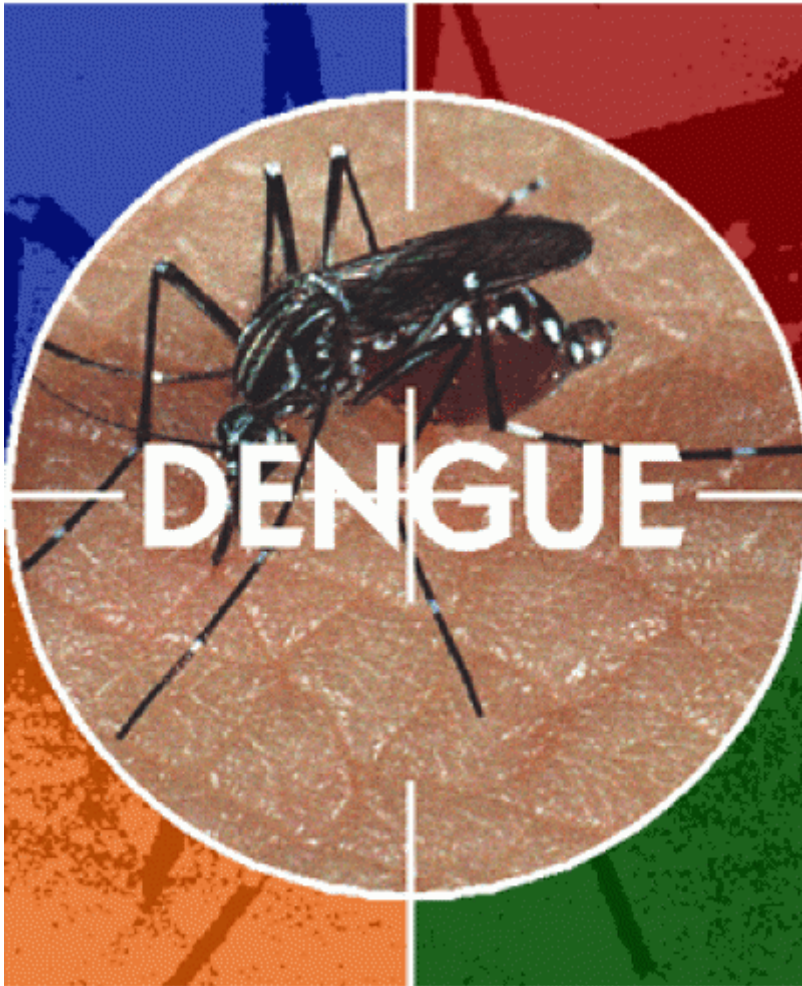


Brazil Attempts to Combat Dengue with GM Mosquitoes



Brasilia, April 21 (RHC) – The world's largest ever swarm of genetically modified (GM) mosquitoes has been released in a Brazilian town to combat dengue -- a leading cause of illness and fatality in several Mercosur countries, except for Uruguay.

Genetically modified in a laboratory with a gene designed to devastate the non-GM *Aedes aegypti* population and reduce dengue's spread, the newly hatched *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes called "Franken-skeeters" were released in Jacobina, a farming town in Bahia state, according to local press reports.

"We need to provide alternatives because the system we have now in Brazil doesn't work," said Aldo Malavasi, president of Moscamed, a Brazilian company that's raising and testing the GM mosquitoes in Jacobina. He added that there are "thousands and thousands of cases of dengue and that is a large cost for the country. People are unable to work."

Last year, Brazil reported 1.4 million cases of dengue, which is endemic in three of the

12 host cities for this summer's World Cup. There is no vaccine. The most severe form of the illness, dengue hemorrhagic fever, can lead to shock, coma and death.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there has been a 30-fold increase in dengue cases around the globe during the last 50 years.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/internacionales/21029-brazil-attempts-to-combat-dengue-with-gm-mosquitoes>



Radio Habana Cuba