

July / Aug / Sept '23

Volume 27, Issue 3



MnEBA News

Special Interest Articles:

- 2024 Raffle Calendars Now Available
- Summer Picnic Thank You
- Board Meeting Minutes
- NAEBA Convention in Sioux Falls, SD Highlights
- Minnesota Board of Animal Health Updates
- Minnesota State Fair
- Board Blog
- Vet Corner
- NAEBA Position on Ante-Mortem CWD Testing
- MnEBA Charitable Elk Hunt

President's Message by Mark Luedtke



Hello everyone! Hope everyone and your family are doing well. Wow where did the summer go? Isn't it crazy how you wait for summer for so long, then we all pack twice as much stuff as we should into it, that it just feels too busy and packed full to even enjoy it.

Bulls are bugling and starting to fight, and people are busy scoring, sorting, and shipping. Hope you are able to sell all that you want, the markets appear to be good.

I have heard different strategies to meet the new fence requirements and I hope you are able to put something together that the Board of Animal Health will approve that works for you. I admit I am still trying to decide what to do. It is difficult between managing cost, effort, and consideration of ongoing maintenance.

I wish you all the best of luck in this breeding season. Stay safe, stay healthy and enjoy the fall.

Mark

Make Plans to Attend! **2024 MnEBA Annual Conference** January 5-6, 2024

Best Western Plus Kelly Inn St. Cloud

100 4th Ave South ~ St. Cloud, MN 56301

Room Rates \$119/night

Reservation Line (320) 253-0606

*Annual Meeting ~ Informational Seminars
Evening Banquet*

Make a weekend out of it and take advantage of all the interesting things to do in St. Cloud!

MORE DETAILS TO 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.

Board of Directors

President

Mark Luedtke
(320) 630-5419

Vice President

Lance Hartkopf
(320) 543-3664

Secretary/Treasurer

Brian Wagner
(612) 366-5078

Director

Greg Lubinski
(507) 273-0525

Director

Jerry Campbell
(218) 820-5515

Executive Secretary to the Board

Brenda Hartkopf
(320) 543-2686

MnEBA

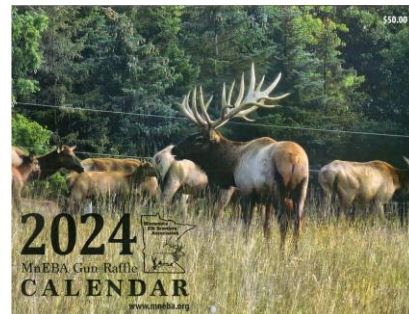
Mission Statement

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.

2024 Raffle Calendars Now Available!

Order Your Calendars Today!

If you have not yet picked up your 2024 MnEBA Gun Raffle Calendars, please call the office to order your calendars today! There are many calendars available for anyone who can sell them! As we move into fall, it's a good time to begin selling calendars for next year!



New this year, four of the twelve months will feature an elk meat package instead of \$100 cash for the Bonus Day on the 15th of the month. The other months will have the usual \$100 cash. Many thanks to both Elk Marketing and Crescent Meats for their 100% donations to these prize-winning days!

Once again, members are eligible for great incentives when selling the new 2024 MnEBA Gun Raffle Calendar. A free MnEBA membership for selling 30 or more calendars and returning stubs and money before December 31 is being offered once again. Also, back by popular demand, for every 10 calendars sold with stubs and money being returned before December 31, your name goes into a drawing to win a Winchester Wildcat Semi Auto VSX Gray 22 LR 16.5" rifle. 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 2024 MnEBA Gun Raffle Calendar! This year's sponsors include Dennis Engebretson, Marlen Schmitz, Wade Schimmelpfennig, Greg Lubinski, Mark & Lisa Luedtke, Jerry & Linda Campbell, Roger & Saichon Nietfeld (took two!), Brian Wagner, Kraig & Jenny Wurst, Klint & Lora Wylie and Lance & Brenda Hartkopf. Contact the MnEBA Office to order your calendars today!

Summer Picnic Thank You!

Thank you to the Luedeke Family for hosting the 2023 MnEBA Summer Picnic!

Many thanks to Luedeke Family of Elkoholics Elk Ranch in Miltna for hosting this year's MnEBA Summer Picnic on June 24th. It was a beautiful day for a picnic and the Luedeke family had a great set-up for the 35+ people who were able to attend!

The Luedeke's provided delicious burgers, brats and beverages to go along with other fantastic potluck items people brought along. There's never a shortage of delicious food at MnEBA summer events!

There was much discussion about recent laws that have passed at the State Capitol with everyone trying to figure out how they are moving forward with the new physical barrier language. It was good to discuss these concerns together. The Luedeke's have a beautiful setting for their elk operation and attendees got to enjoy an interesting tour to end the day. Thanks again to the Luedeke Family for your great hospitality!!



Board Meeting Minutes

Board Meeting Minutes July 10, 2023

The Minnesota Elk Breeders Association Board of Directors held a meeting via Zoom on Monday July 10, 2023 at 8:00 a.m. Mark Luedtke, Lance Hartkopf, Brian Wagner and Brenda Hartkopf were present. Directors Jerry Campbell and Greg Lubinski were absent. President Luedtke called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. Luedtke announced there would be an addition under New Business to discuss requesting to take part in fence line research with Dr. Scott Wells.

The secretary minutes from May 27 was reviewed. L. Hartkopf moved to accept the report as written, Wagner seconded, motion carried. The year-end treasurer's report was then reviewed in detail. L. Hartkopf moved to accept the treasurer's report, Wagner seconded, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Board reviewed the draft budget and determined to not make any changes to the draft as presented. Wagner moved to approve the draft budget, L. Hartkopf seconded, motion carried.

The State Fair Committee made a recommendation to change pricing for several of the products sold at the State Fair. It was recommended that pricing for the 8" split and 8" whole dog chews be increased \$5 each. On the sausage, chubs will be made in a 10 oz. size instead of 12 oz. The board agreed to the committee's recommendations.

B. Hartkopf reported that all MnEBA Gun Raffle Calendar sponsorships have been sold and the calendar is ready to go to print as soon as the board approves the final gun list. Board discussed the

proposed gun list and approved it as presented. Also discussed Scott Salonek offering to donate product for each of the Bonus Meat Days. Will combine Scott's offering for two of the Bonus Meat Days and check with Crescent Meats to ask if they will sponsor the other two Bonus Meat Days with similar product and quantity. Wagner to follow up.

NEW BUSINESS

Board discussed industry reaction to new elk-related legislation passed in May. Then discussed cost for the average elk producer to comply with required physical barrier language and what it would cost the industry as a whole.

As the industry contemplates how to deal with new legislation requiring a physical barrier on the fence line for all Minnesota farmed cervidae including elk, discussed if it would be beneficial for the elk industry to ask to take part in a current fence line study with the University of Minnesota. Was determined to table for now.

Luedtke reported he would be meeting with Representative Isaac Schultz at noon today to discuss the new import laws, physical barrier language and data privacy issues. B. Hartkopf is working on setting up a meeting with our lobbyist, the MDA lobbyist and the board before the end of July. Discussed possible dates.

L. Hartkopf moved to adjourn, Wagner seconded, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:24 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Brenda Hartkopf, Executive Secretary

*Spring Coulee
Velvet Capsules*



Bill & Karen Knutson
Home of Spring Coulee Elk

N7447 Cty Hwy D
Holmen, WI 54636
Phone (608) 526-4477
Cell (608) 792-4477
Fax (608) 526-2055
miniman41@centurytel.net

Advertiser Index

Spring Coulee Velvet Capsules
Page 4

ADM Animal Nutrition
Page 10

Leedstone
Page 11

Thank you for your support!

NAEBA Convention in Sioux Falls, SD Highlights!

The 2023 NAEBA Convention took place in Sioux Falls, South Dakota on July 27-29. See which Minnesota producers received awards and played prominent roles in the conference!



Brian Wagner, Seminar Speaker
Measuring Hard Antler Bulls in
Handling Facilities



Dr. Glen Zebarth, Seminar Speaker
Managing Broken Bones & Antler
Pedicule Damage



Brenda Hartkopf, Seminar Speaker
A Year in the Life of an Elk Rancher



Brenda Hartkopf
Rush Johnson President's Award



Mark Luedtke
People's Choice 2-4 Yr Old Hard Antler
LLE Blue 11



Mark Luedtke
Premier Breeder Award
Typical Hard Antler

For the second year in a row, the antler competition did not have any velvet antler entries but it did have 36 sets of hard antler in the competition. Minnesota bulls won in the top three of several categories which included:

2 Year Old Non Typical	Bull	Score	Sire / Dam's Sire	Breeder
3 rd Place	LLE Blue 14	383 2/8	LLE 331/Frisia Dynasty	Mark & Lisa Luedtke
2 Year Old Typical	Bull	Score	Sire / Dam's Sire	Breeder
1 st Place	LLE Blue 11	337 2/8	LLE 331/LLE Stinger	Mark & Lisa Luedtke
2 nd Place	LLE Blue 30	333 2/8	LLE Tealk/LLE Zoomer	Mark & Lisa Luedtke
3 Year Old Non Typical	Bull	Score	Sire / Dam's Sire	Breeder
3 rd Place	SPR 942G Ice Man	455 7/8	Frisia Daniel 176B/Logman	Darrell Turek
3 Year Old Typical	Bull	Score	Sire / Dam's Sire	Breeder
1 st Place	LLE Y923	380 7/8	LLE 331/LLE Thor	Mark & Lisa Luedtke
2 nd Place	LLE Y933	379 0/8	LLE Rebel/PVER Max Far Go	Mark & Lisa Luedtke
4 Year Old Non Typical	Bull	Score	Sire / Dam's Sire	Breeder
3 rd Place	LLE Y830	463 7/8	LLE 320/Billabong	Mark & Lisa Luedtke
4 Year Old Typical	Bull	Score	Sire / Dam's Sire	Breeder
1 st Place	LLE Y815	400 4/8	LLE 320/LLE Zoomer	Mark & Lisa Luedtke
3 rd Place	LLE Y831	356 3/8	LLE Stinger / LLE Thor	Mark & Lisa Luedtke
5 Year Old Typical	Bull	Score	Sire / Dam's Sire	Breeder
1 st Place	LLE Y709	417 3/8	LLE 320/LLE Braetak	Mark & Lisa Luedtke



June 26, 2023

From: Dr. Courtney Wheeler, MN Board of Animal Health

Re: Email Containing Farmed Cervidae Program Updates

Dear Farmed Cervid Producer,

New statutes passed during the 2023 Minnesota legislative session have reshaped the Board of Animal Health's oversight of Minnesota farmed Cervidae herds.

On July 1, 2023, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will be responsible for administering and enforcing statutes and rules governing ownership of farmed white-tailed deer. The Board of Animal Health (BAH) retains the responsibility for administering and enforcing laws regulating all other farmed Cervidae species.

The BAH and DNR are working to develop an interagency agreement to establish roles and responsibilities necessary to protect the health of all Cervidae in Minnesota consistent with amended or new state regulations. Upcoming changes to the BAH Farmed Cervidae Program including the following:

Minnesota statute changes effective July 1, 2023

- All farmed Cervidae 6 months of age and older that die or are slaughtered must be tested for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).
- A person must not import live Cervidae into the state from a state or province where CWD has been detected in the farmed or wild cervid population in the last five years unless that animal tests negative for CWD with a validated live-animal test. Currently, there is not a live-animal test for CWD that has been validated.
- Live Cervidae or Cervidae semen must originate from a herd that has been subject to a CWD herd certification program and has reached the highest certification status.

Minnesota statute changes effective September 1, 2023

- If an escape of a farmed cervid should occur that is not returned or recaptured by the owner within 24 hours of the escape, the DNR must be notified immediately. After 72 hours of a farmed cervid escape, a licensed hunter may kill and possess the escapee and is not liable to the owner for the loss of the animal.
 - To report an escape, please call your local DNR Conservation Officer or your regional DNR Wildlife Manager Office.

Minnesota Statute changes effective September 1, 2024

- Perimeter fencing must be 96 inches in height, constructed and maintained to prevent farmed cervids from escape, free-roaming cervids from entry and physical contact between your farmed Cervidae and wild cervids.
 - We have included a list of approved exclusionary fencing options that can be used to prevent the physical contact of non-white tailed deer farmed Cervidae and free-roaming cervids (see Page 8). Any variations to these options must be inspected and approved by the BAH.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at farmed.cervidae@state.mn.us or 651-201-6804. Thank you for your continued cooperation as we navigate these new regulations together.

Courtney Wheeler | Assistant Director
Minnesota Board of Animal Health
625 Robert St. N
St Paul, MN 55155
O: 651-201-6800
C: 612-756-2810
www.mn.gov/bah

June 30, 2023

From: Dr. Courtney Wheeler, MN Board of Animal Health
Re: Email Announcing New Farmed Cervidae Program Director

Thank you for working with us as we navigate the new legislation regulating farmed Cervidae. I wanted to inform you that we have hired a new Farmed Cervidae Program Director, Dr. Heather Damico. I will continue to serve the Board of Animal Health as Assistant Director. Please reach out to Dr. Damico with questions regarding the Farmed Cervidae Program moving forward.

Heather Damico, DVM | Senior Veterinarian
Minnesota Board of Animal Health
C: 612-271-9860
Heather.damico@state.mn.us

News Release

Contact: Michael Crusan at Michael.crusan@state.mn.us

Board of Animal Health Appoints New Leader



August 3, 2023 - Saint Paul, Minn - The six-member Minnesota Board of Animal Health has named Dr. Brian Hoefs as its new executive director and state veterinarian. The Board selected Dr. Hoefs to succeed Dr. Marion Garcia, who served the agency until April of this year. Dr. Hoefs has been serving in the role as interim since April.

Dr. Hoefs graduated from the University of Wisconsin, River Falls with an undergraduate degree in Animal Science, Equine and Food Animal emphases, and earned his DVM from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Dr. Hoefs has worked in a variety of veterinary positions including equine, mixed animal, and small animal practices as well as academia. Additionally, he has served as an animal humane officer and biosecurity specialist for a broiler company. Dr. Hoefs joined the Minnesota Board of Animal Health in 2019 where he previously oversaw swine, equine and livestock concentration points.

"After 25 years as a licensed veterinarian, I am still thrilled with all there is to learn and accomplish for animals in this profession," said State Veterinarian, Dr. Brian Hoefs. "I look forward to expanding the relationships we have with our partner agencies, veterinarians, and Minnesotans to protect the health and wellbeing of our animals."

Dr. Hoefs is the 11th executive director to hold the position in the Board's 120-year history. Executive directors are appointed annually by the Board members unless a vacancy occurs, and the position needs to be filled mid-term. For details about other news and events at the Board of Animal Health, visit www.bah.state.mn.us.

EDITOR'S NOTE: As stated previously, language recently passed by the House and Senate would require all farmed cervidae producers to have a physical barrier on their exterior fences completed by September of 2024. In June, BAH released the most recent parameters for exclusionary fencing as shown below. This list may expand as breeders think of other creative ways to achieve a physical barrier, however any physical barrier will ultimately need to be approved by the BAH before it is recognized.

You can get creative with how you achieve a physical barrier such as by only utilizing interior pens instead of pens with an exterior fence line, using fewer pens which have an exterior fence line, or any combination of methods below.



Guidelines for Exclusionary Fencing

The purpose of exclusionary fencing is to prevent the commingling of wild and farmed Cervidae which includes contact through a fence.

- Approval of exclusionary fencing for interstate movement would be subject to meeting the receiving state's acceptable fencing parameters.
- Any variations to these options must be approved by the Board of Animal Health (Board).
- Completed fencing must be inspected and approved by the Board before an exclusionary fencing designation is granted.

Board approved exclusionary fencing options

Double 8-foot (96 inches) high fencing at least 4 feet apart.

Secondary (coupled) fence attached to the outside of an existing 8-foot fence:

- Secondary fence material is 2 feet by 4 feet welded wire that is four feet high.
- Spacers are attached to existing posts, so the two fences are at least 11 inches apart.
- The bottom of the fence is 6 inches above the ground and the top is 4 feet 6 inches above the ground.
- Spacers are placed between the posts at no more than 8-foot intervals to ensure that the 11-inch space between the fences is maintained.

Solid fencing as part of an existing 8-foot fence:

- Solid material such as wood or densely woven shade cloth.
- Solid material must be attached to the fence and cover at least 4 feet in height from the ground.

Electric fencing:

- Electrified 12.5 gauge or larger diameter fencing wire must be used to create an external barrier consisting of at least four strands of wire.
- Wires should be evenly spaced with the lowest wire no higher than 10 inches off the ground and the highest wire at least four feet (48 in.) but no higher than five feet (60 in.) off the ground.
- The fence must deliver a minimum of 5000 volts throughout the length of the fence.
- An industrial strength fencer with alarm notification and battery backup must be utilized to electrify the fence..

BAH 6.26.2023

August 24 – Labor Day September 4, 2023

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

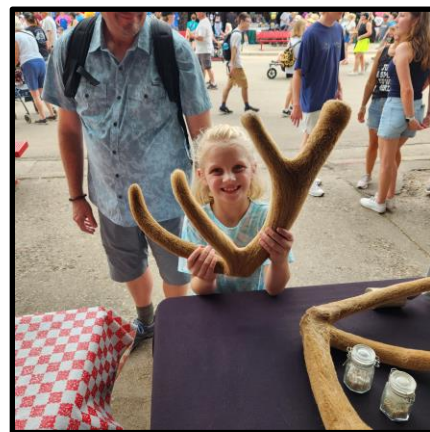
The Minnesota State Fair began on August 24 with attendance significantly higher each day of the fair over last year to date. Dog chews, sausage and jerky have been the hot sellers so far!

Paul Hueg and Greg Lubinski have done another outstanding job preparing the booth for the fair. The time, effort and improvements they add each year are amazing. We can't thank them enough for everything they do to make MnEBA's booth at the State Fair a success!

A big thank you to Minnesota Grown for sponsoring the cost of the booth. Also, many thanks to Greg for donating a whole animal to make sausage and to both Greg and Paul for paying for the processing to make the sausage being sold in the booth. This gives the association 100% profit on sausage sales!



Paul and Greg have worked at least a few hours of almost every day of the fair to make sure all goes smoothly. Other volunteers have stepped up as well for which MnEBA is grateful! These members include Kelly Luedeke, Mark Lucas, Wade Schimmelpfennig, Ron & Lynnette Schmitz, Jim Byrne, Scott Salonek, Greg Lubinski Family & Colleen Etzbach, Dale & Donna Wippler, Kraig Wurst Family, Darrell Turek Family, Marissa Rayburn, Alayna Matrious, Lance & Brenda Hartkopf and Paul & Lynn Hueg. Thanks again to all, your time and efforts are very much appreciated!



Board Blog by Lance Hartkopf, Vice President



Hi everyone. Another busy season is upon us- scoring bulls, hauling bulls and organizing breeding groups. I hope you are all managing through it okay. My Colorado trips have been a little interesting this year. On the first trip we had to wait in traffic as we had to merge into one lane to get around a bolder bigger than the pickup that had fallen off the mountain. Then the second trip we had to wait for a mudslide to be cleared from a small cloud of heavy rain that just sat in the same spot on the mountain side in Glenwood Canyon. Luckily we were on the way home and the bulls were off the trailer.

I would like to thank the Luedeke family for hosting the summer picnic. It was a great crowd, and it was nice to visit with everyone again. The farm tour was interesting with not only the elk but all the other animals they raise as well.

I worked the first day of the State Fair a couple days ago and I must also say a big thank you to Paul Hueg and Greg Lubinski for the time and effort they have put into designing and constructing the MnEBA fair booth. Paul thinks of every detail and makes improvements each year. Even though it seems the booth can't get better, he thinks of something to improve on.

I wish everyone a great Fall season on the farm and hope to see you all in January.

Lance

RACK PLUS™ FOR OUTSTANDING RESULTS

OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IS THE HALLMARK OF ADM'S DEER AND ELK FEEDING PROGRAM.

The Rack Plus program incorporates the latest technical advances in cervid nutrition with ADM's time and field-proven formulation and feed technology techniques to deliver the right balance of protein, energy, vitamins, and minerals that enable deer and elk to reach their full genetic potential.

DEER & ELK 18-4 (81686AAA) AND DEER & ELK 18-5 BREEDER (81692AAA)

- Complete, pelleted feeds formulated specifically for deer and elk
- Provide multiple protein sources, stabilized rice bran, highly digestible energy and fiber sources, CitiStim®, and direct fed microbial
- Both products provide 18% protein and no more than 14% fiber; 18-4 provides 4% fat and 18-5 provides 5% fat
- 18-5 Breeder: Formulated specifically for the breeding herd; also provides natural-source vitamin E, B-complex vitamins, selenium yeast, and Antler D™*

CitiStim®, an ADM proprietary feed ingredient, is a proven, truly unique, whole-cell, inactivated yeast product that may help the animal strengthen its defense against health challenges by supporting and optimizing gut function, gut integrity, and body defense responses.

*Antler D is a trademark of Head Gear LLC.

PROVEN PERFORMANCE FOR BIGGER BULLS





Get the benefits of Thermal Care™! Ask us how to add it to your ADM feed today. 800-217-2007

For more info, contact Troy Bjorge at 320-412-9957
AN_DeerHelp@adm.com
www.ADMAnimalNutrition.com/wildlife



MnEBA Kitchen

The following is actually a side dish but is a favorite with delicious elk meat added!

Elk Burger and Beans

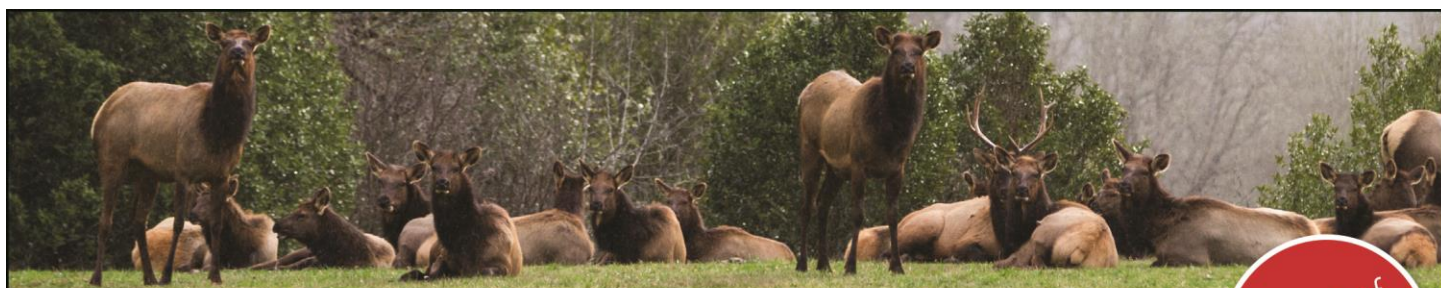
3/4 lb. elk burger	1/4 cup molasses
1 medium onion, diced	1/2 tsp. salt
1 large can brown beans	1/2 tsp. dry mustard
1/3 cup ketchup	1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
1/3 cup sugar	6 strips of bacon, fried and crumbled



DIRECTIONS

Brown elk burger and onion. Season with salt and pepper. Add the rest of the ingredients including fried and crumbled bacon. Place in casserole dish and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Do you have a favorite elk recipe? Please send a copy of the recipe to the MnEBA office so it can be shared with others! Thanks!!



Leedstone®
Family & veterinarian owned since 1994.

Home of
MN NUES
Ear Tags!

MINIMIZE PARASITES IN YOUR ANIMALS!

Find the right pour-on to reduce GI roundworms, lungworms & other harmful parasites.



Cydectin

Longer lasting; ID treatment with purple color.



Eprinex

Weatherproof; unaffected by temperature extremes.



Eprizero

Same active ingredient as Eprinex; use in varying weather conditions, including rain.

More Ivomec & Ivermectin pour-ons are here too.*

Keep your elk growing and healthy.
Visit Leedstone.com or call 877.608.3877 to order!

Melrose, MN 56352
222 County Road 173 SE
800.996.3303

Glencoe, MN 55336
2580 9th Street E
877.864.5575

Plainview, MN 55964
24260 County Road 27
800.548.2540

Menomonie, WI 54751
1720 Freitag Drive
866.467.4717

*See your veterinarian for direction when developing a pour-on program for your elk.

Vet Corner by Glen Zebarth, DVM

USDA APHIS is looking to update the CWD Program Standards and has been conducting Zoom listening sessions for the past few weeks. There is one more listening session on September 14, sign up as instructed below to listen in if desired. The last couple listening sessions deal with predictive genetics. Dr. Chris Seabury is said to be close to completing the elk genome. I see this as absolutely necessary for cervidae owners to stay in business in the future. Hopefully by the next newsletter, we will have an idea of what that looks like.

USDA Seeking Input on CWD Herd Certification Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is holding five virtual listening sessions on the Chronic Wasting Disease Herd Certification Program standards in the next few months. The Zoom listening sessions are for anyone to offer insights into the future direction of the program, methods for increasing enrollment, biosecurity, CWD prevention, barriers, and other options for preventing interactions between farmed and wild cervids. The listening sessions are scheduled and details of each are outlined below:

- **July 27, 2023, at 11:00 a.m.**
 - The overall direction of the program.
 - Increasing herd certification program participation.
 - Biosecurity.
 - Prevention of contact between farmed and wild cervids.
 - Prevention of CWD not including genetics.
- **August 10, 2023, at 2:00 p.m.**
 - Animal identification.
 - Electronic ID.
 - Annual and physical inspections.
 - Inspection and inventory.
- **August 17, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.**
 - Surveillance.
 - Use of ante-mortem tests.
 - Postmortem sampling.
 - Penalties for HCP non-compliance.
- **August 24, 2023, at 12:00 p.m.**
 - Disease response including use of predictive genetics to manage CWD positive, suspect, and exposed herds.
- **September 14, 2023, at 2:00 p.m.**
 - Indemnity approach, including role of indemnity in predictive genetics herd management.
 - Use of predictive genetics to prevent CWD within the HCP.

For more information on this or other listening sessions or to register for them, please visit USDA's CWD topic page. If you would like to speak on one or more of the session topics, please indicate this on the registration form. The deadline to register to speak will be one week prior to each session. Registration instructions and updated session information can be accessed on the Cervid Health Program website. Comments will be limited to 3 to 5 minutes depending on the number of requests to speak.



NAEBA Position on Ante-Mortem CWD Testing



July 1, 2023

The quest for the development of an effective ante-mortem (live) test for Chronic Wasting Disease is generally supported by all stakeholders. For years, the North American Elk Breeders Association and its 501(c)(3) foundation, the Elk Research Foundation, along with the cervid industry at large, have supported such research in several ways. This includes financial support, trial use of member owned animals, and test sample collection, among others.

As of July 2023, there is not an approved ante-mortem test for Chronic Wasting Disease for any cervid species by United States Department of Agriculture (USDA APHIS) or the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). Ante-mortem testing, however, is currently used by some state and provincial agencies with numerous legislative and regulatory proposals suggesting additional methods of use.

Though there is not an approved test at this time, NAEBA feels the following policy statement is warranted to steer discussion about how ante-mortem testing could be used to benefit the elk industry.

The North American Elk Breeders Association, which serves as the trade association and international breed registry organization representing elk ranchers across the United States, Canada and Mexico, has developed a position statement on CWD ante-mortem testing for elk.

The North American Elk Breeders Association supports the development and use of a Chronic Wasting Disease ante-mortem test for elk as a risk assessment tool in an effort to prevent unnecessary destruction of animals, lessen time in quarantines and open commerce to closed markets. The elk industry's support is contingent on the scenario and manner in which the test is administered.

The North American Elk Breeders Association supports the use of an ante-mortem test, performed in accredited labs approved for the specific test method, by National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL), National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) or National and WOA Reference Laboratory for Scrapie and CWD, in the following scenarios and conditions:

- (1) Managing CWD Positive Herds. Use of an ante-mortem test as a whole herd test to screen animals for purposes of test and cull, as an alternative to mass depopulation of the herd.
- (2) Exoneration of CWD Exposed Animals. Use of an ante-mortem test on specific exposed animals to avoid depopulation or prolonged quarantine.
- (3) Opening Commerce to Closed Markets. Use of an ante-mortem test on specific animals destined for movement into, or within, a jurisdiction that currently prohibits entry or movement.

The North American Elk Breeders Association opposes the mandated use of an ante-mortem test as a state, provincial or federal program requirement for certification or movement, as well as the application as a whole-herd test requirement, unless for management of a positive herd.

Background

USDA's most recent 2019 CWD Program Standards document provides guidance on how ante-mortem testing could be used for whitetail deer for specific scenarios but excludes such guidance for elk. USDA APHIS has not provided clear guidance for desired target success rates for ante-mortem tests to be used for elk.

Without USDA APHIS consent, state agencies and state legislative bills have proposed the use of ante-mortem testing for elk for various purposes, which all exceeds guidance issued by USDA APHIS. In response, USDA APHIS reports it has limited authority to prevent a state agency or legislature from mandating the use of ante-mortem

testing for elk, provided they use specific labs. While some states attempt to closely mirror USDA APHIS endorsed whitetail deer protocol for elk, other states have proposed unprecedented requirements and conditions for live testing of elk and other cervid species.

Under state authority, states are reportedly able to utilize ante-mortem testing provided they follow specific protocol such as utilizing a specific test performed in accredited labs approved by the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN). Further, states apparently have the ability to utilize ante-mortem testing for elk as their own state risk assessment tool, provided they follow certain lab requirements.

Policy Discussions

NAEBA recognizes its policy will not curb proposals by agencies or stakeholders suggesting the use of ante-mortem as a regulatory tool, however, the position can be used by the Association and its state/provincial partners as a guide for support, or opposition, of a proposal.

The NAEBA policy was developed based on feedback from the NAEBA Government Relations Committee, representing almost twenty elk industry states and provinces, which yielded the following themes when considering how the test could and should be used. This includes the following:

- A live test should be used for program relief but not as a new regulatory tool.
- A live test should be used on a per-animal basis and not as a whole herd test (unless for management of a positive herd).
- There is support for the use of a live test as a way to open commerce to currently closed markets or sources impacted by a wild deer CWD discovery.

The policy is developed with a macro view on the general use of ante-mortem testing for elk and is not intended to infer what types of testing should be used. NAEBA is relying on science and the practical application of how this may benefit the elk industry as research evolves. NAEBA further recognizes agencies, universities and private labs may advocate the use of a specific test but will refer to the Association's policy for how it should be applied. In 2023, it is clear that state and federal program administration is killing more farmed elk than CWD infection itself. In addition, USDA often does not have sufficient indemnity funds available to pay for the execution of its own program response. After two decades, NAEBA firmly believes there should be new alternative response options placed on the table, with the aim of assessing risk without killing healthy elk not known to be infected with CWD. With this in mind, the policy statement was carefully crafted to incorporate scenarios in concert with the themes described above.

Examples of program relief include:

- Utilization of live testing as a risk assessment tool to screen CWD-exposed animals without killing them. After all, these elk may be exposed but otherwise exhibit no signs of infection.
- The cervid industry finds the 60-month quarantine blanket window to be without scientific merit not accounting for conditions, cervid species type and respective CWD genetic genotype. Thus, utilization of live testing as a risk assessment tool to screen animals could lessen quarantine time.

Examples of per-animal testing versus whole-herd testing:

- Utilization of live testing should only be used for animals in need of screening. This would apply to CWD-exposed animals but no other animals in the herd. By program definition, only the CWD-exposed animals are known to be commingled with a positive animal. A whole herd test would be testing animals beyond the investigation's reach by definition.

No New Regulatory Requirements

NAEBA strongly believes live testing should not be used as a new regulatory requirement for movement or herd certification. Approval and widespread use of live testing may lead special interest groups to advocate for new requirements to be placed on farmed cervid herds, however, given states' inability to stop the spread of CWD among the free-ranging herds in known states and newly discovered states, their attention is better suited to preventing wild deer movement.

A New Path Forward

As the cervid industry, agency officials and other stakeholders contemplate ways to improve CWD program management for farmed cervids, NAEBA wishes to remind agency officials, policy makers and interested stakeholders that a greater looming threat for CWD spread is among free-ranging deer. USDA APHIS data demonstrates Chronic Wasting Disease prevalence among enrolled elk herds is a fraction of one percent. However, misdirected attention on farmed cervid herds does not address the growing threat of free-ranging deer across the landscape. Special interest groups and many state agencies seek to add more requirements to the farmed cervid industry, or halt its existence completely, while failing to address the greatest vector of Chronic Wasting Disease spread. While wildlife agencies seek to add new rules to the cervid industry, these agencies have failed to prevent the following:

- Chronic Wasting Disease exists in the wild nearly coast to coast across the United States. Two-thirds of these states have ongoing CWD detections in wild deer only and not discovered in farmed cervids.
- Virtually each year a new state finds Chronic Wasting Disease in a state or area of a state surprising agency officials.
- There are no safeguards that prevent wild deer migration from endemic states or counties into uninfected territory.
- Some states discover Chronic Wasting Disease in the wild for the first time only to later learn it has existed in a high prevalence for years while undetected. This demonstrates agency surveillance programs are not sufficient to learn where the disease exists.
- Chronic Wasting Disease exists in the wild in states that do not have a farmed elk and deer industry.
- The free-ranging herd's contamination of the environment, subject to possible movement of prions, is largely undocumented and unregulated.

As the USDA noted in the Federal Register, published June 13, 2012, *"We have now concluded, however, that our CWD objective should be to establish a herd certification program for herd owners and States to control the incidence of CWD in farmed and captive cervids and prevent the interstate spread of CWD. We have concluded that elimination of CWD from farmed and captive cervids is not practical given the persistence of CWD in wild cervid populations and our current lack of knowledge about how CWD may be transmitted between wild cervid populations and farmed and captive cervids."*

NAEBA believes in the spirit of USDA's comments and views ante-mortem testing as a new program tool to prevent unnecessary destruction of animals, lessen time in quarantines and open commerce to closed markets.

MnEBA Charitable Elk Hunt

The 2023 MnEBA Charitable Elk Hunt will take place later this fall at Tony's Trophy Elk Hunt Ranch in Baudette, MN. Several MnEBA members are putting their resources together to provide this opportunity for a veteran of the United States armed forces to harvest a beautiful bull elk. These members include:

Tony & Patty Beckel – elk hunt facility and guide services

Mark & Michelle Lucas – donated elk bull

Lance & Brenda Hartkopf – travel, lodging and processing for recipient



There are four veterans who have applied for this year's hunt. The board will soon determine the recipient. This will mark the 17th year MnEBA has sponsored this hunt! Many thanks to all who have made this year's hunt possible!

**Minnesota Elk Breeders
Association**

9086 Keats Avenue SW
Howard Lake, MN 55349

PHONE:
320-543-2686

FAX:
320-543-2983

E-MAIL:
info@mneba.org

OFFICE HOURS
8:30 -11:30 a.m.
Mondays, Tuesdays &
Thursdays

Calendar of Events

January 5-6, 2024 – MnEBA Annual Conference, Best Western Plus Kelly Inn, St. Cloud, MN

March 8-9, 2024 – NAEBA March Mingle, Courtyard Marriott, Lafayette, IN

August 1-3, 2024 – NAEBA Annual Convention & International Antler Competition, Crowne Plaza Denver Airport Convention Center, Denver, CO

Classified Ads

Wanted: Any and all elk meat animals, trophy bulls, breeding stock or whole herds. Brian Wagner, 612-366-5078.

Wanted: Wapiti Labs is buying hard antler. Best prices on 2" diameter and larger. Call 651-237-4051 for more information.

**MINNESOTA ELK
BREEDERS
ASSOCIATION**

9086 Keats Avenue SW
Howard Lake, MN 55349