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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ODA CONFIRMS WEST NILE VIRUS INFECTION

Horse from Shelby County tests positive

REYNOLDSBURG, OH (Aug. 9, 2012) — The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) today confirmed a case of West Nile Virus in a horse from Shelby County. Samples were collected on August 1, 2012 and results were confirmed by the agency on August 6, 2012.

Mosquitoes can pick up the West Nile Virus from wild birds and may then transmit the infection to people and other animals. Studies show that cool, wet weather in early spring followed by very hot temperatures throughout the summer can result in increased mosquito activity.

Infection with West Nile Virus does not always lead to signs of illness in people or animals. In horses that become clinically ill, the virus infects the central nervous system and may cause symptoms of encephalitis. Clinical signs of encephalitis in horses may include a general loss of appetite, depression, weakness in limbs, and possible fever.

“Animal vaccination is a primary key to preventing the spread of West Nile virus among animals. I urge horse owners to consult their veterinarians about West Nile Virus vaccinations as well as vaccinations for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), another viral disease spread by mosquitoes,” said Dr. Tony Forshey, State Veterinarian.

“Ohioans can reduce the risk of West Nile virus by eliminating the places where mosquitoes breed, such as standing water that is present for four or more days” said Dr. Forshey.

The following precautions can lower mosquito activity and reduce the risk of becoming infected with West Nile Virus:

- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots, discarded tires, or any object on your property that could collect standing water.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers left outdoors.
- Have roof gutters cleaned every year, particularly if the leaves from nearby trees have a tendency to clog the drains.
- Turn over plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.
- Don't let water stagnate in birdbaths.
- Aerate ornamental pools or stock them with fish.



- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools and remove standing water from pool covers.
- When possible, reduce outdoor exposure at dawn and dusk, the times of day when the mosquitoes that transmit West Nile virus are most active, during the warmer months of the year;
- Consider wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants and socks when outdoors, particularly at dawn and dusk, or in areas known for having large numbers of mosquitoes;
- Use insect repellents according to the manufacturer's instructions. Effective repellents contain DEET. Consult a doctor if you have concerns about the use of repellent on young children, as repellent is not recommended for children under the age of two months.

More information is available from CDC at: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>

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