



NEW WORLD SCREWWORM

Information for U.S. Sheep Producers

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⚠ IF YOU SUSPECT NEW WORLD SCREWWORM – ACT IMMEDIATELY

- Contact your veterinarian and your State Animal Health Official or USDA Area Veterinarian in Charge immediately.
- Samples for confirmation can be collected free of charge and must follow USDA APHIS protocols.
- Treat infested animals according to your veterinarian's recommendations.
- If left untreated, animals can die of NWS myiasis within one week.
- For current cases and recommendations: [Screwworm.gov](https://www.screwworm.gov)

WHAT TO DO RIGHT NOW

For many operations it is not feasible to change management and it is critical for all operations to regularly check animals for wounds.

- ❑ **Establish a vet relationship.** Contact your veterinarian now to establish a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) – your vet must know your operation before a crisis, not during one.
- ❑ **Know your contacts.** Visit [Screwworm.gov](https://www.screwworm.gov) for the current case map and your state's contact information.
- ❑ **Adjust your calendar.** Schedule shearing, lambing, and marking procedures (castration, tail docking, ear tagging) during cooler, low-fly-activity months when possible.
- ❑ **Step up inspections.** Inspect animals frequently – especially after any procedure that creates a wound.
- ❑ **Treat newborn navels.** Treat umbilical areas of newborn lambs promptly and provide timely wound care to speed healing.
- ❑ **Know the signs.** Unusual behavior, restlessness, bad odors, visible wound activity – these are fly strike warning signs.
- ❑ **Keep treatment records.** Document all treatments: dates, drug names, doses, withdrawal periods, and prescribing veterinarian.

WHAT IS NEW WORLD SCREWWORM?

New World screwworm (NWS, *Cochliomyia hominivorax*) is a highly devastating pest. NWS larvae (maggots) burrow into the flesh of living animals, a condition called myiasis or fly strike. This causes serious tissue damage and can be fatal.

NWS can infest:

- Livestock
- Pets
- Wildlife
- Occasionally birds
- Rarely, humans
- The pest does not typically spread directly from one infected animal to another. However, larvae feed on the host animal for 5–7 days before dropping off to complete their life cycle in the soil.
- Spread mainly occurs when infested animals are moved by people.
- NWS is eradicated using the sterile insect technique, which releases sterile male flies to reduce reproduction in wild populations.
- Rapid detection, reporting, and treatment are essential to prevent spread and protect the sheep industry.
- **For current cases and recommendations, visit [Screwworm.gov](https://www.screwworm.gov).**

MINIMIZE RISK

- NWS activity is greatest when ambient temperatures rise above 80°F, especially with a relative humidity of 30–70%.
- The fly is less active when temperatures drop below 59°F for a sustained period of time.
- Adjust shearing and breeding season so that lambing and marking procedures (castration, tail docking, ear tagging) occur during low fly season to reduce exposure.
- Follow CDC recommendations to protect yourself, your family, and your employees from infestation.

TREATMENT DECISIONS

A veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) is critical for making treatment decisions based on current recommendations for sheep in your area. A VCPR means your veterinarian knows your animals and your operation – establish this relationship before a crisis, not during one.

EXTRA-LABEL DRUG USE (ELDU) – WHAT PRODUCERS NEED TO KNOW

Your veterinarian may prescribe FDA-approved drugs for extra-label use (uses not listed on the label) in accordance with existing regulations (21 CFR Part 530), including uses not listed on the label and extended withdrawal periods supported by appropriate scientific evidence.

Extra-label use of drugs is limited to drugs with full FDA approval. It does not include conditionally approved drugs, index-listed products, or products with Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) only.

A small number of animal drugs have full FDA approval for non-NWS indications AND a conditional approval or EUA for NWS. These drugs can still be used in an extra-label manner because they carry a full approval.

- The treatment charts on the accompanying page are for guidance only. Refer to the FDA for the most current treatment options for NWS.
- These charts are not treatment recommendations. Decisions must be made with knowledge of expected efficacy, possible side effects, and food safety implications.
- Review the FDA Fact Sheets (linked in charts) for each drug. Read labels for EPA- or FDA-approved options.
- Consult FARAD.org for food animal residue avoidance and withdrawal guidance.

DISPOSAL & DECONTAMINATION

As part of the NWS larvae life cycle, NWS larvae drop off the host to pupate in the soil. It is critical to collect all expelled larvae from treated wounds.

Larvae disposal options:

- Place larvae in sealed tubes filled with alcohol (to kill the larvae) and double-bag tubes before disposal
- Incinerate larvae

Holding areas and bedding:

- Must be treated with an approved larvicidal insecticide before disposal. Work with your State Animal Health Official or USDA Area Veterinarian in Charge for recommendations in your area.
- After insecticide has taken effect, wash treated holding areas with soap and warm water to reduce animal exposure to chemicals.

KEY CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

- [Screwworm.gov](https://www.screwworm.gov) – current cases, state contacts, and updated recommendations
- [Your State Animal Health Official](#)
- [USDA Area Veterinarian in Charge](#)
- [FARAD.org](https://www.farad.org) – food animal residue avoidance and withdrawal guidance
- [FDA](#) – current treatment options and drug fact sheets
- [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov) – recommendations to protect yourself, your family, and your employees