

Longhorned Ticks in New Jersey

In late 2017, animal health experts in New Jersey identified a *Haemaphysalis longicornis* tick, commonly known as the “longhorned tick” or “bush tick,” on a sheep in Hunterdon County. Recently, the tick has also been found in Union and Middlesex Counties in New Jersey, as well as from a calf in Albemarle County in Virginia and cattle in Hardy County in West Virginia. The longhorned tick is not native to the United States. However, it is a serious threat to livestock in Australia, New Zealand and countries of eastern Asia.

Finding the longhorned tick in New Jersey is noteworthy because this is the first time this tick was found in the United States. Animal health authorities are still investigating exactly how the longhorned tick entered the U.S. Some possible ways it may have entered include entering on domestic pets (e.g. dogs), horses, livestock or humans.

Why We Are Concerned

The reason this tick is a concern is because it may pose a risk to New Jersey livestock. It is a serious pest that can attach itself to various warm-blooded animals to feed. If too many ticks attach to one animal, the loss of blood can kill the animal. Ticks can also spread a variety of diseases.

What We Are Doing

The property where the tick was found and animals living there were treated to eliminate the tick. We will continue to monitor wildlife, livestock and horses in the local area for these ticks. Our primary goal is to prevent the spread of the tick, stop it from becoming established in NJ and keep it out of the rest of the country.

What You Can Do

The adult longhorned tick is dark brown in color and grows to the size of a pea when it is full of blood. The other life stages of the tick are very small and difficult to see with the naked eye.



(longhorned tick, adult)



(longhorned tick, full of blood)

If you find a suspected longhorn tick on you, your pets, horses, livestock or hunter-harvested deer, please collect the tick for animal health officials to identify.

- Place the tick in a snack or sandwich size Ziploc baggie along with a small stamp size piece of moistened tissue paper and seal it. Do NOT use tape to secure the tick.
- Call the New Jersey Tick Line at: **1-833-NEW-TICK (833-639-8425)**

For additional information about the longhorned tick in New Jersey, visit:
<http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/ah/>