



NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
FEDERATION®
www.nwf.org®

December 2002

A Guide to Reporting on *Chronic Wasting Disease*

A Guide to Reporting on Chronic Wasting Disease

December 2002

National Wildlife Federation

Mark Van Putten, President & CEO

Jamie Rappaport Clark, Senior Vice President, Conservation Programs

Philip Kavits, Vice President, Communications

Gaby Chavarria, Policy Director for Wildlife Management

Communications Contacts:

Ben McNitt: (202) 797-6855

Phil Kavits: (703) 438-6096

Acknowledgments

Information in this report concerning Canada was generously provided by Leigh Edgar and the Canadian Wildlife Federation.

While the National Wildlife Federation is solely responsible for the contents of this media guide, we are grateful for review comments provided by Dr. Jonathan Sleeman, Director of Veterinary Services, The Wildlife Center of Virginia; Denny Ballard, Conservation Federation of Missouri; Jason Dinsmore, Michigan United Conservation Clubs; Ralph Fritsch, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation; Suzanne O'Neill, Colorado Wildlife Federation; and Paula Yeager, Indiana Wildlife Federation.

National Wildlife Federation contributors to this report include John Amoroso, Dan Chu, Patricia Clemons, Megan Dinwiddie, Carolyn Greene, Doug Inkley, Phil Kavits, Ben McNitt, Sterling Miller, Denise Obert, David Ross, Stan Ward and Lisa Yee-Litzenberg.

www.nwf.org

Copyright 2002 National Wildlife Federation. All rights reserved.

Foreword

Chances are growing that if you have not already, you soon will be reporting on chronic wasting disease (CWD).

During 2002 CWD, an obscure malady that kills deer and elk, sprang into headlines in newspapers across the United States and Canada. The disease has been discovered in new regions and raises questions about threats to people, wildlife, livestock and recreation. Sensationalized or inaccurate reporting on these issues poses its own



threat of inciting public fear and overreaction.

Over the next several months, if funding and laboratory capacity is developed, CWD tests are expected to be performed on up to 200,000

deer and elk taken nationwide during the 2002 hunting season. That is nearly 10 times the number of tests than were conducted over the previous 10 years. As the results come in, it is probable CWD will show up in states and regions where it has not been recognized before.

While current scientific research indicates CWD presents no threat to human health, new findings may arise in the coming

months. Journalists will be challenged to distinguish between mere speculation and credible research.

This media guide is intended to assist you whether you are new or a veteran to the CWD story. It gives some baseline factual material, outlines how different groups see and will present the issue, and provides several contact sources. The guide also includes what we believe is the most up-to-date survey available of the U.S. states and Canadian provinces and territories on the status of importation of captive game ranch deer and elk. Game ranching is part of the CWD problem. Whether or not CWD is currently viewed as a problem in your state, the questions of how effectively state game ranch regulations are being enforced and what actions have been taken to ban the import of game animals into your state may provide you with story angles.

As you will see on the following pages, CWD is of significant importance to a surprisingly wide variety of audiences. We hope that this guide assists you in educating people about this important issue.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark Van Putten".

Mark Van Putten
President and CEO
National Wildlife Federation

Table of Contents

What Is Chronic Wasting Disease?.....	1
Does CWD Threaten Human Health?.....	1
Who Cares?.....	1
Some Additional Basics.....	2
CWD Timeline.....	3
The National Wildlife Federation's Position.....	3
Game Ranching.....	4
Map of States With/Without Deer and Elk Import Bans	4
United States Deer and Elk Import Ban..... and Game Ranching List	5
Canadian Provinces Deer and Elk Import Ban..... and Game Ranching List	11
Story Suggestions.....	13
Advice to Hunters.....	13
Contacts.....	14

What Is Chronic Wasting Disease?

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a brain disorder that kills deer and elk.

Although the exact form of transmission of CWD among animals is not known, the most likely route is via saliva, urine and feces between infected and non-infected animals.

Technically, CWD is one of several types of transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE). TSEs are slow-acting degenerative diseases that attack the central nervous system, cause damage to the brain and result in death. Sponge-like holes and lesions in the gray matter of the brain characterize TSEs.

The specific cause of CWD in deer and elk is unknown but the most widely accepted theory is that abnormal proteins called prions turn normal proteins in nerve cells into infectious agents by forcing them to alter shape. As a result, the newly formed toxic proteins destroy brain cells and tissue.

Clinical signs of CWD take up to 36 months to appear and CWD-infected deer or elk can live as long as five years. Symptoms of CWD-infected deer and elk include loss of hair, coordination, appetite and weight, listlessness, excessive salivation and urination, blank stare, paralysis and death. CWD is always fatal and like all TSEs, there is no treatment.

Does CWD Threaten Human Health?

The World Health Organization reports there is no scientific evidence to date that CWD is transmissible to humans. The lack of evidence, however,

does not prove humans are safe from CWD. Research in this area is continuing. Until more is known, hunters directly exposed to game animals are advised to take some minimal precautions to ensure safety.

There is also no evidence to date that CWD is transmissible to livestock. According to the best available evidence, the disease is isolated to deer and elk. Still, the presence of wildlife disease is often a source of concern for the livestock industry, sometimes resulting in political pressure to eliminate any wildlife that might possibly be affected.

As noted, CWD is in a family of diseases known as TSEs (transmissible spongiform encephalopathy). Other TSE diseases include:

- Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), more commonly referred to as mad cow disease.
- Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, which occurs spontaneously in about one of every one million people.
- Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, which is contracted by eating BSE tainted beef and beef products.
- Scrapie, which has been identified in sheep for more than 200 years. There is no evidence that it is transmissible to humans.

Who Cares?

Knowing how different groups view CWD can sharpen your reporting. In quick summary, these include:

General public: The average citizen's primary concern is what, if any, risk does CWD pose to public health? Avoiding ambiguity or sensationalism while reporting CWD's public health risk is important in not fueling public fear and government over-reaction in policy decisions to confront the disease.

State and federal wildlife agencies: Wildlife agencies are charged with ensuring the well being and

appropriate management of free-ranging wildlife populations. They decide what monitoring, control or eradication strategies to adopt when CWD is found. While critical to the well being of wild populations, these agencies are also concerned about the impact on their funding should CWD cause any marked downturn in the hunting-related fees that support their budgets. Such concerns can potentially add to support for actions that eliminate any infected populations.

Hunters and other outdoor enthusiasts: Hunters want to know if CWD poses a danger from eating game meat, what tips they can follow in handling and dressing game to minimize any risk (see below), and how and where they can have game tested for CWD. In the larger context, hunters share two broad concerns. First, what toll will CWD exact on wild game populations? Second, what damage will occur if eradication strategies are adopted to kill-off whole populations of deer and elk in a wide area around any point where infected animals are found?

Conservationists: These groups are broadly concerned about the impact any overreaction to CWD may have on populations of free-ranging native wildlife, including the risk of large-scale eradication strategies for deer and elk populations.

Ranchers and state and federal agricultural agencies: These agencies are primarily concerned with livestock health and the viability of the industry. Although the best evidence to date indicates CWD is not transmissible to livestock, the recent history of mad cow disease (which like CWD is a TSE) in Britain, makes many people in these groups predisposed to adopt eradication strategies when CWD is found in deer and elk populations. The state agricultural agencies are often responsible for regulating game ranches, and there are indications of a spotty record of enforcement in some states.

Animal rights groups: These groups are concerned with avoiding the over use of lethal methods used to combat the disease.

Game ranchers: In states where they exist, game ranches raise deer and/or elk for various purposes including sale, meat production, antler removal for use in foreign markets as an aphrodisiac, and confined hunts, often referred to as "canned hunts." Where infections exist, CWD occurs in a much higher proportion of game ranches deer or elk than wild deer or elk. Often, when CWD is found in a game ranch animal, the entire herd is killed, although quarantines accompanied by long-term monitoring (three to five years) are also utilized. Public funds are used to compensate game ranch owners for the disease-related killing of their animals. The industry is concerned about CWD's threat to its viability, and about increased regulation, state bans on commercial imports of deer and elk, or bans on game ranching altogether.

Some Additional Basics

Some of the essentials in reporting on CWD include:

- The overall CWD infection rate in deer and elk across the country is not known, and it may be three to five years before an accurate picture emerges from test results. It is likely that CWD has existed without detection in several areas for some time. It is probable that CWD has been introduced into some areas by the import of infected game ranch animals.
- Where CWD does occur, experience to date indicates an infection rate of about 1 percent in wild elk, 5 percent in wild mule deer, and between 10 and 12 percent in wild white-tailed deer. In at least one area, however, an entire wild herd is being killed in an effort to eradicate the disease. This prompts fears by conservationists that overreaction to the disease could promote the widespread slaughter of wildlife. Meanwhile, higher rates of infection typically exist where CWD has infected captive game ranch animals.

- The only CWD field test on live animals is too difficult to administer to be of widespread use. The vast majority of CWD testing is done at a limited number of laboratories using brain tissue from dead animals. Test results may not be available for weeks or even months after submittal due to the large volume of tests these labs will be asked to perform.

- The best official source showing the states and the Canadian provinces in which CWD has been found in wild and captive deer and elk is the U.S. Geological Survey's National Wildlife Health Center map found at:
http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/research/chronic_wasting/chronic_wasting_map.html.

- To date, CWD has not been reported in Mexico.

CWD Timeline

1967: Deer at Fort Collins, Colorado, wildlife research facility begin to die from mysterious disease. Workers refer to the disease as chronic wasting disease.

1980: Illness identified as a TSE (transmissible spongiform encephalopathy) and is formally named chronic wasting disease.

1981: First wild elk with CWD found in Colorado. CWD found in northeast corner of the state.

1997-1999: Game ranch deer and elk test positive for CWD in South Dakota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Montana.

As of late early December 2002: CWD has tested positive in Colorado (wild and captive), Wisconsin (wild), Minnesota (captive only), Nebraska (wild and captive), Wyoming (wild only), New Mexico (wild only), South Dakota (wild and captive), Kansas (captive only), Montana (captive only), Oklahoma (captive only), Illinois (wild only) and the Canadian provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta (wild and captive).

National Wildlife Federation's View

The National Wildlife Federation believes:

- All those involved must take a rational and science-based approach to CWD, avoiding reactions based upon unwarranted fear.
- An aggressive program of scientific research must be supported to learn more about CWD, including developing accurate field tests for live animals and definitive knowledge of the disease's potential transmissibility to humans or to other animals.
- Public health concerns should be addressed through the close coordination of professional wildlife managers with public health officials. Research will ultimately determine CWD's risk of transmission to humans.
- Game ranching is part of the CWD problem. The evidence suggests that the interstate transport of infected game ranch animals may have introduced the disease into areas where it had not previously existed. At the very least, these concerns should prompt state legislatures and Natural Resources and Agricultural Departments to review game ranching regulations and enforcement and to consider bans on the import of commercial game animals.



CWD infected deer.

Game Ranching

- Wildlife professionals must manage wildlife. The underlying principle of the North American system of wildlife management is to conserve and restore wildlife in balance with the needs of the public. Professional wildlife management agencies must continue to be the primary managers of wildlife. Agricultural style management of wildlife aims to eliminate any real or perceived impacts to agriculture with little regard for the effect of these actions on wildlife populations. Agricultural style wildlife management has resulted in the demise of wildlife, even its purposeful extermination, or the management of free-ranging wildlife as though it were livestock. The past extermination of wolves and prairie dogs and the current slaughter of Yellowstone bison mistakenly perceived as a disease risk to cattle illustrate the problem. Wildlife managers are specifically trained in managing and sustaining free-ranging wildlife populations and must continue to exercise that authority.

- CWD must be managed and controlled. While some wildlife advocates firmly believe CWD can be eradicated, current information about this disease, including its persistence and unique biology, suggests this is unrealistic.

Game ranching and CWD intersect at several points. It is likely that the crowded conditions at some game ranches where captive animals congregate at man-made feed and water stations are conducive to a more rapid transmission of the disease from infected to non-infected animals than in the wild. In one extreme case, more than 50 percent of all the elk in a Nebraska game ranch tested positive for CWD. In addition, as noted above, the transport of captive game animals from one state to another has probably introduced the disease into some areas where it had not previously existed. This concern recently led several states to enact bans on the import of captive deer and elk. Infection in a captive herd also may be spread to wild animals by interactions through fencing, or due to downed fencing.

The following is a state-by-state United States survey conducted by the National Wildlife Federation and a province-by-province Canada survey conducted by the Canadian Wildlife Federation sum-

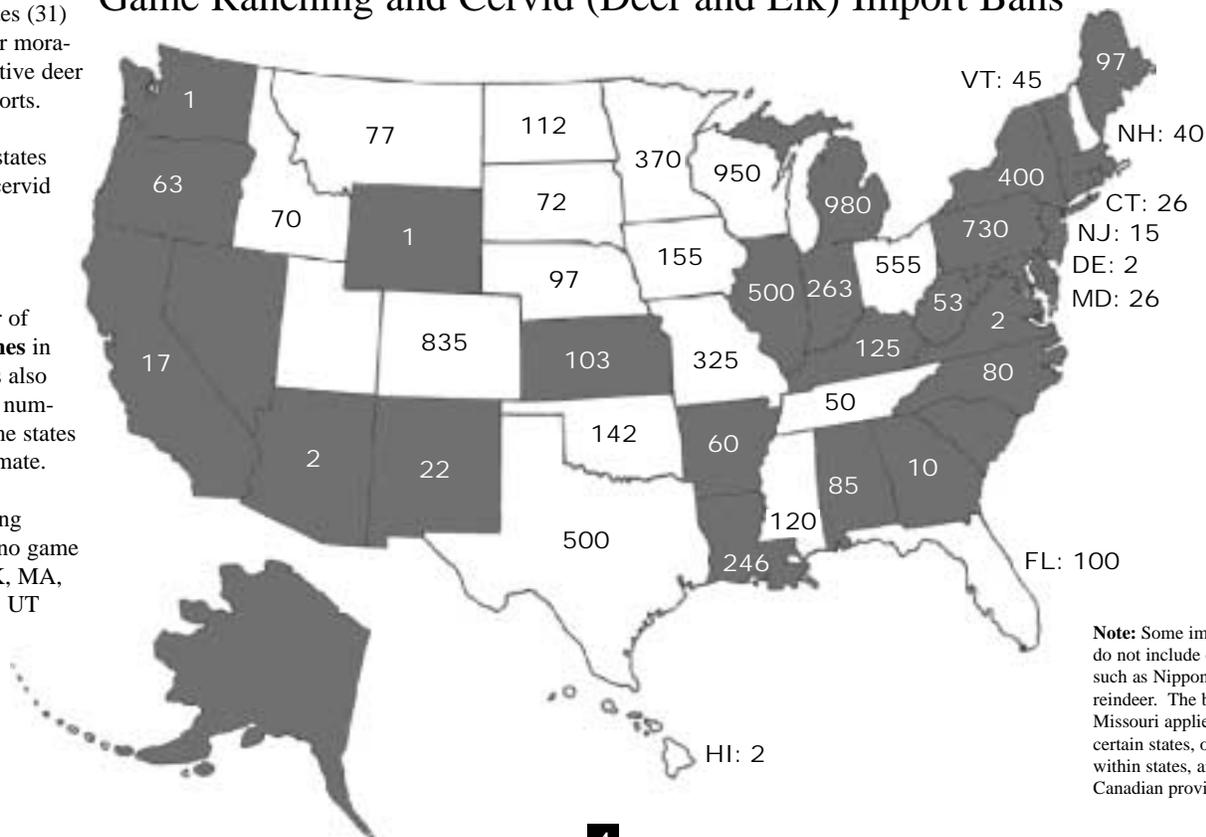
Game Ranching and Cervid (Deer and Elk) Import Bans

Shaded states (31) have bans or moratoria on captive deer and elk imports.

Unshaded states (19) allow cervid imports.

The number of **game ranches** in each state is also shown. The numbers for some states are approximate.

The following states have no game ranches: AK, MA, NV, RI, SC, UT



Note: Some import bans do not include exotics such as Nippon deer and reindeer. The ban in Missouri applies only to certain states, or counties within states, and certain Canadian provinces.

marizing the status of state and provincial law relating to the importation of cervids (deer and elk), the number of game ranches in each state or province, and a contact person on these issues in each state or province.

The definition of game ranch varies from state to state and can include many different types of operations from a petting zoo, to an area enclosing hundreds of animals in a canned hunt shooting preserve, to a few acres a property owner has fenced-off to confine native deer.

In summary, the United States survey finds:

- There are approximately 8,500 game ranches in 44 states. In several instances, state officials contacted for this survey acknowledge the figures they provide are approximate, and in some cases that it is likely there are some game ranches operating illegally in their state.
- 31 states have imposed a ban or a moratorium on the import of captive cervids (deer and elk).
- At least 19 of those 31 states enacted a ban or moratorium during 2002.
- Several states have imposed partial import bans, applying only to deer or elk from states, or even counties within states, where CWD has been found; and several states allow imports but require some form of assurance that imported deer or elk originate from CWD-free captive herds.

Alabama

State law: Cervid imports banned for at least past 30 years.

Game ranches: Approximately 85.

Regulated by: Alabama Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, contact: Chief of Wildlife Gary Moody: (334) 242-3469.

Alaska

State law: Cervid imports banned May 23, 2002.

Game ranches: None.

Regulated by: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, contact: Matt Kirchhoff: (907) 465-4328.

Arizona

State law: Captive cervid (except Nippon deer) imports banned May 18, 2002.

Game ranches: 2.

Regulated by: Arizona Game and Fish Department, contact: Mark Naugle: (602) 789-3289, or Dana Yost: (602) 789-3281.

Arkansas

State law: Cervid imports banned May 16, 2002.

Game ranches: 60.

Regulated by: Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, contact: Mark Clark: (501) 223-6359, or Blake Fasey: (501) 223-6300.

California

State law: Captive cervid imports banned (with exception of fallow deer and reindeer).

Game ranches: 15 to 20 fallow deer ranches. Elk ranches prohibited.

Regulated by: California Department of Fish and Game, contact: Dr. Pam Swift, State Veterinarian: (916) 358-1462 or (916) 358-2900, and Department of Agriculture (regulates captive cervids if disease occurs that could impact livestock).

Colorado

State law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated. Cervids must be in a 60-month CWD surveillance program.
Game ranches: 185 mule deer and 650 elk licensed facilities.
Regulated by: Colorado Division of Wildlife and Department of Agriculture, contact: Dr. Wayne Cunningham, State Veterinarian: (303) 239-4161; Kathi Green, Terrestrial Disease Coordinator, Colorado Division of Wildlife: (303) 291-7275.

Connecticut

State law: Cervid imports banned.
Game ranches: 26 (are for exhibition only, such as petting zoos).
Regulated by: Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, contact: Howard Kilpatrick: (860) 642-7239, and Department of Agriculture.

Delaware

State law: White-tailed deer imports banned and authorities are not negotiating licenses to import other types of cervids in expectation of imposition of an official ban in January 2003.
Game ranches: 2 (one shooting game ranch and one ranch containing six sika deer as pets).
Regulated by: Delaware Department of Agriculture (regulates farmed deer) and Division of Fish and Wildlife (regulates free-ranging white-tailed deer).
Contact: Dr. H.W. Towers, State Veterinarian: (302) 698-4560.

Florida

State law: Cervid imports require permit.
Game ranches: Approximately 100.
Regulated by: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (regulates possession of captive cervids), contact: Tim Breault, Division of Wildlife: (850) 488-3831, and Department of Agriculture (regulates importation and health of cervids).

Georgia

State law: Cervid imports banned May 29, 2002.
Game ranches: 10 licensed exotic game ranches (fallow, sika, red deer, reindeer). No white-tailed deer ranches allowed except for educational purposes.
Regulated by: Georgia Department of Agriculture and Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division.
Contact: Dr. Carter Black, State Veterinarian: (404) 656-3667, or Department of Natural Resources: (770) 761-3044.

Hawaii

State law: Cervids imports allowed if they have a permit approved by the Board of Agriculture.
Game ranches: 2 (one elk ranch and one private deer farm). (Cervids not native to Hawaii.)
Regulated by: Hawaii Department of Agriculture, contact: Lisa Nakyma (808) 832-0566.

Idaho

State law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated. No imports from CWD endemic areas or from east of the 100th meridian.
Game ranches: 70.
Regulated by: Idaho Department of Agriculture, Division of Animal Industries and Bureau of Animal Health, contact: Idaho Bureau of Animal Industries: (208) 332-8540.

Illinois

State law: Cervid imports banned April 19, 2002.
Game ranches: Approximately 500.
Regulated by: Illinois Department of Agriculture, contact: Dr. Richard Hull: (217) 782-4944 and Department of Natural Resources, contact: (217) 782-6302.

Indiana

State law: Cervid imports banned May 2002.
Game ranches: 263 deer ranches (not licensed for elk).

Regulated by: Indiana State Board of Animal Health.

Contact: Linnea Peterchess, Division of Fish and Wildlife: (317) 233-6527, or State Board of Animal Health: (317) 227-0300.

Iowa

State law: Cervid import permitted from certified CWD free herds.

Game ranches: 150-160.

Regulated by: Iowa Department of Agriculture (regulates elk) and Department of Natural Resources (regulates deer), contact: Dale Garner, Wildlife Bureau: (515) 281-7127.

Kansas

State law: Cervid imports banned.

Game ranches: 103.

Regulated by: Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, contact: Kevin Jones: (620) 672-5911.

Kentucky

State law: Emergency moratorium prohibiting cervid importation as of June 1, 2002.

Game ranches: 125.

Regulated by: Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, contact: Scott Porter: (800) 858-1549, ext. 419, Jonathan Day: (800) 858-1549, ext. 348, or Jim Lane: (800) 858-1549, ext. 410, and Department of Agriculture.

Louisiana

State law: Cervid imports banned May 6, 2002.

Game ranches: 118 licensed game breeders; 116 commercial facilities; and 12 hunting preserves.

Regulated by: Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, contact: Dave Moreland: (225) 765-2344

Maine

State law: Emergency moratorium banned entry of cervids June 12, 2002.

Game ranches: 97.

Regulated by: Maine Department of Agriculture and Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, contact: Mark Stadler: (207) 287-5252.

Maryland

State law: Cervid imports banned.

Game ranches: 26.

Regulated by: Maryland Department of Natural Resources, contact: Brian Eyler: (410) 260-8566.

Massachusetts

State law: Cervid imports banned April 2002.

Game ranches: None.

Regulated by: Massachusetts Department of Agriculture.

Contact: Marion Larson, (508) 792-7270, ext. 111.

Michigan

State law: Emergency moratorium banned entry of cervids April 26, 2002 (reindeer allowed with permits).

Game ranches: 980.

Regulated by: Michigan Department of Agriculture, contact: Dr. Rachel Zesar, State Veterinarian, Division of Animal Industries: (517) 241-1557.

Minnesota

State law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated.

Game ranches: 370, including 310 deer and/or elk ranches registered with the Board of Animal Health (contact: Kim Blackford, administrative specialist: (651) 296-2942 ext. 22) and 45 elk and 15 deer ranches registered with the Department of Natural Resources (contact: Richard Nordy, information technician specialist: (651) 294-7008).

Regulated by: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, contact: Dr. William D. Hueston, Center for Animal Health and Food Safety: (612) 625-8709, or Dr. Paul Anderson, Board of Animal Health: (651) 296-2942, ext. 21.

Mississippi

State law: Cervid imports allowed, but restricted to animals from CWD-monitored herds. Imports banned from states where CWD has been found.

Game ranches: 120.

Regulated by: Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Department of Animal Health, contact: Dr. James Watson, State Veterinarian: (601) 359-1170

Missouri

State law: Cervid imports banned from Wisconsin, South Dakota, Saskatchewan, eight counties in Colorado, one county in Kansas, one county in Minnesota, one county in Montana, one county in Nebraska, one county in New Mexico, one county in Oklahoma, and four counties in Wyoming. All other imports must come from a three-year CWD surveillance program.

Game ranches: 300 breeding ranches and 25 shooting ranches.

Regulated by: Missouri Department of Agriculture, contact: Michele McKinzie, Department of Animal Health: (573) 751-4359; Bob Ziehmer, Missouri Dept. of Conservation: (573) 751-4115, ext. 3601.

Montana

State law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated. Cervids must originate from a five-year CWD surveillance program.

Game ranches: 77.

Regulated by: Montana Department of Livestock and Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Contact: Tim Feldner: (406) 444-4039.

Nebraska

State law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated. Cervids must be from herd of origin that has no diagnosis or evidence of CWD for the past five years or be in a herd enrolled in a state approved five-year CWD surveillance program.

Game ranches: 97.

Regulated by: Nebraska Department of Agriculture, contact: Dr. Larry Williams, State Veterinarian: (402) 471-6802.

Nevada

State law: Cervid imports banned.

Game farms: None.

Regulated by: Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife, contact: Craig Mortimor: (775) 688-1914.

New Hampshire

State law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated. Cervids must come from CWD-free states and be from herds tested for TB and brucellosis.

Game ranches: 40.

Regulated by: New Hampshire Fish and Game Department and Department of Agriculture, contact: Dr. Clifford McGinnis, State Veterinarian: (603) 271-3551.

New Jersey

State law: Cervid imports banned April 15, 2002.

Game ranches: Approximately 15.

Regulated by: New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife, contact: Larry Herrighty: (609) 292-6686.

New Mexico

State law: Cervid imports banned.

Game ranches: 22.

Regulated by: New Mexico Game and Fish Department, contact: Dr. Kerry Mower, State Veterinarian: (505) 476-8080.

New York

State law: Cervid imports banned April 12, 2002.

Game ranches: 400.

Regulated by: New York Department of Environmental Conservation, contact: Chuck Dente: (518) 402-8868.

North Carolina

State law: Cervid imports banned May 17, 2002.

Game ranches: 80.

Regulated by: North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, contact: Kate Pipkin:(919) 733-7291.

North Dakota

State law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated. Cervids must be CWD-free and come from a CWD-free area and herd.

Game ranches: 100 elk farms and 10-15 deer farms. Regulated by: North Dakota Board of Animal Health, contact: Jacquie Gerads: (701) 328-6613.

Ohio

State law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated. Cervids must originate from or have been added to herd of origin at least 12 months prior to import, not been exposed to CWD 12 months prior to import, and show no diagnosis or signs of CWD in herd of origin 60 months prior import.

Game ranches: 555, including 523 white-tailed deer ranches and 32 ranches with other types of deer, according to Geoff Westerfield, wildlife research technician, Ohio Division of Wildlife, District Three, contact: (330) 644-3802 ext. 3027.

Regulated by: Ohio Department of Agriculture, contact: Dr. David Glauer: (614) 728-6220, or Dr. Lee McPail: (614) 728-6220.

Oklahoma

State law: Cervids imports allowed, but regulated. Cervids must be in CWD surveillance program as of January 1, 2002 and come from a CWD-free herd.

Game ranches: 114 commercial deer and/or elk, 28 non-commercial deer and/or elk.

Regulated by: Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and Department of Agriculture, contact: Dr. John Doyle, State Veterinarian: (405) 522-6122.

Oregon

State law: Cervid imports banned November 8, 2002.

Game ranches: 63.

Regulated by: Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, contact: Don Whittaker: (503) 872-5310, ext. 5341.

Pennsylvania

State law: Cervid imports banned August 1, 2002. Game ranches: 700 deer farms, 90 elk farms and approximately 730 game farms altogether because some farmers have dual permits for deer and elk to be on one farm.

Regulated by: Pennsylvania Game Commission, contact: Jerry Feaser: (717) 705-6541, and Department of Agriculture.

Rhode Island

State law: Cervid imports banned.

Game ranches: None.

Regulated by: Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Agriculture and Department of Environmental Management, contact: Chris Hannafin: (401) 222- 2781, ext. 4503.

South Carolina

State law: Cervid imports have never been permitted (with the exception of exhibition reindeer for Christmas which has since been banned).

Game ranches: None.

Regulated by: South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, contact: Charles Ruth: (803) 734-8738.

South Dakota

State law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated. Cervids must not originate from or ever have been a member of a herd diagnosed with CWD or be a member of a trace-back or trace-forward herd as determined by an epidemiological investigation in the past five years.

Game ranches: 70 to 75.

Regulated by: South Dakota Department of Agriculture, contact: Dr. Sam Holland, State Veterinarian: (605) 773-3321.

Tennessee

State law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated. Cervids must have been in a CWD surveillance program prior to January 1, 2000, and have no record of trace-back or trace-forward of positive CWD herds.

Game ranches: Approximately 50.

Regulated by: Tennessee Department of Agriculture, contact: Dr. Ron Wilson: (615) 837-5103, or Larry Marcum: (615) 781-6610.

Texas

State law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated. In states with CWD surveillance, cervids must be in a five-year CWD monitoring program. In states with no CWD monitoring programs or where CWD has not been found, all health, death, sales and purchase receipts for a minimum of the past five years must be available.

Game ranches: Approximately 500 captive breeding white-tailed deer facilities (elk are not classified as game animals in Texas and therefore no number can be determined for current elk facilities).

Regulated by: Texas Animal Health Commission, contact: Dr. Jerry Cooke: (512) 389-4774, or Carla Everett: (512) 719-0710.

Utah

State law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated. Cervids must be CWD-free and cannot be imported from east of the 100th meridian.

Game ranches: None.

Regulated by: Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, contact: Steve Cranney: (801) 538-4780.

Vermont

State law: Cervids imports banned May 2002.

Game ranches: 40 to 50.

Regulated by: Vermont Department of Agriculture and Department of Fish and Wildlife, contact: Tom Decker: (802) 241-3700.

Virginia

State law: Cervid imports banned (imports have never been permitted).

Game ranches: 2 to 3 fallow deer farms (white-tailed deer farming prohibited).

Regulated by: Virginia Department Game and Inland Fisheries, contact: Bob Ellis: (804) 367-6482.

Washington

State law: Cervid imports banned (including caribou).

Game ranches: 1

Regulated by: Washington Department Game and Inland Fisheries, contact: Dr. Jerry Nelson: (360) 902-2519.

West Virginia

State law: Cervid imports banned September 27, 2002.

Game ranches: 53.

Regulated by: West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, contact: Dr. James Crumb: (304) 637-0245, or Paul Johansen: (304) 558-2771.

Wisconsin

State law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated. Cervids must come from CWD monitored and CWD-free herds for at least five years.

Game ranches: 950 elk and/or deer ranches.

Regulated by: Wisconsin Department of Agriculture regulates elk and white-tailed deer, contact: Dr. Shelby Molina: (608) 224-4873, and Department of Natural Resources, contact: Tom Hauge: (608) 266-2193.

Wyoming

State law: Cervid imports banned since 1977.

Game ranches: 1.

Regulated by: Wyoming Game and Fish Department, contact: Dr. Terry Kreeger: (307) 322-2784.

Canadian Survey

In summary, the Canadian survey finds:

- There are close to 2,600 game ranches in Canada's 13 provinces and territories.
- Four of the provinces have imposed a ban or a moratorium on the import of captive cervids (deer and elk). The remaining nine provinces and territories allow cervid imports, with varying forms of regulation. Note: For this survey, the British Columbia prohibition on importation of deer or elk for captive game hunting is counted as a ban.
- Canadian law bans the import of captive cervids from states in the United States where CWD has been found.

British Columbia

Provincial law: It is illegal to import deer or elk for the purpose of captive game hunting.

Game ranches: 45 fallow deer ranches; and 8 reindeer ranches.

Regulated by: British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture, Fishery and Foods.

Contact: Dan Ireland: (250) 356-1672.

Alberta

Provincial law: Moratorium on cervid import since 1988. Cervid ranching is legal for native and exotic cervids with CWD surveillance on all farms.

Game ranches: 456 elk ranches; 172 white-tailed deer ranches; 20 mule deer ranches; 210 reindeer ranches; and 3 moose ranches.

Regulated by: Alberta Minister of Agriculture, contact: John Girvan: (780) 427-4567, or Margo Phybus, wildlife: (780) 427-3462, Food and Rural Development, and Ministry of Environment.

Saskatchewan

Provincial law: Cervid imports require permits. Ranching is not permitted for sika, red deer or elk/red deer hybrids; mandatory CWD surveillance on all farms.

Game ranches: 410 elk ranches; 130 white-tailed deer ranches; 16 mule deer ranches; 35 fallow deer ranches; and 19 reindeer ranches. Caribou are also farmed.

Regulated by: Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, contact: Sheri Dobbs: (306) 787-4657, and Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management, contact: Kevin Omoth: (306) 787-8102.

Manitoba

Provincial law: Moratorium on cervid imports for game farming. Moratorium does not apply to imports for slaughter, although no such imports have occurred to date. Elk ranching only (need permit); all ranched cervids are tested for CWD at death.

Game ranches: 88 elk ranches; 7 petting zoo-type ranches of various deer species.

Regulated by: Manitoba Department of Agriculture and Food, contact: Emmerson Trout: (204) 945-7557.

Ontario

Provincial law: Cervid imports allowed; penned hunting of native species prohibited.

Game ranches: 66 elk ranches; 31 white-tailed deer ranches; 159 fallow deer ranches; 97 ranches have red deer; and 35 ranches have red deer/elk hybrids.

Regulated by: Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Contact: Brian Tapscott (519) 846-3400, and Ministry of Natural Resources.

Quebec

Provincial law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated. Exotic and native species ranching permitted; voluntary CWD surveillance program on ranches. Game ranches: 88 ranches have elk; 206 ranches have white-tailed deer; 234 ranches have fallow deer; and 51 ranches have sika deer.

Regulated by: Quebec Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Foods.

Contact: Claude Fournier: (418) 380-2100.

New Brunswick

Provincial law: Cervid imports require a permit; no ranching of native species.

Game ranches: 3 elk ranches; 5 red deer ranches; and 2 elk/red deer hybrid ranches.

Regulated by: New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy and Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture.

Contact: Brian Trenholm: (506) 453-5464.

Prince Edward Island (PEI)

Provincial law: Cervid imports require permit. Elk and red deer ranching permitted (Prince Edward Island has no native big game).

Game ranches: 2 elk ranches.

Regulated by: PEI Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Environment.

Contact: Art Smith: (902) 368-6083.

Nova Scotia

Provincial law: Cervid imports require permit.

Game ranches: Elk, red, fallow and sika deer ranching on 10 ranches.

Regulated by: Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Contact: Tim Flemming: (902) 893-6524.

Newfoundland and Labrador

Provincial law: Cervid imports do not occur due to Cabinet decision prohibiting game ranching.

Game ranches: None.

Nunavut (new territory)

Territorial law: Territory has no law on cervid imports or game ranching.

Game ranches: None.

Northwest Territories

Territorial law: Territory has no law on cervid imports, but legislation prohibiting game farms is under review.

Game ranches: None.

Contact: Doug Stewart: (867) 920-8064.

Yukon

Provincial law: Cervid imports allowed, but regulated; game ranching permitted.

Game ranches: 3 elk ranches.

Contact: David Beckman: (403) 667-5838.

Federal Government Contact:

Dr. Brian Peart, Canadian Food Inspection

Agencies: (613) 228-6696.

Story Suggestions

- If CWD has not been found in your area, find out how extensively it is being tested for, and explain to your audience what CWD is and what it might mean if CWD is found there.
- What are the state and local plans for addressing CWD, if it is found? What do various groups think of them?
- What is the potential impact of CWD on hunting in your area and what might that mean to non-hunters (potential loss of conservation agency funding, etc.)?
- Could widespread deer and/or elk extermination happen in your area because of CWD?
- What's the advice to concerned hunters?
- If game ranches exist in your state, are state regulations adequate and are they being effectively enforced? Is there reason for your state to consider a ban on the import of commercial game animals?
- Have the large number of recent state bans on the import of commercial game animals affected the game ranching industry in your state, whether or not a ban exists there?

Advice to Hunters

A guide for hunters on handling and processing deer can be found on the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources web site at:

http://datcp.state.wi.us/ah/agriculture/animals/disease/chronic/pdf/venison_safety_2side.pdf

In general, the advice to hunters in field dressing deer includes:

- Wear rubber gloves when field dressing carcasses.
- Do not consume obviously ill animals.
- Bone out the meat.
- Minimize the handling of brain and spinal tissue.
- Wash hands and instruments thoroughly after field dressing is complete.
- Avoid consuming brain, spinal cord, eyes, spleen, tonsils and lymph nodes of harvested animals. Normal field dressing coupled with boning out of a carcass will remove essentially all of these parts.
- When hunters have their meat commercially processed, they should request that their meat be precessed individually.



United States Department of Agriculture

Contacts

Steve Torbit, Ph.D., Director

National Wildlife Federation
Rocky Mountain Natural Resource Center
Boulder, CO
(303) 786-8001 - torbit@nwf.org

Doug Inkley, Ph.D., Senior Science Advisor

National Wildlife Federation
Reston, VA
(703) 438-6460 - inkley@nwf.org

Through its network of affiliated state organizations, the National Wildlife Federation may be able to assist you in locating concerned and knowledgeable conservationists in your area. For assistance, please contact our communications department at: 703-438-6096 or 202-797-6855.

Additional Contacts

Colin Maxwell, Executive Vice President

Canadian Wildlife Federation
Kanata, Ontario, Canada
(613) 599-9594 - colin@cwfed.org

U.S. Geological Survey, National Wildlife Health Center

http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov.gov/research/chronic_wasting/chronic_wasting.html

For Information on Chronic Wasting Disease:

Dr. Scott Wright (608) 270-2460

Paul Slota (608) 270-2420

Wildlife Disease Information Node

(chronic wasting disease sampling: pictures and process description of testing for CWD)

<http://wildlifedisease.nbio.gov/wdhh/Sampling.html>

Animal and Planet Health Inspection Services, Department of Agriculture

<http://aphisweb.aphis.usda.gov/vs/naahps/cwd/#Site>
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services,
Department of Agriculture Legislative and Public
Affairs (202) 720-1309

Department of Agriculture /Department of Interior, Chronic Wasting Disease and Management Plan

Delivered to Congress June 27, 2002

<http://aphisweb.aphis.usda.gov/oa/cwd/cwd62602.html>

SDA: Alisa Harrison (202) 720-4623

DOI: Frank Quimby (202) 208-7291

Links to States with CWD information

<http://aphisweb.aphis.usda.gov/vs/naahps/cwd/cwd-information.html>

A wealth of information is available on the numbers of people involved in and the economic impact of hunting in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's 2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation on the web at:

<http://federalaid.fws.gov/surveys/surveys.html>



The mission of the National Wildlife Federation is to educate, inspire and assist individuals and organizations of diverse cultures to conserve wildlife and other natural resources and to protect the earth's environment in order to achieve a peaceful, equitable and sustainable future.

Photo Credits:

Front cover photos, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (all but lower left photo) and University of Wyoming (lower left photo only).

Page 3, University of Wyoming.

Page 13, United States Department of Agriculture.

Printed on 25 percent recycled paper.



NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
FEDERATION®
www.nwf.org®

December 2002

11100 Wildlife Center Drive, Reston, VA 20190-5362