

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CASE OF EASTERN EQUINE ENCEPHALITIS CONFIRMED IN PALM BEACH COUNTY HORSE

PALM BEACH COUNTY, FL –The Florida Department of Health is following an increase in Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus activity in the state. Palm Beach County now has a confirmed case of Eastern Equine Encephalitis of a horse from the Jupiter area that had to be euthanized on June 23rd. So far, sentinel chickens in Palm Beach County have not tested positive for the EEE virus, but as a precaution, our sentinel chickens will now be tested weekly instead of bi-weekly. Also Palm Beach County Mosquito Control has begun aerial spraying in the north county in an effort to eradicate rising mosquito populations.

This is the 19th horse to be reported with EEE virus infection with onset this year. Sentinel chickens from Brevard, Citrus, Flagler, Leon, Martin, Orange, Putnam, Sarasota, St. Johns, and Volusia counties have also tested positive for antibodies to EEEV. **The Department of Agriculture is advising horse owners to have their animal's vaccinations up to date.**

Eastern equine encephalitis is not passed from an infected horse to humans. The Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus is an arbovirus spread by infected mosquitoes, which can sometimes transmit the infection to horses, other animals, and, in rare cases, people. There is no West Nile Virus or EEE vaccine available for humans, therefore it is extremely important for the public to take preventive measures to reduce the risk of mosquito bites:

- Use an insect repellent when outdoors
- Wear light comfortable clothes with long sleeves, long pants and socks at night
- Drain standing water from around the house including pots, boat covers, containers, gutters.
- Repair any screens that may have holes.

For more information log on to <http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/ai/main/eee.shtml>

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