

ANIMAL HEALTH ALERT

Veterinary Public Health | (213) 288-7060 | vet@ph.lacounty.gov | <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/vet/>



Animal Health Alert: New World Screwworm Detected in the United States

June 5, 2026

Key Points:

- New World screwworm (NWS) is a reportable, foreign animal disease affecting all warm-blooded animals, including livestock, pets, wildlife, birds, and humans.
- On June 3, 2026, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that [NWS was detected in a calf in Zavala County, Texas](#). This is currently the only confirmed detection in the United States.
- **NWS is not currently present in Los Angeles County or California.**
- Dogs have been the second most affected species in Mexico after cattle, highlighting the importance of vigilance among companion animal practitioners.
- Animals that travel to or are imported from NWS-affected areas pose a significant risk of introducing NWS to unaffected areas. Review applicable movement restrictions and requirements from CDC, USDA, and state and local authorities before traveling with or transporting animals to or from affected areas.
- Immediately report any suspected cases of NWS in animals to the [California Department of Food and Agriculture](#) and, if the animal is located in Los Angeles County, also notify [Los Angeles County Veterinary Public Health](#).

Dear Veterinary Colleagues:

Los Angeles County Veterinary Public Health (VPH) has been monitoring the northward movement of New World Screwworm (NWS) through Mexico. On June 3, 2026, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the detection of NWS in a calf in Zavala County, Texas. **NWS is not currently present in Los Angeles County or elsewhere**

in California. VPH continues to actively monitor the situation and will provide updates as significant developments occur.

NWS is caused by the larval stage of the fly *Cochliomyia hominivorax*. Unlike most fly larvae, NWS larvae feed on living tissue, causing progressive and potentially severe wounds. Infestations can occur in any warm-blooded animal, including companion animals, livestock, wildlife, birds, and humans. Animals with open wounds, recent surgical sites, tick bites, umbilical remnants, or other skin lesions are particularly susceptible.

Veterinarians should maintain a heightened index of suspicion in animals that:

- Have recently traveled to or been imported from NWS-affected areas; or
- Present with wounds containing visible larvae

If NWS is suspected, immediately report the case to the [California Department of Food and Agriculture](#) (CDFA) and, if the animal is located in Los Angeles County, also notify [VPH](#). Prompt recognition and reporting are essential to prevent the establishment and spread of NWS.

Please find the [USDA press release](#) below, along with additional NWS resources and reporting information.



Contact: APHISpress@usda.gov

USDA Confirms Presence of New World Screwworm in the United States

Animal Health Officials Working Quickly to Protect U.S. Livestock and Wildlife

WASHINGTON, DC – JUNE 03, 2026 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) confirmed the detection of a New World screwworm (NWS) in a bovine in Zavala County, Texas. NWS is a serious pest that affects livestock, pets, wildlife, and less commonly, people and birds. NWS larvae (maggots) burrow into the flesh of living animals, causing serious damage to livestock and economic losses.

The affected animal is a 3-week-old calf and larvae were identified in its umbilical area. To date, there have been no further detections.

“All models showed New World Screwworm entering the country in 2025; however, thanks to the hard work across the entire Trump administration and our industry, state, and local partners, we were able to buy time for this moment. Protecting our livestock industry is a national security issue of the utmost importance, and USDA is wasting no time in taking action,” said Dudley Hoskins, Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs. “USDA invested heavily in the tools needed to eliminate NWS ever since cases started increasing in Central America and Mexico. The United States has defeated this pest before, and we will do it again.”

USDA and Texas officials are taking immediate action to contain and eradicate NWS from the United States, following the strategies and actions outlined in the [NWS Response Playbook](#). This includes:

- Forming a unified Incident Command Team with the Texas Animal Health Commission and deploying response personnel to the area;
- Establishing a 20 km infested zone around the detection and implementing quarantines, movement controls, and surveillance in this area;
- Expediting targeted release of [sterile NWS flies](#) by immediately deploying ground release chambers in the area, in addition to the 4 million sterile flies per week already being released aerially in the area;
- Increasing trapping for NWS flies along the border and just outside of the dispersal area;
- Implementing NWS surveillance and management strategies in wildlife; and
- Conducting targeted outreach in the local area.

Additionally, USDA’s National Veterinary Stockpile stands ready to assist, and will provide resources including treatments, equipment, and logistics support the response as needed.

USDA will continue to work with state departments of agriculture, animal health officials, industry, and producers to mitigate economic impacts of restrictions as much as possible, including negotiating with our trading partners to regionalize any trade restrictions on live animals, limiting them to defined geographic areas.

NWS maggots can infest livestock and other warm-blooded animals, including in rare cases people. They most often enter an animal through an open wound and feed on the animal's living flesh.

USDA urges residents in the area to check their pets and livestock for signs of NWS. Look for draining or enlarging wounds and signs of discomfort. Also look for screwworm larvae (maggots) and eggs in or around body openings, such as the nose, ears, and genitalia or the navel of newborn animals. If you suspect your animal is infected with screwworm, contact your state animal health official or [USDA area veterinarian in charge](#) immediately.

While not common in people, if you notice a suspicious lesion on your body or suspect you may have contracted screwworm, seek immediate medical attention.

The U.S. food supply is safe. Screwworms do not infest meat, fruits, vegetables, or other food sources. USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) ensures that the nation's commercial supply of meat, poultry, and egg products is safe and properly labeled. Under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA), FSIS inspection personnel must inspect all eligible animal species unless they are exempt or covered by a state inspection program.

Any evidence of screwworm infestation in an animal would be identified during these inspections, and any contaminated product from an affected animal would not be allowed to enter the food supply.

For more than a year, USDA has led a unified response to NWS. As the lead coordinating agency, USDA has deployed advanced surveillance systems and supported robust cross-border response efforts in Mexico and Central America to combat the pest and push NWS away from the United States. These efforts have bought time for USDA to increase domestic preparedness efforts.

Learn more about New World screwworm at [Screwworm.gov](#).

Additional NWS Resources:

LACVPH

- [New World Screwworm](#) – General updates and information with specific LA County information

CDFA

- [CDFA – AHFSS – New World Screwworm](#) – Information on California’s response to NWS
- [NWS Sample Collection Protocol](#)
- Handouts to share:
 - [New World Screwworm Factsheet](#)
 - [Visual Comparison: NWS vs. Other Flies](#)

USDA

- [Screwworm.gov](#) – Information on the unified Federal response to NWS
- [USDA Confirms Presence of NWS in the United States](#) – Press release
- [USDA APHIS Current Status](#) – National NWS detection data
- [New World Screwworm: Be Aware and Prepare, Information for Veterinarians](#)
- [New World Screwworm: Veterinary Considerations for Dogs and Cats that Travel Internationally](#)
- [Bring a Pet Dog into the United States](#) – Information on traveling with pets from screwworm-affected countries

FDA

- [New World Screwworm: Information for Veterinarians](#) – Information on prevention and treatment options including for small animal veterinarians

CDC

- [New World Screwworm Outbreak](#) – Outbreak overview
- [Bringing an Animal in to the U.S.](#) – Overview of CDC animal import requirements

Thank you for your continued work to protect animal health.

Veterinary Public Health

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

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