



New World Screwworm: Be Aware and Prepare

Information for Veterinarians

New World screwworm (NWS) myiasis is a serious disease that affects livestock, pets, wildlife, occasionally birds, and in rare cases, people. The disease is most often detected in cattle, swine, horses, small ruminants, and dogs.

Myiasis occurs when NWS fly larvae (maggots) burrow into the flesh of a living animal, causing very painful wounds. NWS can cause serious, often fatal damage to animals.

NWS flies are attracted to wounds. Animals that have recently given birth, suffered an injury, or had a surgical procedure, such as dehorning or branding, are most vulnerable. Even tick bites can attract NWS flies.

What to Look For

- Maggots in wounds or other body openings, such as the nose, ears, and genitalia or the navel of newborn animals
- Wounds that have bloody discharge and foul odor
- Wounds that become deeper and larger as the maggots grow and feed on living tissue
- Animals that are showing signs of pain including depression, irritability, not eating, and isolating themselves from other animals or people

Report Signs of NWS

Immediately report any suspicious wounds, maggots, or infestations to your State Animal Health Official and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Area Veterinarian in Charge.

- Remove maggots (various shapes and sizes) from several sites within the open wound using forceps. It's important to collect maggots from the deepest part of the wound. Eggs and adult flies may be sampled from the wound's edges.
- Place the specimens in a tight-closing vial or test tube and preserve them in 70 percent alcohol (ethyl or isopropyl) at room temperature.



- Your USDA or State veterinarian will assist in getting samples submitted to USDA's National Veterinary Services Laboratories.

Treatment

- Thoroughly clean the affected area and remove all visible larvae. Use antiseptics to prevent secondary infections.
- Administer approved topical or systemic antiparasitic treatments to eliminate remaining larvae.

Protect Yourself

- Use disposable gloves for sample collection and treatment of affected animals.

Learn More

Scan the QR code to learn more about NWS or contact your State Animal Health Official or USDA Area Veterinarian in Charge.

State Animal Health Official

www.usaha.org/saho/

USDA Area Veterinarian in Charge

www.aphis.usda.gov/contact/animal-health

