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***Malheur County horses test positive for West Nile Virus***

The Oregon Department of Agriculture announces today that three horses from Malheur County have tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). Test results are being confirmed by the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa.

Last week a dead crow found in Vale, Oregon was confirmed to have the disease. “It’s important to note that the virus passed by mosquitoes, not by horse to horse, or horse to human contact.” Dr. Don Hansen, State Veterinarian.

Hansen urges the following actions to help prevent the spread of the disease:  
**Vaccinate horses.** If your horse has not been vaccinated, you are encouraged to vaccinate now. If your horse is displaying signs of illness, notify your vet immediately, there is an anti-serum available states Dr. Jim Boyle, Vale Vet Clinic.

Most infections in humans are mild. West Nile can cause flu-like symptoms such as fever and headache. Sometimes it also causes weakness, swollen glands or a rash. Many people who are exposed never become sick. In rare cases the virus can cause inflammation of the brain and result in serious illness or even death.

Malheur County residents should take simple steps to protect themselves from mosquito bites:

Look around your home and property and eliminate all sources of standing water that can support mosquito breeding, for example gutters, birdbaths and old tires.

Because mosquitoes are most active at dawn and dusk, avoid playing or working outside at these times.

When outdoors, wear long pants, long sleeve shirts and other protective clothing.

Wear insect repellent, preferably one that contains DEET. Follow label directions when using any repellent.

Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.

Media Contacts:            Questions regarding horse health: Dr. Don Hansen 503-986-4680  
More information: [http://oregon.gov/ODA/AHID/ahid\\_wnv.shtml](http://oregon.gov/ODA/AHID/ahid_wnv.shtml)