



A horse watched cars drive by about three miles west of Goodland on Old U.S. 24 Monday afternoon. Horse owners in Goodland have bought about 100 doses of a vaccine for the West Nile virus in the last two weeks.

Photo by Doug Stephens/The Goodland Daily News

Animals get West Nile vaccine

By Doug Stephens

The Goodland Daily News

The West Nile virus is driving Goodland horse owners to buy a hurriedly released vaccine to protect their animals.

Deb Smith, co-owner of Prairieland Animal Clinic, said the vaccine has been available there since May, but sales didn't pick up until the past two weeks, when the virus was found in animals in Cowley County on the Oklahoma border in southeast Kansas.

"We've sold quite a few doses," Smith said, "probably 100 in the past two weeks. We've been selling it for a while, but there have been much more people buying it lately."

To be safe, a horse needs two doses of the West Nile vaccine, given three to six weeks apart, Smith said. The doses cost \$18 each.

Three horses in Kansas, the last

Protect yourself from virus

Because the West Nile virus is transmitted by mosquitoes which have bitten infected animals, the best way to keep from getting it may be to avoid the obnoxious little critters.

The federal Centers for Disease Control suggest some precautions:

- Apply insect repellent whenever going outside, especially at dawn, dusk or the evening. Apply it to both your skin and clothing because mosquitoes can bite through light clothes.
- Repellents with the chemical DEET, usually listed by manufacturers as N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide, are the most ef-

fective, because they prevent female mosquitoes from landing.

- Follow the manufacturer's directions when using repellents.
- Wear long sleeves and pants outside whenever possible.
- Try to stay inside during high-risk hours and make sure screens are on windows.
- Place mosquito nets over infant carriers when outside.
- The insects breed in stagnant water, so dump out water in flower pots, pet bowls, clogged rain gutters, tires and buckets.

had the virus, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment said last week.

The virus is spread only by mos-

but the disease usually is mild and feels like the flu. In rare cases, people can suffer encephalitis or meningitis, swellings of the tissues of the brain,

day, bypassing a bid from a Goodland group.

After reviewing bids from U.S. Waste Industries of Colorado Springs and CEKK of Goodland and speaking to company representatives, the commissioners voted 3-1 to start negotiating with the Colorado company.

"We still have a long way to go," Mayor Tom Rohr said. "We are talking with them, but we are a long way from making any decisions."

The commission asked the two firms for bids, which were opened at a meeting two weeks ago, but gave no specifications, and each offered different services. Commissioner Chuck Lutter voted against the decision, saying he thought each company should have the opportunity to bid for the same specifications.

Commissioners Dean Blume, Curtis Hurd and Rohr voted for dealing with U.S. Waste. Commissioner Rick Billinger is on vacation and was not at the meeting. He indicated at the last meeting that he was against contracting the service to anyone.

The commission talked about tabling the discussion until its next meeting.

Parched called a

By Rachel Miscal

The Goodland Daily News

Drought has devastated Sherman County crops so badly that the county has been declared a disaster area, which means farmers can get low-interest emergency loans from the federal government.

Dennis Mote, director of the Sherman County Farm Service Agency, said it's a step in the right direction, but the last thing most farmers need right now is another loan.

Sherman County is one of 58 counties in Kansas the U.S. Department of Agriculture deemed a disaster area on Thursday. The department made the decision after receiving letters from Gov. Bill Graves and Kansas congressman explaining that drought cut this year's wheat harvest, ruined the dryland corn and is taking its toll on other fall crops. With no crop to sell, farmers could find themselves with serious money troubles.

Mote said eligible farmers here can receive emergency loans with a 3.75 percent interest rate. Farmers can borrow up to 100 percent of their actual losses up to \$500,000 and the loan