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USDA Releases Updated New World Screwworm Response Playbook



Contact: APHISpress@usda.gov

Strengthening Preparedness Through Robust Federal, State, and Stakeholder Collaboration

WASHINGTON, DC- April 8, 2026 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is sharing the updated *New World Screwworm (NWS) Response Playbook*, a comprehensive guide designed to support coordinated, science-based action should NWS be detected in the United States.

"USDA continues to execute Secretary Rollins' five-pronged plan to keep NWS out of the United States," said USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, Dudley Hoskins. "While we are aggressively safeguarding American agriculture and working with Mexico to prevent further northward spread, we must also ensure that our domestic response plans are ready for immediate activation. Strong coordination with states, producers, veterinarians, sportsmen, and other partners is essential to achieving that goal."

The updated Playbook outlines critical science-based strategies for Federal, state, tribal, and local responders, including how to:

- Coordinate response operations
- Reduce spread and prevent establishment of NWS in new areas
- Manage the pest in infested animals
- Implement NWS fly surveillance and control measures
- Maintain continuity of business
- Support efficient information flow and situational awareness

Developed Through Extensive Engagement

APHIS shared a draft Playbook in October 2025 and worked to gather feedback from state animal health officials, Federal partners, livestock and wildlife industry groups, tribal partners, veterinary organizations, and other key stakeholders to prepare the updated version. Their expertise and operational experience were essential in shaping practical, field-ready guidance for real-world response scenarios.

Based on this feedback, APHIS made several key updates to the Playbook including clarifying and expanding:

- Terminology (e.g., NWS establishment, suspect, zones, types, phases, quarantines), treatment versus preventative NWS animal drugs and pesticide products;
- Agency roles, responsibilities, and authorities
- Animal movement requirements
- Wildlife management, including:
    - Improved description of roles, responsibilities and authorities related to wildlife
    - Added and improved definitions of confined, farmed, and free-ranging wildlife
    - Refined guidance on use of antiparasitic drugs and pesticide for use on/in wildlife
    - Development guidance on wildlife surveillance

Additionally, APHIS updated four supplemental guidance documents that were posted with the draft Playbook and added an additional eight supplemental guidance documents, all referenced in the Playbook.

To ensure continued alignment with state-level plans and industry practices, APHIS will continue to revise the Playbook as preparedness activities advance and evolve. The agency will continue to work directly with states, territories, tribes, Federal agencies, industry, wildlife, and other partners to refine response tools, strengthen coordination, and support joint planning efforts.

To access the NWS Foreign Animal Disease Preparedness and Response website, please visit www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-emergencies/nws. For more information about USDA’s efforts to prevent and prepare for NWS, please visit Screwworm.gov.

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