

## 2018 Annual

### Cervid Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance Identification Program Report

January 17, 2019

#### **Introduction:**

Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA), Office of State Veterinarian is tasked with oversight of the animal health regulation of the captive cervid population in Kentucky. The authority to regulate this industry was provided by the General Assembly through KRS 246.295, effective March 2002. Regulations in 302 KAR 20:066 were approved and became effective January 2003. HB 230 (2006) further clarified the respective responsibilities of KDA and KDFWR.

Diseases of particular concern are brucellosis, tuberculosis (TB), and chronic wasting disease (CWD). Brucellosis and TB are especially important to Kentucky's agriculture economy because of the potential impact upon the cattle industry. Both the farmed and wild populations of cervids are potential reservoirs of the diseases.

CWD is a member of the class of diseases known as Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE). Other members include Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) of cattle, Scrapie of sheep and goat and Creutzfeldt – Jakob Disease (CJD) of humans. The causative agent of these diseases has been identified as an infectious protein called a prion. Because the science surrounding prion disease is still evolving, management of diseases like CWD is especially challenging. Many key elements are yet to be recognized with the certainty necessary for control and eradication. The fact that CWD can pass from both farmed to wild and visa versa has lead to significant spread and subsequent extreme measures to control. This has caused financial hardships to both the wildlife and farming industries.

#### **Background**

Kentucky developed its Cervid Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance Identification (CCWDSI) program in response to concerns from wildlife interests and from captive cervid farmers. There needed to be a vehicle that could allow farmers to continue operation of their facilities while

assuring that their movements did not expose the wild herd to diseases as had happened in other states.

While most disease testing and certification programs can provide that assurance, the nature of CWD with its uncertain means of transmission and its long incubation period coupled with the lack of live animal diagnostic tests presents a formidable obstacle.

The Kentucky CCWDSI program was modeled after existing state programs and the USDA programs as published in 9 CFR Part 55. It is based on monitoring a controlled population over a significant period of time. The tools to facilitate this include animal identification, veterinary supervision, annual census, reconciliation of additions and losses, restriction of movement and mandatory testing of slaughter and death losses. By application of these tools over time, i.e. 5 years, a confidence for the status of that herd population can be derived. In turn, that can allow for more freedom of movement and enhanced commercial opportunities.

Facilities permitted by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR) are required to enroll in the CCWDSI. There are currently 67 herds enrolled. Management of this program presented some challenges and KDA continues to work with producers to maintain compliance.

In 2009, the General Assembly passed SB 81 which provided for importation of cervids from states where CWD has not been diagnosed and that have a CWD Certification program comparable to KY CCWDSI.

Importations must be approved on an individual basis by the KY state veterinarian. KDA revised the interstate entry requirements in 302 KAR 20:040, Section 13 to align with KRS 257.550, created in 2009 as noted above.

KDA is currently in the process of revising the CCWDSI regulation 302 KAR 20:066 to improve management of the CWD program and to align it with the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) federal rule for CWD Certification Programs.

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#### **Status**

96 enrolled herds in Kentucky's CWD Program:

2285 individual cervids of record in Kentucky's CCWDSI Program:

White Tailed Deer	2168 head
Elk	80 head
Reindeer	2 head
Fallow	35 head

Herd Status in Kentucky's CCWDSI Program:

Certified Herd	86
Monitored	9
5 Years Monitored	0
3 Years Monitored	0
2 Years Monitored	1
1 Year Monitored	0
Disbanded	0
Suspended	0

Herd sizes in Kentucky's CWD Program:

1-10 head	44 %
11-50 head	45 %
51-100 head	6 %
100+ head	5%

#### **Current Status Summary:**

Following is a summary of the CCWDSI program as of January 17, 2019

- 96 herds are enrolled
- 2285 cervids in program
  - 2168 white tail deer

Kentucky Department of Agriculture  
Office of State Veterinarian

- 80 elk
- 2 reindeer
- 35 fallow
- size of herds
  - 1-10: 42
  - 10-50: 43
  - 50-100: 6
  - 100+: 5
- CWD tests conducted
  - 2018 - 89 accessions; 262 animals tested
- CCWDSI Monitored Levels
  - 1 Yr - 0
  - 2 Yr - 1
  - 3 Yr - 0
  - 4 Yr - 0
- Quarterly inspection: All current
- Annual Census: All current

**Ongoing / Upcoming Issues**

- KYHerds data input
- Annual census reconciliation
- Electronic Identification (EID) and recording- successfully used the UHF Reader on a HCP farm