ADVISORY
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Florida Keys Mosquito Control District and Oxitec Announce Site Participation for Florida Keys Pilot Project to Combat Disease Transmitting Mosquito

- *Placement of first mosquito boxes projected for the week of April 26th;*
- *Oxitec's non-biting male mosquitoes would begin to emerge in May;*
- *Project approved by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State of Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), and has support from the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and an independent advisory board;*
- *Public support in project areas remains high.*

The **Florida Keys Mosquito Control District** and **Oxitec Ltd** today announced location participation plans for its landmark Florida Keys pilot project. Project managers anticipate that during the last week of April and first week of May release boxes, non-release boxes and netted quality control boxes will be placed in six locations: two on Cudjoe Key, one on Ramrod Key and three on Vaca Key. Throughout all release locations less than 12,000 mosquitoes are expected to emerge each week for approximately 12 weeks. Untreated comparison sites will be monitored with mosquito traps on Key Colony Beach, Little Torch Key, and Summerland Key.

This marks the start of the US EPA approved project to evaluate this safe, sustainable and environmentally-friendly solution to control the invasive *Aedes aegypti* mosquito species.

Oxitec's non-biting male mosquitoes will emerge from the boxes to mate with the local biting female mosquitoes. The female offspring of these encounters cannot survive, and the population of *Aedes aegypti* is subsequently controlled.

The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito makes up about four percent of the mosquito population in the Keys but is responsible for virtually all mosquito-borne diseases transmitted to humans. This species of mosquito transmits dengue, Zika, yellow fever and other human diseases, and can transmit heartworm and other potentially deadly diseases to pets and animals.

Quote from Andrea Leal, Executive Director Florida Keys Mosquito Control District:

"An important part of FKMCD's mission is to protect residents in the Florida Keys from the disease-transmitting mosquito, *Aedes aegypti*. As we are seeing development of resistance to some of our current control methods, we are in need of new tools to combat this mosquito. And given the unique ecosystem we live in, those tools need to be safe, environmentally friendly, and targeted. That is why we are collaborating with Oxitec on this project. With full approval from the US EPA and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and with support from the US Centers for Disease Control and an independent advisory board, we are pleased to announce that this project will soon be underway."

Quote from Oxitec's CEO, Grey Frandsen: "We are immensely thankful for FKMCD's continued partnership and for the strong public support this project has received from Florida Keys residents. This truly is a public-private partnership driven by support for new, environmentally-sustainable solutions to combat disease-transmitting mosquitoes. While next week's releases represent a landmark release of Oxitec mosquitoes in the US, we're focused on demonstrating the value this technology can have for Florida Keys residents, communities and business owners, while protecting the Keys' beautiful and sensitive habitat that we all value so much. With outstanding support from local residents, and with full clearance from the Federal and state regulators, it's time to get to work."

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About Oxitec's *Aedes aegypti* technology:
Oxitec's non-biting male mosquito was designed to control the invasive, disease spreading *Aedes aegypti*. It has successfully provided significant suppression of the wild *Aedes aegypti* in other geographies and does not persist in the environment or cause harm to beneficial insects like bees and butterflies.

This technology also removes all requirements for adult mosquito-rearing and releases, and eliminates the potential for female releases. Combined with other innovations, this technology is anticipated to reduce up to 90% of costs associated with traditional insect release programs.

Similar projects in the Brazilian city of Indaiatuba found that Oxitec's mosquito suppressed disease-carrying *Aedes aegypti* by up to 95%[1] in urban, dengue-prone environments following just 13 weeks of treatment, as compared to untreated control sites in the same city.

[1] 95% was the high 2-week rolling average and the individual weekly high was 98%; the highest 4-week rolling average was 92%.

Additional resources:

- The U.S. EPA's approval of and complete risk assessment of the pilot project;
- The U.S. EPA's responses to public comments;
- The U.S. EPA/U.S. CDC memorandum on vectorial capacity of Oxitec's technology;
- The U.S. CDC's letter confirming their collaboration in the project;
- The State of Florida's approval of the pilot project;
- 100+ independent peer-reviewed scientific publications on Oxitec technology;

About *Aedes aegypti* in Florida

- *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes are an invasive species in Florida and other parts of the U.S.
- In recent years, the Florida Keys have seen locally transmitted cases of dengue and travel-related cases of Zika.

To stay up-to-date or learn more about the project, please visit keysmosquitoproject.com.

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