



Department of
Agriculture

John R. Kasich | Governor

David T. Daniels | Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ohio Agriculture Department Working to Identify Cause of Dog Illnesses

State is enlisting the help of Ohio veterinarians to identify and combat disease

REYNOLDSBURG – (Sept. 6) The Ohio Department of Agriculture is working with animal health experts to determine the cause and origin of a series of dog illnesses in the state. The department is also urging veterinarians in the state to contact the Division of Animal Health if they suspect any animals in their care are suffering from the same disease.

The department's Division of Animal Health has been taking reports of severe dog illnesses in several parts of the state for the past three weeks. Affected dogs have exhibited similar symptoms including vomiting, bloody diarrhea, weight loss and lethargy. Although there are several known causes of these symptoms in dogs, it is generally believed that there is an unknown contributor to the cases.

"While we continue to work diligently to identify what is making these dogs sick, we are asking Ohio's veterinarians to help by contacting our laboratory for consultation if they suspect they are treating a related case," said State Veterinarian Dr. Tony Forshey. Veterinarians can also help by sharing information on what pet owners should look for and how they can protect their dogs.

Owners of dogs with similar symptoms should contact their veterinarian immediately. The department has also recommended concerned dog owners take standard precautions used to reduce the spread of viral infections, including monitoring the animal closely for signs of illness and refraining from co-mingling them with other dogs.

"The most important thing dog owners can do is call their veterinarian if they have concerns about the health of their pets. Your veterinarian is the best person to help determine if your animal is ill and what steps should be taken to help them recover," said Dr. Forshey.

Canine Circovirus

As part of its investigation, the department also announced the presence of canine circovirus in a fecal sample taken from an ill dog in the state. This is the first laboratory detection of canine circovirus in Ohio. Further work is being done to verify the significance of this finding.

"The laboratory confirmation is important because the virus is newly isolated, however we are not prepared at this time to confirm that canine circovirus is the cause of the dog illnesses," said State Veterinarian Dr. Tony Forshey. "Because the symptoms being exhibited can also be linked to other known illnesses, additional analysis and information is needed to determine if this virus alone or in co-infection contributes to illness and death in dogs."

– Continued –



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Canine circovirus is newly isolated and there is very little information available about the virus, where it came from and how it spreads. The limited research available shows that canine circovirus can cause vasculitis and hemorrhaging in infected dogs.

The Ohio Department of Agriculture will continue to investigate the situation and urge veterinarians who believe they are treating dogs with similar symptoms to consult the laboratory by calling (614) 728-6220

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