

**Legislative Report
on
Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)**

January 14, 2003

**by
Minnesota Board of Animal Health (BAH)
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
in consultation with
Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA)
Minnesota Cervidae Advisory Committee**

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Executive Summary

The following report and recommendations on control of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) reflect the position of the Minnesota Board of Animal Health (BAH) and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in consultation with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), the Minnesota Cervidae Advisory Committee, and other interested parties.

General recommendations are as follows:

- (1) Regulation of all captive cervidae in Minnesota should be consolidated under statutes for “farmed cervidae” and be administered by the Minnesota Board of Animal Health (BAH). Regulation of free roaming cervidae should remain under the authority of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).
- (2) Registration and surveillance for chronic wasting disease (CWD) should be mandatory for all farmed cervidae. Surveillance for CWD in wild deer populations should be continued and expanded in the future. Capture and ownership of wild cervidae should be restricted.
- (3) Current regulations for importation of cervidae should become permanent and importation of cervidae carcasses should be restricted.
- (4) Additional funding should be allocated to the Board of Animal Health for implementation of programs for registration and CWD surveillance in farmed cervidae.
- (5) Funding requests for the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory at the University of Minnesota should be supported. This laboratory is now fully accredited by USDA to perform tests for chronic wasting disease and has become an essential part of CWD surveillance programs in both farmed and free roaming cervidae in Minnesota.

Legislative Background

On May 17, 2002 Governor Ventura signed into law House File 3183 [Chapter 373, 2002 Statutes]. This law included a number of provisions related to controlling the threat of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in Minnesota wild and domestic deer and elk herds. Section 34 of this law requires that a report be developed related to CWD.

Sec. 34 [CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE RECOMMENDATIONS: REPORT]

The board of animal health and the commissioner of natural resources, in consultation with the Cervidae advisory committee and other interested parties, shall jointly study and make recommendations on measures to protect domestic and wild Cervidae from chronic wasting disease. The report shall include recommendations for:

- (1) cervidae fence specifications;
- (2) disease infection prevention measures;
- (3) criteria for quarantine or destruction of contaminated herds;
- (4) methods of harvest;
- (5) tagging of cervidae; and
- (6) other items determined by the board and commissioner.

By January 15, 2003, the board and the commissioner shall report their recommendations to the senate and house of representatives committees with jurisdiction over agriculture and natural resources policy.

Findings and Recommendations

The following report and recommendations on control of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) reflect the position of the Minnesota Board of Animal Health (BAH) and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in consultation with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), the Minnesota Cervidae Advisory Committee, and other interested parties. Recommendations were formulated at meetings held in April, August and October 2002, and January 2003.

Fence Specifications - Fences for cervidae must be at least 96 inches (8 feet) in height and be constructed, and maintained, to prevent the escape of domestic cervidae, as well as entry of wild free roaming Cervidae. In order to allow for the upgrading of existing fences, this requirement should become effective on January 1, 2004.

Disease infection prevention measures:

1. Maintain current regulations for importation of Cervidae (M.S. 35.155)
2. Consolidate regulation of captive cervidae under Board of Animal Health.
3. Require registration of all captive cervidae with the Board of Animal Health.
4. Require CWD surveillance in all captive cervidae operations.
5. Restrict capture and ownership of wild cervidae.
6. Restrict importation of cervidae carcasses.
7. Continue and expand CWD surveillance in wild deer populations.

Criteria for quarantine or destruction of contaminated herds - Herds determined to be infected, or exposed to infected animals, will be quarantined under Board of Animal Health authority (M.S. 35.05). No animals will be allowed to leave or enter a quarantined herd of farmed Cervidae. Infected or exposed animals will be purchased, euthanized and tested for chronic wasting disease as long as funds are available for this purpose.

Methods of Harvest - Farmed Cervidae must be slaughtered and inspected in accordance with Minnesota statutes 31 and 31A or the United States Department of Agriculture voluntary program for exotic animals, Code of Federal Regulations, title 9, part 352. Persons selling or buying farmed Cervidae sold as livestock, sold for human consumption, or sold for slaughter must comply with chapters 17A, 31, 31A, and 31B.

Tagging of cervidae - Farmed Cervidae must be identified by means approved by the Board of Animal Health. After January 1, 2004, such identification must be visible to the naked eye at a distance of fifty yards. Newborn animals are required to be identified prior to December 31 of the year in which the animal is born or prior to movement from the premises, whichever occurs first.

Other recommendations:

1. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture meat inspection staff will collect tissue samples from all cervidae slaughtered at Minnesota state inspected slaughter plants for CWD testing. Sample collection will be done at no cost to the producer.
2. The Minnesota DNR will continue its targeted and general surveillance of wild free roaming deer to determine the prevalence of CWD in the wild cervidae population.
3. Feeding of wild deer should be restricted to reduce the potential spread of diseases including chronic wasting disease.
4. Capture and ownership of wild deer should be prohibited.
5. Importation of hunter harvested wild deer carcasses should be prohibited except for cut and wrapped meat, quarters, or other portions of meat without the spinal column or head attached. Antlers, hides, teeth, finished taxidermist mounts, and antlers attached to skullcaps that have been cleaned of all brain tissue would be allowed entry.
6. Additional funding should be allocated to the Board of Animal Health for implementation of these programs. It is estimated that \$600,000 in additional annual funding will be required to fully implement mandatory registration and CWD surveillance programs for farmed cervidae in Minnesota.

Minnesota Cervidae Advisory Committee

- (1) Farmed Cervidae Advisory Committee Members
- (2) Task Force – Response Planning in case of CWD case in Minnesota
- (3) Task Force – Legislative Initiatives Planning for 2003 legislative session

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Chronic Wasting Disease - Key Events for 2002 and 2003

2002

- Feb 28** Wisconsin reported three wild deer positive for chronic wasting disease.
- Apr 10** Farmed Cervidae Advisory Committee meeting was held. Two task forces were formed, one for legislative initiatives and another for emergency response planning.
- May 17** New legislation on importation of cervidae became effective.
- Aug 12** First Cervidae Advisory Committee task force meetings were held.
- Aug 30** First Minnesota case of CWD was identified in a single elk near Aitkin.
- Oct 1** Second Cervidae Advisory Committee task force meetings were held.
- Nov 9** DNR began sample collection for CWD testing on 4,500 wild deer.
- Dec 1** Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory became fully accredited for CWD testing.

2003

- Jan 9** Third Cervidae Advisory Committee task force meeting were held.
- Jan 14** Plans were finalized for legislative report on chronic wasting disease.

CWD Regulations from Surrounding States

State	Mandatory Registration	Mandatory CWD Surveillance	Primary Agency
Colorado	Yes	Yes	Colorado Department of Agriculture - Brands Board
Wyoming	Yes	Yes	Wyoming Game and Fish Department
South Dakota	Yes	Yes	Animal Industry Board
North Dakota	Yes	Yes	Board of Animal Health
Wisconsin	Yes	Yes	Division of Animal Health - Department of Agriculture
Nebraska	Yes	Yes	Department of Agriculture
Montana	Yes	Yes	Department of Fish and Wildlife
Michigan	Yes	Yes	Department of Agriculture
Indiana	Yes	Yes	Board of Animal Health
Illinois	Yes	Yes	Department of Agriculture and Department of Natural Resources
Kansas	Yes	No	Kansas Animal Health Department
Iowa	Yes for WT Deer No for other cervidae	Yes for WT Deer No for other cervidae	Department of Natural Resources and Department of Agriculture
Missouri	Yes for WT Deer No for elk	Yes for WT Deer No for elk	Department of Conservation and Board of Animal Health

**Farmed Cervidae in Minnesota (BAH)
January 6, 2003**

Registered farmed cervidae herds	319
Elk herds	232
White-tailed deer herds	59
Combination elk and white-tailed deer herds	18
Other kinds of cervidae	10
Elk – total animals	11,749
White-tailed Deer – total animals	1,868
Other types of cervidae	311
Herds participating in voluntary CWD surveillance program	227
Animals tested and found negative for CWD	1,185
Animals tested and found positive for CWD	1

**Game Farms in Minnesota (DNR)
January 6, 2003**

Total Game farms in Minnesota – all species	1,043
Game farms with cervidae	452
Elk herds	45
White-tailed deer herds	358
Combination elk and white-tailed deer herds	27
Other kinds of cervidae	22
Elk – total animals	694
White-tailed Deer – total animals	4,534
Other types of cervidae	435
Wild deer tested and found negative for CWD	1,100

**Distribution of Game Farms with Elk and White-tailed Deer
January 6, 2003**

