

New World screwworm flies approach United States

New World screwworm is a **parasitic fly** that primarily affects livestock but can also infest humans, according to the CDC. The infestation starts with a female screwworm fly laying eggs on open wounds or other parts of the body in live warm-blooded animals and people. One female fly can lay 200 to 300 eggs at a time and up to 3,000 during its lifespan. When these eggs hatch into maggots, they burrow into the wound to feed on the living flesh.

The screwworm flies were eliminated from the United States in 1966 and eradicated as far south as Panama by 2000, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation. The flies started **re-emerging** above the biological barrier in Panama in 2022. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Mexico has confirmed several cases of screwworm flies within 400 miles of the U.S./Mexico border since July this year. As of Dec. 16, the closest detection of screwworm flies to the United States was in Nuevo León, Mexico. There are currently **no screwworm flies in the United States**.

