

New World Screwworm: What You Need to Know Before Traveling Internationally with a Pet

What is New World Screwworm?

[New World screwworm](#) (NWS) is a fly that lays its eggs in wounds or body openings such as the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, or genitals. The eggs hatch into maggots that feed on the living flesh of animals. While it mostly affects livestock, NWS can also infest cats, dogs, wildlife, and people. Federal and State officials work continuously to keep it out of the United States and protect agriculture, wildlife, and public health.

How To Protect Your Pet

If you are traveling to or from [NWS-affected countries](#) with a dog or cat, talk to your veterinarian about:

- NWS risk factors, signs of NWS infestation, and how to prevent it
- Scheduling veterinary exams before and after travel
- Whether taking your pet to NWS-affected countries is necessary
- Finding veterinary resources in the destination country (The [U.S. Embassy or consulate](#) in your destination country may also be able to help guide you to local veterinary resources.)

Important: Pets showing signs of NWS infestation may be denied entry into the United States and sent back to the country of departure at the pet owner's expense.

Bringing Dogs and Cats into the United States

[Dogs](#) and [cats](#) are subject to the following import requirements from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS):

- [Bringing a Pet from Another Country into the United States](#) | APHIS
- [Bringing Your Dog or Cat into the United States](#) | CDC
- [Importing a Dog for Adoption or Resale](#) | APHIS

Additionally, dogs arriving from [NWS-affected countries](#), including those returning to the United States, must have a health certificate signed by an official government veterinarian in the country of departure that:



Key Considerations

- New World screwworm can affect dogs and cats—not just livestock.
- Know and follow all U.S. entry requirements for pets.
- Pets suspected of having screwworm may be denied entry into the United States.

- Confirms the dog was inspected for NWS within 5 days of travel
- Confirms the dog does not have an NWS infestation

Signs of NWS in Animals

Watch for:

- Maggots or white egg masses in wounds or body openings such as the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, or genitals
- Foul odor or the smell of decay
- Signs of pain including irritated behavior, depression, not eating, and isolating themselves from other animals or people

Immediately report signs of NWS to your local veterinarian, [State veterinarian's office](#), or [USDA](#).

Reporting Suspected Cases of NWS In People

Contact your healthcare provider right away. Healthcare providers should report suspected cases to the [local or state public health authorities](#).