

Breadcrumb

1. [Home](#)
2. [Print](#)
3. [Pdf](#)
4. [Node](#)
5. [Entity Print](#)

USDA Conducts 2025 Oral Rabies Vaccination Efforts Targeting Wildlife in Eastern United States

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WASHINGTON, August 12, 2025—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.

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 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 90 percent of reported rabies cases in the United States are in wildlife.

APHIS and its cooperators will begin distributing ORV baits on or about Aug. 13, 2025, 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.

The RABORAL V-RG® vaccine is safe for many 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 many baits may experience a temporary upset stomach, but there are no long-term health risks. If people come in contact with baits, they should immediately wash the contact area with warm water and soap.

ORV baits will be distributed during the following time periods and based out of airports in the cities listed below:

In Northeast to Mid-Atlantic states during August:

- The Houlton, Maine, project will cover parts of northern Maine and distribute approximately 713,000 ORV baits by airplane and vehicle.
- The Brockport, N.Y., project will include areas in western New York and distribute approximately 100,000 ORV baits by airplane. In addition to RABORAL V-RG®, APHIS will distribute another ORV bait, ONRAB, in select areas of New York as part of an ongoing field assessment.
- The North Lima, Ohio, project will involve distribution of approximately 729,000 ORV baits in parts of western Pennsylvania. Field assessment of ONRAB will also occur in western Pennsylvania at the same time.

- The Buckhannon, W.Va., project will include portions of western Pennsylvania and West Virginia, distributing approximately 364,000 ORV baits by airplane and vehicle. ONRAB field assessment also will take place in select areas of West Virginia.

In Massachusetts from mid-September through mid-October:

- The Cape Cod, Mass., project will cover parts of peninsular and mainland Massachusetts and distribute more than 74,000 ORV baits by helicopter, bait station, and vehicle.

In Southern states during October:

- The Abingdon, Va., project will cover parts of North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and a small portion of southern West Virginia, distributing more than 634,000 ORV baits by airplane, helicopter, and vehicle.
- The Andrews, N.C., project will include areas in western North Carolina and north Georgia and will distribute 410,000 ORV baits by airplane, helicopter and vehicle.
- The Dalton, Ga., project will cover areas in Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, distributing approximately 690,000 ORV baits by airplane and helicopter.
- The Gadsden, Ala., project will cover parts of northeast and central Alabama (including the Greater Birmingham area) and distribute approximately 718,000 baits by airplane, helicopter, and vehicle.

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