

CWD Herd Certification Program

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a slow and progressive transmissible neurological disease of deer, elk and moose caused by an infectious protein, or prion, which produces small lesions in the brains of infected animals.

CWD is always fatal and is transmitted through direct animal- to-animal contact or by contact with saliva, urine, feces, blood, and carcass parts of an infected animal or infected soil. CWD is classified as a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) and is similar to “mad cow” disease in cattle and scrapie in sheep. CWD has a long incubation period of 18 to 24 months with clinical signs often not apparent until the end stage of the disease.

Clinical signs include weight loss, behavioral changes, increased drinking and urination, excessive salivation, and lethargy.

CWD is primarily diagnosed by using immunohistochemistry (IHC) in a laboratory to detect prions in the brain, tonsils, or lymph nodes after death.

Indiana requires CWD-susceptible cervid species to be registered under the Indiana State Board of Animal Health in either the USDA Herd Certification Program (HCP) or the State CWD Registered Program.

CWD-susceptible species include the following: white-tailed deer, elk, red deer, sika, mule deer, moose, and reindeer.

CWD Herd Certification Program Requirements:

- Premises identification for each herd location
- Annual inspection and inventory by BOAH personnel
- Each animal is required to have a visible, official tag (must bear the US shield) and a secondary ID which is unique to the farm (farm tag, tattoo, microchip)
- ID must be applied by 1-year-of-age or sooner, if the animal leaves the farm
- Maintain current inventory records
- Maintain an 8-foot tall fence or higher
- All animals older than 1-year-of-age that die or are harvested are required to be sampled for CWD.

For More Information

More information about CWD and associated requirements is available online at: in.gov/boah/ or <https://cwd-info.org/>



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