



Georgia Department of Agriculture

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Gary W. Black
Commissioner

New World Screwworm

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On September 30, 2016, New World Screwworms were found in Key Deer in the Florida Keys.

As a young boy, I remember fighting screwworms while working cattle with my father. It caused serious economic hardships for livestock producers. I also remember the eradication effort, when planes released sterilized male flies. Today, Screwworm is a serious problem in many parts of the world, but has been eradicated from the USA since the 1960's. The New World Screwworm (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*) affects all mammals—livestock, pets, wild animals, humans—and sometimes birds are infested. The Screwworm fly lays eggs in an open wound; then the larvae (maggots) hatch and eat living tissue. This can rapidly cause serious illness and even death.

The USDA and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) have responded quickly and are attempting to contain and eradicate the Screwworm population. We do not want Screwworms in Georgia. Please make yourself familiar with Screwworms and how they present in animals. Be alert. There are many types of flies and their larvae that are endemic in Georgia which do not cause the serious problems associated with Screwworms; however, the Screwworm fly and larvae are readily identifiable. The larvae invade living tissue rapidly and cause illness quickly. If you suspect screwworm, report it immediately to:

Georgia State Veterinarian's office/Animal Health - 404-656-3667

<https://gdaforms.wufoo.com/forms/georgia-reportable-animal-disease-form/>

If possible collect the larvae in jars while wearing gloves, with and without rubbing alcohol, for identification. You will be contacted by a Veterinary Medical Officer that will arrange for a visit to examine the animal and collect samples, including the larvae.

For further details regarding the New World Screwworm situation in the Florida Keys, please use the link below. Florida has a dedicated website for the public and it is updated daily:

<http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Animal-Industry/Consumer-Resources/Reportable-Animal-Diseases/New-World-Screwworm>

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