

FACT SHEET

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EXTERNAL PARASITES ATTACKING SWINE IN TEXAS

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External parasites can greatly reduce the production efficiency of swine, and severe infestations may cause death. Troublesome parasites can be controlled effectively through proper use of certain insecticides. Specific chemical control recommendations and usage restrictions frequently change, and periodic revisions in recommendations are necessary. For a complete listing of insecticides and their recommended use for swine external parasite control, refer to the current issue of MP-691, *Texas Guide for Controlling External Parasites on Livestock and Poultry*, available from county Extension agents or the Department of Agricultural Information, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77840.

Hog Louse, *Haematopinus suis* (Linnaeus)

The hog louse is a blood-sucking parasite. Severe infestations can cause serious loss of flesh, poor utilization and general unthriftiness. The hog louse, one of the largest lice known, reaches 5 or 6 mm in length and is bluish-gray. The lice feed mainly on the tender areas of the skin but may be found over the entire body.

Each female louse glues 1 to 20 eggs on a single bristle, laying up to 90 eggs over a 25-day period. The eggs hatch in 12 to 20 days and the young lice become active immediately. They reach maturity in about 10 days.

Sarcoptic Mange Mite, *Sarcoptes scabiei suis* (De Geer)

Sarcoptic mange is caused by a small yellowish mite which is scarcely visible to the naked eye. The mites burrow into the skin, forming tunnels within which each female lays 10 to 25 eggs. The eggs hatch in 3 to 10 days, and the young mites reach maturity in 10 to 12 days. The burrowing of the mites causes lesions which usually appear first on the head. These lesions spread toward the rear of the body until the entire body may be covered. The skin becomes thickened, yellowish or pinkish and raw. The animals may lose their hair as a result of heavy infestations. Hogs of all ages are susceptible, but younger and older animals are affected most seriously.

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Hog Follicle Mite, *Demodex phylloides* Csokor

Demodectic or follicular mange is caused by a small worm-like mite about half the size of the sarcoptic mange mite. The mites penetrate the hair follicles and cause small hard nodules or pimples to form. These nodules may grow to about 1 inch in diameter and often rupture, releasing a creamy-white, cheesy material. The pimples first appear about the head and spread backward over the rest of the body. Demodectic mange is not common in Texas but may occur occasionally in some areas.

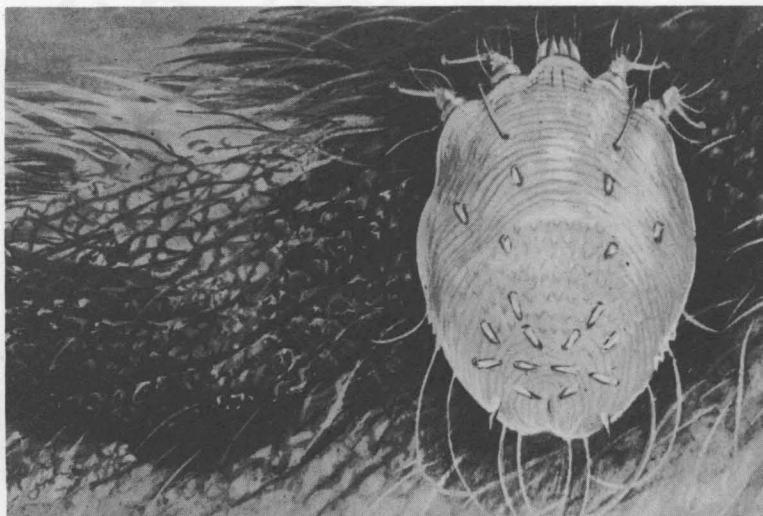
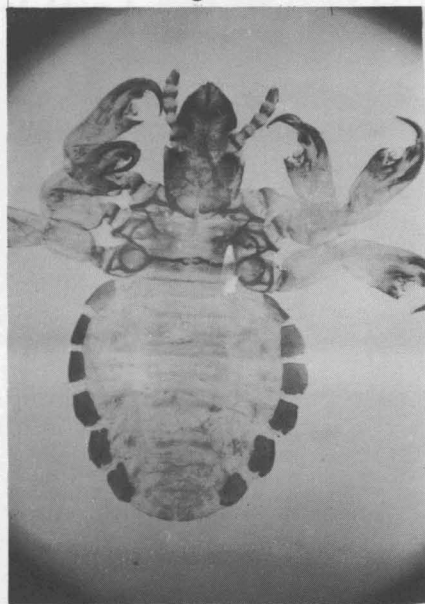
Screw-worm, *Cochliomyia hominivorax* (Coquerel)

Prior to the screw-worm eradication program in the Southwest, screw-worms were common pests of swine. Despite the overwhelming success of this program, isolated screw-worm infestations occasionally occur in Texas. Livestock producers should be alert for possible infestations. If maggots are noticed in any animal wound, 10 or more worms should be collected from deep within the wound and submitted for identification. Containers are available at county Extension offices. Screw-worm eradication officials will act promptly to eradicate screw-worms in the area, if the maggots are identified as true screw-worms.

The true screw-worm is only one of a large group of flies, most of which are referred to as common blow flies. The screw-worm maggot is a true parasite that infests only wounds of warm-blooded animals. Some maggots infesting these wounds may be those which breed primarily in carcasses.

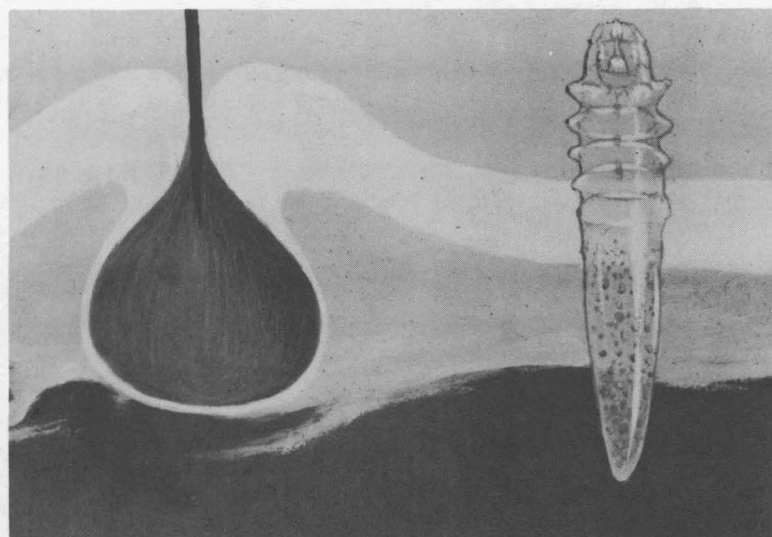
The female fly lays about 250 eggs to the cluster on a wound. The egg cluster is about the size of the end of a cigarette. When females are numerous, they lay egg clusters overlapping each other. Freshly laid egg clusters are white but change to a dull gray after about 12 hours. The tiny, newly-hatched maggots burrow into the flesh of the animal and begin feeding. Wounds infested with screw-worms have a distinctive, foul odor. A characteristic bloody or brownish discharge drains from the wound and feeding maggots usually are covered by this fluid. The maggots feed in closely packed groups, continually rasping away at living flesh.

Hog louse.



Sarcoptic mange mite and scab produced by mite activity.

Demodectic mange mite and infested hair follicle.



Typical infestation of sarcoptic mange.



Screw-worms feeding in a wound gouge out a deep pocket. Often the maggots feed so deeply they cannot be recognized easily. Close observation, however, reveals the ends projecting just above the surface of the bloody discharge. An infested wound attracts other screw-worm flies; consequently, thousands of maggots may be at work

within a few days in a single wound.

Screw-worm maggots normally mature in 5 or 6 days, then fall to the ground to pupate and develop into flies.

An infestation can kill an untreated, full-grown animal in 10 days or less, depending on the location of the wound.