

Foreign Animal Disease

VETERINARY INFORMATION ON NEW WORLD SCREWORM

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has confirmed the detection of New World screwworm in a stray dog that was found in Homestead, Florida. The presence of New World Screwworm, a foreign animal disease, was first reported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture on October 3, 2016, after samples from the Lower Keys, in Monroe County, tested positive.

New World Screwworm are fly larvae (maggots) that can infest livestock and other warm-blooded animals, including people. Screwworm larvae most often enter an animal through an open wound or the umbilicus of neonates and feed on the animal's living flesh. If detected early, animals and people can be treated and fully recover. Rapid and thorough response efforts are imperative. Screwworm is a federal and state reportable disease. Any suspect cases must be reported to the State Veterinarian's Office at 1-800-HELP-FLA.

Clinical Signs of Infection in Animals

- Wounds in living animals infested with maggots
- Serosanguinous discharge from the infested wound
- Malodor
- Discomfort
- Anorexia and decreased milk production
- Seclusion from rest of herd or flock



Sample Collection

Veterinarians should remove larvae from the wound with tweezers, place them in 80% - 95% alcohol, and call 1-800-HELP-FLA to report any suspect cases of screwworm.



Treatment and Prevention

Below are guidelines for consideration in treatment of patients.

- Treat the wound as clinically appropriate, removing maggots and necrotic tissue.
- Capstar can be given to dogs and cats prior to wound treatment to aid in larval expulsion and death.
- Initially, it is critical to recheck the wound daily, until no further larvae are emerging and the wound is granulating.
- Treat DOGS with approved permethrin based flea and tick product per label directions. Take the usual precautions if cats are in the same household.



- Avermectins are effective treatments and preventatives and include ivermectin, doramectin and moxidectin (Cydectin).
 - Topical applications may not become fully effective until 72 hours after administration.
 - Doses that are effective to treat screwworm are higher than monthly heartworm preventative doses.
 - The use of avermectins are off label usage for treatment of screwworm.

- Systemic (oral and injectable) avermectins are effective within 12 hours and have residual activity for up to 28 days.

- Insecticides such as permethrins and coumaphos can be effective.
 - For specific insecticide products please reference the USDA FAD PReP Manual, *Disease Response Manual, New World Screwworm Myiasis*, May 2014.