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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oral Rabies Vaccine Field Evaluation in New York, August 12 – 17, 2024

Depending on the weather, aerial and hand distribution of oral rabies vaccine baits will take place in Western New York from August 12- August 17, 2024. Areas of New York State are once again taking part in a nationally coordinated effort to halt the spread of raccoon rabies in 16 states. Ongoing field evaluation of oral rabies vaccine (ORV) called ONRAB will occur in Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Clinton, Erie, Essex, Genesee, Jefferson, Lewis, Niagara, Oneida, Onondaga, Orleans, Oswego, St. Lawrence, and Wyoming counties. These sites were selected in part because of ongoing collaborations with Quebec and Ontario, Canada in the fight against rabies to protect human and animal health and reduce significant cost associated with living with rabies across broad geographic areas.

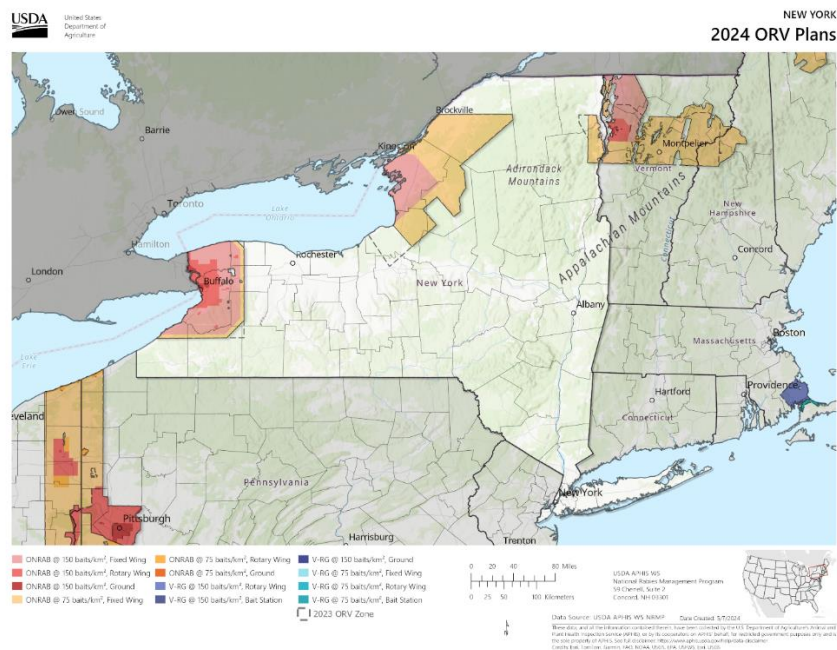
“Rabies is a serious public health concern because if left untreated it is generally fatal. Costs associated with detection, prevention and control of rabies conservatively exceed \$500 million annually. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, greater than 90 percent of reported rabies cases in the United States are in wildlife,” stated Paul Pettit, Public Health Director of the Genesee and Orleans County Health Departments (GO Health). The efforts are focused on controlling raccoon rabies, which continues to account for most of the reported wildlife rabies cases in the United States. Raccoon rabies occurs in all states east of the established ORV zone that extends from Maine to northeastern Ohio to central Alabama. Continued access to oral vaccine and bait options that are effective in all target wildlife species remains critical to long-term success.

The ONRAB bait consists of a polyvinyl chloride (PVC) blister pack, containing the vaccine.

- To make the baits attractive, the blister packs are coated with a sweet attractant that includes vegetable-based fats, wax, icing sugar, vegetable oil, artificial marshmallow flavor, and dark-green food-grade dye.

- While humans and pets cannot contract rabies from the bait, those who come across the bait directly should leave it undisturbed. Most bait packets are consumed within four days, and nearly all of the bait will be gone within a week.
- Please do not attempt to remove a bait from your dog's mouth. The bait will not harm the dog and could lead to vaccine exposure.
- Should contact with baits occur, immediately rinse the contact area with warm water and soap and contact your local health department at 585-344-2580 ext. 5555 for Genesee County or 585-589-3278 for Orleans County.

If you have additional questions related to the field evaluation in New York, please contact the Wildlife Services office in Rensselaer, NY at (518) 477- 4837.



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