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USDA Update on Coordinated Federal Response to Protect United States from New World Screwworm

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Under the decisive leadership of U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) continues to make substantial progress on our [sweeping, five-pronged plan](#) to protect the nation's livestock, wildlife, and agricultural communities from the threat of New World screwworm (NWS). This whole-of-government effort reflects the Trump administration's unwavering commitment to safeguarding America's agricultural economy and domestic food supply. **As of October 17, NWS has not been detected in any animals or traps in the United States.**

Vigilance and Preparedness at Home

With the support of industry, state, and Tribal partners, the United States remains vigilant against and fully prepared for possible NWS incursions. USDA is deploying intensive surveillance and monitoring systems; investing in NWS innovation; and supporting robust response activities in Mexico and Central America. Our teams are in place along the U.S. border, deploying over 113 NWS-specific traps and lures across high-risk areas of border states, and leveraging thousands of fruit fly/insect traps aligned all along the Southern border. At least 22,210 *Cochliomyia* flies from traps in all locations have been submitted to NVSL for identification, with no NWS

detections to date.

USDA has conducted extensive U.S. training efforts and over 50 stakeholder meetings, increasing regional awareness of NWS and enabling more comprehensive suspect case reporting and response. Outreach and response materials, including the [NWS Disease Response Strategy](#), ensure coordination between USDA, states, and industry in advance of a U.S. case. Earlier today, USDA also shared the [NWS Response Playbook](#), an operational plan with detailed strategies of how USDA will work with States and other partners if we had an NWS detection within our borders.

In addition, USDA examines all wildlife captured in high-risk counties in Texas for signs of NWS infestation. To date, more than 1,600 wild animals have been examined, with no evidence of NWS found.

Cross-Border NWS Response and Collaboration

Although Mexico continues to confirm new cases of NWS, the overwhelming majority of these remain in the far southern part of the country, with no significant northward expansion over the past several months. The two northernmost detections (approximately 70 and 170 miles from the U.S. border, respectively) occurred in Nuevo León in young cattle transported from Chiapas, Mexico. While the ideal number of cases in the northern parts of the country is zero, Mexico's ability to conduct rapid surveillance and notification has ensured these transportation-related cases remain isolated incidents. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) continues to coordinate sterile insect transport and release at prioritized locations in Mexico and is providing close oversight on nearby surveillance activities.

On August 19, USDA and Mexico's agriculture authority, SENASICA, signed a collaborative NWS Action Plan with detailed actions about trapping, surveillance, and movement protocols that will help stop the spread of the parasite. The plan allows for U.S. audits of Mexico's response. USDA is also helping SENASICA to implement a more risk-based trapping plan, with the installation of 960 traps north of the current Mexican aerial dispersal zone. USDA has assisted Mexico with hiring over 200 surge staff for fly trapping and animal movement controls within Mexico, and the Mexican government has authorized 168 NWS checkpoints for official inspections, preventative treatment, and wound care. These immediate response protocols have resulted in at least 7,245 animals within Mexico receiving timely treatment for NWS.

Southern U.S. ports of entry remain closed to livestock imports as part of ongoing efforts to maintain robust safeguards

Sterile Fly Dispersal and Production

Mass production and targeted dispersal of sterile flies remain critical components of our effective response. USDA continues to produce 100 million sterile flies per week from the COPEG facility in Panama, and is also investing \$21 million to support Mexico's renovation of an existing fruit fly facility in Metapa—which will double NWS production capacity once complete. With ongoing support from APHIS technical experts, Mexico anticipates this sterile fly production to begin as soon as summer 2026. To expand our domestic response capacity, USDA has also begun construction on a sterile fly dispersal facility at Moore Air Base in Edinburg, TX that is projected to begin operating in early 2026. APHIS is also expediting design and construction of a sterile fly production facility in Southern Texas, with a targeted maximum capacity of 300 million sterile flies per week. Once combined with the 200 million sterile flies, we are projected to have access to by next summer, this will approach the approximately 500 million sterile flies per week that USDA produced when it successfully eradicated NWS populations from large swaths of the United States in the 1960s and 1970s.

Innovation and New Tools

APHIS examines all wildlife captured in high-risk counties in Texas for evidence of NWS infestation; more than 1,600 wild animals have been examined to date with no evidence of NWS. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently approved new therapeutic tools that are effective against this pest, in case cases are confirmed in U.S. animals. Furthermore, USDA has committed up to \$100 million towards breakthrough technologies through the NWS Grand Challenge, which will solicit ideas to develop new therapeutics, enhance sterile fly production, and advance NWS traps and lures. USDA is also exploring the suitability and effectiveness of technologies like e-beam and x-ray sterilization and genetically engineered flies.

Unified Federal Response

USDA has established a dedicated New World Screwworm Directorate within APHIS focused on coordinating and implementing [the Secretary's plans](#). USDA is collaborating closely with the following agencies to ensure a unified federal response

to [NWS](#): Department of the Interior, Department of Energy, Department of War, Department of State, Environmental Protection Agency, [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), [Customs and Border Protection](#), [Food and Drug Administration](#), and others.