

2024 USAHA Resolution 27

efforts have been increased to get ahead of the northern movement of NWS utilizing air drops of sterile flies from planes and ground dispersal chambers in Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica.

NWS eradication is accomplished by the sterile insect technique which involves the mass-rearing and sterilization, using radiation of a target pest, followed by the systematic area-wide release of the sterile males by air or ground over defined areas, where they mate with wild females resulting in no offspring and a declining pest population. Since the outbreak of NWS began in summer 2023, more than 4.5 billion sterile flies have been released. Current sterile fly production is approximately 95 million flies per week and maximum sterile fly production capacity is 100 million flies per week. Total costs of eradication efforts to this point exceed \$54 million.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States (US) Congress to appropriate annual funding to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), International Services to support and enhance ongoing new world screwworm (NWS) eradication efforts in Central America, to include funding for measures such as increasing sterile fly production and release capabilities, until the pest is pushed south of the Darien Gap in Panama.

USAHA requests USDA-APHIS to perform a risk assessment for the reintroduction, control, and eradication of NWS infestation in the US as soon as practical to provide updated information for refining mitigation and response strategies and projecting economic impacts and costs.

USAHA requests that USDA-APHIS conduct training and outreach regarding NWS surveillance and eradication at all southern ports of entry through collaboration with other federal agencies, such as US Customs and Border Protection, to mitigate the threat of reintroduction of the pest through increased awareness and, consequently, earlier detection of potential NWS reintroduction. Additionally, USAHA urges USDA-APHIS to prioritize updating NWS outreach materials and production and distribution of no-cost ectoparasite collection kits to increase stakeholder awareness and promote surveillance.