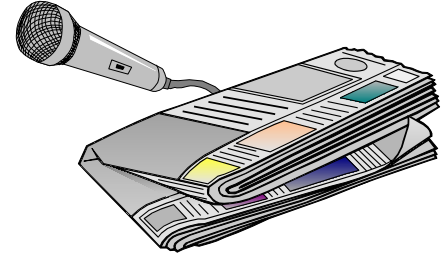




*Agriculture Home Economics 4-H*

# GLENN COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION NEWS FLASH



August 26, 2004

Extension Notes by Barbara Reed, Glenn County Farm Advisor

## **Proper Manure Management May Help Control West Nile Virus Mosquito**

### **Breeding**

After first appearing in Southern California, it was only a matter of time before West Nile Virus (WNV) made its way to the Northern Sacramento Valley. Cases of the mosquito borne disease have been identified in dead birds throughout the area and there are some human cases popping up. Mosquitoes become infected with WNV when they feed on infected birds. The disease is transmitted to humans and animals from the bite of an infected mosquito. The disease cannot be spread from human to human or animal to animal.

Dairy producers can help reduce the risk for disease by eliminating mosquito breeding sites on the farm. Manure solids in dairy lagoons take up precious storage capacity, and they create conditions that are ideal for mosquitoes. Mosquitoes need still water for their egg laying because larvae must keep their air tubes above the surface when breathing. Floating manure solids provide sheltered water for mosquitoes and they restrict wind aeration. Weeds that grow on floating manure solids and around the sides of the lagoon only add to the problem by providing still water and by preventing pesticide sprays for mosquito control from reaching the pond surface.

There is no perfect solid separation system, so all dairies deal with manure solids in the pond to some degree. Summer irrigation systems are a good way to circulate fresh ditch or well water through the storage pond to stir



up and flush out as much of the solid material as possible. This will reduce breeding sites and free up storage capacity in the pond, and also carry manure nutrients to forage crops that need them.

Managing irrigation water (with or without manure) is important, because standing water in fields can provide a breeding site for mosquitoes too. Try to manage irrigation application rates to match water needs, and implement a tail water return system to deal with excess water standing at the end of the field. Unfortunately, standing irrigation water may be due to uneven distribution of manure solids, so solving one problem in the pond can sometimes create another one in the field. Dairy manure management is a constant challenge, but good management can help control the breeding habitat for WNV mosquitoes. For more information on mosquito control, contact your local Mosquito Abatement District (MAD) or Mosquito Vector Control District (MVCD)

Butte County MVCD	533-6038
Colusa County MAD	458-4966
Durham MAD	345-2875
Glenn County MVCD	934-4025
Tehama County MVCD	527-1676

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