

USDA continues field evaluation of Oral Rabies Vaccine for Raccoons and other Wildlife

21 August 2023 | News

APHIS and cooperators will distribute approximately 3.5 million ONRAB ORV baits



APHIS and cooperators will distribute approximately 3.5 million ONRAB ORV baits

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) today announced it will continue field evaluation of the oral rabies vaccine (ORV) bait ONRAB in eight states as part of its larger-scale rabies prevention effort. This year's field evaluation will assess ONRAB's distribution methods and effectiveness in raccoons, skunks, and other wildlife.

APHIS's Wildlife Services leads the cooperative National Rabies Management Program that works to prevent the spread of rabies in wildlife. Through this program APHIS works with states and other partners across the country to manage and eliminate rabies in U.S. wildlife and protect public health and safety. As human populations grow in suburban and rural areas, there is more interaction with wildlife. This increases the risk of rabies exposure for people and pets.

APHIS and cooperators will distribute approximately 3.5 million ONRAB ORV baits in parts of Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia to test the immune effects in targeted wildlife. Additionally, APHIS is conducting the final year of a small-scale project during October in Chattanooga, Tenn., to evaluate the effectiveness of ONRAB's distribution methods. APHIS wildlife biologists will sample raccoons and skunks following bait distribution to determine vaccination rates.

Field evaluation of ONRAB during 2023 is a collaborative effort among APHIS, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the vaccine manufacturer (Artemis Technologies Inc., an indirect, wholly owned subsidiary of Ceva Sante Animale S.A., Guelph, Ontario, Canada), and state departments of agriculture, health, and natural resources.