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MARTIN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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For Immediate Release

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SENTINEL CHICKENS TEST POSITIVE FOR EASTERN EQUINE ENCEPHALITIS (EEE) VIRUS

Residents urged to use the "5 Ds" for prevention

Two sentinel chicken from the South Stuart area flock were confirmed positive for the EEE virus on June 18th, 2010. This is the first confirmation of EEE virus in the Martin County sentinel chicken flocks in approximately 30 years.

Eastern Equine Encephalitis is a mosquito borne viral disease which occurs in the eastern half of the United States where it causes illness in humans, horses and some bird species. Most people who become sick from mosquitoes have mild symptoms like headache, fever, dizziness and fatigue, but more severe symptoms are possible. Anyone with severe symptoms should contact their primary care physician or seek immediate medical care

Sentinel chickens are placed in Jensen Beach, Palm City, Hobe Sound, Stuart, Indiantown, Jupiter Island and Martin Grade by Martin County Mosquito Control to monitor mosquito-related diseases.

Mosquito borne illness are preventable. The Martin County Health Department urges residents to follow the "5 Ds" for prevention:

- **Dusk and Dawn** -- Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are seeking blood, for many species this is during the dusk and dawn hours.
- **Dress** -- Wear clothing that covers skin.
- **DEET** -- When the potential exists for exposure to mosquitoes, repellents containing DEET are recommended. Products with concentrations up to 30% DEET are generally recommended for most situations. (It is not recommended to use DEET on children less than 2 months old. Instead, infants should be kept indoors or mosquito netting used over carriers when mosquitoes are present). Always read the manufacturer's directions carefully before you put on a repellent.
- **Drainage** -- Check around your home to rid the area of standing water, where mosquitoes can lay their eggs.

In addition, horse owners are encouraged to vaccinate their animals to prevent the viral infection.

For more information: contact Todd Reinhold, Martin County Health Department, (772) 221-4090 or Gene Lemire, Martin County Mosquito Control, (772) 288-5659.

Information is also available at : www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/EasternEquine.html

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