle. In all, about 772,868 vaccine-laden baits will be distributed via airplane, helicopter and vehicle, covering about 3,736.5 square miles in Ohio.

| Year | Raccoon-Rabies Variant Animal Cases |
|------|-------------------------------------|
| 1997 | 62 |
| 1998 | 26 |
| 1999 | 6 |
| 2000 | 0 |
| 2001 | 1 |
| 2002 | 1 |
| 2003 | 2 |
| 2004 | 46 |
| 2005 | 38 |
| 2006 | 10 |
| 2007 | 20 |
| 2008 | 9 |
| 2009 | 4 |
| 2010 | 3 (as of August 19, 2010) |

Program Partners Ohio departments of Health, and Natural Resources
USDA-APHIS, Wildlife Services Program
Local Health Departments
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

For more information, please visit the ODH or USDA-APHIS web sites at

<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhPrograms/dis/zoonoses/rabies/orv/orv1.aspx>
http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage/oral_rabies/rabies_vaccine_info.shtml