OXITEC

DATE: 10 August 2021
PRESS RELEASE

Oxitec Advances Process to Bring Friendly™ Mosquito Technology to California to Help Government Agencies Protect Public Health

Mosquito control districts ranging from Northern California, the Central Valley, and Southern California support Oxitec's efforts to bring non-biting male Friendly™ *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes for pilot programs.

Following successful launch of its Friendly™ *Aedes aegypti* pilot program in the Florida Keys, Oxitec, the leading developer of biological solutions to control pests that transmit disease, destroy crops and harm livestock, has requested approval from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to pilot its technology in California in partnership with local government agencies that have demonstrated interest in evaluating the technology.

Climate change has allowed disease-transmitting mosquitoes to advance into new regions throughout the Western U.S., posing a threat to tens of millions of people. The invasive *Aedes aegypti*, vector of dengue, Zika, heartworm and other diseases, is now present in more than 300 cities and towns across California, and its range continues to expand. There are no treatments or vaccines for many of the diseases transmitted by *Aedes aegypti* and innovative mosquito control techniques are urgently needed.

After a comprehensive federal review, Oxitec's safe, non-biting Friendly™ *Aedes aegypti* control technology was approved by the EPA for a pilot program in the Florida Keys, which has been underway since April 2021.

After receiving interest from a range of mosquito control districts in northern, central and southern California, Oxitec has applied to the EPA for authorization to expand the areas within which it can pilot its Friendly™ *Aedes aegypti* technology in collaboration with government partners. Upon EPA and state regulatory approvals, Oxitec would work closely with interested mosquito control agencies to determine the location, size, and scope of a pilot program or programs. Any proposal would be preceded by extensive community education and outreach efforts.

In collaboration with mosquito control districts, Oxitec will also be working to provide the public with information about the technology and proposed project, and to answer their questions.

Grey Frandsen, Oxitec's CEO, said, "Climate change is presenting new public health challenges in the western U.S. that urgently require new solutions. The Oxitec team is working around the clock to make our Friendly™ technology available to address these growing challenges. We're thankful for the support from a diverse range of public agencies throughout California that are leaning forward to find innovative solutions that can deliver safe, species-specific control of the dangerous and invasive *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, ultimately providing tangible benefits for communities and the environment."

Truc Dever, President of the Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California, said "Mosquito control agencies are interested in learning more about innovative technologies

to determine if they are a viable option in protecting the public from disease-transmitting mosquitoes. We support Oxitec bringing their non-biting male Friendly™ *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes to California so that we can assess the efficacy and control potential of their technology. Any emerging technology that we use to protect the public from mosquito-transmitted diseases would be used in conjunction with other control methods that are part of our Integrated Vector Management strategy."

Oxitec will be hosting a media Q&A session on Wednesday, August 11th at 12pm EDT / 9am PDT. To register your place, please email:

press@oxitec.com

ENDS

Learn more: oxitec.com/california

Oxitec Press Inquiries
+1-202-792-3080
press@oxitec.com

About Oxitec
Oxitec is the leading developer of biological solutions to control pests that transmit disease, destroy crops and harm livestock. Founded in 2002 at the University of Oxford, Oxitec is led by a passionate team comprised of 15 nationalities and is supported by world-class partners. Learn more at oxitec.com.

Notes to editors:

Further quotes

Chris Barker, Associate Professor at the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine and Co-Director, Pacific Southwest Center of Excellence in Vector-Borne Diseases, said "It's critical that mosquito control and public health experts have access to cutting-edge technology so that they can stay ahead of the curve and prevent mosquito-transmitted disease outbreaks. This is particularly important for the invasive mosquitoes that are spreading in California because these mosquitoes have spotty distributions and utilize hard-to-find backyard habitats that limit the effectiveness of traditional mosquito control methods. I support Oxitec's efforts to bring its innovative mosquito control technology to California as it could become an important tool for protecting the public from the threats posed by invasive *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes."

Dr. Mark van der List, Veterinarian and beekeeper, said, "Invasive mosquitoes are becoming an increasing threat in California from both a veterinary and human health perspective. As a veterinarian, I appreciate efforts to reduce *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes which are capable of transmitting heartworm disease in animals. In my free time, I enjoy keeping bees and tending to their hives. As we collectively work to protect the health of

pollinators, I support innovative mosquito control techniques that are environmentally sustainable."

Kevin Bolsajian, co-founder of the Marian Wilson Butterfly Garden, said "I support efforts to reduce invasive species in an environmentally-sustainable way. Having innovative mosquito control techniques in California that protect the health of butterflies is very important and I appreciate the environmental benefits of Oxitec's technology."