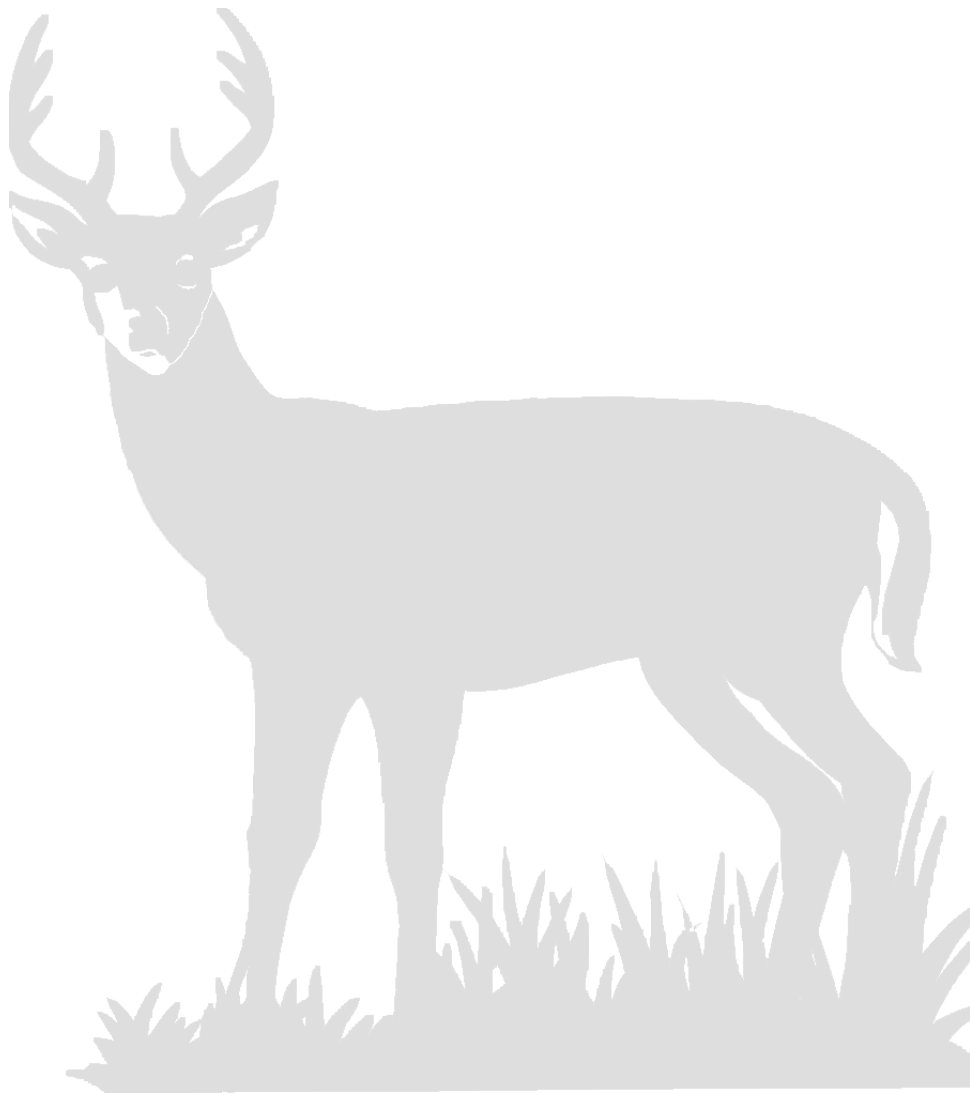


Understanding Chronic Wasting Disease in Wisconsin



The first step to disease control



Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
 2291 West Broadway
 Missoula, MT 59808
 1-800-CALL ELK



Est. 1982
 Whitetails Unlimited
 National Headquarters
 PO Box 720
 Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235
 1-800-274-5471
www.whitetailsunlimited.com

Natural Resources Board

Trygve A. Solberg
 James E. Tiefenthaler, Jr.
 Gerald M. O'Brien
 Herbert F. Behnke
 Howard D. Poulson
 Catherine L. Stepp
 Stephen D. Willett

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Darrell Bazzell, Secretary
 Francis Fennessy, Deputy Secretary
 Barbara Zellmer, Executive Assistant

Acknowledgments

Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services
 Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Staff
 University of Wisconsin, Department of Wildlife Ecology
 University of Wisconsin-Extension
 Part of the Printing cost was generously paid for by Whitetails Unlimited

This publication was produced by the Department of Natural Resources with assistance from Interagency CWD Taskforce to assist hunters and landowners in Wisconsin's Chronic Wasting Disease Management Zone better understand chronic wasting disease and its management.

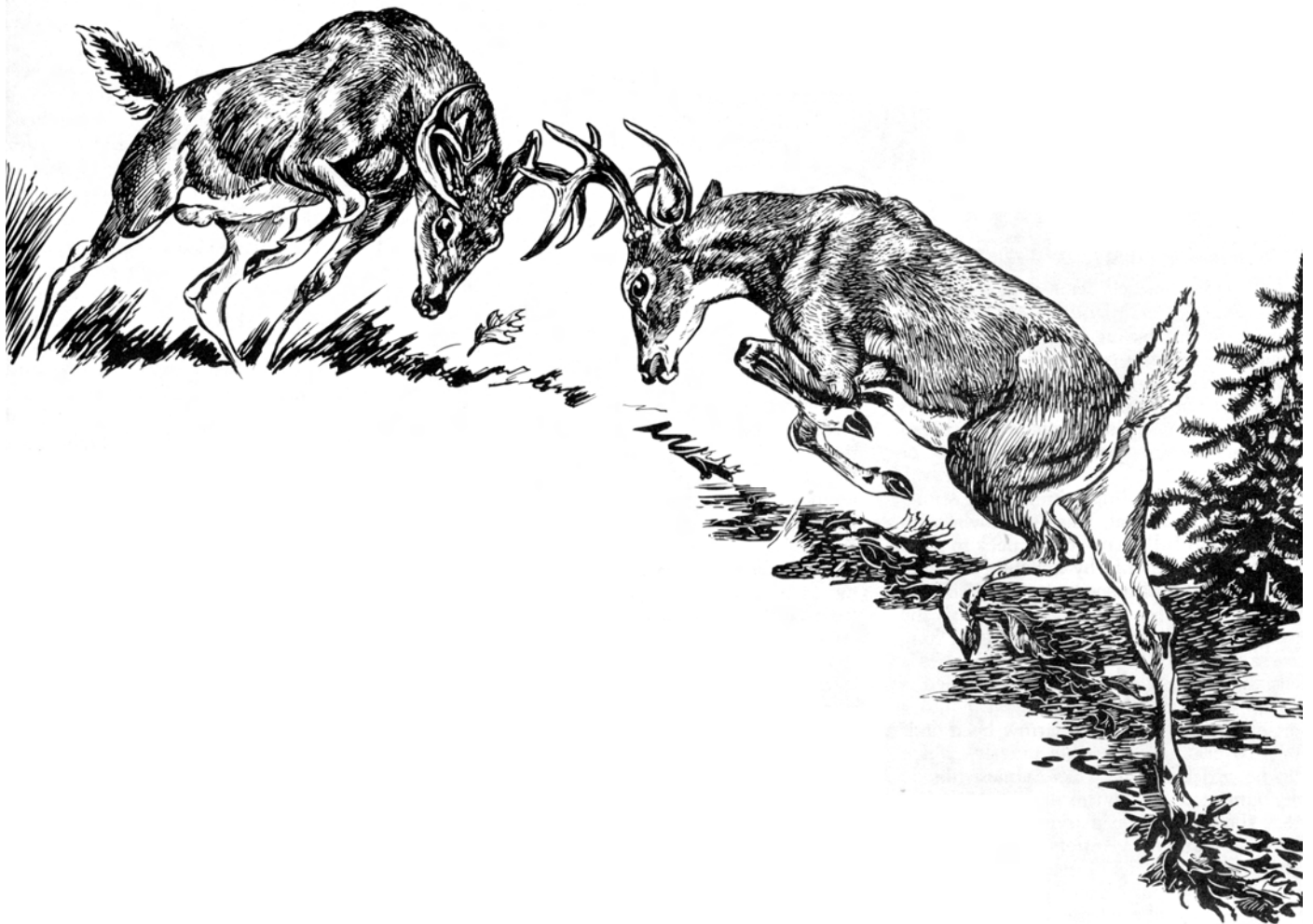
Author: Jennifer Pelej
 Designer: Jeanne Gomoll

This publication is available in braille, audio cassette, large print or computer format upon request. To order, call 608-266-8204.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to: Equal Opportunity Office, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240

Table of Contents

Background information.....	2
Health concerns.....	4
Human Health.....	4
Livestock Health	5
Hunting, the need to continue a tradition	6
Field dressing/processing guidelines.....	8
The Management Plan for Chronic Wasting Disease	10
The Action Plan	10
Special Measures.....	11
Contacts.....	13



Chronic Wasting Disease: Background information



Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a nervous system disease of deer and elk. It belongs to the family of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE's) or prion diseases. Though it shares certain features with other TSE's like bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) or scrapie in sheep, it is a distinct disease apparently only affecting members of the cervid or deer family.

In 1967, the symptoms of a clinical "wasting" syndrome in deer were discovered in a northern Colorado wildlife research facility. Mule deer were the first to display the chronic weight loss and behavior changes characteristic of the disease. It wasn't until 1978 that researchers classified this strange disease as a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy and named it chronic wasting disease.

Chronic wasting disease was detected in free-ranging deer and elk in northern Colorado and adjacent sections of southeast Wyoming in the mid-1980s. By May 2001, more cases of CWD were found in southwestern Nebraska, adjacent to Colorado and Wyoming.

As a precautionary action, Wisconsin wildlife biologists began testing wild deer for CWD in 1999. In the third year of testing, Wisconsin discovered its first confirmed cases of CWD. On February 28, 2002, officials received the news from the National Veterinary Services Lab in Ames, Iowa, that samples from the 2001 deer harvest were positive for the disease. The three deer testing positive for CWD were harvested in deer management unit 70A, in eastern Iowa and western Dane counties.

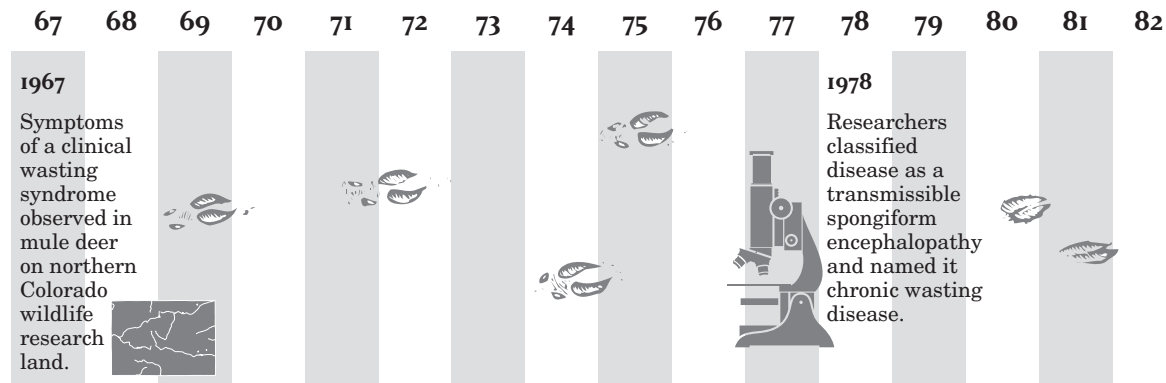
The Department of Natural Resources, working with landowners and the Departments of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and Health and Family Services, initiated intensive sampling in the area to define the extent and severity of CWD. A 450-square mile surveillance zone was established, roughly centered where the original three CWD positive deer were harvested. Over 500 deer were sampled from the surveillance zone. Fifteen additional cases of CWD were confirmed. As of May 30, 2002, a total of 18 Wisconsin deer have tested positive for CWD. The DNR will continue to collect samples from this area throughout its disease eradication process.

Deer & Elk Farms

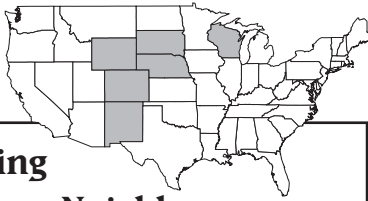
Wisconsin has 275 registered elk farms and 572 white-tailed deer farms. There have been no confirmed cases of CWD from Wisconsin farmed herds.

Chronic wasting disease has been found on game farms in other states. The first case of CWD in a farmed herd of elk was confirmed in South Dakota during 1997. Since then, farms in Nebraska, Colorado, Oklahoma, Montana and the Canadian provinces, Saskatchewan and Alberta, have been added to the list. Infected herds are slaughtered or quarantined, and tested. If no further evidence of CWD is detected over five years, the quarantine is lifted.

Chronic Wasting Disease Timeline



States with confirmed CWD in wild herds



Learning from our Neighbors

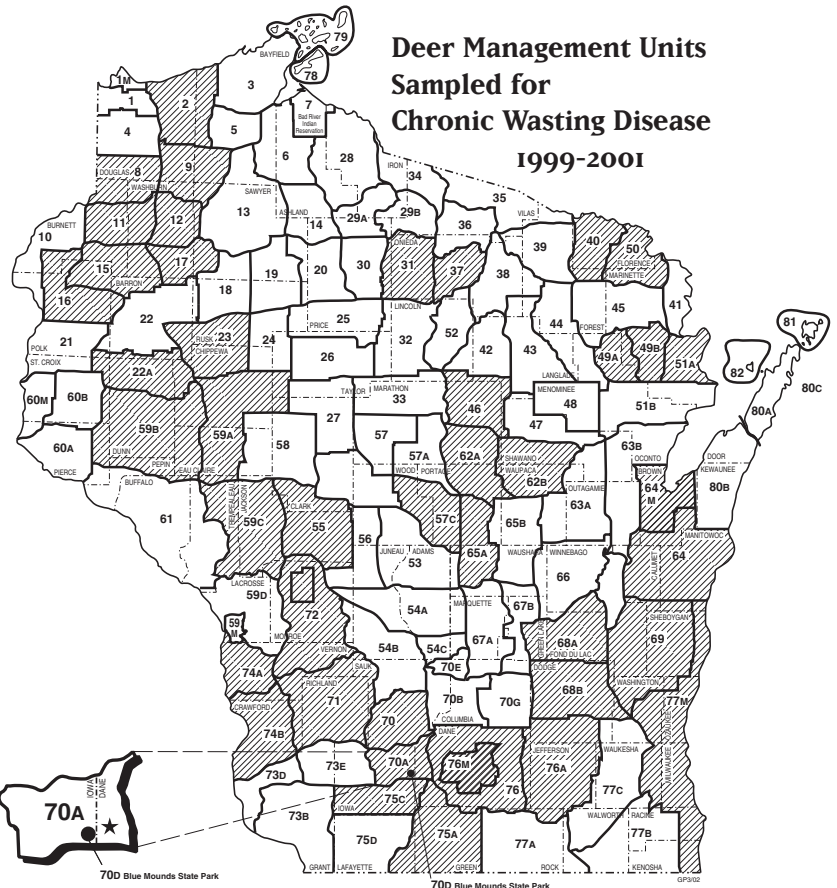
The health of Wisconsin wildlife has been monitored since the 1970s, according to Department of Natural Resources wildlife veterinarian Julie Langenberg. The DNR's Wildlife Health Team performs hundreds of necropsies (the animal version of an autopsy) each year on a wide variety of species to determine causes of death and to watch for outbreaks of significant diseases.

This work is done to safeguard wildlife, livestock and human health.

The presence of CWD in Colorado and other states put Wisconsin on alert for CWD. Since 1999, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has routinely screened the state's deer herd for CWD. Routine testing can lead to early detection of population diseases, as it did in detecting CWD.

In three years, the DNR has tested over 1000 free-ranging white-tailed deer. Sampling during the 2001 season consisted of 345 deer from around the state, harvested by hunters. Out of that total, 82 were tested from the Mt. Horeb area. From the Mt. Horeb area sample, three deer tested positive for CWD. All three deer were bucks, ranging from 2½ to 3 years old. **Results from all other deer throughout the state came back negative for CWD.**

Annual statewide testing will continue and sample collection areas will be added. The DNR will solicit hunter assistance in statewide testing procedures by asking that the heads be donated from harvested deer.



Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Health biologists collected tissue samples for Chronic Wasting Disease from deer in these deer management units over the past three deer hunting seasons. No positive tests were recorded in 1999 and 2000.

★ Three positive tests were recorded in samples collected from deer registered in Unit 70A in 2001.

To Learn More About CWD

The Department of Natural Resources offers a chronic wasting disease Web site, www.dnr.state.wi.us, with recent news releases, maps and links to Wisconsin's Interagency CWD Taskforce Web sites. The Web site also links to additional CWD information from other states and CWD researchers.

83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 00 01 02 03

mid-1980s

First discovery of chronic wasting disease in free-ranging deer and elk in northern Colorado and adjacent sections of southern Wyoming.



1997

The first case of CWD in a farmed herd of elk confirmed in South Dakota



1999

WDNR begins routine CWD testing of deer statewide



February 28, 2002

Wisconsin officials received confirmation from the National Veterinary Services Lab in Ames, Iowa, that three deer samples from the 2001 deer harvest proved positive for CWD.

Health Concerns



Human Health






Chronic wasting disease is a neurological disease found in elk and deer (cervids) only. Researchers believe that the disease-causing agent is an infectious abnormal protein, called a prion, which is smaller than a virus. Prions (pronounced PREE-ons) attracted public attention during the bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or “mad cow,” epidemic that affected England in the 1980s. The disease-causing prions enter brain cells and apparently convert normal prions found within the cells into abnormally-folded prions just like themselves. The abnormally-folded

prions accumulate in the brain, causing death of brain cells and the development of microscopic holes. Pathologists describe these holes as “spongy change,” which has led to naming this group of diseases “spongiform” brain diseases. It is believed that CWD is transmitted through deer to deer contact. There is no scientific evidence that CWD is transmissible to other animals through consuming meat from an infected deer. In addition, there is absolutely no evidence that humans can contract the disease by simply being in the area of Wisconsin where the disease has been found.


The transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) family of diseases

Diseases in this family have long incubation periods that ultimately result in destruction of brain function. It can take up to 15 months for physical symptoms to emerge. Physical symptoms may then last for weeks to months before death occurs. Diagnosis is based on clinical signs and confirmed by lab testing. There are no certified procedures available for testing live animals. Researchers believe the diseases are carried by prions, proteins which are smaller than viruses and alter the formation of brain tissue. Currently, there are no treatments or cures for the diseases.

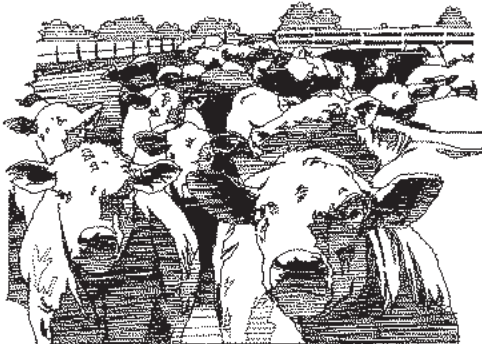
Found in animals:

Chronic wasting disease	found in deer and elk.	
Scrapie (scray-pee)	identified in sheep for centuries.	
Transmissible mink encephalopathy	a disease found in mink.	
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy	also known as Mad Cow Disease.	
Feline spongiform encephalopathy	rare disease generally found in middle to old age cats, mostly confined to England.	

Found in humans:

Classic Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (Croyts-feld Yah-kob)	occurs naturally at a rate of one per one million people. Considered a hereditary disease.	
New variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease	transmission linked to consumption of bovine spongiform encephalopathy-contaminated meat.	
Kuru, fatal familial insomnia and Gerstmann-Sträussler-Scheinker disease	examples of very obscure human TSEs	

CWD has not been linked to the human TSE (see sidebar), Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, in the way that cattle BSE, also called “mad cow disease”, has been in Europe. The prion that causes CWD accumulates in certain parts of infected animals including: the brain, eyes, spinal cord, lymph nodes, tonsils, and spleen. Health officials recommend that these parts not be eaten and also advise that no human or animal eat any part of a deer known to have CWD or displaying visible signs of CWD infection. Signs of CWD in animals include: weight loss, behavioral changes like isolation, blank facial expression, nervousness, excessive salivation, teeth grinding, increased drinking and frequent urination.



Livestock Health

Many agencies have been involved in researching the risk of chronic wasting disease transmission to livestock. One group of veterinarians from the University of Wyoming, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department are currently studying the issue of chronic wasting disease and livestock.

In three separate experiments, the researchers placed cattle in pens with CWD-infected deer. In the five years this experiment has been underway, no cattle have contracted the disease. The cattle were even fed diseased brain tissue from infected deer. The only cattle that the researchers were able to infect with CWD had CWD-infected tissue injected directly into their brains. Even when injected directly into the brain, only three of 13 cattle came down with the disease. These results suggest that CWD is not naturally transmissible to livestock.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, similar experiments were conducted by placing sheep and goats in close quarters with CWD-infected deer. To date there is no evidence of CWD transmission to these domestic herds. Scientific evidence also suggests there is no danger of CWD transmission to domestic herds of bison as well.



How bovine spongiform encephalopathy entered the human food chain

Between 1994 and 1996, 12 people in England came down with new variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (nvCJD). All the victims had eaten beef products from cattle suspected of having bovine spongiform encephalopathy, commonly called "mad cow disease." Scientists in England reported that the prions from ten of the British patients were remarkably like those of the "mad cows" and not like those of people who died of "classic" Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.



Scientists now speculate that the prions traveled through the food chain. It began in sheep, traveled to cattle, and then infected humans.

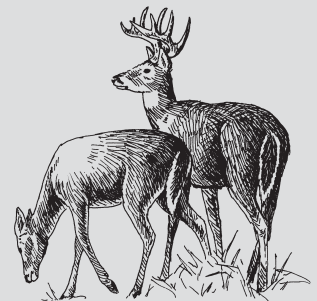


Scrapie, a spongiform encephalopathy disease of sheep, has been around over three hundred years. Scrapie, like chronic wasting disease and BSE, is centralized in the spinal column, brain, and other parts of animals that are not typically eaten by people. In the past, sheep meat and bone were ground together into "offal" and added to cattle feed as a protein supplement. Chances are scrapie-infected body parts were added to cattle feed in the areas of "mad cow" outbreak. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, changes in feed rendering operations allowed the TSE to survive the rendering process. The cattle ate this infected meal, and contracted the disease.



Experts speculate that humans were contracting nvCJD by ingesting contaminated beef products. "Mad cow disease" is known to accumulate in the brain and spinal column of infected cattle. When these parts are cut through in the butchering processes, CWD-infected central nervous system tissues can contaminate the meat. In certain cuts of beef where the meat stays on the bone, like T-bone steak, the likelihood of contamination is greater. Humans are putting themselves at greater risk for nvCJD when they eat contaminated meat. In many European countries, the sale of T-bone steak and other cuts was banned.

Health officials know that CWD accumulates in the brain, eyes, spinal cord, lymph nodes, tonsils, and spleen of infected deer. As a safeguard, humans and other animals are advised against eating these parts. It is also suggested that hunters bone out the meat from deer harvested in CWD infected areas.



Hunting, the need to continue a tradition



“The discovery of chronic wasting disease in the Wisconsin deer herd should not deter hunters from doing what they love, but rather solidify the notion in their minds that they are conservationists, doing what is necessary to sustain the future of the deer population and the welfare of Wisconsin resources.”

—Department of Natural Resources Secretary, Darrell Bazzell

Tradition

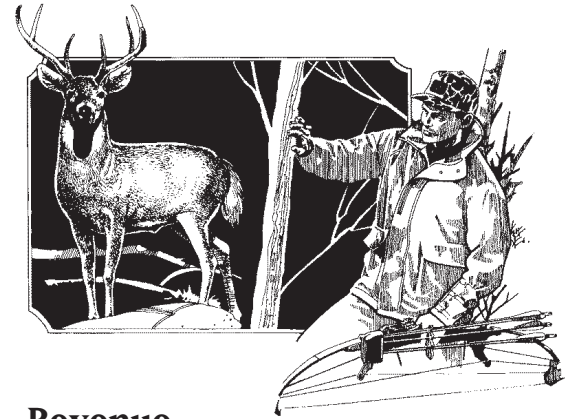
Hunting has always been a part of Wisconsin’s outdoor heritage. Originally an important means of putting food on the table, the modern deer hunt combines elements of food gathering, family tradition, recreation and wildlife management.

Population Control

Hunting is the wildlife manager’s most important tool for managing the deer population. The white-tailed deer has adapted very well to our current landscape of agriculture, mixed forest and urban fringe development. As a result, deer populations have swelled. This has created abundant wildlife viewing opportunities and has made Wisconsin a top whitetail hunting state. It has also created problems for motorists, farmers, foresters and homeowners as deer attempt to cross roadways and graze on crops, tree seedlings and plantings.

Tourism

More than an in-state tradition, Wisconsin sees hunters from all 50 states in the fall when up to 700,000 hunters go to the woods and fields for the annual gun deer hunt. According to a DNR and University of Wisconsin survey, approximately 60 percent of hunters would miss hunting more than any other of their interests if they were unable to do it. Many have also said that there is no substitute for the experience of deer hunting.



Revenue

Hunting is also very important to the recreational economy of the state. In 1996, hunters spent \$897 million on supplies, lodging, and other associated costs. These expenditures support thousands of private sector jobs and wildlife programs like land acquisition and management, wildlife education, and research.

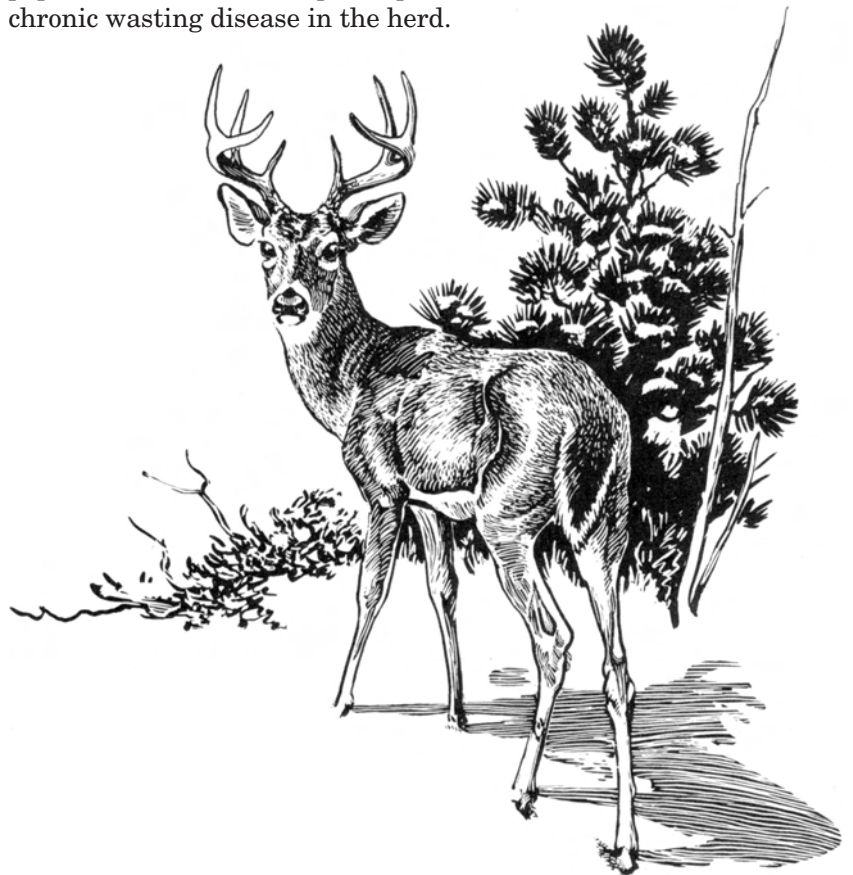
Maintaining balance

Every deer hunter plays a vital role in wildlife management. Hunter harvests help maintain a sustainable ecosystem by keeping deer populations in balance with land carrying capacity and social tolerance. Concerns associated with overpopulation due to decreased hunting include:

- **Agricultural damage:** According to the DNR's 1998 publication, *Wisconsin's Deer Management Program*, approximately 90 percent of wildlife crop damage in the state is a result of deer overpopulation. In 2001, claimed crop damage caused by wild life cost about \$1.8 million.
- **Increased deer-vehicle collisions:** In 2001, over 45,000 deer were killed statewide in collisions.
- **Forest damage:** Overgrazing by deer diminishes tree regeneration.
- **Damage to ornamental plants and landscaping.**
- **Airport runway safety issues.**
- **Decreased food supply and cover for other species:** As deer numbers increase, the plant species they prefer to eat decrease or disappear. This hurts other animals that depend on those plants and may lead to the proliferation of unwanted plant species.

Every three years, deer management unit (DMU) population goals are reviewed and set in a series of public meetings. The population goal for each management unit represents the number of deer that can be supported by the ecosystem and tolerated by residents. Across Wisconsin, over winter population goals range from 10 to 35 deer per square mile of deer range. Many DMUs currently exceed their goal.

This spring's aerial survey of deer management unit 70A, where CWD has been detected, showed 40 to 50 deer per square mile. This number does not include the expected crop of spring fawns. Experts warn that such overpopulation could lead to quick spread of chronic wasting disease in the herd.








Safe Handling










Chronic wasting disease has been known to occur in deer and elk in the USA for decades. In spite of ongoing surveillance for similar disease syndromes in humans, there has never been an instance of people contracting a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) disease from butchering or eating venison. CWD has not been linked to the human TSE disease, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, in the way that “mad cow disease” has been in Europe. The prion that causes CWD accumulates in specific parts of infected animals—the brain, eyes, spinal cord, lymph nodes, tonsils and spleen. Therefore, these tissues should not be eaten from any deer. Health officials additionally advise that humans and other animals should not consume any part of an animal with visible signs or confirmed infection of CWD.

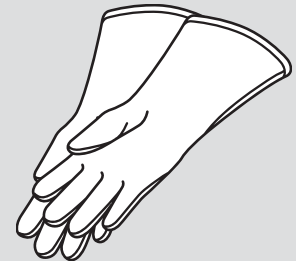
Experts suggest simple precautions that hunters field dressing animals and processors should take when handling deer in areas where CWD is found:

General Precautions

-  Do not eat the eyes, brain, spinal cord, spleen, tonsils or lymph nodes of any deer.
-  Do not eat any part of a deer that appears sick.
-  If your deer is sampled for CWD testing, wait for test results before eating meat.

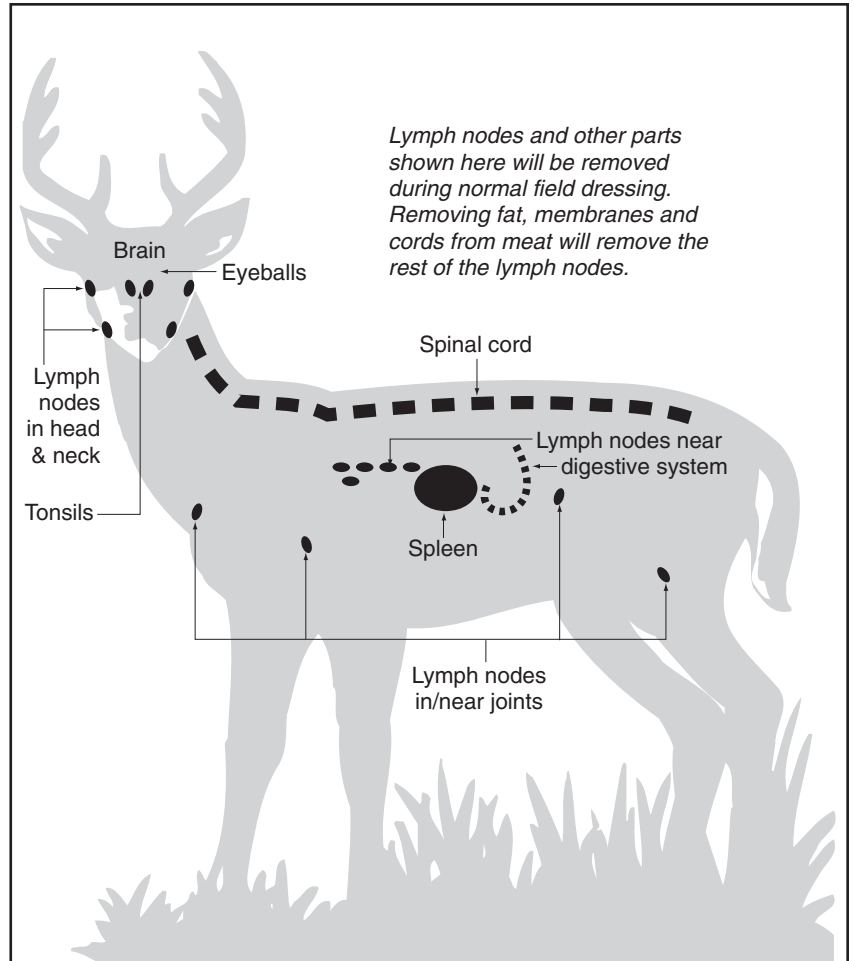
Hunters

-  **Wear rubber or latex gloves** when field dressing carcasses.
-  **Bone out the meat** from your animal.
-  **Remove** all internal organs.
-  **Minimize the handling** of brain, spinal cord, spleen and lymph nodes (lumps of tissue next to organs or in fat).
-  **Do not use** household knives or utensils.
-  **Use equipment dedicated** to field dressing only.
-  **Clean knives and equipment** of residue and sanitize with household bleach. Use a solution of equal parts chlorine bleach and water. Wipe down countertops and let them dry. Soak items like knives one hour. When through, dilute the solution further and dump it down a drain.
-  **Request that your animal be processed individually** and not combined with meat from other animals.
-  **Avoid use of saws.** Do not cut through spine or skull.



Processors

- Process all deer from CWD management zone separately** at the end of the day.
- Wear rubber or latex gloves.**
- Minimize the handling** of brain or spinal tissue. If removing antlers, use a saw designated for that purpose only, and dispose of the blade.
- Dispose** of hide, brain and spinal cord, eyes, spleen, tonsils, lymph nodes, bones, and head by sealing in plastic bags and sending to legal disposal agent as designated by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.
- Bone out meat** from the deer and remove all fat and connective tissue. This will also remove lymph nodes.
- Do not cut through spinal column.** Avoid using a saw.
- Identify and store meat and trimmings from each deer separately.** Each hunter should get meat only from the animal he or she brought to you.
- Thoroughly clean and sanitize equipment and work areas with bleach** before using it for other processing. Use a solution of equal parts chlorine bleach and water. Wipe down countertops and let them dry. Soak items like knives one hour. When through, dilute the solution further and dump it down a drain.
- If you store meat until test results are available, work with owners to dispose of meat from animals that test positive for CWD.



The Management Plan For Chronic Wasting Disease



The DNR has partnered with staff from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), the Department of Health and Family Services (DFHS), the University of Wisconsin – Madison’s Department of Wildlife Ecology and UW-Extension, with assistance from the United States Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS), and the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (WVDL), to create an adaptive management plan for CWD. As more is learned about the disease, the plan may be extended or modified.

Goals of the CWD management plan are as follows:

1. Define the extent and severity of CWD infection in Wisconsin’s deer.
2. Investigate possible origins of CWD infection in Wisconsin, with the objective of preventing possible repetition of events that led to the disease in Wisconsin.
3. Minimize the potential for the disease to spread beyond currently infected areas of the state.
4. Eradicate the disease in the currently affected area of the state.
5. Use the best scientific information available to achieve these objectives.
6. Provide timely, complete and accurate information about CWD and CWD management efforts to the public.

Action Plan

Sampling

The first phases of the plan consisted of intensive sampling. Area landowners and DNR and USDA marksmen provided 516 deer over the age of 18 months from the 450 square mile area surrounding the original CWD discovery site. The purpose was to determine the extent and severity of CWD infection. Additional samples were taken from car-killed deer, and from retrieval of sick and dead deer reported by the public. As of May 30, 2002, results from these tests confirmed 15 additional cases of CWD, bringing the total to 18 positive deer in the Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin, area. Intensive statewide sampling is planned for fall 2002.

Assessing origin and spread

Starting with the discovery of CWD on February 28, 2002, the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and DNR’s Law Enforcement and Wildlife Management staffs began investigating the possible origins of CWD in Wisconsin. Landowners, cervid farm owners, hunters, animal feed businesses and other members of the communities within the surveillance area were contacted. Annual reports from DNR licensed white-tailed deer farms were also reviewed. Though the origins of the disease will be fully investigated, it is unlikely that the source of CWD infection in Wisconsin will ever be identified. All information collected will be used to help prevent repetition of CWD-causing events in other locations.

Restricting Live Animal Importation

As a precautionary action, DATCP issued an emergency rule made effective in April that halts the importation of live deer and elk into Wisconsin unless they come from herds that have been under surveillance for CWD at least five years. This amounts to a temporary ban on imports since few or no herds anywhere in the United States have been under surveillance for that long.

Protecting Farm Herds

The Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection previously had a voluntary pilot program to monitor chronic wasting disease on deer and elk farms. The program is now mandatory for deer and elk farmers who move live animals off their farms. Hobbyists or others who just enjoy the aesthetics of keeping deer on their property do not have to enroll in the monitoring program, but they cannot move any live animals off their property. If they take animals to slaughter or send any part of a carcass – even a set of antlers – off their property, that animal must be tested for CWD. The rule also requires that all deer killed on shooting preserves must be sampled before the hunter takes them off the preserve. The farm owners pay the veterinarian, shipping, and laboratory fees for all testing on their animals.

Like the DNR, DATCP began testing for CWD before it was suspected to be in Wisconsin. From October 1998 through May 2002, more than 450 samples had been submitted from farm-raised deer and elk in Wisconsin. All were negative. For more information about monitoring and testing farm-raised deer and elk, call 608-224-4872.

Preventing CWD on Wisconsin's deer and elk farms

The Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection has issued an emergency rule aimed at preventing CWD on Wisconsin's deer and elk farms. The rule requires testing and imposes strict controls on animal movement.

Provisions include:

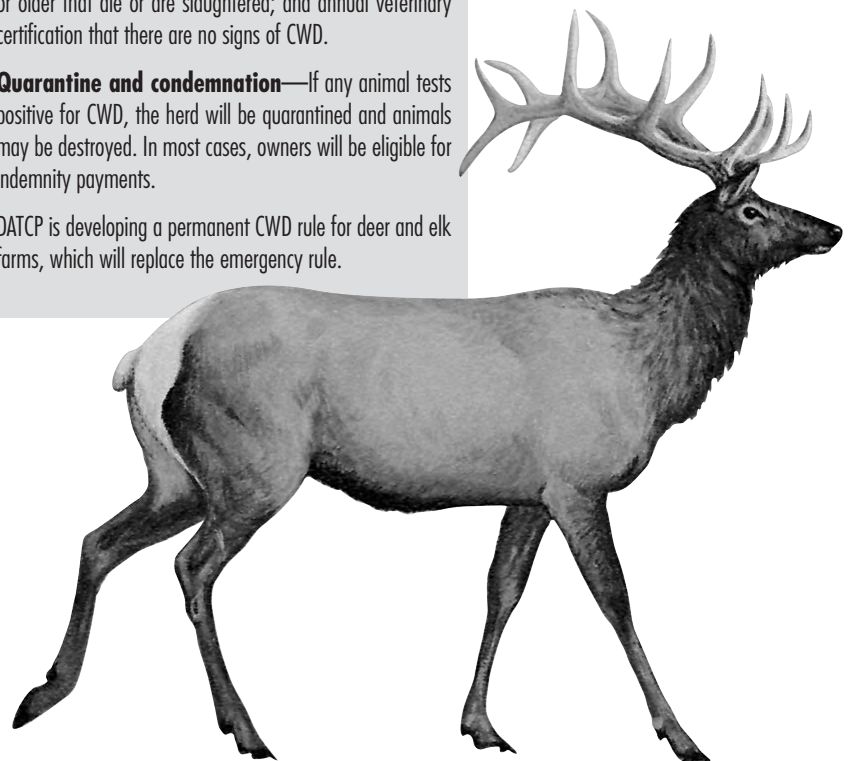
Mandatory testing—For all deer and elk 16 months or older that die or go to slaughter from farms that move live animals; for any deer or elk 16 months or older that die or are killed if any part of the carcass moves off the farm; and for all deer harvested on shooting preserves.

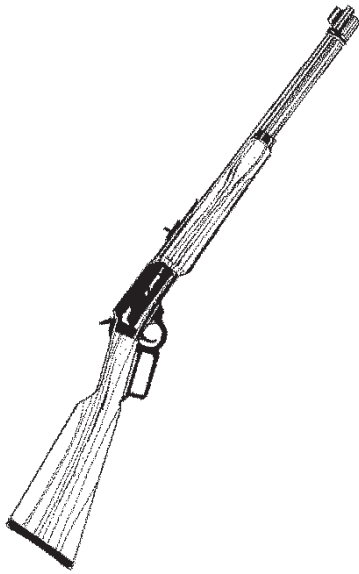
Imports from other states—Deer and elk will not be allowed into Wisconsin unless they come from herds that have not had any contact with animals from other herds for at least a year; that have had no signs of CWD for at least five years; and that have five-year herd records, including all causes of death, available to animal health officials.

In-state movement—Farms that move deer or elk off their premises must be enrolled in the herd monitoring program. This requires individual ID numbers for all animals; annual reports of all births, deaths, sales, and purchases; mandatory CWD testing of all animals 16 months of age or older that die or are slaughtered; and annual veterinary certification that there are no signs of CWD.

Quarantine and condemnation—If any animal tests positive for CWD, the herd will be quarantined and animals may be destroyed. In most cases, owners will be eligible for indemnity payments.

DATCP is developing a permanent CWD rule for deer and elk farms, which will replace the emergency rule.





Special Measures to Collect/Kill Deer in the Eradication Zone

Permits

During the summer of 2002, willing landowners in the current eradication zone in western Dane, eastern Iowa, and a small part of Sauk Counties, will be issued scientific collector permits to shoot deer on their property.

Interested landowners can volunteer to help by contacting DNR at 608-935-1945.

Collection periods are taking place one week per month in June, July, August and September. **The collection periods are: June 8-14, July 13-19, Aug. 10-16, and Sept. 7-13.** Permits are good through September 13, 2002.

Having a seven-day collection period followed by several weeks of no shooting allows deer to resume normal patterns and gives residents and outdoor recreationists a sense of normalcy and security knowing when shooting will take place.

Permit holders and their agents do not need a deer-hunting license, but they must meet the legal age and safety requirements for obtaining a Wisconsin deer hunting license. The Natural Resources Board recently approved an extended hunting season for the Management Zone along the periphery of the Eradication Zone. This special extended season will begin October 24, 2002. Hunters will need licenses in order to participate in the special extended hunting seasons.

Rifle use will be allowed in Dane County, but it is the landowner's choice.



Disposal

Protecting human, animal and environmental health are the primary considerations in the selection of deer carcass disposal methods. Wisconsin's public health officials emphasize that there is no recorded case of a human developing a TSE disease as a result of eating or contacting CWD-infected deer. Similarly, there is no evidence suggesting CWD is transmissible to livestock. This does not mean there is a guarantee of absolute safety from CWD. Officials from several state agencies are carefully reviewing all disposal options to determine which methods will best contain or destroy CWD and minimize the exposure to humans and other animals. Efficiency, transportation and volume handling ability also enter into the equation. Methods of carcass disposal under consideration include: engineered sanitary landfills, incineration, chemical digestion and rendering, or combinations of the above. Disposal methods used and locations may change throughout the CWD management process.

Testing

At this time diagnosis of CWD requires an immunohistochemical (IHC) stain test of tissue from an animal's brain stem. Other diagnostic tests are in development that may lead to earlier detection and more rapid results, but it may be some time before these new tests are available. There is great public interest in having a means to test hunter-harvested deer. At the time of this publication, Wisconsin does not have in-state CWD testing ability of any kind. The National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa, has provided CWD testing services supporting Wisconsin's CWD surveillance program since 1999 and during additional sampling in spring and summer of 2002. However, testing is limited by lab capacity. The legislature and Governor recently directed \$900,000 to development of in-state CWD testing capacity. More funding may come from a request for federal help. This amount will provide enough capacity to handle necessary testing for research and disease management but is not intended to meet demand for testing hunter-harvested deer. In fall, 2002 the DNR plans to sample 500 deer from each county in the state. This number of tests will provide a statistically reliable answer to the question, "Is there CWD in the county I hunt in?" Some counties with lower expected harvests will be lumped to collect the 500-deer samples.



What should I do if I observe or harvest a deer that I suspect might have CWD?

Call the local DNR office or the DNR Wildlife Health Team (608-267-6751, 608-221-5375) right away. The DNR will make every effort to collect samples from the possibly affected deer for CWD testing.

Wisconsin State Agency Contacts

**Department of Agriculture, Trade,
and Consumer Protection**
608-224-5130



**Office of Outreach and Policy/Animal Health
and Safety Issues**

<http://datcp.state.wi.us> keyword: chronic wasting disease

Department of Health and Family Services
608-267-7321

<http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/healthtips/BCD/creutzfeldt.htm>

Department of Natural Resources
608-266-8204



Bureau of Wildlife Management

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife/whealth/issues/CWD/>

