

Watch For Lyme Disease

HUNTINGDON (Huntingdon Co.) — As the threat of Lyme disease spreads throughout the Northeast, Penn State researchers are seeking answers that could help Pennsylvanians avoid the sometimes debilitating disease.

Entomologists in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences are in the fourth year of a study to map the distribution of Lyme disease and the disease-carrying deer tick in Pennsylvania. The project's goals are to identify high-risk areas and educate the public about how the disease can be prevented.

"Reported Lyme disease cases have increased in recent years," said extension entomologist Steven Jacobs, who leads the study. "But your chances of getting the disease are very low if you know how to manage the risk."

Jacobs says the public can be a major help in the research by taking any tick found, dead or alive, to the nearest county office of Penn State Cooperative Extension. The tick will be sent to Penn State's University Park Campus, where it will be identified.

"If you find a tick, try to keep it alive," said Jacobs. "Put the tick and a few blades of green grass in a small, green container, such as a pill bottle. If it's already dead, put it in a small container with alcohol. Be sure to note exactly where and when the tick was found. After it's identified, you'll be notified about what type of tick it was."

During its life cycle, the deer tick may be found on a variety of hosts including mice, chipmunks, birds and deer. While awaiting a suitable host, the tick usually is found on leaf litter or low branches in brushy, wooded areas. Deer ticks are most active in late spring and early summer.

Lyme disease can cause a variety of symptoms, including a

bull's-eye-like rash, fever, stiff neck, muscle aches and headaches. Left untreated, victims can suffer facial palsy, arthritis and even paralysis. The disease normally is treated with antibiotics, but if not caught early, recovery can be slow.

The ongoing study of deer ticks in Pennsylvania, funded by the Centers for Disease Control, is part of a comprehensive educational effort that will include reference materials for health care providers, television and radio public service announcements and educational programs for elementary and high schools. Much of the

data gathered have come from tick samples sent in by the public.

So far, deer ticks have been submitted from 44 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. The areas with the highest reported numbers of deer ticks are southeastern Pennsylvania, including Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Bucks, Berks, Northampton, Lehigh and York counties; the Moshannon State Forest region, including Elk, Clearfield, Cameron, McKean and Centre counties; and the Presque Isle peninsula in Erie County.

"Although not all deer ticks carry Lyme disease," Jacobs said, "the reported incidence of the dis-

ease appears to be highest in areas that have a high incidence of ticks. But we need submissions of ticks from more counties to get a truer picture of the situation statewide."

The counties with the highest reported incidences of Lyme disease are Cameron, Elk, Pike, Delaware, Clearfield, Bucks, Montgomery, Clinton, Clarion and Wayne.

Researchers are paying special attention to Pike County in northeastern Pennsylvania. Although Pike County has a high incidence of Lyme disease (89 cases per 100,000 population), only three deer ticks have been submitted

from that county during the Penn State study. The Pike County commissioners have funded a special study to investigate that apparent discrepancy.

"There have been a lot of lone star ticks found in Pike County, and they also can carry Lyme disease in very rare cases," Jacobs said. "Other possible explanations are that people in Pike County are contracting the disease in their travels outside the county, or that new residents moving in already have the disease." Results from the Pike County project could help to explain similar inconsistencies in other counties.

Extension Offers Pre-Harvest Grain Marketing Workshop

ALLENTOWN (Lehigh Co.) — Grain farmers can enter their wheat, corn, and soybean fields this season with a better plan for the crop they're harvesting by attending a local grain marketing seminar, on Friday, June 25, which begins at 7 a.m. here at the Lehigh County Agricultural Center.

Dr. James Russell of the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service will give a half-day workshop on grain marketing with an outlook for the mid-Atlantic region's grain trade.

The seminar will conclude by 2 p.m.

The Lehigh Valley Grain Marketing Club is sponsoring the event. The club has about 20 grain producers who meet regularly to discuss and hear about what's happening in the markets and how they can respond for better prices.

The purpose of the seminar, and that of the grain marketing club, is to foster knowledge, which leads to better selling decisions. Russell will address means of price protection, the workings of forward con-

tracts, options and futures, and advanced grain marketing concepts. Russell's background in grain marketing started in Oklahoma, where his family ran one of the state's first grain elevator and where he served as state marketing specialist.

In the past five years in Maryland, Russell has been instrumental in helping extension agents and farmers organize more than 15 grain marketing clubs.

One of his recent presentations to grain producers included the following "self-inflicted wounds":

- Failure to understand and use basis data for cash sales of grain.
- Trying to predict grain prices.
- Accepting excess price risk.
- Over-reliance on market outlook by the experts.
- Failure to account for storage and interest expenses.
- Failure to consider all marketing choices.
- Failure to obtain the latest, accurate market information.

The workshop will show what the producer can do to increase

income and, also important, to sleep better.

Cost of the seminar is \$10, which covers the continental breakfast, lunch, and breaks.

Reservations should be made to the Lehigh County Cooperative Extension Office by calling (215)

391-9840 by Tuesday, June 22. Walk-in attenders are also welcome, but must call the extension office first.

The Lehigh County Agricultural Center is off Route 222, a quarter mile east and north of the interchange with Route 309 in west Allentown.



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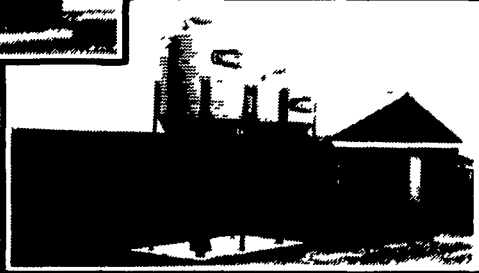


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