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## **Notice of Confirmed Case of Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis**

A positive case of Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis (EEE) has been confirmed in Ouachita County.

No other horses were exposed to the infected horse. The Arkansas Livestock and Poultry Division's Animal Health Section communicated with the primary party and notified other officials of active equine venues within the area.

Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis is an extremely rare but serious and fatal infection that causes encephalitis, an acute inflammation of the brain. The disease is spread by biting insects, primarily mosquitoes and flies, that have bitten birds infected with the EEE virus. Insect control and vaccination are the recommended preventative measures.

This disease can infect a wide range of animals other than horses, including other mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians. While humans can also contract the disease through biting insects, they cannot get the disease through direct contact with an infected animal.

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture's Livestock and Poultry Division is urging owners to closely monitor their equine for early clinical signs, which include loss of appetite, decreased activity, and depression. Clinical signs can be subtle and progress to tremors, paralysis, altered mental state, and stumbling (ataxia). Some affected horses die within a few days. Surviving animals may have residual nerve deficits.

The disease is preventable through regular vaccinations and by developing a good pest management program. Owners should contact their regular veterinarian for more information and to report any nervous system signs. Those without a regular veterinarian should call the Arkansas Livestock and Poultry Division at 501-225-1598 if any horses show clinical signs.