



# New World Screwworm (NWS)

## Producer Frequently Asked Questions

### General Information

#### 1. What does a New World Screwworm (NWS) infestation look like?

Animals infested with NWS may exhibit signs of depression, restlessness, isolation, head shaking, and/or biting and licking their wounds. Producers should closely examine live animals for wounds and mucous membranes (e.g., mouth, nose, eyes, genitalia, anus) containing a foul odor, small white eggs, or larvae (maggots). It is important to know that NWS exclusively infests live animals: NWS larvae will soon drop off its host animal after it dies to continue their life cycle.

#### 2. What should I do if I suspect an NWS infestation on an animal?

- **Livestock or pets:** contact your local veterinarian immediately. You should also report the suspected case to the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Animal Health Branch via calling **1-866-922-2473**.
- **Wildlife:** report suspected infestations to your local California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) biologist. Find contact information for regional offices here: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Regions>

#### 3. Who can submit fly or larvae samples for official identification?

Currently, CDFA, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and licensed veterinary practitioners are authorized to submit samples for official confirmation to the National Veterinary Services Lab (NSVL). Reporting suspicious flies or larvae to CDFA, USDA, or CDFW is critical to ensure the collection and submission process is completed quickly and correctly, leading to an effective and efficient response for mitigation.

#### 4. Can I collect fly or larva samples found in a wound on my animal?

CDFA is working together with producers in certain regions to allow them to collect and submit samples obtained from cases that have a high clinical suspicion of NWS. Producers with infested animals must report their findings to CDFA, which will then provide guidance and the necessary information/documents for sample submission. This process helps ensure the lab is not overwhelmed with flies and maggots that do not pose a threat. It is best to contact your veterinarian for proper sample collection and submission.

## 5. How will movement restrictions serve as a containment tool in an NWS-Infested Zone?

The highest risk for spreading NWS is through animal movements. Animals leaving infested areas will be subject to specific animal movement requirements and restrictions. Meeting these animal inspection, treatment, and identification requirements helps CDFA and USDA control the spread of the pest, monitor for additional infestations, and allow producers to safely continue moving their animals.

## 6. Is New World Screwworm in California?

Currently, there are no confirmed cases of NWS in California. California animal health officials are monitoring the situation and continuing their prevention efforts in coordination with federal and state partners to mitigate the risk of it entering the state.

## Prevention and Treatment

### 7. Which preventative drugs are available to use to avoid NWS animal infestations?

Producers are encouraged to discuss potential prevention and treatment options with their veterinarian as soon as possible to develop protocols for their operations. Please be aware that these antiparasitic drugs may also affect other parasites and should be used judiciously and appropriately to avoid the development of resistance. In addition, these drugs may have specific meat and milk withdrawal times for certain species, which can be prolonged with repeated dosing.

Animal drugs must be approved by the FDA and administered through a veterinary-client-patient relationship (VCPR) to treat or prevent NWS myiasis in animals. More information can be found here: <https://www.fda.gov/animal-veterinary/safety-health/animal-drugs-new-world-screwworm>

Animal drugs for veterinarians that are either approved, conditionally approved, or emergency use authorized for NWS infestations can be found on the FDA website: <https://www.fda.gov/animal-veterinary/safety-health/new-world-screwworm-information-veterinarians>. Frequently asked questions about NWS animal drugs for veterinarians can be found here: <https://www.fda.gov/media/191189/download?attachment>

## 8. Which insecticides or pesticides can be used to control NWS?

USDA has developed a list of pesticides that are currently registered with the EPA either for use against NWS, may have utility against NWS, or have been labeled for the control of flies. The list can be found here: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/pesticides-for-nws.pdf>.

**Disclaimer:** Please note that not all products are available for use in California. You can use the California Department of Pesticide Regulation's Product/Label Database tool at the following link to search for which pesticides are available for use in California: **California Product/Label Database Application**. As with all pesticides, please read and follow all application instructions on the label prior to administration and use to maximize safety and efficacy.

NWS flies do not typically hang out on livestock or in manure. Producers are encouraged to develop integrated pest management plans to address their risk of NWS in consultation with their veterinarian.

## 9. Are there any other preventative measures I can take to prevent NWS infestations?

Yes. Producers can reduce the risk of NWS infestation by:

- Utilizing fly and tick control methods, including fly sprays, and keeping clean conditions in and around livestock-holding areas;
- Repairing equipment and cleaning up debris in animal environments to avoid unnecessary wounds or injuries;
- Moving wound-inducing procedures, such as castration, birthing, and dehorning, to cooler months when NWS fly activity is low;
- Getting animals accustomed to regular inspections for infested wounds;
- Implementing routine biosecurity practices, such as inspecting newly received animals for infested wounds; frequently cleaning clothing, equipment, and vehicles; and minimizing wildlife access on your premises; and
- Spreading awareness of NWS to your frequent contacts.

## **10. Which actions are critical to protect my animals from NWS infestations?**

The main priorities should be:

1. Avoiding the creation of unnecessary wounds via elective procedures. Wounds should be treated quickly if they occur, and the wound should be covered and monitored closely until it heals properly. Consult your veterinarian for appropriate wound care.
2. Regularly inspect your animals and any new animal additions to your production. Immediately report suspected cases of NWS

## **Animal Surveillance**

### **11. What does NWS animal surveillance look like?**

NWS animal surveillance consists of inspecting new and existing animals for infested wounds or mucous membranes and other clinical signs of NWS myiasis.

### **12. Who should be conducting NWS animal surveillance?**

All animal owners and livestock producers should conduct routine animal surveillance, especially on newborn animals or animals with wounds. Anyone around wildlife, domestic, or other warm-blooded animals should monitor those animals for open wounds or signs of possible NWS infestations. CDFA will conduct animal surveillance to identify potentially impacted animals if NWS is detected in the state.

### **13. How does NWS animal surveillance work?**

NWS animal surveillance improves early detection, thereby allowing animal health officials to promote quick containment of the NWS population through response activities, and allowing veterinarians to promptly treat any infested animals.

### **14. Why is NWS animal surveillance important?**

Animals infested with NWS or a secondary infection, if left untreated, may die within one to two weeks of infestation. Additionally, infested wounds and the presence of maggots on living animals are often the first indicators of NWS in an area. Reporting them quickly allows state and federal animal health officials to begin response activities.

### **15. What are the roles of animal health officials in NWS animal surveillance?**

As part of their routine regulatory duties, CDFA staff monitor for indications of animal disease and pests. If NWS is detected in California, CDFA responders will conduct animal surveillance in

the designated infested and surveillance zones to help determine the extent of the spread, prevent additional spread, and share resources with animal owners.

## **16. What happens if NWS is detected through animal surveillance?**

CDFA and USDA will quickly evaluate and determine if there is an NWS population in the area and enact response plans. Response plans can include enforcing animal movement requirements to move animals from an infested zone, evaluating the need for sterile insect distribution, and prioritizing stopping the spread while maintaining continuity of animal agriculture business.

## **Fly Surveillance**

### **17. What does NWS fly surveillance look like?**

NWS-specific fly traps contain either a synthetic bait (Swormlure-4) or animal liver and are placed in strategic locations to monitor for the presence of the fly. Animal health officials regularly collect and submit suspicious flies from the traps for official identification at the NVSL.

### **18. Why is NWS fly surveillance important?**

Fly surveillance helps animal health officials detect NWS flies if they are in the area, adding a layer of surveillance and bolstering early detection for a quick response, should NWS be detected.

### **19. How do NWS-specific fly traps work?**

Adult NWS flies are attracted to Swormlure-4—the synthetic bait placed in each trap—and stick to the nontoxic sticky surface area of the trap. These traps are only utilized for surveillance purposes by CDFA and USDA to monitor for the presence of NWS flies, not to reduce populations or stop them from spreading.

### **20. Are insecticides or pesticides used in NWS fly surveillance traps to eliminate fly populations in an area?**

NWS-specific fly traps are only used for surveillance purposes by CDFA and USDA. Currently, no insecticides or pesticides are approved by the EPA or the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR) for the elimination of NWS flies found in fly traps.

## 21. Can I conduct my own fly surveillance using NWS fly traps?

If your premises is placed within either a NWS-infested zone or a surveillance zone, then you may be asked to place fly traps in specific areas on your premises. Otherwise, unless you are approached by CDFA or USDA, fly trapping would not be advised.

## 22. What happens if an NWS fly is detected through fly surveillance traps?

If an NWS fly collected in a surveillance trap is confirmed via laboratory confirmation, then CDFA and USDA will quickly evaluate the situation and determine if there is an NWS population in the area. Response efforts to contain, control, and eradicate will be enacted, as appropriate.

## 23. What is the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT), and how does it relate to the control of NWS?

Female NWS flies only mate once during their lifetime. Specialized facilities mass-produce sterile flies that are then released in NWS-infested areas. When sterile male flies mate with the wild female flies, it effectively ends the life cycle of the female fly since she will not mate again. This major control method prevents reproduction, thereby resulting in a decline in the population of NWS, ultimately leading to the eradication of the pest in infested areas.

## 24. Where can I find more information?

More information can be found at the following links:

- California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Animal Health Branch: [CDFA - AHFSS - AHB](#)
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW): [California Department of Fish and Wildlife Home Page](#)
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) APHIS: [New World Screwworm](#)
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH): [CDPH Home](#)

To report suspected cases of NWS, please call **1-866-922-2473**.