cdfa CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD & AGRICULTURE

New World Screwworm (NWS) Trapping & Surveillance Response and NWS Workgroup ACTIVITY REPORT

Activity report #: 4
Data current as of February 5, 2026
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Summary:

California and the US continue to remain free from NWS.

On October 21, 2025, through a combined USDA and CDFA team, California began active surveillance for NWS flies with the placement of eight traps along the Southern California-Mexico border. Ongoing maintenance and monitoring of these traps with submission of flies to NVSL for prompt identification began the week of November 9, 2025. CDFA continues to monitor traps and submit flies twice a week as conditions permit.

As of February 5, 2026, the closest confirmed active detections of NWS in Mexico have occurred in Tamaulipas, approximately **187 miles south of the U.S. border**, with all affected animals remaining within the state with no reported history of movement from outside the area. USDA is working closely with Mexico's National Service for Agro-Alimentary Health, Safety, and Quality (SENASICA) to gather additional details and assess the situation. There are **7 active cases in Tamaulipas** and **approximately 714 active cases across Mexico**, and while individual case counts fluctuate, the overall trend reflects a continued northward spread of NWS from regions where it had been successfully controlled for decades.

To mitigate risk, **USDA will reallocate aircraft and sterile insects** to strengthen coverage along the U.S.–Mexico border. The new dispersal zone will extend about **50 miles into Texas**, adjacent to Tamaulipas, to reinforce eradication efforts. To support these operations, the **dispersal facility at Moore Air Force Base** in Texas currently has **10 personnel on detail and plans to hire a total of 40 staff**. The facility was also scheduled to receive **40 liters of pupae on February 2**, which will be **dyed prior to emergence** to allow for rapid identification of sterile flies if they are captured in U.S. traps

Earlier this week, the importance of strict import protocols was underscored when a **horse imported from Argentina** was presented at an **equine import quarantine facility in Florida**. During routine inspection, APHIS identified an **open wound containing larvae**. Samples were immediately collected and shipped to the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) in Iowa, where the larvae were confirmed to be NWS. The **horse was treated promptly with medication to eliminate larvae**, following established import procedures, and will remain in quarantine until cleared of infestation. Because this was detected at the import facility, **this is not considered a US case of NWS**.

The most effective form of surveillance continues to be close monitoring of animals and reporting any suspicious fly larva in wounds to your local CDFA Animal Health Branch district office to initiate rapid foreign animal disease investigation and early detection.

CDFA began NWS preparedness activities several months ago through the creation of workgroups and those activities continue to expand. Outreach has been performed through phone calls, emails, and site visits to over 350 stakeholders within the State of California including: feed stores and pet stores, dairies, USDA accredited veterinarians, livestock markets and feeding operations, petting zoos, livestock haulers, livestock land owners, state slaughter plants, brand holders, Imperial and San Diego county Public Health Department Animal Care and Control, Humane Societies, College Extensions, Universities, High schools, fairs, and Agricultural Commissioners. Additionally, articles have been written for the California Veterinary Medical Association magazine, California Veterinarian, California Dairy Quality Assurance Program newsletter, as well as for the Animal Health Branch newsletter. Webinars for producers and veterinarians have also been held periodically.

By the Numbers:

- Number of infested counties: 0
- Number of counties with Swormlure traps placed: 2
- Number of Swormlure traps placed by county:
  - Imperial County: 4
  - San Diego County: 4
- Number of Completed Rounds of Surveillance[1]:
  - Imperial County: 20
  - San Diego County: 15[2]
- Flies:
  - Number of flies submitted to NVSL:
    - Imperial County: 993
    - San Diego County: 456
  - Number of negative flies[3]: 1,389

Outreach:

Outreach has been conducted using webinars, in-person conversations, emails, or phone. Topics discussed relate to NWS and include, but are not limited to: What is NWS, fly and maggot identification, animal movement, sample collection and submission, reporting requirements, herd health and management, farm fly control, and animal treatment therapy in the case of infestation. We have completed translating documents into Spanish.

- Outreach materials used when performing outreach activities:
  - CDFA NWS Website
  - CDFA New World Screwworm Factsheet
  - CDFA 2025 NWS Outreach Packet, contains:
    - CDFA New World Screwworm Factsheet
    - CDFA Visual Comparison: New World Screwworm vs. Other Flies
    - CDFA New World Screwworm Sample Collection Protocol

[1] Field teams collect flies and rebait deployed traps up to twice a week, dependent on external factors.
[2] Surveillance temporarily paused due to low ambient temperatures resulting in minimal fly activity.
[3] There may be a lag from NVSL returning results; no known positives.

- Outreach materials translated into Spanish
  - Collection Protocol
  - NWS Disposal and Cleaning Livestock Infographic
  - NWS Disposal Household Animals Infographic
  - NWS Feature Table
  - NWS Treatment Infographic

- USDA resource links
  - New World Screwworm
  - New World Screwworm Response Playbook - DRAFT
  - USDA launched a new unified NWS website, screwworm.gov on November 21. The site centralizes New World screwworm information across the federal government and reflects a whole-of-government effort to fight the pest.

Planning and Preparedness

National Engagement: CDFA staff have participated on the national committees that developed the U.S. NWS playbook and interstate movement guidelines. We are also working with other states, including Arizona, on continuity of business and interstate movement in the event of an incursion.

NWS Workgroup Activities:

There are CDFA NWS workgroups that meet weekly to monthly and collaborate with other organizations such as the California Department of Pest Detection/Emergency Projects (PDEP), California Department of Fish & Wildlife, and U.S Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS). As a result of these work group meetings, several outreach documents, infographics, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been created and are actively undergoing revisions and approvals. Below is a brief list of what has been created through these workgroups. The list includes both finalized and draft forms in review:

- Sick Call Form
- Two (2) external notifications letters
- Interstate movement animal document
- Intrastate movement animal document
- Policy development document
- Infographic topics including: Collection protocol; Disposal household animals; Disposal livestock; Features table; and Animal treatment Infographic.
- CDFA's NWS Webpage is now live and continues to be updated based on feedback (link above).
- SOPs include: Quarantine & Zoning; Outreach & Education; Animal Husbandry Inspection and Treatment; NWS Checkpoint; Trap Deployment and Maintenance; Sample Collection; and Disposal.