



NEW WORLD SCREWORM FOR ANIMAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Veterinary professionals are often the first to recognize cases of New World Screwworm in domestic or wild animals

New World Screwworm (NWS) is a parasitic fly whose larvae feed on living tissue. Larvae "screw" into wounds or natural body openings of warm-blooded domestic & wild animals

- Untreated cases can lead to severe wounds, infections, and death.
- NWS was eradicated from the US over 50 years ago. However, the parasite has advanced across Mexico over the past year, and the first US case occurred in a calf in South Texas in June 2026.
- Screwworm eggs are white and deposited in a shingle-like clump on or near the edges of superficial wounds.
- The larvae are 2-15mm long and have one pointed and one blunt end with rings of dark brown spines around the body.
- Female screwworm flies are slightly larger than a housefly with a dark blue-green body and red-orange head.

Reporting is key to keeping Illinois free of NWS. Accredited veterinarians MUST report suspected cases of New World Screwworm

- Check all animals for:
 - Wounds with larvae (even small and superficial wounds)
 - Foul odor of decay
 - Animal behavior: discomfort, headshaking, depression, anorexia
 - Pocketed wounds and wounds leaking serous, blood-tinged fluid



To Report Suspected NWS

**CALL THE STATE VETERINARIAN'S OFFICE:
(217) 872-4944**

OR

**THE USDA AREA VETERINARIAN IN CHARGE:
(217) 547-6030**

- Provide animal ID, owner contact, photos, location, brief history (including travel), and photos
- Collect as many larvae as possible from all areas of wound with forceps. Be sure to collect from the deepest part of wound. Collect up to 10 larvae if possible
- Place larvae in a sealed container and cover with 70% alcohol or ethanol. Keep in a dark place until further instruction
- NWS Treatment: thoroughly clean the site. Treat the animal with approved pesticide or other effective medication to kill screwworm larvae. Treated wounds should be inspected daily until completely healed.