

Ohio Department of Health
Appalachian Ridge Oral Rabies Vaccination Program – August 2008
At-a-Glance

Background Rabies is a viral disease that affects animals and people and is still virtually 100 percent fatal. Raccoon-rabies variant (RRV) is of particular public health concern because it can infect domestic animals and people. Ohio's effort to keep RRV from spreading throughout Ohio began in 1997. A new vaccine that could be eaten by wild animals was used to create a barrier of immunized raccoons along Ohio's borders with Pennsylvania and West Virginia. This strategy was very successful and in subsequent years many other states including Pennsylvania and West Virginia also began programs. This multistate effort, coordinated by the United States Department of Agriculture's, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services, is called the Appalachian Ridge Oral Rabies Vaccination Program. Other cooperators involved in the Ohio effort include the Ohio departments of Natural Resources (ODNR) and Agriculture, The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine, Dynamic Aviation and local health departments (LHDs).

In July 2004, RRV-infected raccoons were discovered west of the immune barrier in Lake, Geauga and Cuyahoga counties. Aggressive surveillance and testing of raccoons to define the extent of the outbreak was initiated. Within three weeks, an emergency rabies vaccine baiting was conducted to halt further spread. For continued control and elimination of RRV, vaccine-laden baits are being distributed in the spring and fall in this newly infected area.

Baiting Area ORV baits will be distributed in 16 northeast Ohio counties including Ashtabula, Columbiana, Geauga, Jefferson, Lake, Mahoning and Trumbull, and parts of Belmont, Carroll, Cuyahoga, Harrison, Monroe, Noble, Portage, Summit and Washington. The immune barrier runs along Ohio's border with Pennsylvania and West Virginia; from Lake Erie south to the Ohio River. The western edge is I-77 in Cuyahoga County

Start Date Baiting is slated to begin Aug. 29. Aerial baiting in rural areas should take 10 days, weather permitting. Vehicle and ground distribution of ORV baits in urban and suburban neighborhoods is expected to take about 32 days, from Sept. 2 through Oct. 3, but may be depending on weather conditions. The base of operations is Youngstown-Elser Metro Airport in North Lima, Ohio.

Bait Distribution Baits are delivered at a density of about 75 baits per km² or about one bait per 3.3 acres. Most of the baits will be delivered by specially equipped white Beechcraft King Air planes. They will fly over rural areas along north-south flight lines that are about 0.5 miles apart at an altitude of about 500 feet. An ODNR helicopter will also be distributing baits in targeted urban and suburban areas such as parks and preserves. Ground teams, consisting of LHD personnel, will be delivering vaccine-laden baits in urban and suburban areas, mostly by vehicle. In all, about 977,525 vaccine-laden baits will be distributed via airplane, helicopter and vehicle, covering about 3,871 square miles in Ohio.

Year	Raccoon-Rabies Variant Animal Cases
1997	62
1998	26
1999	6
2000	0
2001	1
2002	1
2003	2
2004	46
2005	38
2006	10
2007	20
2008	5 (as of August 21, 2008)

Program Partners Ohio departments of Health, Natural Resources, and Agriculture
 USDA-APHIS, Wildlife Services Program
 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

For more information, please visit the ODH Web site at:
<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhPrograms/idc/zoodis/rabies/orv/orv1.aspx>