



Special Interest Articles:

- 2016 MnEBA Charitable Elk Hunt
- 2016 MN Farmed Cervidae Economic Impact Study
- MN State Fair Recap
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- 2016 MnEBA Gun Raffle Calendar
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President's Message by Jim Byrne



I was looking through my email the other day and low and behold there was a message that read, "It's time for another president's message". So here we go. Now first of all, I want to thank all those who took time to work the booth at the state fair this year. I hope you all enjoyed the time as much as I did. It is a great time to talk about our industry, our animals and our farms. I really have the best of feelings watching both the old and young touch the antler and see the amazement in their eyes when they realize elk are real and not only on TV.

If you didn't spend a couple of hours participating in this special opportunity, you missed something very, very special. My deep thanks again to Paul Hueg and Greg Lubinski for all the hard work in coordinating the recruitment and schedules.

I think that by now we all have had enough rain for a while. As the sign at my local elevator states, "This is the wettest drought ever". Breeding season is under way. Fall harvest is beginning and October weather with any luck will cooperate.

Plans are being made for the annual meeting in January, which will be held at Arrowwood Lodge in Alexandria, MN. The raffle is underway and no immediate crisis is looming. This is a time to enjoy the blessings given to us each day.

Enough rambling. It's time to sit in my chair on the porch and listen to bulls bugle. Enjoy the coming fall. Stay safe and involved.

Mark Your Calendars! **2017 MnEBA Annual Conference** January 13-14, 2017

Arrowwood Resort & Conference Center

2100 Arrowwood Lane NW ~ Alexandria, MN 56308

Room Rates \$99 (no Waterpark) / \$129 (with Waterpark) ~ 320-762-1124

Annual Meeting ~ Informational Seminars ~ Evening Banquet

Bring the family, this is Martin Luther King Jr. Day weekend! The Arrowwood Resort has a fantastic indoor water park for the kids and the city of Alexandria has many unique shopping destinations.

*FURTHER DETAILS BE INCLUDED IN THE
DECEMBER NEWSLETTER.*

MnEBA News is a bimonthly publication of the Minnesota Elk Breeders Association. It is mailed out on the first day of February, April, June, August, October, and December. Deadline for information, articles, and advertisements is the 15th of the preceding month.

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MnEBA

Mission Statement

The Minnesota Elk Breeders Association represents a unified voice that strengthens the Elk farming industry in Minnesota by creating awareness about Elk production and promotion and consumption of Elk products.

2016 MnEBA Charitable Elk Hunt

Elk Hunt Takes Place October 10th-12th

MnEBA is making final arrangements for the 10th Annual MnEBA Charitable Elk Hunt! This anniversary hunt is scheduled to take place October 10-12 at Tony's Trophy Elk Hunt Ranch in Baudette, MN.

Eileen Vasquez of St. Paul, MN has been chosen as this year's hunt recipient. Eileen is a disabled Navy veteran who served 3 tours in Iraq. While serving on a navy ship aircraft carrier dealing with nuclear power, she was exposed to nuclear materials which among other negative effects, is slowly causing her to go blind. She is expected to be totally blind in two years. This hunt is a once in a lifetime chance for her to go on an elk hunt before she no longer has the sight to do so. Her husband is also a disabled veteran of the U.S. armed forces.

MnEBA offers many thanks to everyone who is helping to make this year's hunt possible. They include Tony Beckel – Tony's Trophy Elk Hunt Ranch, Lance & Brenda Hartkopf for the purchase of the bull, Dan Mueller for transporting the bull from Pine Island to Baudette, Lake Superior Safari Club International for donating funds for travel, food, lodging and meat processing, and Ron Welle of Midwest Outdoors Unlimited who is making all the final arrangements and accompanying the hunt recipient. Many thanks to all who have made this 10th annual elk hunt possible!

2016 Minnesota Farmed Cervidae Economic Impact Study

Watch For the Survey to Arrive in Your Mailbox in November

Every five years, MnEBA conducts a new economic impact study to officially track the current status of the farmed cervid industry in Minnesota. This study is widely used for legislative and marketing purposes. This data has proven to be invaluable, especially when dealing with any kind of legislative issues MnEBA comes up against as it gives the industry credibility with legislators and the general public.

We're coming to the end of five years since we conducted the last study and are making plans to conduct a new study. The Minnesota Deer Farmers Association has agreed to join in this project to help capture the economic impact and statistics of the entire Minnesota farmed cervid industry.

Expect to see your survey in November. A survey will be mailed out to every farmed cervid producer in Minnesota whether they are an association member or not. It is very important for everyone to fill out and return this survey so the results capture the most accurate picture of the industry. Please be watching for your survey and do your part to help make this project a success!

Minnesota State Fair Recap

This year's MnEBA booth at the State Fair was again very successful with nearly \$11,000 worth of meat and dog chews being sold during the 12 days of the fair! It's no wonder as the State Fair also broke their all-time attendance record at 1,943,719 attendees!

One of the new features co-chair Paul Hueg put together was a new brochure holder display. This display put all the great promotional materials MnEBA has front and center which drew a lot of attention to the information MnEBA members had to share with fairgoers.

Paul, Greg Lubinski and Kraig Wurst went up the day before the fair to set everything up and had things ready to go for the first day of the fair. Greg spent much time putting together the schedule, calling nearly every MnEBA member to help out as some of the "regular" shift volunteers had conflicts this year. Greg also filled in for several shifts who were a little short on manpower.

Greg also donated 400 lbs. of elk trim to use in the elk sausage and jerky for State Fair sales. Thank you Greg and Roxy for your very generous donation!!!



Special thanks to everyone who helped man the booth this year. This list includes Ray Smothers, Aase family, Perry Olson, Lance & Brenda Hartkopf, Greg & Roxy Lubinski, Bryce & Megan Lubinski, Wade Schimmelpfennig & Heike Lewandowski, Glen & Kaye Zearth, Jim Byrne, Ken & Carol Mudek, Melquist family, Mark & Lisa Luedtke, Paul & Lynn Hueg, Pat & Rita Prodzinski & grandkids, Norman Schimmelpfennig, Mark & Michelle Lucas, Martin & Justin Zacharias, Darrell & Sheila Turek and Jeremi & Sarah Rollings. A big thank you also to Paul Hueg for picking up the trailer and for taking the booth down and returning it to Howard Lake.

Mark your calendars for August 24 – September 4, 2017 for the next Great Minnesota Get-Together! Maybe next year is the year they will break 2 million attendees! There's no better place than the Minnesota State Fair to reach our target audience of potential elk farmers and elk product consumers, all in one place. Make plans to be a part of this great outreach effort next year and enjoy a day at the Fair!



Elk Sausage For Sale!!!

There are (77) 16oz Elk Garlic Summer Sausage chubs left over from the State Fair which have been discounted from \$12 to just \$8! They are absolutely delicious!

You can freeze them and have delicious sausage available any time of year. Please call the MnEBA Office to order your discounted chubs today – 320-543-2686 or info@mneba.org.

2016 NAEBA International Antler Competition

The 2016 International Antler Competition was a great opportunity to view antler genetics from all across North America! Several contests were decided on a mere 1-2" difference in size. The Top 3 winners in each category are listed below. For a complete set of results, contact the NAEBA office at 320-543-3665 or info@naelk.org.

The 2017 NAEBA Convention & International Antler Competition will be held in Mankato, Minnesota on July 27-29, 2017. This is your chance to bring antlers to a close competition! Even if you haven't competed in awhile, it's a great opportunity to get some official scores on your bulls, especially when breeding stock buyers come calling! If you are thinking of taking antler sets to the competition next year, make sure to take pictures of them with their visible ear tag while the antler is still on their head. Entries are not accepted without a picture.



2016 International Antler Competition Top 3 Winners/Category

| Category | Bull's Name | CWI/SCI | Bull's Sire / Dam's Sire | Owner |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Velvet 2 Year Old | | | | |
| 1 st | LLE Hulk | 83.50 CWI | LLE Thor / Ludwig Y496 CBF | Mark & Lisa Luedtke |
| 2 nd | ABID 87B | 80.78 CWI | Levi | Ben & Connie Seutter |
| 3 rd | EMF 405B | 77.37 CWI | Styx / Twister | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| Breeders Three Two Year Old | | | | |
| 1 st | ASEU 1425 | 79.85 CWI | Levi | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| | ASEU 1447 | 76.67 CWI | Levi | |
| AVERAGE CWI 74.45 | ASEU 1440 | 66.81 CWI | Levi | |
| Velvet 3 Year Old | | | | |
| 1 st | EMF Sniper | 110.72 CWI | Styx / Python 3P | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| 2 nd | EMF Kenard | 107.91 CWI | Tequila / Maverick A73 | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| 3 rd | EMF Rebel | 102.95 CWI | Tequila / SHR King 26 | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| Breeders Three Three Year Old | | | | |
| 1 st | EMF 327 Ravage | 101.39 CWI | Styx / SHR King 26 | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| | EMF 305A | 79.13 CWI | Styx / Twister 119R | |
| AVERAGE CWI 89.88 | EMF 323A | 89.11 CWI | Styx / Yodaman 142S | |
| 2 nd | EMF 331A | 82.08 CWI | EMF Zeus / SHR King 26 | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| | EMF 322A | 96.23 CWI | EMF Zeus / Candyman | |
| AVERAGE CWI 89.81 | EMF 325A | 91.12 CWI | EMF Zeus / CrackerJack | |
| Velvet 4 Year Old | | | | |
| 1 st | EMF 211Z | 110.99 CWI | Styx / SHR King 26 | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| Velvet 5 Year Old | | | | |
| 1 st | SPR 166Y | 114.65 CWI | Amarillo Sky | Lance & Brenda Hartkopf |
| 2 nd | Mojito | 103.22 CWI | Tequila / Bounty | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| Velvet Mature | | | | |
| 1 st | Commander | 186.53 CWI | Python | Ben & Connie Seutter |
| 2 nd | Chief | 158.25 CWI | Python | Ben & Connie Seutter |
| Hard Antler Typical Spiker | | | | |
| 1 st | PVER Yellow 42 | 71 2/8 SCI | | Andy Azcarraga |

| | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Hard Antler Non-Typical Spiker | | | | |
| 1 st | 141B Fine | 210 7/8 SCI | KEF Mighty Fine / KEF CrackerJack | Chuck & Marsha Canady |
| 2 nd | Bridger C171 | 209 4/8 SCI | Chief Denali / VVR Stormy | Rodney & Everett Miller |
| 3 rd | MNMIS B-21 | 169 1/8 SCI | Misery Creek Richard / EUN Blast | Greg Lubinski |
| Two Year Old Typical | | | | |
| 1 st | PVER Royal T | 344 3/8 SCI | Prophet 812 | Andy Azcarraga |
| 2 nd | Frisia Donald | 310 6/8 SCI | Red Cooper / Amber Elk Rascal | John & Patricia Kooistra |
| 3 rd | Frisia Dwayne | 309 7/8 SCI | Frisia Dynasty / SHR King 26 | John & Patricia Kooistra |
| Two Year Old Non-Typical | | | | |
| 1 st | EMF Hysteria | 451 5/8 SCI | Tequila / Python P3 | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| 2 nd | EMF Tiny | 446 3/8 SCI | Styx / EMF Typhoon | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| 3 rd | EMF Diesel | 431 6/8 SCI | Styx / Logman | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| Two Year Old Breeders Three Hard Antler | | | | |
| 1 st | CMC Nuckie | 330 4/8 SCI | KEF Mighty Fine / CrackerJack | Chuck & Marsha Canady |
| | Fine 137A | 302 7/8 SCI | KEF Mighty Fine / CrackerJack | |
| | AVERAGE SCI 302 7/8 | Fine 134A | 275 3/8 SCI | KEF Mighty Fine |
| Three Year Old Typical | | | | |
| 1 st | ASEU 1273 | 389 5/8 SCI | Levi | Ben & Connie Seutter |
| 2 nd | ASEU 1225 | 376 3/8 SCI | | Ben & Connie Seutter |
| 3 rd | Frisia Hector | 374 4/8 SCI | | John & Patricia Kooistra |
| Three Year Old Non-Typical | | | | |
| 1 st | EMF Stryker | 519 1/8 SCI | Styx / Cassius P4 | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| 2 nd | The Toy 151Z | 459 1/8 SCI | KEF CrackerJack / KEF Big John | Joel Cornelius |
| 3 rd | Frisia Super Boy | 458 6/8 SCI | Frisia Dynasty / Amber Yoda | John & Patricia Kooistra |
| Three Year Old Breeders Three Hard Antler | | | | |
| 1 st | 121Z | 432 1/8 SCI | KEF Mighty Fine / Samurai | Chuck & Marsha Canady |
| | 127Z | 374 2/8 SCI | KEF Mighty Fine / CrackerJack | |
| | AVERAGE SCI 380 5/8 | 125Z | 335 5/8 SCI | KEF Mighty Fine / SHR Impressive |
| Four Year Old Typical | | | | |
| 1 st | EMF Midas | 460 3/8 SCI | Styx / Amber Yoda | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| 2 nd | AER 130Y | 388 4/8 SCI | | Ken Anderson / Andy Azcarraga |
| 3 rd | Frisia Model | 387 4/8 SCI | / Platinum | John & Patricia Kooistra |
| Four Year Old Non-Typical | | | | |
| 1 st | Avenger | 526 SCI | Levi | Ben & Connie Seutter |
| 2 nd | Frisia June | 508 2/8 SCI | Frisia Integrity / AE Superior | John & Patricia Kooistra |
| 3 rd | AER 137Y | 393 6/8 SCI | Amber Yoda | Ken Anderson |
| Five Year Old Typical | | | | |
| 1 st | PVER Yel 013 | 423 6/8 SCI | | Andy Azcarraga |
| 2 nd | PVER 047 | 409 2/8 SCI | | Andy Azcarraga |
| 3 rd | G02 | 397 4/8 SCI | Duramax 254 | Greg Kenyon |
| Five Year Old Non-Typical | | | | |
| 1 st | Chernobull | 597 3/8 SCI | Tequila / SHR King 26 | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| 2 nd | HIE Massive | 480 SCI | Tequila / The Bounty King | Chad Lawler |
| 3 rd | Splendor's Ray | 478 2/8 SCI | X-Ray | Lance & Brenda Hartkopf |
| Six Year Old Typical | | | | |
| 1 st | Dale Jr. | 466 1/8 SCI | SCF 304S / Stalwart | Rick Jensen |
| 2 nd | 048W | 451 6/8 SCI | | Andy Azcarraga |
| Six Year Old Non-Typical | | | | |
| 1 st | Styx | 558 6/8 SCI | Styx / Tequila | Eric & Kim Mohlman |
| 2 nd | Abe ASEU 90B | 489 6/8 SCI | Levi | Ben & Connie Seutter |
| Mature Typical | | | | |
| 1 st | PVER Prophet | 456 4/8 SCI | | Andy Azcarraga |
| Mature Non-Typical | | | | |
| 1 st | Splendor's Blend | 530 2/8 SCI | SPR Casey | Paul & Barbara Hartkopf |
| 2 nd | Levi | 528 7/8 SCI | Cobra | Ben & Connie Seutter |
| 3 rd | ARR Buckwheat | 469 SCI | | Bob, Karen & Chris Thuerauf |

MnEBA Indoor Display Gets New Look!



The MnEBA indoor booth display is sporting a whole new look with a new tabletop backdrop, with funding and assistance from Minnesota Grown. The new tabletop display was recently set up at the NAEBA Convention in Omaha.

This is phase one of a two phase plan. Phase one is going back to our roots and promoting the benefits of diversifying into elk. Phase two will focus on the markets/products and will be in the form of a stand up banner stand or two which can be placed on either side of the tabletop display. With the advances in photo taking technology, it is hoped to have a display which really stands out and draws the eye!

Many thanks to Minnesota Grown for your assistance in designing and funding these new projects!



For more info, contact Leo Windschitl at 218-820-0658
AN_DeerHelp@adm.com • ADMAAnimalNutrition.com

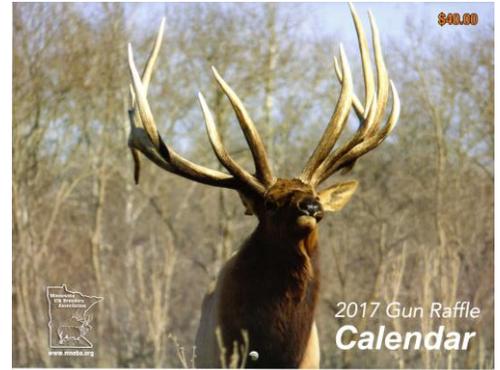
ADM

2016 MnEBA Gun Raffle Calendar

Great incentives to sell and chances to win!

There are over 500 calendars in the hands of members to sell, but very few stubs and money have been returned so far. As fall farming tasks give way to winter, it's the perfect time to order your calendars and begin sales! The goal is to sell out for the 2nd year in a row. If calendars sell out this year, the number of calendars printed for 2018 will be reevaluated.

Once again this year, members are eligible for great incentives when selling the new 2017 MnEBA Gun Raffle Calendar! A free MnEBA membership for selling 30 or more calendars and returning stubs and money before December 31st is being offered once again this year. Also back by popular demand, for every 10 calendars sold with stubs and money being returned before December 31st, your name goes into a drawing to win a Winchester SXP 12ga 3.5" Full Camo Waterfowler shotgun! The more calendars you sell, the more chances to win!



MANY THANKS to all MnEBA members who stepped up to sponsor a month in the 2017 MnEBA Gun Raffle Calendar. This year's sponsors include: Jim & Eileen Byrne, Jerry & Linda Campbell, Dennis & Jacky Engebretson, Lance & Brenda Hartkopf, Greg & Roxy Lubinski, Mark & Lisa Luedtke, Perry & Sandy Olson, Darrell & Sheila Turek, Brian Wagner, Leo Windschitl, Kraig & Jenny Wurst and Klint & Lora Wylie.

Calendars are available by contacting your local board member, or the MnEBA Office at 320-543-2686 or info@mneba.org.

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 CUSTOM EQUIPMENT FABRICATING,
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MnEBA Kitchen

As it's getting cooler and more difficult to grill out, here's something new to try with those elk steaks in your freezer!

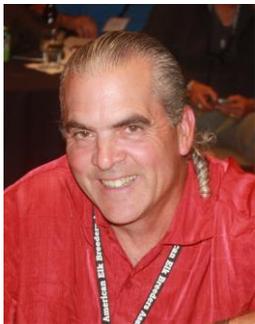
Crock-Pot Elk Meat Barbeque

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| 3 lbs. elk round steak cut into chunks | 1 tsp. garlic powder |
| 1 small onion, chopped | 1 tsp. dry mustard |
| ½ cup green pepper, chopped | 1 tsp. thyme |
| 1½ cups water | 1 Tbsp. paprika |
| 2 tsp. beef bouillon | 2 Tbsp. brown sugar |
| 1 can tomato soup | buns |
| ¼ cup Worcestershire sauce | |



Remove fat from meat chunks and place meat in crock pot or slow cooker. Add onion, green pepper and 1½ cups water. Add bouillon. Cook on High 7 hours or until meat is well done and shreds easily with a fork. Add rest of ingredients and stir to mix. Simmer for about one hour, stirring occasionally. Meat should be well shredded by end of cooking time. Spoon over toasted bun halves to serve. Serves 6 to 8.

Board Blog by Mark Luedtke, MnEBA Vice President



School has once again started, some of the leaves are changing colors, and the bulls are bugling. Fall is in the air! I hope you have all had a wonderful summer. I don't know about you, but this is a time of year when I can't seem to catch up on the long list of projects I was hoping to get done before winter: shipping trophy bulls, storing up winter feed, setting up breeding groups and repairing the damage of rutting bulls. Some days feel like a lost cause! Please don't misunderstand me, I love what I do, fall is just a very busy time. Maybe that isn't such a bad thing because it gives me a reason to look forward to those sub-zero days with blowing snow! 😊

October will be here soon and with it the annual United States Animal Health Association meeting. Unfortunately, the event this year will be in North Carolina and our Governor has put restrictions on all Government employees, so none of the Minnesota Board of Animal Health representatives will be allowed to attend. As much as we will miss the participation of Dr. Paul Anderson and his peers from the Minnesota Board of Animal Health, I am planning to be in attendance with a good delegation of national cervid representatives. Please contact me if you have specific thoughts or concerns I should be aware of.

I was personally disappointed last year when the TB resolution failed in the final assembly vote and have every intention of seeing what I can do to address what I believe is an unfair disadvantage to doing the blood test. In essence it all revolves around the false positives that exist in a vast majority, if not all of the disease test protocols. The problem with the TB blood test is the limited ability to test out of the situation prior to having to euthanize the animal. I'm not overly optimistic about my ability to change the current situation, especially since Dr. Paul Anderson was key in getting the resolution as far as we did last year, but it is a process and for there to be any progress at the national level it is important to continue trying for what we believe in.

I hope you all have a great fall and look forward to seeing you in January.

Advertiser Index

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AgMax

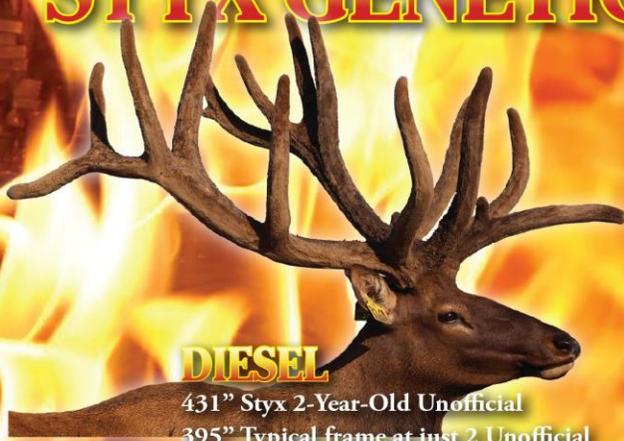
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Spring Coulee Velvet Capsules

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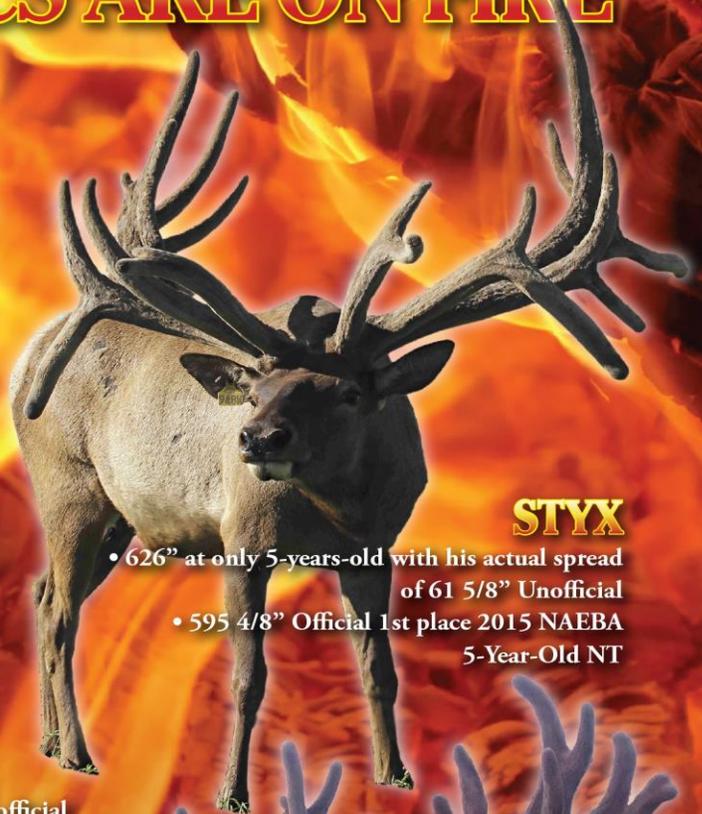
Thank you for your support!

STYX GENETICS ARE ON FIRE



DIESEL

431" Styx 2-Year-Old Unofficial
395" Typical frame at just 2 Unofficial



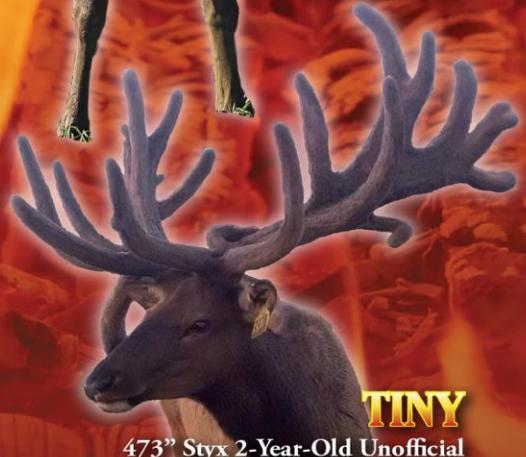
STYX

• 626" at only 5-years-old with his actual spread of 61 5/8" Unofficial
• 595 4/8" Official 1st place 2015 NAEBA 5-Year-Old NT



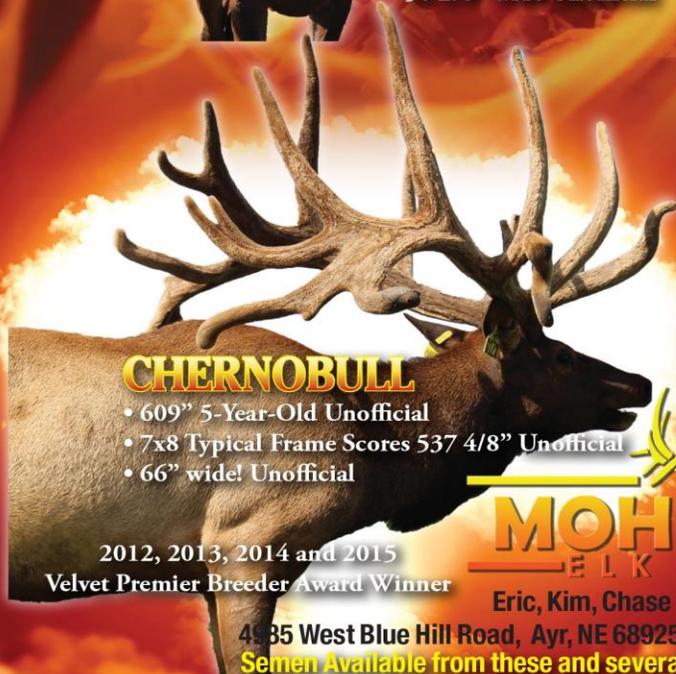
STRYKER

550" Styx 3-Year-Old Unofficial
56 2/8" wide Unofficial



TINY

473" Styx 2-Year-Old Unofficial
Special thanks to Herb Fritch of Two Feathers Elk & Bison for his purchase of Tiny. Make semen inquiries to Mohlman Elk Farm who retains 1/2 semen rights.



CHERNOBULL

• 609" 5-Year-Old Unofficial
• 7x8 Typical Frame Scores 537 4/8" Unofficial
• 66" wide! Unofficial

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In The News

Missouri Deer Industry Wins Lawsuit Against Missouri Department of Conservation

Statement from Jacques deMoss, President of the Missouri Deer Association, regarding the Court's Order in Hill, et al. v. Missouri Department of Conservation, et al.

September 15, 2016 - We are very pleased the judge agreed that the state of Missouri does not have - and cannot take - ownership of privately owned animals. The deer in question have never been a part of the wild. They were born and raised on private farms with considerable financial investment from deer farmers, while the state has invested nothing in them.

The Conservation Department used the threat of Chronic Wasting Disease as justification for trying to take an ownership interest in these deer. We share Conservation's concern about CWD, just as we are concerned about all of the diseases that can affect animals. In fact, the deer farmers who have invested millions of their own dollars in acquiring and raising these deer have a greater financial stake than anyone in seeing that they remain disease free. We fully support the Conservation Department's efforts to control the spread of CWD in the wild population and hope that it continues to improve its surveillance of deer in the wild.

We do not think we are beyond regulation by the state. We have contended from the beginning that we think the Missouri Department of Agriculture is the appropriate agency to regulate our privately owned deer, just as they regulate other privately owned animals in the state. In fact, the Department of Agriculture has regulated our industry for years and actually had its own regulations governing the importation of private deer and testing of harvested deer for CWD before Conservation tried to ban importation completely. Those regulations are consistent with the standards adopted by the United States Department of Agriculture. It is absurd that one state agency would attempt to ban what another agency from the same branch of state government allows subject to certain regulations.

This litigation has not finally concluded until the time for appeal expires or an appeal is decided. For that reason, we ask that any inquiries be made through our counsel, Jean Paul Bradshaw of the law firm of Lathrop & Gage LLP. He can be reached at 816-460-5507 or jbradshaw@lathropgage.com.

Changes Affect How Deer Carcasses Can Enter Minnesota

MN DNR News Release

August 1, 2016 - Starting this fall, hunters can no longer bring whole deer carcasses into Minnesota from anywhere in North America. This restriction includes all members of the deer family (deer, elk, moose and caribou).

Previously, the restriction only applied to animals harvested in areas of North America where chronic wasting disease (CWD) has been known to occur.

"We are making this change to respond to the increasing prevalence and geographic spread of CWD," said Adam Murkowski, Big Game Program leader with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

The disease is always fatal and infected deer can appear healthy. Live animal testing is still in development.

Starting this fall, hunters may bring only the following parts into Minnesota, regardless of where the animal was harvested outside of the state:

- Meat that is boned out or that is cut and wrapped (either commercially or privately).
- Quarters or other portions of meat with no part of the spinal column or head attached.
- Hides and teeth.
- Antlers or clean skull plates (no brain tissue attached) with antlers attached.
- Finished taxidermy mounts.
- Nonresidents transporting whole or partial carcasses on a direct route through Minnesota are exempt from this restriction; however, similar restrictions exist in all surrounding states.

The 2016 Minnesota Hunting and Trapping Regulations Handbook states that this rule is likely to be in place (pages 2 and 62). This rule has been finalized and is in place for the fall of 2016.

Minnesota DNR to Test for CWD Again this Fall

Outdoor News ~ Joe Albert, Contributing Writer

May 23, 2016 - After a one-year hiatus, the DNR plans to conduct chronic wasting disease surveillance of white-tailed deer in the southeastern part of the state this fall.

The agency has sampled deer from that part of the state in six of the past seven years.

Part of the reason for this fall's round of testing is that southeastern Minnesota is the place from which the state's lone CWD-positive animal was discovered. (A bowhunter killed the animal in late 2010.) But it's also in response to the CWD that's present in deer in Iowa's Allamakee County, which shares a border with Minnesota, and to the ongoing threat posed by CWD-infected deer in Wisconsin.

The DNR's goal is to test a total of 3,600 deer from the 300 series of permit areas. Some of those deer, officials hope, will come from around the Pine Island area, from where the positive wild animal came.

"It would be nice to go back into that area and make sure nothing festered there," said Michelle Carstensen, DNR wildlife health program leader. "Even though we feel good about the three years of negative (tests), you just never know. It's prudent to check that while we're there anyway."

Yet it's the situation in Wisconsin, where CWD prevalence continues to rise, that's the real

concern. The disease has been spreading outside of the state's endemic area, and wildlife officials say Wisconsin is the most likely source of the CWD-infected deer found in Iowa.

"In my mind, it's going to be something that as the spread continues, it's going to reach into our state," Carstensen said, noting that the 300 series of deer permit areas in Minnesota are particularly at risk due to their proximity to the border. "If it's going to come here and we can get it early, we have the best chance to succeed in minimizing the impact."

DNR staffers will work check stations throughout the southeast during the opening weekend of this fall's firearms deer season. Hunters in those areas will be unable to register their animals via the Internet or on the phone during that time.

In addition to working check stations, Carstensen and her staff also are exploring additional methods for collecting samples.

Management and CWD

Adam Murkowski, the DNR's big-game program leader since January, is no stranger to CWD, having worked in part on Wisconsin's deer program prior to coming to Minnesota.

"It keeps me up at night," he said of the possibility of CWD coming into Minnesota from Iowa or Wisconsin.

Yet he believes the state has a good plan when it comes to monitoring deer herd health, and says there's no reason to believe CWD is established in Minnesota's deer herd.

Still, he worries about how the disease could affect Minnesota's deer, especially if it was widespread.

"It would profoundly affect the management of deer," he said. "And it would put us in a position where we would have to evaluate our current strategies and how those need to be altered in order to protect the entirety of the state's deer herd."

Wisconsin's Plan

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker last week attended that state's Conservation Congress annual meeting and discussed updates to the state's CWD plan.

According to a press release from Walker's office, the plan will be updated in a variety of ways, including:

- Seeking input from hunters, landowners, farmers, and foresters in every county using county deer advisory councils.
- Directing the DNR to conduct a comprehensive study of deer population dynamics.
- Creating "best management practices" for the deer farm industry.
- Conducting more frequent fence inspections.
- Developing quicker test results for hunters.



The Minnesota Elk Breeders Association is one of many organizations and individuals who contribute to the national Public Relations Campaign organized by the American Cervid Alliance. The following is a recent industry update. This highly successful campaign is in its third year!

USDA APHIS CWD Program Standards Work Group Nearing End

Group's Report to be Submitted to USAHA for Feedback in October

September 27, 2016 - The USDA APHIS Work Group created to revise the CWD Program Standards document will conclude its work next month. The work group, which was created earlier this year, has met bi-weekly since June to revise the document. This included a three-day session in person at a USDA facility in Maryland.

In contrast to the previous work group that met throughout 2013, this group is focusing more on the policy of various areas of the program standards document rather than a line by line revision.

As of September, discussions from the group have been constructive with signs of improving several key areas, such as avoiding spider web trace-outs and the use of ante-mortem testing in some situations.

The work group will convene one more time in early October to review the group's report that will be submitted to two committees at the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) conference in North Carolina. The USAHA Farmed Cervid Subcommittee and USAHA Committee on Captive Wildlife and Alternative Livestock will review the group's report and offer feedback. The subcommittee will meet on Monday afternoon of October 17 and the full committee will meet on Tuesday morning of October 18.

Charly Seale, who serves as a member of the CWD Work Group and as a co-chair of the USAHA Farmed Cervid Subcommittee, asked for a strong showing of industry support at the conference. "This is very important for our industry as we have an opportunity to make substantive changes to the document. CWD policy has devastated some states and this is industry's chance to improve it. We appreciate all the cervid industry representatives who plan to attend the USAHA conference next month."

The three industry representatives who are on the CWD Work Group are Travis Lowe of the North American Elk Breeders Association, Charly Seale of the Exotic Wildlife Association and Shawn Schafer of the North American Deer Farmers Association.

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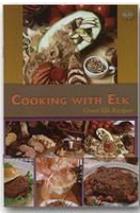
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Velvet Antler Brochures is a general velvet antler brochure produced by NAEBA. \$.30 each

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Elk Info Brochure with general elk health and market info. FREE to MnEBA members up to 100 copies. \$.50 each to non-members. (pictured)

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Vet Corner by Dr. Glen Zearth

The following article is courtesy of the Elk Research Council.

Elk Research Council Project 1503 Managing CWD through live testing and genetic screening FINAL REPORT

By Nicholas J. Haley, *Midwestern University*

In early March of this year, with the help of the North American Elk Breeders, the Elk Research Council and other industry support, we began a very ambitious project to not only continue the development of live animal tests for chronic wasting disease (CWD), but for the first time begin applying those tests towards a practical goal: managing CWD in a private herd of elk in an area where CWD is prevalent on both sides of the fence.

The initial two weeks in the field involved the collection of rectal biopsies, blood, and other samples from nearly 470 elk for testing. All animals were sampled over the course of four days and sent out to smaller pastures so they could be run through again the following week after positive animals had been identified. Rectal biopsies were evaluated by two methods – the standard immunohistochemistry (IHC) assay used for brain and lymph node tissues (though not yet formally approved for biopsies) and the RT-QuIC amplification assay. Biopsy testing was completed in 3-5 days, and while results correlated very well between the two tests, it was apparent that RT-QuIC may have the higher sensitivity we are currently seeking, identifying roughly twice as many infected animals as IHC.

After going over the test results at the start of the second week, a compromise was made between the ranch, our research group, and the regional agricultural agency to determine how best to manage infected animals. The ranch had a vested interest in preserving any positive bulls, in hopes they may survive long enough to be hunted this fall. Without much data to support definitive infection in RT-QuIC-positive, IHC-negative animals, a conservative decision was made to cull all IHC-positive cows and simply follow the positive bulls and IHC-negative, RT-QuIC positive animals into the fall hunting season and again at next year's inventory. These animals may be resampled if harvested or if a carcass is discovered during the fall season, and retested by biopsy this coming spring if they are present to follow up on our results.

While additional samples are being evaluated for more accurate test development, a portion of blood was analyzed further for two important purposes: pregnancy testing and genetic evaluation.

Historically, the CWD-resistant genotype found in elk, "Prnp 132LL," has been very hard to find in wild and farmed populations. It has been suggested that this may be because the susceptible genotype, 132MM, is more "fit," which could mean 132MM cows have more calves, or 132MM bulls are more dominant, or any number of things. We wanted to evaluate pregnancy rates in each of the genotypes (132MM, 132ML, and 132LL) to see if there was any relationship between genotype and pregnancy. In the future, we will continue testing this idea by performing pregnancy palpation instead of relying on a blood test, but for the moment it appears that all genotypes had similar pregnancy rates. This means that, should we decide to more closely manage the genetic background of the herd, cow reproductive rates should not be an issue moving forward.

The other relationship concerning the 132MM, ML, and LL genotypes we wanted to follow up on was CWD resistance. As with previous studies, we found that the 132MM animals were much more likely to be infected than 132ML animals; about twice as likely in the present group of animals. All elk that had the 132LL genotype (35 in total) were CWD-negative by both of our tests, which made the prospect of promoting the 132LL genotype as a means to manage CWD very enticing in this herd. Unfortunately, and despite their known resistance, there have been a small number of reports of CWD-positive 132LL elk, so this solution would likely not be a permanent or comprehensive one for the ranch.



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At this point, we had accomplished many of the things we sought out to do in the first year of the study: 1) collect a variety of samples that could be used by a number of researchers to develop a better test for CWD, 2) use those test results to begin a management strategy for the ranch, and 3) evaluate the genetic background of the animals to continue pursuing genetic resistance as a means for controlling CWD in farmed elk and deer.

We made the decision to take it a step further. Using technology commonly referred to as “DNA fingerprinting,” we analyzed the genetics of every animal on the ranch using DNA microsatellites in an effort to construct a herd pedigree. Obviously, with many animals in older generations missing due to harvesting, predation or disease, our family tree was difficult to build beyond the youngest generations, but it should vastly improve in the future now that we have DNA collected from every animal on site.

Why build a pedigree? There are two very important reasons: 1) It will allow us to more closely examine the basis for CWD susceptibility among related animals and 2) It can give us further insight into why resistant 132LL elk are so rare in wild and farmed populations.

I'll save the best for last and discuss our findings on the rarity of the 132LL genotype first. Using the pedigree, we were able to see just how many calves a cow had on the ranch now, and how many calves a particular bull may have sired. What we found was that the number of offspring a cow had on the farm did not seem to depend on her genotype: 132MM cows had just as many offspring present as 132ML and 132LL cows. Instead the discrepancy seemed to be explained by the genotype of the father: older 132MM bulls had a slightly higher number of calves than older 132ML bulls. The reason is still up for debate, perhaps 132MM bulls are more dominant, or they're more fertile. Either of these explanations, or others we haven't thought of, should in no way disqualify encouraging the recruitment or importation of 132LL bulls. As 132LL bulls become more common, they should be able to effectively outcompete 132MM bulls for breeding opportunities and continue to pass their resistant genotype on.

“It should be apparent that we've gone way beyond developing a live animal test with this study, and hopefully with the continued cooperation of the cervid farming industry, our research partners, and both the United States Department of Agriculture and Canadian Food Inspection Agency, we can continue pursuing CWD resistance as a means to control the disease in farmed elk and deer”.

The most important reason for building a pedigree relates to how we can more effectively use genetics to promote CWD resistance in a herd. Most of us are probably familiar with using an animal's genetic history to improve certain desired characteristics. Antler size is one obvious example, but we can use the same information to encourage genetic resistance to CWD. The general term for this is an animal's “Estimated Breeding Value,” or EBV, which looks at the productivity of all of that animal's offspring to assign a breeding score to the parent. A Holstein cow with a higher EBV has offspring that produce more pounds of milk per lactation, for example. In our case, we'd be looking forward, at the susceptibility of all of the offspring to CWD, as well as backwards, to the susceptibility of all of the parents, grandparents, and siblings. Our term for this figure is the “Relative Index of Susceptibility to CWD,” or RISC. Using data from this herd, and eventually past and future CWD-positive herds, to examine the likelihood an animal has for developing CWD if its offspring, or sister, or mother had CWD will allow us to better assign RISC scores to animals and determine their potential resistance to CWD and further select them for breeding. Ideally we'd like to select cows or bulls that have no offspring with CWD, regardless of their genetic background.

Which brings us to the basis for pursuing this avenue: it became apparent in this and past studies that the 132MM/LL genotype found in elk couldn't explain everything. For example, we have a number of older 132MM cows in the herd, some with calves who have all escaped infection. At the same time, we have a number of very young 132ML animals that were found to be infected. This is mirrored in past studies in white tail deer, where a small percentage of “susceptible” animals were found to be free of CWD, while an equally small number of “resistant” animals were found to be infected. This all points to additional genetic mechanisms of resistance, which with the right approach can be exploited and used to develop enhanced resistance to CWD in elk and deer just as we've done to promote antler development and other characteristics.

It should be apparent that we've gone way beyond developing a live animal test with this study, and hopefully with the continued cooperation of the cervid farming industry, our research partners, and both the United States Department of Agriculture and Canadian Food Inspection Agency, we can continue pursuing CWD resistance as a means to control the disease in farmed elk and deer. I feel that this may be the most important opportunity the elk and deer farming industries have to take possession of CWD management in a way no other group can, using techniques that we're all familiar with. As effective as agricultural groups have been at improving milk production in dairy cows, antler size in deer and elk, and growth rates in lambs, I feel the same can be said for the industry's potential for improving CWD resistance to the point where private herds may be the go-to source for CWD resistant animals: what would take Mother Nature millennia to accomplish, with your help and dedication, producers can achieve in several generations.

Minnesota Elk Breeders Association

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8:30-11:30 a.m.
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Calendar of Events

January 13-14, 2017 – MnEBA Annual Conference, Arrowwood Resort & Conference Center, Alexandria, MN

March 10-11, 2017 – NAEBA March Mingle & Colorado Elk Breeders Association Annual Meeting, Holiday Inn Denver Lakewood, Denver, CO

March 10-12, 2017 – Outdoor News Deer & Turkey Classic, Warner Coliseum, MN State Fairgrounds, St. Paul, MN

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