

West Nile Virus cases update

During the month of August and the end of July, the Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory (WSVL) has detected serologic and PCR evidence of West Nile Virus (WNV) in 24 equine submissions from 10 Wyoming counties. In the past 5 years and in comparison to this year, the laboratory has detected lower numbers of cases serologically. 2018 also had increased detection numbers with acute phase antibody detection in 14 equine submissions. From 2019 to 2022, there were a total of 11 cases with detected WNV acute phase antibodies (2019- 3 cases, 2020- 0 cases, 2021- 5 cases and 2022- 3 cases). In the past 5 years, WNV has not been detected with PCR in any equine submissions.

West Nile Virus is transmitted by mosquitos. WNV affects humans and other animals, especially birds and horses. Affected animals can present with a variety of clinical signs varying from no clinical disease to potential lethal encephalitis, inflammation in the brain. Horses can recover from infection but can be left with long term side effects. Many of the recent WY cases have had a variety of neurologic signs, including generalized or hind-end weakness, lethargy, incoordination and stumbling as well as muscle twitching, drooping head and abnormal sensitivity to outside stimuli. Some of the horses have had a fever and most of the horses have either no or a poor vaccine history. Annual vaccination is the best form of protection as well as implementation of mosquito control and decreased exposure to mosquitos.

 WNV Cases (July 27-Aug 31, 2023)

