

YOAKUM COUNTY NEWS IN AGRICULTURE



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MOSQUITOES

Hopefully rains are coming our way and irrigations of crops, lawns, and yards all can provide a habitat for mosquitoes. By controlling mosquitoes, we can help prevent the threat of disease transmission that they bring. From an integrated approach, mosquitoes are no different from any other targeted pest causing problems.

Many of the control measures are preventative and the mosquito population should decrease, while using less chemical control. By understanding the mosquito and its life cycle will help to find the right method of control. There are many species of mosquitoes that in our area and all of them require water to complete their life cycle. The aquatic larval life stage of mosquitoes are referred to as wigglers. They are harmless and form the base of the food chain. Only the female mosquito that parasitically feeds on blood, and only when it is time to lay eggs. These females utilize blood for protein to give them energy for laying hundreds of viable eggs.

Mosquitoes must have water to complete their life cycle. Even in the current drought, there is enough water present for mosquitoes to survive. They do not require much water at all. Some species can complete a life cycle in about five days in as little as a cup of water. The first method of control is to disrupt the mosquitoes' habitat. A few examples of a provided habitat would be a pet's outdoor drinking bowl, livestock tanks, uncovered rain collection barrels, or that water holding pothole in the back alley are all places that mosquitoes can lay eggs and successfully reproduce. These breeding grounds can be eliminated by changing the pet's drinking water every four days, livestock tanks can be stocked with predatory fish or stored upside down when not in use, rainwater collection barrels can be made air tight, and potholes can be filled or drained. The young adult mosquitoes are partial to cool, damp, and shady areas like tall grass, weeds, or tall plants. By keeping the grass and weeds mowed near your house or barns should seriously limit mosquito's access to your family and livestock. For a pesticide control of young adult mosquitoes, the product Malathion can be applied. When using a pesticide read and follow the label.

When dealing with female mosquitoes, always wear a mosquito repellents that have active ingredient DEET or Picaridin. There are several ways to limit our exposure to mosquitoes. Mosquitoes are not active during hotter hours of the day. Therefore, avoid going outside during dawn, dusk, or night time hours during mosquito season; wearing long sleeve shirts and pants; and using light traps or bug zappers can help keep from a mosquito bite .

Monthly Precipitation (inches)

	2013	2012
January	0.63	0.23
February	0.75	0.30
March	0.04	0.31
April	0.00	0.66
May	1.22	0.99
June	0.00	0.53
July	—	1.55
August	—	0.78
September	—	2.36
October	—	0.20
November	—	0.03
December	—	0.36
Total	2.64	8.30

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