

EPA Authorizes Release of 2 Billion More GMO Mosquitoes as Reports of Malaria Surface in States That Already Released Them

Locally acquired malaria has been nonexistent in the U.S. for the last 20 years. But five such cases have recently been diagnosed — four in Florida and one in Texas — the only two states that have released genetically engineered mosquitoes.

Story at a glance:

- Genetically engineered (GE) mosquitoes created by biotechnology company Oxitec have been released in the U.S. in Florida and Texas.
- In March 2022, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) granted Oxitec a two-year extension of its experimental use permit, or EUP, which would allow the biotech company to release additional GE mosquitoes in Florida as well as in four counties in California for the first time.
- While the EPA extended Oxitec's EUP both the Florida Department of Agriculture and California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) must approve Oxitec's testing in order for it to move forward in their states.
- Following pushback from legislators, California's DPR announced Oxitec voluntarily withdrew its research authorization application to test its GE mosquitoes in California.
- Locally acquired malaria has been nonexistent in the U.S. for the last 20 years, but five such cases have recently been diagnosed — four in Florida and one in Texas.

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