Weekly Summary

Comments:

Humans:

This week, California reported its first two human cases of WNV in 2005. A 47-year-old Tulare County man experienced fever and headache in early June. He was never hospitalized and is currently recovering. A Riverside County youth was the second individual reported infected with WNV. The youth, who experienced an onset of symptoms in mid-June, was hospitalized but is currently recovering at home.

Horses:

No additional horse cases were reported this week from the California Department of Food & Agriculture. The year-to-date total stands at three positive for WNV.

Dead Birds:

This week the hotline received 3,030 dead bird reports, for a YTD total of 26,749 reports. 108 out of 390 (27.7%) dead birds collected from 49 counties tested positive for WNV this week.

- Fifty-seven out of 302 (18.9%) dead birds tested positive via RT-PCR.
- Three out of four (75%) corvids tested positive via VecTest.
- Thirteen out of 13 (100 %) corvids tested positive via RAMP.
- Thirty-five out of 71 (49.3%) dead birds tested positive via immunohistochemistry.

The WNV positive dead birds were collected from the following counties: Butte, Calaveras, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Merced, Orange, Placer, Riverside, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Stanislaus, Tulare, Tuolumne, Ventura, and Yolo. This is the first indication of WNV activity in Butte, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Ventura counties in 2005.

The following bird species tested positive for WNV: American crow (67); American robin (4); canary (2); European starling (1); house finch (1); house sparrow (1); northern mockingbird (2); western scrub-jay (27); yellow-billed magpie (3). See “WNV Positive Dead Birds” table for details.

Since January 1, 2005, 257 of 3,553 (7.2%) dead birds have tested positive for WNV.

Mosquito Pools:

CVEC reported 45 positive mosquito pools from the following counties: Los Angeles (30), Kern (3), Orange (2), Riverside (4), Santa Barbara (1), Sutter (4), and Tulare (1). The positive pools from Santa Barbara and Tulare counties are the first indication of WNV in 2005. The YTD total for the State is 86. CVEC also reported 1 positive WEE pool in Riverside. The YTD total for the State is 17.

Sentinel Chickens:

VRDL reported that the previous flavivirus positive chicken (Bulletin # 18) from Lake Elsinore (Riverside County) tested positive for WNV. This brings the year-to-date total to four WNV seroconversions. Furthermore, VRDL reported that 23 chickens from four different flocks in Imperial County have seroconverted to western equine encephalomyelitis (WEE). This is the first reporting of WEE seroconversions in 2005.

Website Information:

California Arbovirus Surveillance Bulletin # 20
Week 26    Friday, July 1, 2005

TEST SUMMARIES

Humans and Horses

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Dead Birds

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Sentinel Chickens and Mosquito Pools

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*Total has been adjusted to include local agency submission

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### California Arbovirus Surveillance Bulletin # 20

**Week 26**  
**Friday, July 1, 2005**

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### National Comments:

As of June 28, 2005, West Nile virus (WNV) activity has been detected in the following 23 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. In addition to California, human WNV cases have also been reported in Kansas (1), Missouri (1), South Dakota (4), and Texas (1).
TEST PROTOCOLS

Dead Birds:

All bird species, except chickens, doves, and pigeons, from all zip codes are currently being accepted for testing unless otherwise requested by a local agency. Positive Vec-Tests from oral swabs from crows are no longer confirmed. Other bird species are tested by singleplex RT-PCR and confirmed with a second primer set. Dead birds are necropsied at the California Animal Health and Food Safety (CAHFS) Laboratories and kidney tissue from the dead birds are forward to the UC Davis Center for Vectorborne Diseases (CVEC) for WNV using the PCR Taqman assay. Organ pools from PCR positive carcasses are tested using cell culture for virus isolation. The WNV Dead Bird Surveillance Coordinator, Ryan Carney, can be reached directly at (510) 412-6254.

Sentinel Chickens:

Dried blood spot specimens from sentinel chickens submitted each week to the DHS Viral and Rickettsial Disease Laboratory (VRDL) are tested for the presence of antibodies to West Nile virus (WNV), western equine encephalomyelitis (WEE), and St. Louis encephalitis (SLE) viruses by EIA and IFA. The VRDL performs additional testing, including plaque reduction neutralization (PRNT), on specimens from sentinel chickens from geographic areas where WNV is detected for the first time. The VRDL also forwards selected serum to CVEC for additional testing for WNV, WEE, and SLE antibodies as needed.

Mosquito Pools:

All mosquito pools are screened for WEE, SLE, and WNV viral RNA using a Taqman multiplex RT-PCR. CVEC will cease confirmation testing on PCR-positive pools of Cx. tarsalis and Cx. quinquefasciatus but will continue to confirm multiplex PCR-positive results for other mosquito species using singleplex RT-PCR.

Prepared by the Vector-Borne Disease Section (Infectious Diseases Branch) and the Viral and Rickettsial Disease Laboratory Branch, Division of Communicable Disease Control, California Department of Health Services, 850 Marina Bay Parkway, Richmond, CA 94804. Questions concerning this bulletin should be addressed to Al Hom by phone (510) 412-6252, FAX (510) 412-6263, or email [ahom@dhs.ca.gov].