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OAHN summer survey and lab data: Key results

There were 82 survey respondents from 27 counties, including primary care, referral, emergency and mobile practices. One respondent noted multiple cases of parvovirus in puppies all stemming from a single breeder. Not far from the Ontario border a [large outbreak of parvovirus was reported in dogs in Northern Michigan, most of which were incompletely vaccinated, and many of which initially tested negative for parvo using point-of-care tests](#). Some respondents reported the usual seasonal variation in canine infectious respiratory disease complex (CIRDC) cases, but once again there was concern about more cases of CIRDC progressing to pneumonia.

Battling blastomycosis

In the spring of 2022, a survey respondent reported a cluster of 4 ocular blastomycosis cases in Eastern Ontario. Infection in the dogs was confirmed by urine antigen test or other signs of systemic fungal infection (e.g. on thoracic radiographs). There has also been concern about increased cases of blasto in people in southwestern Quebec, and in the fall of 2021 there was a [large outbreak of blasto in people in the First Nations community of Constance Lake ON](#). This has led to renewed interest in surveillance of pets and/or wildlife to help detect high-risk areas for this typically regional or travel-associated disease. If you see cases of blasto, particularly if the diagnosis is made without laboratory sample submission, these can be quickly and easily reported to OAHN through our [online disease reporting portal](#).

Top disease concerns Apr-May-Jun 2022 by percentage of survey respondents ▼

	Q3'22	Q3'21
Infectious gastroenteritis	43% ▲	36%
Ticks/tick-borne disease	29% ▲	17%
Infectious respiratory	54% ▼	68%
Other parasitic/protozoal	23%	19%
Other bacterial	23% ▲	15%
Other	11%	15%
Systemic viral	10%	9%
Fungal disease	10%	8%
Toxicoses	9%	11%
Animal welfare concerns	6%	8%
Heartworm	5%	6%
Rabies concerns/enquiries	2%	4%
Total respondents	82	53



Canine distemper and rabies titres in imported dogs

As of September 28, 2022, commercial dogs from over 100 countries considered high-risk for canine rabies are no longer be permitted entry into Canada. Prior to the end of September, there were multiple shipments of dogs in which several animals became significantly ill within weeks of arrival, even requiring hospitalization. At least one of these dogs developed severe neurological signs and was tested for rabies. Fortunately rabies was not the cause, but many of these dogs tested positive for canine distemper.

This is an important reminder of risks of other vaccine-preventable diseases besides rabies (e.g. distemper, parvo) in imported dogs, and the need for infection control precautions for several weeks (or longer) after these dogs arrive in Canada. OAHN recently collaborated with the Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS) companion animal network to produce an [info sheet for dog owners about canine distemper](#). It's also an critical reminder that neurological distemper cannot be clinically distinguished from rabies.

OAHN is still seeking a small number of dogs to participate in a study examining rabies antibody titres in dogs vaccinated abroad. Dogs that have been recently imported from a high-risk country and have a foreign rabies vaccination certificate are eligible as long as a blood sample can be collected before they are revaccinated for rabies here in Canada. For additional information, please contact Dr. Scott Weese (jweese@uoguelph.ca).

RHDV2 Update: Vaccine, PCR, project

No additional cases of [rabbit hemorrhagic disease virus 2 \(RHDV2\) have been reported in Ontario since the end of June 2022](#), although [a rash of cases has more recently been detected around Calgary AB](#).

A [bivalent \(RHDV1 & RHDV2\) vaccine is now available in Canada](#) through CEVA Animal Health and veterinary distributors.

In addition, the [Animal Health Laboratory](#) can now perform tissue PCR for RHDV2 in Ontario at a cost of \$43 per sample. Please contact the AHL directly for more information on tissues required and submission options.

The OAHN wildlife and companion animal networks have also received approval for a [joint project to provide subsidized RHDV2 testing for cases in deceased domestic rabbits that meet certain high-risk criteria, as well as testing for high-risk cases from rehab facilities](#). It is anticipated that submissions under this surveillance project will be accepted beginning in November 2022. Watch oahn.ca and OAHN social media for more details.

During regular business hours, if you have an urgent question about a potential RHDV2 case, please contact Dr. Alexandra Reid, co-lead of the OAHN wildlife network, at alexandra.reid@ontario.ca, or the OMAFRA AICC at 877-424-1300.

More information about RHD and preventing the spread of this virus is available on the [CFIA website](#), and in the [OMAFRA veterinary advisory](#) and [industry update](#).

Look for the next OAHN survey in January 2023!

Practitioner input is invaluable to help detect regional trends, alert veterinarians to disease clusters and guide further investigation. The more vets participate, the more useful you will find the results!



Rabies: Map launch, summer round up

Seven additional cases of raccoon variant rabies have been confirmed in Ontario since the last N2K update, for a total of 16 skunks and 5 raccoons in 2022, still ALL in the St. Catharines area (!). The [Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry \(MNR\)](#) has now launched its [new interactive rabies case map](#) that allows users to filter testing and cases by year, and zoom in to specific municipalities. Note that the map does NOT show cases of bat-variant rabies, because the risk from bats is present across the province, and is not higher or lower in a given area based on whether there have been recent detections.

At least 30 cases of bat-variant rabies have also been detected so far in 2022, including one case in a skunk in Waterloo region, which emphasized the need to always be vigilant for this disease, even in areas where it hasn't been recently detected in non-bat wildlife.

As always, the [OMAFRA rabies website](#) includes detailed information about rabies response in Ontario, including a [risk assessment flowchart](#). This flowchart can also be found on the [OAHN rabies resource page for veterinarians](#) (OAHN login required), along with the [OAHN veterinary guidance for domestic animal to human bites](#).



No comingling birds: AHA order extended

In response to the fall wave of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) cases in poultry and wild birds in Ontario and across western Canada, the Chief Veterinarian for Ontario has issued an [order banning comingling of domestic birds](#), which has now been extended until November 21. More information about the ongoing situation with HPAI in Ontario is available on the [OMAFRA avian influenza webpage](#). For the latest information on HPAI in wild birds in Canada, visit the [interactive HPAI wildlife dashboard](#).

Helpful resources for helping pet pigs

Do you have clients who own pet pigs or backyard pigs, but you are uncertain about what to look for and what to do when it comes to pigs, and how to advise these clients? The [OAHN swine network](#) is designing some quick-reference infosheets for veterinarians and pig owners (*coming soon!*), as well as a handy video on pig necropsy especially for veterinarians who are not swine specialists. Ensuring there are mechanisms in place to help diagnose diseases in these animals helps improve their overall health and welfare, and helps protect the entire pig population in Ontario from the risk of African Swine Fever (ASF). More resources for small holder and pet pig owners and veterinarians, including [specific ASF information like this whiteboard video](#), is available on the [OVMA ASF webpage](#). The *free* 4-part online [CAHSS smallholder pig course for veterinarians](#) is now also available on demand.

Contact us!

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Flu vaccination reminder

As we enter flu season once again, remember that [annual flu vaccination](#) is particularly important for those who work with susceptible animal species, including [poultry](#), [swine](#) and [dogs and cats](#), especially in high-density settings like shelters and kennels.

Monkeypox: Guidance for veterinarians

Cases of monkeypox in people in Canada have been declining steeply since the outbreak peaked in July 2022, but there are still a lot of unknowns when it comes to this virus and transmissibility to pets and other animals in North America. The [CVMA](#), in collaboration with [Worms & Germs Blog](#), has posted [interim guidance for veterinary clinics for care of pets of persons with known or suspected monkeypox](#).

Help us help you!

Have an idea for an infographic you'd like to see, or a podcast you'd like to hear? [Email oahn@uoguelph.ca](mailto:oahn@uoguelph.ca) to let us know!

Meet your OAHN companion animal network team:

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Other useful links

[Worms & Germs Blog](#)

[Animal Health Laboratory](#)

[OMAFRA Rabies Page](#)

[OAHN Podcasts](#)

