

Rabies Cautions Still In Effect

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Last year there was 361 cases of rabies reported. "And that is only reported," Vore said. "There are probably many that go unreported."

Of that number of reported cases, there were 208 raccoons, 75 skunks, 32 felines, 19 fox, one otter, one bobcat, 13 cows, two horses, two goats, two ground-hogs, and six bats. Better than 3/4 of these cases were in the southeast portion of the state. York and Lancaster counties were highest with 11 raccoon cases in each. York also had five foxes, three skunks, three cats, and one cow. Lancaster had two foxes, 11-raccoons, three cats, four skunks, and two cows.

In 1993, there were 78 rabies cases reported in the state from January through March. Again, the majority are centered in the southeast portion of the state, with raccoons being the main carrier.

"When you see a nocturnal animal in your backyard in the daytime, be suspicious," Vore said.

He says that, almost without exception, the setting where a rabid animal is discovered involves a property with a mountain behind sloping down to a stream.

One of the first symptoms of rabies is a swollen throat. As the throat swells, the animal cannot swallow but becomes very thirsty and goes in search of water.

The progression of rabies from its onset until death can be anywhere from 72 hours to a week. "It depends on the size of the animal and where it is bitten," said Vore.

If, for instance, a cow is bitten on the ankle, it would take a number of days for the virus to be carried by the bloodstream to the brain. If a dog is bitten on the neck, it would take only a day or two.

Rabies infection occurs when the rabies virus enters the nerve endings beneath the skin. Typically, this is through a bite from an

infected animal; however, infection can occur if the saliva of a rabid animal comes in contact with an open wound or a mucus membrane, such as in the eyes, nose, or mouth.

Rabies cases should first be reported to the Department of Agriculture. Vore said, "We want only the head of the animal for examination." It normally takes three to four days before they find the results.

The Department of Agriculture advises farmers to have all animals vaccinated, especially if farmers live in a high risk rabies area.

It is the only weapon that presently exists to combat the spread. In Pennsylvania, all dogs and house cats must be vaccinated.

"This idea," said Vore, "originated primarily to protect humans, pets, and livestock, is paying off. However, the current epidemic of 'raccoon rabies' probably will be around for another couple of years."

Like any other disease, the rabid raccoons will eventually kill themselves off. Meanwhile, safeguards must be taken to protect domestic and farm animals.

"Any warm-blooded animal can carry rabies," said Vore, "even birds. When you see any animal acting strangely, be suspicious."

Vore also cautioned, "If you do shoot an animal you believe may be carrying rabies, wash down with lye or strong soap. If you remove the head, wear rubber gloves, a face mask, gloves — make certain the eyes are protected. The eyes are really an open wound and must be protected in order to keep the virus from entering the body."

Vore also said, "When livestock are in question, the Bureau of Animal Industry will send a representative to the farm. If the investigator feels that there is reason to suspect that livestock has been exposed, a quarantine will be imposed on those animals. Permits will be issued to move ani-

mals that have not exhibited signs of rabies."

Should a human have reason to believe he or she has been exposed to rabies, the new Wistar Institute's vaccine is a vast improvement over the original rabies vaccine developed a century ago by Louis Pasteur.

This current treatment requires a series of four to six relatively painless injections in the arm, compared to Pasteur's method of 14 to 21 painful abdominal injections.

Pre-exposure vaccines are offered to persons at risk such as veterinarians, animal handlers, and others whose work involves contact with potentially rabid animals.

Bruce Luse, district supervisor of the Bureau of Dog Laws, said that dog law officers do periodically check households with pets to make certain vaccinations are being given. "However, we cannot possibly get to all of them," he said.

The Bureau has an indemnity plan for farmers who may lose income—producing livestock from infection by wild animals. "However, if the farmer has pets which have no proof of vaccination, the indemnity will not be granted," he said. If a farmer does not have dogs or house cats, the indemnity will still be made.

It is possible to carry insurance for livestock infected with rabies. If the farmer has insurance, the indemnity is void.

Luse says research is constantly being done to further decrease the spread of rabies. "There is an oral vaccine, much like the sabin vaccine against polio," Luse said. "Experiments have been done where the vaccine has been injected into food left for the wildlife. Then, officers would have to spend night after night trapping raccoons and extracting a tooth to

see if they had been properly inoculated. As you can well imagine, the logistics of this are preposterous. This type of prevention would probably take 20 to 30 years to be effective."

But, until something more

effective occurs, the Department of Agriculture continues to advise farmers to vaccinate and gives a warning to residents, especially rural residents, to be on the lookout for wild animals exhibiting unusual behavior.

Soybean Special Combines Planter, Drill Advantages

RACINE, Wis. — J I Case unveiled its new 5400 Soybean Special, an implement that will provide many of the advantages of a planter for a price that's competitive with grain drills.

According to Kurt Schenck, Case product manager—implements, the 5400 prepares the ground for seed much like Case International planters do, but uses a grain-drill feed cup metering system.

"We developed this unit partly in response to customer demands for accommodating narrower rows for interplanting," said Schenck. The Soybean Special accommodates 15-inch row spacing.

Two 15-foot configurations with staggered row units will be available — one 10-row and one 11-row, with 15-inch row spacing. Two 20-foot configurations with staggered row units will also be available — one 14- and one 15-row, with 15-inch row spacing. The 11- and 15-row units solid seed 15-inch rows and have no skip-rows. The 10- and 14-row units also seed 15-inch rows but have two 26-inch skip-rows to accommodate later cultivation or chemical application.

"Another consideration in the development of the 5400 was the need for equipment that can

handle high-residue conditions," Schenck said. "The unique staggered arrangement of the row units provides more clearance for surface residue to pass through the unit, which reduces plugging in heavy crop mat. For the farmer, this means no extra coulters to install for planting in reduced- or no-till conditions."

Schenck pointed out that the Soybean Special features the same superior row-unit technology as Case International Early Riser® planters, including staggered double-disk openers, front pull equalizing depth gauge wheels, and a special furrow firming point that provides a well-defined V furrow bottom. This combination provides more uniform depth control and better seed placement, especially in rough ground.

"The end result with the Early Riser system is that you get excellent seed-to-soil contact for optimum germination," he said.

He noted that the Soybean Special has angled metal feed cups for metering. "These are precision molded of oxide-coated, oil impregnated, sintered steel and won't warp or wear like the plastic cups found on competing equipment," he said.

To accommodate high-density seeding, the 5400 also features a larger seed hopper than planters.



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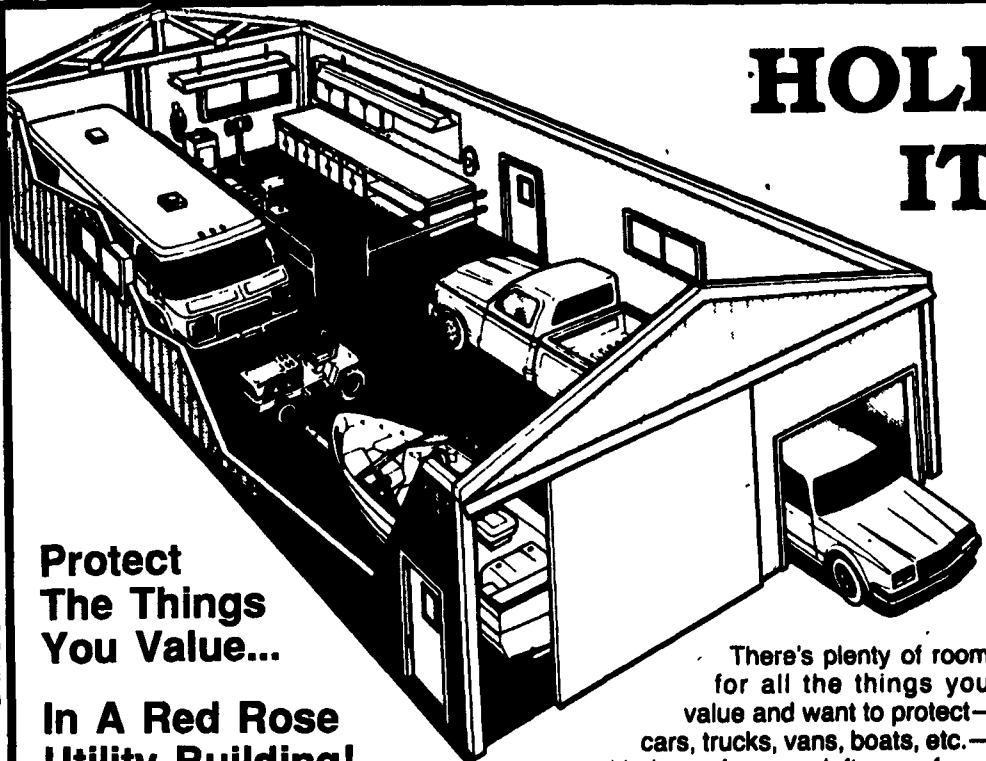
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