

Repel Mosquitoes and Ticks, Naturally

Pine oil found to be more effective than DEET for repelling pests.

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By Stephanie Staton

Photo courtesy Virginia Tech Weed ID GuideAgricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists have discovered a naturally occurring compound that is derived from pine oil. The patented compound, isolongifolenone, repels mosquito bites and two types of ticks; compared to DEET, a popular synthetic chemical repellent, it is more effective on mosquito bites and equally efficient against the two ticks species.

Mosquitoes and ticks bear blood-borne diseases that they pass on through their bites as they feed on human and animal blood. Whether your concern is for your animals and/or yourself, a natural repellent that has less impact on the environment as well as fewer dangerous, engineered chemicals is a preferable option for many.

The pine oil-based repellent is not yet in production; investors and manufacturers are being sought to produce it commercially. It can be prepared from pine oil feedstock in ton quantities for commercial applications. Its inexpensive, relatively easy development is an advantage over other natural repellents for mass production and distribution.

About the Author: Stephanie Staton is managing editor for the Popular Farming Series and associate editor for Hobby Farms and Hobby Farm Home.

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