



**Animal and Plant  
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# News Release

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## **USDA Begins 2013 Oral Rabies Vaccine Efforts in Eastern United States (Corrections 10/21/13)**

WASHINGTON, Aug. 9, 2013— To prevent the further spread of wildlife rabies, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will begin its 2013 distribution of oral rabies vaccine baits (Raboral V-RG®) in select areas along the East Coast. This effort seeks to prevent the spread of raccoon rabies.

With their cooperators, APHIS' Wildlife Services (WS) program will begin distributing the oral rabies vaccination baits by aircraft and by hand beginning on or about Aug. 12. The baits will be distributed in the following select areas and time periods.

In Northeast to Mid-Atlantic States, between August 12 and mid-September:

- The Plattsburgh, NY project will cover parts of New York, Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont and distribute 372,900 baits by fixed-wing aircraft and 4,680 by hand;
- The Batavia, NY project will cover parts of New York and distribute 31,800 baits by fixed wing aircraft;
- The Allegheny, PA project will cover parts of Pennsylvania and distribute 303,120 baits by hand;
- The North Lima, OH project will cover parts of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia and distribute 652,500 baits by fixed and rotary-wing aircraft and 73,800 by hand; and,
- The Clarksburg, WV project will cover parts of West Virginia and Ohio and distribute 936,000 baits by fixed-wing aircraft and 9,720 by hand.

In southern states, between October 22 and November 1:

- The Prattville, AL project will cover parts of Alabama and distribute 81,000 baits by rotary-wing aircraft;
- The Greeneville, TN project will cover parts of Tennessee, North Carolina and Virginia and distribute 760,200 baits by fixed and rotary-wing aircraft and 26,640 by hand; and,
- The Dalton, GA project will cover parts of Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee and distribute 603,000 baits by fixed-wing aircraft and 23,400 by hand.

In Massachusetts October 28 – November 26:

- The Cape Cod, MA project will cover parts of Massachusetts and distribute 29,820 baits by hand.

The National Rabies Management Program was established in recognition of the changing scope of rabies in which the primary human risk is now due to exposure from wildlife rather than domestic pets. The goal of the program is to prevent the further spread of wildlife rabies and eventually eliminate rabies in land-dwelling wildlife in the United States through an integrated program that includes vaccinating wildlife against the disease.

Oral rabies vaccination baits are coated with a fishmeal attractant and may be packaged in one-inch square cubes or two-inch plastic sachets. For photos of the vaccination baits, please visit [www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife\\_damage/oral\\_rabies/photo\\_gallery.shtml](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage/oral_rabies/photo_gallery.shtml).

The Raboral V-RG® vaccine has been shown to be 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 are asked to leave them undisturbed should they encounter them. Dogs that consume large numbers of baits may experience an upset stomach, but there are no long-term health risks. If contact with baits occurs, immediately rinse the contact area with warm water and soap.

Rabies is caused by a virus that infects the central nervous system in mammals. Signs suggestive of rabies include unusual, aggressive or alternatively calm and “friendly” behavior, an inability to eat or drink, balance problems, circling, seizures, coma and finally death. While rabies is almost always fatal, human exposures can be successfully treated, if treatment is sought immediately following exposure.

Since 1997, WS National Rabies Management Program has been working cooperatively with local, state and federal governments, universities and other partners to address this public health problem by distributing oral rabies vaccination baits in targeted areas. This cooperative program targets the raccoon variant in the eastern United States, and unique variants of rabies in coyotes and foxes in Texas. During 2013, WS will also conduct field trials to test the safety and effectiveness of an alternate oral rabies vaccine, ONRAB. WS is testing ONRAB to assess whether rabies management goals can be more effectively addressed by integrating this vaccine into control efforts.

For additional information concerning the raccoon oral rabies vaccine program, please visit [www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife\\_damage/oral\\_rabies/index.shtml](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage/oral_rabies/index.shtml) or contact WS toll free at 1-866-4-USDA-WS (1-866-487-3297).

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