



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

**Division of Public Health  
Communicable Disease Branch**

Date: June 15, 2018  
To: NC Veterinarians  
From: Alexis M. Barbarin, M.Ed., PhD.  
Subject: NC Animal Tick Identification Program

To the Veterinarians of North Carolina:

The North Carolina Division of Public Health, Communicable Disease (CD) branch is launching a collaborative, statewide tick identification program with North Carolina veterinarians to determine the diversity and distribution of tick species across the state. North Carolina has historically had a high incidence of reported human cases of Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and over the past five years, incidence of reported cases Lyme disease in people has been on the rise. Additionally, the recent discovery of the longhorned tick *Haemaphysalis longicornis*, has increased the need for tick surveillance that may be of both human and livestock importance. Active tick surveillance efforts have been limited to a handful of counties throughout the state. By using passive surveillance methods via soliciting ticks collected by veterinarians, we plan to clarify the tick species present throughout all 100 counties of North Carolina, and their distribution. The goal of this surveillance program is to create interactive maps of tick distribution in North Carolina and to make that information publicly available.

Participation in the *NC Veterinarian Tick Identification Program* is voluntary for North Carolina veterinarians, and highly encouraged. Veterinarians should remove ticks from their animal patients, store ticks in a Ziploc bag or plastic vial with a cotton ball dipped in alcohol, and complete a short form outlining patient demographic information. Participants will be provided with prepaid mailing envelopes by the CD branch. Ticks collected from separate animal patients should be placed in separate Ziplocs or plastic vials. Multiple vials/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 following identification. Ticks **will not** be tested for pathogens. All tick submissions should be sent to the Communicable Disease Branch at the address listed below.

If you are interested in participating, please confirm by sending an email to Dr. Alexis M. Barbarin at [NTickID@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:NTickID@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  
1902 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1902**

For more information about tickborne disease surveillance in North Carolina or if additional envelopes are needed, please contact the Communicable Disease Branch at (919) 733-3419. Additional information about ticks and tickborne disease can be found at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or at our website at <http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/diseases/vector.html>