Chronic Wasting Disease Herd Certification Program

In 2019, Public Act 466 of 1988 was updated to state, "A privately owned cervid premises that is licensed as a full facility under the privately owned cervidae producers marketing act, 2000 PA 190, MCL 287.951 to 287.969, shall participate in the chronic wasting disease herd certification program."

Herd Certification Program Requirements:

1. Fencing must be structurally sound, maintained in good condition, sufficient construction to contain the animals, and compliant with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' fencing requirements.

2. Every animal in the herd must be officially identified with two animal identifications (IDs) before reaching 12 months of age or leaving the premises. One of the IDs must be an official U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) ID, and the other must be unique to the herd. Both IDs must be reported on the annual inventory.

3. Herd inventory records must be updated and submitted to the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) at least annually for herd reconciliation.

4. Inspections are conducted annually, and physical herd inventories are conducted at least every three years.

5. A complete physical herd inventory for all animals greater than 12 months of age must be performed every three years by an accredited veterinarian or a state/federal representative. Individual identification numbers must be verified during the inventory.

6. Owners are responsible for assembling, handling, and restraining animals for a physical herd inventory or other inspections to allow an accredited veterinarian or a state/federal representative to safely read all animal identifications at least once every three years. The owners are responsible for any costs incurred to present the animals for inspection and must agree that any liability or injury to the animals during handling rests with the owner.

7. New animals may be introduced to the herd only from other herds enrolled in the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Herd Certification Program (HCP). Adding animals to the herd or the property without a geographic separation of at least 30 feet between the perimeter fencing of each herd, will cause the whole herd to assume the status of lowest program status animal in the herd.

8. Herds of different status may be on the same property if they:

    a. Are geographically separated by at least 30 feet between the perimeter fence around the separate herds, and this is verified by a state/federal representative or an accredited veterinarian.
    b. There is no commingling of animals ever.
    c. Herd records and inventories are maintained separately.
    d. Working facilities, water sources, equipment, and land use are specific to only one of the herds on the property.

9. If a herd receives animals from a herd of lower status, the purchasing herd owner must notify MDARD within five business days of the movement.

10. At the time of discovery, the herd owner must immediately report to MDARD any animals that escape, disappear, or are otherwise missing from the premises.

11. The herd owner must immediately report all deaths of farmed or captive cervids 12 months of age or older (including animals that were hunted or slaughtered) to MDARD.

12. Animal head submissions, carcasses, or lymph node and obex samples of animals 12 months of age and older that die or are killed for any reason must be received at the Michigan State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory within seven days of death.

13. If samples were not submitted for an animal 12 months of age or older or were untestable the consequences are:

    a. Replace all non-tested animals with testable post-mortem samples from an equal number of animals of the same sex and species that resided in the herd for at least as long as the untested animal(s).
    b. Reduce the herd status one level for each animal that was not submitted for testing.
    c. A combination of the two options above (i.e., replace some animals and reduce herd status by the number animals that were not tested or replaced).

Michigan Department of AGRICULTURE & Rural Development