

What Maine Animal Health Stakeholders Need to Know

A Maine Animal Health Program Resource Guide

What Is New World Screwworm?

New World Screwworm (NWS) is a serious disease caused by the larvae (maggots) of a fly called *Cochliomyia hominivorax*. Unlike most maggots that feed on dead tissue, NWS maggots feed on **living flesh**, causing painful and sometimes life-threatening wounds.

The United States eliminated NWS in 1966. However, on June 3, 2026, the USDA confirmed a new detection in Texas near the Mexican border.

The U.S. food supply remains safe. NWS does not infest meat, fruits, vegetables, or other food products. Any affected animal would be identified during USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service inspection, and no contaminated product would enter commerce.

Why Should Maine Care?

There have been no detections of NWS in Maine.

NWS flies are not expected to survive Maine winters year-round. However, animals and people can unintentionally transport eggs, larvae (maggots), or flies into Maine.

Any warm-blooded animal can be affected, including:

- Cattle, Swine, Sheep, Goats, Horses, Dogs, and Cats
- Poultry and birds
- Wildlife
- Humans

Cold Weather and Maine Risk

Sustained cold temperatures limit the ability of NWS flies to survive and reproduce. Maine's climate makes long-term establishment unlikely, although infested animals could still introduce the parasite into the state. Maine's climate makes long-term establishment of NWS unlikely.

Adult flies survive poorly in cold temperatures, and winter conditions generally prevent reproduction. NWS flies mate only once in their lifetime, and they cannot develop into adults and survive in temperatures under 59 degrees Fahrenheit.

However, animals carrying eggs or larvae can still introduce NWS into the state. For that reason, vigilance remains important, especially for:

- Imported animals
- Rescue animals
- Animals returning from travel
- Exhibition animals attending interstate events

Preventive treatment is not recommended for animals that live in Maine and have not traveled to areas where New World Screwworm (NWS) has been found. This is because NWS has not been detected in Maine or anywhere in New England. If you are traveling to a NWS-impacted area, talk to your veterinarian about treatment and prevention of NWS and follow all FDA and EPA guidelines for NWS Emergency Use Authorized products, including observing all withholding periods for meat and milk.

Because NWS is considered a **Foreign Animal Disease**, every suspected case must be reported to the Maine State Veterinarian’s Office and USDA Veterinary Services.

Reporting Suspected Cases of NWS

<p>Maine Animal Health Program</p> <p>DOMESTIC ANIMALS</p>	<p>Phone: (207) 287-3701</p> <p>Email: animalhealth.AGR@maine.gov</p>	 <p>Maine Animal Health Program Report Form</p>
<p>USDA Veterinary Services Area Office</p> <p>DOMESTIC ANIMALS</p>	<p>Phone: (508) 363-2290</p>	 <p>USDA Report Form</p>
<p>USDA Wildlife Services</p> <p>WILDLIFE</p>	<p>Phone: (866) 4USDA-WS, (866-487-3297)</p>	
<p>Maine CDC</p> <p>HUMAN HEALTH CONCERNS</p>	<p>Phone: 1-800-821-5821</p> <p>Email: disease.reporting@maine.gov</p>	

Know the Signs of NWS Infestation

Animals with NWS may have:

✓ Wounds that do not heal	✓ Irritation, pain, or excessive scratching
✓ Visible larvae (maggots) present in a wound	✓ Swelling around wounds
✓ Foul-smelling wounds	✓ Depression, weakness, or unusual behavior

What Does NWS Look Like?

Adult NWS flies are about the size of a housefly and have:

- Metallic blue-green bodies about the size of a house fly
- Orange eyes
- Three dark stripes on their backs



NWS Maggots (larval baby flies)

- Light colored
- Mouth Hooks (teeth) visible under a microscope
- Live in and eat living flesh



Because they resemble other flies, diagnosis should never be based on appearance alone.

Why Fairs and Exhibitions Matter

Fairs bring together animals from many locations. This creates opportunities for diseases and parasites to spread.

Livestock superintendents, exhibitors, and animal owners should:

- Check animals daily for wounds and signs of illness.
- Monitor animals arriving from outside Maine.
- Ensure required animal movement documents accompany animals.
- Promptly isolate animals with suspicious wounds.
- Contact a veterinarian if NWS is suspected.

Before Animals Arrive at the Fair or Event

Ask exhibitors to:

- Inspect animals for wounds and navels on young animals.

- Treat and monitor any injuries
 - Bring required Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (CVIs), permits, or other movement documents.
 - Avoid transporting animals showing signs of disease or infestation.
-

What To Do If You Suspect NWS

For Animal Owners

Step 1: Contact your veterinarian immediately.

Be prepared to provide:

- Travel history
- Purchase history
- Fair or exhibition attendance history
- Animal movement paperwork

Step 2: Take photographs.

Photograph clearly on a white or plain colored background:

- Wounds
- Maggots
- Adult flies

Place a ruler or U.S. coin in the photo for size comparison.

Step 3: Save easily removed specimens.

While wearing gloves:

- Collect dead flies or surface maggots that are easily removed.
- Place maggots in a sealed container with 70% alcohol (ethanol). Dead flies in a sealed dry container. Bring them to your veterinarian.

Important

Do not mail or submit maggots or flies directly to a laboratory.

Official samples must be collected and submitted according to USDA and State Veterinarian instructions.

Quick Reference for Fair Livestock Superintendents

Isolate and Report If You Observe:

Signs	Action
Non-healing wound with maggots	Isolate the animal and contact the veterinarian
Foul-smelling wound	Contact veterinarian
Recent travel from NWS-affected areas, plus a suspicious wound	Contact veterinarian
Visible larvae (maggots) present in a wound <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be sure to check the sheath, navel, eyes, ears, nostrils, and between toes Tail docking, disbudding, tagging, recent tattoos, and any surgery sites 	Contact the veterinarian immediately and report to the State Veterinarian's office.

Remember, NWS is spread primarily through the movement of infested animals. Early detection and reporting are critical.

Travel and Movement Considerations

Maine currently has **no additional restrictions for healthy animals entering from NWS-affected areas**.

However:

- Other states may have additional requirements.
- Import requirements can change quickly.
- Owners should check destination requirements before traveling.

Before moving animals:

- ✓ Ensure animals are healthy.
- ✓ Examine animals for wounds or signs of infestation.
- ✓ Verify all required paperwork is complete.
- ✓ Confirm destination-state requirements.

Animals with suspected NWS should **not travel**.

NWS Resource Library

Learn More about NWS:

[Current Status of NWS](#)

[USDA Information Page for NWS](#)

[USDA Brief NWS in Livestock](#)

[USDA NWS Myth Busters](#)

[CDC NWS Information](#)

Graphic Images of NWS Cases in Animals

[Photos of NWS Cases](#)

Learn More about Animal Movement & NWS

[USDA Guidance for Dog & Cat Movement](#)

[Interstate Livestock Movement Requirement Search Engine](#)

[State of Maine Animal Importation Requirements](#)

[International Animal Export \(non-pet species\)](#)

[International Pet Travel Requirements](#)

Treatment Guidance Documents Resources for Veterinarians

[FARM Drug Residue Manual that Includes Approved NWS Treatments](#)

[FDA Resource for Veterinarians Treating NWS](#)

[Pesticides for NWS Guide](#)

Emergency Response Resource: The State of Maine Will Utilize

[USDA NWS Response Playbook](#)