

New World Screwworm (NWS) Response

Overview of Wildlife Surveillance

April 8, 2026

Note: These procedures may be revised as the situation develops or more information becomes available.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This document provides guidance on USDA recommendations for potential surveillance in wildlife. The type of surveillance implemented in wildlife for NWS could be influenced by local infrastructure, density and type of wildlife species present in the area, and feasibility. Below are some general considerations for different surveillance approaches. It is recommended that a combination of several surveillance strategies be implemented to improve the detection of NWS. Surveillance activities could include but are not limited to:

- Use of camera traps
- Hunter check stations
- Road-kill surveillance
- Inspection of animals handled as part of routine wildlife handling by agencies, university researchers, and wildlife control entities
- Reporting from wildlife rehabbers, private practice veterinarians, law enforcement, taxidermists, wild game meat processors, and public
- Other activities as opportunities arise

Any suspect case of NWS (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*) myiasis resulting in the surveillance approaches described below should be reported immediately to the State Animal Health Official ([SAHO](#)) or U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Area Veterinarian in Charge ([AVIC](#)) and designated wildlife health POC. The SAHO and AVIC will initiate a Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) investigation (FADI), if warranted. The AVIC will coordinate with the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) to communicate results to the SAHO. For more information, refer to the [NWS Foreign Animal Disease Investigation Guide](#).

Camera Traps:

Below is a non-exhaustive list of considerations when using camera traps to conduct surveillance for NWS.

1. Land access: permission needs to be obtained before any cameras can be placed.
2. Targeted camera placement is encouraged to maximize detection of affected animals. Cameras should be placed in animal congregation areas. Strategically target areas known for food, water, shelter, and movement corridors.
3. Cameras should be placed facing north, when possible, to avoid false triggers due to sun.
4. Cameras should be placed at an appropriate height for the focal species – a height (around 20 inches) is suitable for capturing a wide range of ground-based animals but if the focus is deer or wild pigs a height closer to 36 inches is more appropriate.
5. The area in front of the camera should also be cleared of brush, grass, etc. out to the maximum trigger distance for the camera being used to ensure a clear view of the animals

captured and reduce photos taken due to vegetation movement. Depending on the time of year, this may require periodic maintenance as vegetation grows.

6. Images captured by cameras should be reviewed routinely to ensure NWS suspect animals are identified quickly. AI tools ([CameraTrapDetector](#), [SpeciesNet](#), and [Wildlife Insights](#)) are available for automating species identification and removing images without animals.
7. Camera sites should be routinely visited to ensure cameras are working properly.

Hunter Check Station Surveillance

1. Animals harvested by hunters offer a valuable surveillance strategy for NWS and, if suspect cases are condemned, this type of surveillance offers an additional opportunity to reduce spread of NWS to new areas.
2. If a state does not typically implement hunter check stations, they could be considered as a surveillance strategy.
3. When a suspect case is identified:
 - a. Samples will be collected according to the sample collection procedures guidance.
 - b. The check-station attendant will notify the wildlife health POC and the wildlife health POC will notify the AVIC/SAHO of the suspect case.
 - c. AVIC/SAHO will determine whether the carcass can be moved off-site by the hunter.
4. Carcasses suspected of having NWS should be handled using Disposal and Disinfestation of Animals and Materials (link when approved).
5. If hunting is permitted within the infested zone (IZ), place hunter check stations on major roadways within the IZ. Additional check stations can be used within the Adjacent Surveillance Zone (ASZ).
6. Additionally, because check stations will serve to congregate carcasses it is recommended that fly surveillance also be implemented at and near check stations.
7. Hunter check stations offer an opportunity for hunter education and awareness. Outreach materials for hunters can be found here ([Information for Hunters](#)).

Road Killed Animal Surveillance:

1. Surveillance of recently road-killed animals could add value for detection of NWS and is commonly used for other diseases in wildlife.
2. Surveillance should be conducted only on fresh carcasses to reduce submissions of larvae that are not NWS.
3. Establishing communication and reporting mechanisms for State Patrol, Department of Transportation, or other State or local officials that might be notified of a vehicle collision with wildlife is important.
4. NWS response staff should be observant of new carcasses while conducting operational activities.
5. Unaffected carcasses should be disposed of in accordance with local policy. If the policy is to leave unaffected carcasses in place during investigation, carcasses determined to not have NWS should be marked (e.g. orange spray paint, etc.) in a way to indicate that they have already been inspected to avoid reinspection.

6. Suspect carcasses should be handled in accordance with the guidance for disposal of wildlife carcasses and wildlife carcass disposal policy for other diseases within the state (See Disposal and Disinfestation Guidance for New World Screwworm (NWS) Infestations).
7. All investigations should be recorded in a central database that includes at minimum species, location, date, and if samples were submitted for identification.

Routine Wildlife Handling Activities

1. Wildlife agencies, university researchers, wildlife control entities, and other entities that routinely contact wildlife can monitor for NWS as part of regular wildlife handling activities.
2. When there is a concern or risk of NWS potentially being present, all handled wildlife should be inspected for signs of myiasis.
3. Inspection guidance should be provided to all entities handling wildlife.
4. All wildlife inspections should be documented and allow for, at minimum, the reporting of the number, location, and species of animals inspected.

Public Reporting

1. Organizations, companies, and the public that commonly contact wildlife can provide valuable surveillance for NWS. These could include but are not limited to wildlife rehabbers, private practice veterinarians, law enforcement, taxidermists, wild game meat processors, and the public.
2. When possible, existing wildlife disease reporting hotlines, web applications, or mobile applications should be used to aid with reporting.
3. Outreach to these groups through targeted education campaigns will be needed to maximize reporting of potential NWS cases.
4. All reports received should be documented and account for, at minimum, reporting of the number, location, and species of animals reported.