



USDA Begins 2021 Oral Rabies Vaccine Efforts in Eastern United States

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WASHINGTON, August 2, 2021— The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will begin its annual distribution of RABORAL V-RG®, an oral rabies vaccine (ORV) bait, in select areas in the eastern United States to prevent the spread of raccoon rabies into America's heartland.

APHIS' Wildlife Services (WS) and its cooperators will begin distributing ORV baits on or about August 2 across rural areas by airplane and in suburban or urban areas by helicopter, vehicle and bait station. ORV baits are coated with a fishmeal attractant and are packaged in two-inch plastic sachets or one-inch square cubes. To see photos of the vaccination baits, please visit www.flickr.com/photos/usdagov/sets/72157623983143606/.

WS and cooperators will distribute ORV baits in select areas and time periods as follows:

In Northeast to Mid-Atlantic States during August:

- The Houlton project will cover parts of northern Maine and distribute approximately 385,000 ORV baits by airplane and vehicle.
- The Allegheny project will cover the Greater Pittsburgh region of western Pennsylvania and distribute approximately 194,000 ORV baits by helicopter and vehicle.
- The Upshur project will cover parts of western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and a small area in southwestern Virginia, distributing approximately 582,000 ORV baits by airplane and vehicle.

In Massachusetts during late September and early October:

- The Cape Cod project will cover parts of peninsular Massachusetts and distribute more than 65,000 ORV baits by helicopter, bait station and vehicle.

In Southern states, during October:

- The Abingdon project will cover parts of North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia and distribute more than 801,000 ORV baits by airplane, helicopter, and vehicle.
- The Dalton project will cover parts of Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee, distributing approximately 1,073,000 ORV baits by airplane and helicopter.
- The Guntersville project will cover parts of Alabama (including the Greater Birmingham area) and distribute approximately 875,000 baits by airplane, helicopter, and vehicle.

The RABORAL V-RG® vaccine has been deemed safe in more than 60 different species of animals, including domestic dogs and cats. Humans and pets cannot get rabies from contact with the baits but should leave them undisturbed if they are encountered. Dogs that consume large numbers of baits may experience an upset stomach, but there are no long-term health risks. If adults or children come in contact with baits, immediately rinse the contact area with warm water

and soap.

Rabies is a serious public health concern. While rabies is almost always fatal once symptoms appear, it also is 100% preventable. Human exposures can be successfully remedied if medical attention is sought immediately following exposure. Costs associated with rabies detection, prevention and control may exceed \$500 million annually in the United States. According to the CDC, about 90 percent of reported rabies cases in the U.S. are in wildlife.

For additional information concerning rabies or the ORV program, please visit <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/wildlifedamage/programs/nrmp> or contact WS toll free at 1-866-4-USDA-WS (1-866-487-3297).

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