



NC Tick Identification Program Update

Date: April 3, 2024
To: NC Veterinarians
From: Alexis M. Barbarin, M.Ed., PhD., State Public Health Entomologist
Subject: NC Tick Identification Program

The North Carolina Division of Public Health, Communicable Disease (CD) Branch continues to offer a collaborative, statewide tick identification program with NC veterinarians to determine the diversity and distribution of tick species across the state. North Carolina is historically a high incidence state for reported human cases of Rocky Mountain spotted fever; over the past five years, incidence of reported cases Lyme disease in NC residents has been on the rise. The 2018 discovery of the longhorned tick *Haemaphysalis longicornis* has increased the need for tick surveillance of both human and livestock importance. Active tick surveillance efforts have been limited to 50 counties throughout the state. By using passive surveillance methods via soliciting ticks collected by veterinarians, we aim to continue to determine tick species abundance and distribution throughout North Carolina. Surveillance data collected between 2018 and 2023 can be viewed on our interactive dashboard located [here](#).

Participation in the *NC Veterinarian Tick Identification Program* is voluntary for North Carolina veterinarians, but highly encouraged. Veterinarians should remove any flat (unfed) or fed ticks from their animal patients, store ticks in a Ziploc bag or plastic vial with a cotton ball dipped in isopropyl alcohol, and complete a short submission form outlining patient demographic information. Participants will be provided prepaid mailing envelopes by the CD Branch. Ticks collected from separate animal patients should be placed in separate Ziplocs. Multiple Ziplocs can be shipped in the same envelope; however, each animal host should have its own [submission form](#) to accompany the clearly labeled corresponding sample. Tick species results will be provided to each veterinarian via email. Ticks **will not** be tested for pathogens. All submissions should be sent to the CD Branch at the address listed below.

If you are interested in participating or are currently enrolled and need more mailers, please contact Dr. Alexis M. Barbarin at NCTickID@dhhs.nc.gov Following receipt, prepaid envelopes and submission forms will be sent to your practice.

NC Tick Identification Program
c/o Dr. Alexis M. Barbarin
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