## **APHIS-USDA UPDATE**

## <u>APHIS-USDA responds to outbreak of New World Screwworm (NWS)</u> in Central America-Mexico



Important Facts and History:

2016-2017 Florida outbreak affected mostly Key Deer (killed >10% of the population), but dogs, cats, pigs and a racoon were also infected.

April, 2025

- 2022-2025 New World Screwworm (NWS) has spread throughout Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Guatemala.
- November 2024, NWS was detected in Mexico. Although endemic to S. America, it has been expanding toward the Southern US border.
- This is a Zoonotic disease. Humans, pets, and wildlife serve as vectors for the illness.
- The larvae (maggots) are the cause of the morbidity/mortality as they cause deadly secondary infection/septicemia.
- This infection is expensive and deadly. In 1935, there were 180 thousand cattle deaths in Texas alone. The cost to eradicate the pest from the US is estimated to be 1.27 billion dollars.
- It is a reportable disease to Nevada Dept of Agriculture and USDA veterinary partners.

Veterinarians and veterinary technicians play a crucial role in detecting and reporting possible infection.

## **EDUCATION RESOURCES**

- Domestic Dog SOP Handout
- Other Animals SOP Handout
- USDA-APHIS NWS training
- module (41): <u>Click here for more</u>
- <u>information.</u>

NWS Need to Know Brochure:

- (<u>Spanish</u>)
- (<u>English</u>)

<u>Nevada Reportable Diseases</u> (2/2024) <u>USDA Reportable Diseases</u> (4/2025) Timeline of Infestations:

- Eggs are laid on mucous membranes or the edge of a wound.
- 8-12 hours the eggs hatch into larvae that burrow and feed on live tissue.
- 5-7 days the larvae fall onto the ground and pupate into adults.
- Female flies mate only once, and males can mate multiple times.
- One female fly can produce 3000 eggs in their 10-30 day lifespan.
- Larvae cannot survive soil temperatures below 46 degrees (F).

Identification

- Egg masses on the surface of a wound are white.
- Eggs and actively feeding larvae can be seen in the same wound. Non-NWS larvae may also be present feeding on necrotic tissue.
- US entry may occur as the infection spreads into N. Mexico or if infected animals are brought to the US from abroad.
- Detection of new larval infestations critical to elimination of the pest.
- Control of infestations, if they occur are timely and costly.
- Inspect all animals' entries upon arrival to the US.
- Look for any maggots feeding on live tissue/deep wound infestation.

- Check pets, horses, and livestock for draining or enlarging wounds, and signs of discomfort such as irritated behavior and headshaking.
- Also look for screwworm larvae (maggots) or eggs. Screwworm eggs are creamy and white and are deposited on near the edges of superficial wounds.
- This pest can infest a wide variety of wounds, from tick bites to cuts and dehorning or branding wounds.
- Infestations are very common in the navels of newborn animals, nasal or eye openings, and genitalia.

If you or other staff suspect larval infection, please see the relevant SOP above for obtaining samples, safe handling, and proper sanitation protocols and contact Department of Agriculture for further information.