



CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

THE FACTS

Many wildlife managers now view CWD as the biggest threat to deer species and to big game hunting in North America. As the disease continues to spread, they are increasingly working together to slow its march across state lines. But they need your help to succeed. Hunters are the first line of defense against CWD because they help reduce the number of deer, provide samples for testing, and help limit CWD spread.

What is Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)?

- Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a contagious neurological disease affecting mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk and moose.
- It causes a spongy degeneration of the brains of infected animals resulting in emaciation, abnormal behavior, loss of bodily functions and death.
- CWD is difficult to stop, and can spread readily through infected feces, urine, saliva, & other body fluids & tissues. Even soil and plants can become contaminated and be a source of infection.

What are CWD symptoms in deer species?

- Weight loss; emaciation.
- Excessive drooling and salivation.
- Loss of fear of humans.
- Loss of body control, tremors or staggering.
- Drooping head or ears.
- Apparent confusion.

Where has CWD been found?

As of February 2019, CWD has been detected in wild and captive animals across 26 states, three Canadian provinces, The Republic of Korea, Finland and Norway. In Minnesota, at least 8 deer/elk farms have detected CWD within their fences. Those farms are in Aitkin, Stearns, Lac Qui Parle, Olmstead, Ramsey, Crow Wing, Meeker and Winona Counties. CWD has been detected in wild deer in Crow Wing, Olmsted, Fillmore, Houston and Winona Counties.

What are the impacts?

- CWD is a death sentence, it is always fatal.
- So far, there is no antidote, no vaccine for deer, no way to get rid of it.
- Without appropriate management within the current CWD Management Zone, the disease may spread to other areas of the state.
- CWD is seemingly unstoppable at this time.
- A healthy deer herd is important for hunting traditions. Minnesota has more than 475,000 deer hunters who harvest about 200,000 deer annually.

Why is a healthy deer herd critical to Minnesota's economy?

- The average Minnesota hunter spends \$1,500 each year.
- Hunters support over 12,400 jobs in Minnesota.
- Hunters generate \$93 million in taxes for the State of Minnesota.
- Hunting generates \$417 million in salaries and wages in Minnesota
- The total ripple effect from hunting in Minnesota as \$1.3 billion annually.

*Statistics from Hunting Works for America.

What is MDHA doing about it?

At its 2019 meeting in Grand Rapids, MDHA members voted to support a number of critical legislative initiatives intended to help protect Minnesota's wild deer herd from CWD.

MDHA members recognize that CWD is the biggest threat to Minnesota's, and North America's, wild deer herd. As Minnesota's leading deer organization, MDHA will do everything it can to protect Minnesota's deer and deer hunting tradition.

MDHA is calling on the Governor and Legislature to agree to support and implement a number of key initiatives this year to fight CWD, including:

- Requiring double fencing on all captive cervid farms
- Mandatory depopulation of all cervids on farms with a CWD-positive test
- Moratorium on any new cervid farms and voluntary buyout of existing cervid farms
- Prohibition of interstate movement of both captive and wild cervids
- Prohibition of interstate movement of any captive cervid byproducts including blood and semen
- Elimination of antler point restrictions (APR) statewide
- Dedication of an additional \$0.50 of current deer license fees to wild deer health, making the total from each deer license \$1.00