

## How do I collect maggots?

Regular sampling and laboratory identification of maggots from infested wounds is key to early detection.

### To collect maggots for identification:

1. Confine the animal for sampling.
2. Gently flush the wound with cool, clean, running water to wash off any secondary-strike maggots.
3. Using tweezers, collect up to 10 maggots that remain deep in the wound and place in a container.
4. Pour hot water (just off the boil) over the maggots in the container and wait for 2 minutes for the maggots to die.
5. Transfer maggots to a small, watertight container and immerse the maggots in alcohol-based hand sanitiser or 80% ethanol.
6. Seal the container and place it in a zip-lock bag with some absorbent paper.
7. Phone your state/territory agriculture department to get advice about sending maggots to your government laboratory. If posting, pack in a small padded bag or box and leave the Aviation Security and Dangerous Goods Declaration unsigned to send by surface mail. Lodge over the counter at any Post Office.

Entomologists specifically trained in SWF identification will examine maggots submitted to the laboratory and will inform you of the results.

Free, ready-made maggot collection kits are available from your state or territory agriculture department.

## Where do I send maggots?

Contact your state or territory agriculture department to get advice on sending maggots for SWF surveillance.

### Queensland

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries  
Customer Service Centre  
**13 25 23**

### Northern Territory

Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade  
Berrimah Veterinary Laboratories  
**(08) 8999 2249**

### Western Australia

Department of Primary Industries and  
Regional Development  
DPIRD Diagnostic Laboratory Services  
**(08) 9368 3351**

### Other states and territories

Visit your agriculture department's website for contact details.

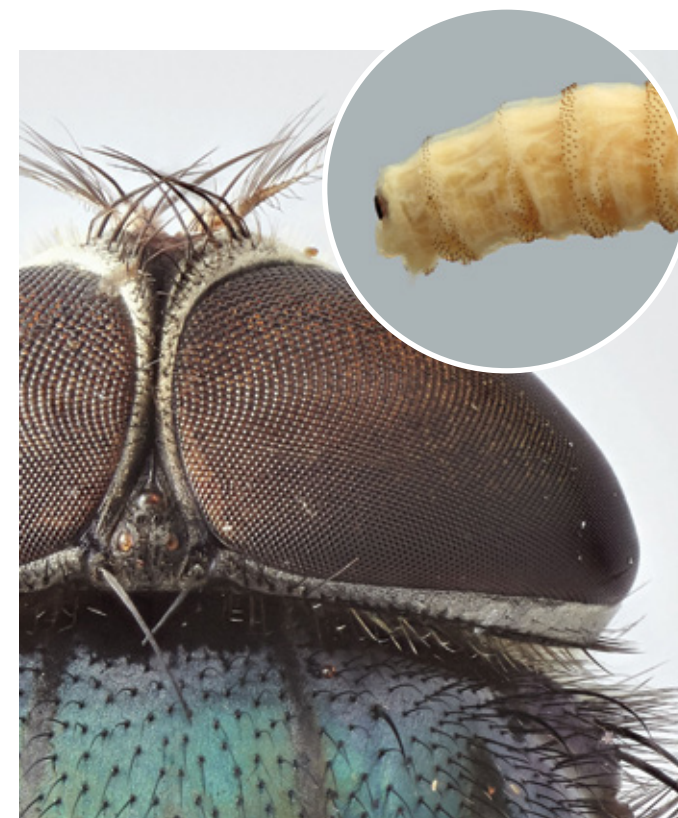
### More information

For more information about SWF, visit  
[www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/SWF](http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/SWF)

**EMERGENCY ANIMAL  
DISEASE WATCH HOTLINE  
1800 675 888**

# Got maggots?

Think screw-worm fly



## What is screw-worm fly and why is it a problem?



Screw-worm fly (SWF) is a type of blowfly whose maggots burrow into the wounds of animals and humans. The maggots feed on the surrounding healthy flesh and grow, causing the wound to quickly become larger. Infested wounds often become infected, and in severe cases, lead to death.

While SWF is not present in Australia, it is widespread in tropical regions around the world (Figure 1). If SWF were to establish in Australia, up to \$100M would be lost annually through livestock production losses and control costs. The pain and distress of wounds would also have severe impacts on pets, wildlife and people.

## How can I help?

Keeping Australia free from SWF relies on early detection. You can help by looking for wounds that may be infested with SWF and **reporting anything suspicious** to your local veterinarian, state or territory agriculture department or by calling the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline.

**Take a photo of the wound and maggots, and if possible, collect and send maggots for laboratory identification.**

Early detection will enable us to minimise the costs of an incursion and eradicate SWF from Australia more quickly.

## How do I spot screw-worm fly?

You won't recognise the adult fly because SWF looks very similar to many other blowflies found in Australia. Look for wounds containing pale, off-white maggots. This includes large wounds, wounds that

fail to heal normally, and wounds that emit a strong pungent, sickly smell.

Likely sites for wounds infested with SWF on animals include:

- husbandry wounds – from dehorning, castration, branding, tail docking and ear tagging
- newborns – navel
- just after lambing/calving – the vulva or perineum of the mother
- skin punctures – from vaccinations, ticks and buffalo flies
- trauma – from barbed wire, horns and other penetrating objects
- sheep – corners of the eyes and breech region without obvious trauma (not typical breech fly-strike)
- dogs – weeping skin sores, fight wounds, anal gland abscesses, eye and ear discharges and lip fold eczema.

Confirmation of the species of maggot requires specialist expertise.

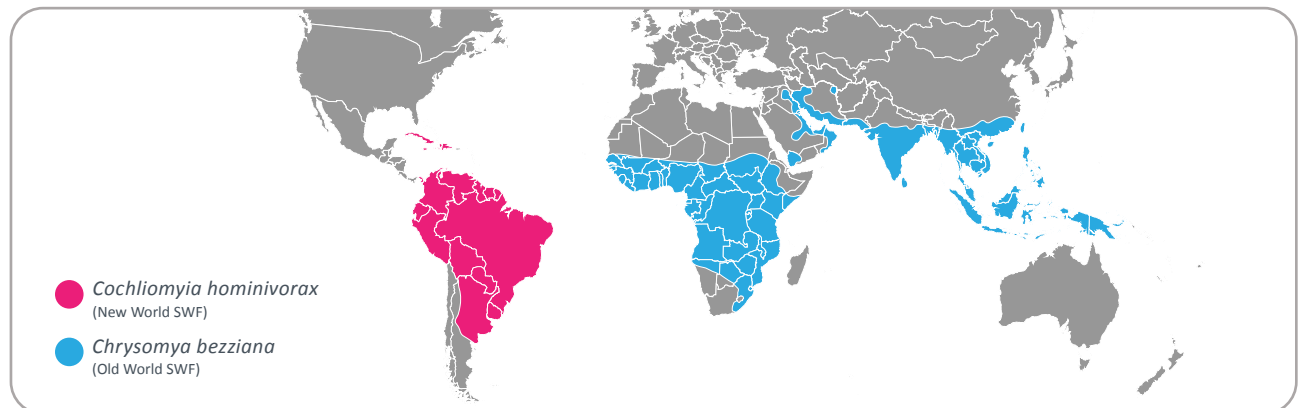


Figure 1. Distribution of *Chrysomya bezziana* (Old World SWF) and *Cochliomyia hominivorax* (New World SWF).