



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

VIRGINIA PRESSLER, M.D.
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 23, 2017

17-090

Public invited to attend series of informational meetings on rat lungworm disease around Oahu

HONOLULU – The Hawaii Department of Health (DOH), along with its partners at the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) and the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), will be hosting a series of community meetings on rat lungworm disease on Oahu.

Meetings will take place at the following dates and locations from 6–8 p.m.:

- **Thursday, Oct. 26:** Ala Wai Elementary School Cafeteria
- **Wednesday, Nov. 8:** Ewa Elementary School Cafeteria
- **Thursday, Nov. 9:** Kaneohe Elementary School Cafeteria

Those interested in learning more about rat lungworm disease are encouraged to attend. Special presentations will be given by health and agricultural officials on how the public can prevent the spread of rat lungworm disease by controlling rat, snail and slug populations, especially around the home and in the garden.

Rat lungworm disease (angiostrongyliasis) can have debilitating effects on an infected person's brain and spinal cord. The disease is endemic to Hawaii. It is caused by a parasitic roundworm, *Angiostrongylus cantonensis*, and spread when infected rodents pass larvae of the roundworm in their feces that is then eaten by snails and slugs.

The disease is not spread from person-to-person. People become infected by accidentally consuming snails or slugs sometimes hidden on unwashed produce, or from eating undercooked snails, freshwater prawns, crabs and frogs.

In 2017, there have been 17 laboratory-confirmed cases of rat lungworm disease statewide.

For more information about the disease and how to prevent its spread, visit:

- DOH website: http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/disease_listing/rat-lungworm-angiostrongyliasis/
- HDOA website: <http://hdoa.hawaii.gov/blog/main/rat-lungworm-information/>
- CTAHR website: <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/ctahr/farmfoodsafety/rat-lungworm/>

- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) website:
<https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/angiostrongylus/index.html>

#

Oahu Informational Meetings on Rat Lungworm Disease

A series of informational meetings will be held on Oahu about rat lungworm disease prevention.



Thursday, Oct. 26, 2017, from 6-8 p.m.

Ala Wai Elementary School Cafeteria
503 Kamoku St, Honolulu, HI 96826

Wednesday, Nov. 8, 2017, from 6-8 p.m.

Ewa Elementary School Cafeteria
91-1280 Renton Rd, Ewa Beach, HI 96706

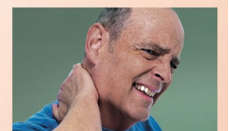
Thursday, Nov. 9, 2017, from 6-8 p.m.

Kaneohe Elementary School Cafeteria
45-495 Kamehameha Hwy, Kaneohe, HI 96744

Meetings will include presentations by the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH), Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) and the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR).

Any individuals interested in learning more about rat lungworm disease and how to prevent its spread are encouraged to attend, including farmers and home gardeners.

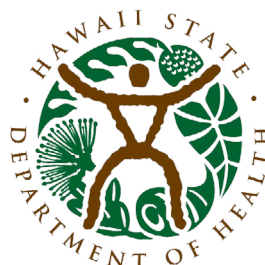
Health and agricultural officials will provide recommendations on how to reduce the risk of rat lungworm disease through personal preparedness and controlling rat, slug and snail populations around your home and garden.



For more information, contact:

Anna Koethe, Public Health Information Coordinator, DOH Communications Office

Phone: (808) 586-4434 | Email: anna.koethe@doh.hawaii.gov



COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE
AND HUMAN RESOURCES
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA