



Special Interest Articles:

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President's Message by Mark Luedtke



Hello everyone! Hope everyone and your family are doing well. The holiday season is upon us, and winter is on its way. What a mild fall to winter transition we have had so far, I am sure there will be a price to pay for it, but I think almost everyone has enjoyed the mild fall.

The breeding season has ended, and the bulls are out of the cow pens. For me it is always a long wait until I can pregnancy check my cows and hopefully confirm a successful breeding season. I sure do hope there are many of you in the same boat as me but to be honest, I am nervous many of our members are choosing to leave our industry because of all of the regulatory challenges hitting us.

I look forward to seeing our association family in January at our annual meeting; I hope you can make it there. There is much to discuss and share with each other. Even though as I stated I'm nervous about the recent changes effecting all of us, I also am aware of several people with solid plans to face the required changes and stay involved. The markets are still staying strong outside of our state and I think that should encourage anyone on the fence to try and hang in there, talk to other members and get ideas on how best you can meet the current changes in requirements.

I wish you all the best. Stay safe, stay healthy and enjoy the winter.

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

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*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!

See event details on the following pages!

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.

2024 MnEBA Annual Conference Seminars Offers Hot Topic Discussions

Best Western Plus Kelly Inn – St. Cloud January 5-6, 2023

MnEBA is eager to host the 2024 MnEBA Annual Conference to gather producers together to discuss navigating the new laws regarding farmed cervidae during a time of very strong markets in the elk industry. This is an important conference on many levels and it is hoped everyone that can possibly make it to this meeting will attend.

Seminar topics include:

Update on Elk Genome – USDA APHIS has funded the mapping of the elk genome for CWD resistance, a next generation tool to test elk to see what their full genome susceptibility is to CWD. This test will be tremendously more encompassing than current testing capability and is expected to be a game-changer for the industry.

BAH Update with Dr. Heather Damico – Meet the farmed cervid program's newest Board of Animal Health Program Director! Dr. Damico will provide updates on the farmed cervid program and an overview of 2023 legislative changes elk producers must be aware of.

Round Table: Ideas for Physical Barrier Fencing – One of the outcomes from the past legislative session was that all farmed cervid premises will be required to have a "physical barrier" on their exterior fences by September 1, 2024. While double fencing is a physical barrier, there are alternative less expensive methods which could be applied that would comply with this requirement. This is an opportunity to have a group discussion about what folks are planning to do which may in turn provide ideas for others who are still working to figure this out.

Ask the Vet – This is your opportunity to generate the dialog for questions and discussion on elk health issues with Dr. Glen Zebarth, who has worked with farmed elk for many years.

EHD – Diagnosis, Treatment, Prevention – Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) is a viral disease of cervids that is transmitted by biting midges. EHD is most prevalent in the late summer just about the time elk are shedding velvet which seems to be a time they are more susceptible to getting sick. It's a disease that is seemingly becoming more prominent and one that Minnesota elk owners should be aware of.

Take advantage of Early Bird savings!!

Make sure to sign up by December 29th to save \$15/person on your registration fees!

Please note there will not be an ADM Animal Nutrition Dinner sponsored on Friday evening as in past years.

Complete and return the enclosed convention insert or sign up online at www.mneba.org/annual-conference.

MnEBA Fundraisers

MnEBA 2024 Donation Fundraiser

Donations accepted by mail through January 4 or in person at the conference.
Drawing to take place the evening of January 6.

Fundraising at the annual conference is an important aspect of keeping the association fiscally sound for the coming year. The past few years, MnEBA has held a donation fundraiser with Bronze, Silver and Gold level donations, each with special incentives. Members have been very generous and the fundraiser has been quite popular. It also gives those who won't be able to attend the conference an opportunity to support the association as well as offering a chance to win a new firearm. Details include:

DONATION LEVELS & INCENTIVE PRIZES

GOLD \$500 – anyone donating \$500 will be listed as a Gold donor in the next newsletter and will be eligible to win a **Winchester XPR Hunter 24" Krytek Highlander Permacote 270WIN**

SILVER \$250 – anyone donating \$250 will be listed as a Silver donor in the next newsletter and will be eligible to win a **Henry H001 Lever Action .22LR**

BRONZE \$100 – anyone donating \$100 will be listed as a Bronze donor in the next newsletter

The drawing for the above prizes will be held during the MnEBA Annual Conference on January 6, 2024. **To be eligible, your monetary donation needs to be received at the office no later than Thursday January 4 or can also be brought to the conference on January 6.** All donors will be listed in the January/February/March 2024 Newsletter unless otherwise requested.

Thank you to everyone willing to participate! Together we can ensure MnEBA continues to remain strong and ready to continue the important work of protecting and promoting the Minnesota elk industry.

Live & Silent Fundraising Auctions

MnEBA will once again be having both a Live and Silent Auction at the upcoming annual conference. It's fun to find and bring items of interest all the while also supporting the industry.

Could everyone bring at least one item? Any and all donations would be greatly appreciated!



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2024 MnEBA Gun Calendar Raffle

Return Stubs and Money by December 31st to be Eligible for Special Gun Drawing and a FREE 2024 Membership

First of all, THANK YOU to everyone who is working to sell MnEBA gun raffle calendars. It is now time to complete calendar sales as **December 31st** is the day members become eligible for great incentives when selling calendars! 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 and in addition, for every 10 calendars sold with stubs and money being returned before December 31st, 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! **To be eligible, make sure to get your calendar stubs and money turned in before December 31st!**



More Help Is Needed To Sell Calendars!

There are currently only 530 of 800 calendars in the hands of members to sell. We need everyone helping to move calendars to make the most out of this funding opportunity! Even if you don't have very many opportunities to sell calendars, pick one up for yourself or family and friends, they make great Christmas presents! **Please contact the office to order more calendars if you can sell them.**

The drawing date is **Saturday, January 6, 2024** at 8:00 PM during the MnEBA Annual Conference in St. Cloud. **All stubs, payments and unused calendars must be turned in by that time.**



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Board Meeting Minutes

Board Meeting Minutes November 3, 2023

The Minnesota Elk Breeders Association Board of Directors held a board meeting via Zoom on Friday November 3, 2023 at 8:00 a.m. Mark Luedtke, Lance Hartkopf, Brian Wagner, Greg Lubinski, Jerry Campbell and Brenda Hartkopf were present. President Luedtke called the meeting to order at 8:08 a.m. and asked for any additions to the agenda. None were offered. The secretary minutes were reviewed from the July 10 and September 20 board meetings. Wagner moved to accept both reports, Lubinski seconded, motion carried. B. Hartkopf reviewed the treasurer's report. As the new fiscal year began July 1, there has not been much activity except for the State Fair. Current checkbook balance was \$30,955.58. Wagner moved to accept the treasurer's report, Lubinski seconded, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussed possible grant award opportunities to help elk owners recoup money spent on the required exclusionary fencing. It is a priority for MnEBA to lobby for funding sources to help offset these costs.

Lubinski reported the State Fair went well, but attendance was greatly impacted the last four days of the fair by the extreme heat. It was still a record-breaking year for sales at the MnEBA booth. More help could have been used during the weekdays of the fair. Both Greg and Paul filled in almost every day.

B. Hartkopf reported the number of calendars out at the present time is about the same as it was at this same time last year. There have been positive comments made about the meat packages.

Board had a long discussion about preparing for the next legislative session and pursuing changes to legislation which passed last year. Luedtke and B. Hartkopf to work on a proposal to allow elk imports with increased requirements to offset concern of CWD entering the state through importation of elk from out of state. Once the board approves the proposal, will schedule meeting with BAH and DNR to discuss. Also to pursue reinstating location privacy as well as removing elk from required physical barrier language. She also gave a brief recap of the House Environment Committee hearing regarding an update on CWD last week.

B. Hartkopf updated the board on MnEBA's participation in the USDA listening sessions regarding revisions to the CWD Program Standards. In addition to verbal remarks made at the listening sessions, four

letters containing written remarks have also been emailed to USDA from MnEBA.

B. Hartkopf discussed MnEBA's participation on the BAH Fencing Variance Committee which allows for discussion from industry, but not final decision making. One meeting has been held to date, with others expected as needed.

B. Hartkopf reported everything is ready for the upcoming MnEBA Charitable Elk Hunt on November 20-22, except for still needing someone to haul the bull from Pequot Lakes to Baudette November 17 or 18. One e-blast has been sent with no response so another will be sent shortly.

Had brief discussion about the Minnesota Deer Farmers Association pursuing legal action regarding the moratorium language that passed in the last legislative session. Expect them to be filing any day.

NEW BUSINESS

MnEBA was recently informed that the MnEBA website, which was built in 2014 using a specific programming language (PHP), will not function correctly after the end of 2024. This is due to the impending end-of-life for that specific version of PHP. Limited funds are available from MN Grown so it is expected there will also be out-of-pocket expense to create a site with a new updated platform. B. Hartkopf to send e-blast to the membership seeking a temporary committee who could work on making a recommendation to the board of what is necessary to have on the website moving forward, that would be affordable with the limited funds available.

Board discussed the upcoming MnEBA Annual Conference scheduled for January 6, 2024 in St. Cloud and what possible seminars should be considered as well as schedule. Luedtke and Hartkopf to work on securing speakers.

Luedtke gave a recap of the recent USAHA meeting in Washington D.C. There was less discussion overall about CWD, with more focus on African Swine Fever, Hoof and Mouth Disease and the Avian Bird Flu. NADEFA did come forward with one resolution which did pass, regarding TB surveillance.

Wagner moved to adjourn, Campbell seconded, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Brenda Hartkopf, Executive Secretary



NEWS RELEASE: Tuesday November 28, 2023

Contact: Brenda Hartkopf, Minnesota Elk Breeders Association, 320-543-2686

Minnesota Military Veteran Harvests Bull Elk

Minnesota Elk Breeders Association (MnEBA), November 28, 2023 – Hunting was something Chad Sheridan could no longer take pleasure in after 16 years in the military, even though he enjoyed hunting when he was younger. But a suggestion from a friend at the American Legion turned into an incredible experience for Chad, one that he still can't believe happened. The opportunity for a military veteran to harvest a bull elk courtesy of the Minnesota Elk Breeders Association and Tony's Trophy Elk Hunt Ranch was just something he had to look in to.

Chad Sheridan grew up in Cannon Falls, Minnesota. As a young adult, he served in the U.S. Army and National Guard for a combined 16 years. The first few years were relatively quiet while he served in the 54B Chemical, 11B Infantry and 88M operations as a truck driver. Then 9-11 happened and he went into three years of combat. Chad was stationed in Iraq as a convoy gunner when in 2005, an IED hit his hummer causing blunt force trauma to his head, neck, shoulders, elbows and hands along with traumatic brain injury (TBI). Chad officially retired from the military in 2011 after multiple surgeries and six years of rehabilitation.

After taking his friend's advice to consider applying for the elk hunt opportunity, Chad visited Fredrickson Elk Farm in Welch, Minnesota to see if this was something he would be interested in doing given he had lost interest in hunting. It did not take long for him to know that yes, he absolutely wanted to apply for this hunt. Once he made the decision to apply for the elk hunt, his interest in hunting slowly returned. While waiting to be chosen for the elk hunt, he was motivated to go hunting again and successfully harvested grouse, a whitetail deer and a bear; precursors for perhaps one of the biggest hunts of his life.

On the week of November 19th, Chad made the trip with his girlfriend Amanda to Tony's Trophy Elk Hunt Ranch near Baudette, Minnesota. While he was excited to go on the hunt, he was completely unprepared for the size of the bull and the incredible emotions afterwards. Chad had chosen to take this hunt alone. After some time in the stand, he heard the bull coming, but it was not yet visible. Once he could see it, his first thought was that he couldn't believe it was that big. That is when the nerves really set in. It was also coming towards him straight on. He could see this would not be the broadside shot he was used to but knew from experience how he would take the bull down. One shot later, the bull fell, stumbled forward about five yards and dropped. Chad knew he should wait awhile to make sure the bull was dead, but just couldn't stop shaking and had to move. He slowly approached the bull, and the closer he got, the bigger the bull looked! When Chad kneeled down next to the bull, he was still "shaking so bad".

Looking back a week later, Chad shares that he still can't believe the hunt was real. "When I showed my family and friends pictures, they told me I never need to go elk hunting again because I'll never find another elk as big as this one was," Chad says. The meat has already been processed and while he originally did not plan to have the bull mounted, "The elk was so large and beautiful, I just had to do it." Chad is beyond grateful and says, "I am so excited and so appreciative to everyone who made this possible."

MnEBA would like to thank everyone who generously supported this year's hunt including Tony's Trophy Elk Hunt Ranch, Mark & Michelle Lucas who donated the bull, Clint Wylie who transported the bull to the hunt facility, and Lance & Brenda Hartkopf who helped to cover the cost of lodging, meals and processing.

MnEBA offers our heartfelt thanks, support and gratitude to Chad Sheridan and to all United States military men and women for their dedication and service to our country.



Chad Sheridan

Board Blog by Jerry Campbell, Director



Fellow elk farmers,

Seasons greetings to you all! Things are settling down on the elk farm. For me work is settling down for the winter as well, which has me contemplating my exclusionary fencing plan. I am currently working up my proposal to the Board of Animal Health. For me it will be a combination of double fencing and shade screen.

The Board of Animal Health (BAH) has a questionnaire for variance proposals to eliminate contact with outside animals. My inspector recommended that I contact the BAH to fill out one of these forms and get their approval on my plan. I am trying to get a start on fencing which means drilling through 5" of frost to get posts in.

As for your Minnesota Elk Breeders Board, we are fighting on for our members. There are a few folks in leadership roles in the state who are sympathetic to these choking regulations. We are always hoping to find people with some common sense that use real science and facts to make the rules that apply to elk farming.

I hope to see you all in St. Cloud for the convention. We are planning a round table discussion on exclusionary fencing ideas at the convention.

I will close for now but we do want to wish a very Merry Christmas to you all.

Jerry Campbell

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MnEBA Kitchen

It's that time of year to fill the crockpot with delicious, warm, hearty meals for the winter months. Plus the added bonus of delicious smells from the kitchen all day long!

Slow Cooker Elk Stew

2 lbs. elk stew meat	3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
¼ cup flour	1 tsp. paprika
2 Tbsp. vegetable oil	1 tsp. oregano
1 tsp. salt	1 large onion, chopped
½ tsp. pepper	4 carrots, cut into 1-inch chunks
4 cups beef stock	1 pound small Yukon Gold potatoes
3 Tbsp. tomato paste	8 oz. small mushrooms
2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard	3 Tbsp. cornstarch combined with ¼ cup water
1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce	



DIRECTIONS

Add stew meat to a shallow dish or pie plate and toss with the flour. Coat the bottom of a large skillet with oil and heat over medium-high heat. Working in batches, add the stew meat, sprinkle with salt and pepper and sear to a rich brown on all sides (crowding the skillet will cause the meat to steam and not brown properly). Transfer to a slow cooker. In a bowl, combine the beef stock with tomato paste, mustard and Worcestershire sauce. Stir in garlic, paprika and oregano, then pour all over meat in slow cooker.

Add onions, carrots and potatoes. Cover and cook on low for 6 hours. Remove cover and add mushrooms, taste sauce and adjust the seasoning if needed and cook for an additional hour. Increase the temperature to high on the crockpot and cook for 15 minutes. Whisk together the cornstarch and water and gently stir into the stew. Cook for an additional 15 minutes to thicken. Serve hot with crusty bread.

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Questions? Contact us at mngrown.mda@state.mn.us or 651-201-6140.





*The Minnesota Board of Animal Health recently released its Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2022-2023. Below was the update on **Farmed Cervidae**.*

The number of registered farmed Cervidae herds in the state continues to decline. Most registered herds consist of white-tailed deer and elk managed by farmers who engage in interstate commerce and producing animals for breeding or hunting, or for the production and sale of animal products.

The most recent detection of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in a farmed Cervidae herd was in Winona County in August 2022. The herd was previously quarantined as part of an investigation into another CWD detection. The remaining 120 animals in the herd were depopulated in October 2022 and no CWD was detected.

Since 2002, 13 herds have been identified as CWD positive and been depopulated. More than 1,500 animals in these herds were tested at the time of depopulation and CWD infection was confirmed in 54 animals.

The 2023 legislative session yielded multiple proposals to change laws regulating farmed Cervidae, and in the end lawmakers enacted several changes to statutes. Most notably, in FY24, responsibility for administering and enforcing the statutes and rules for farmed white-tailed deer are transferred from the Board to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Board retains responsibility for administering and enforcing the statutes and rules for all other farmed Cervidae.

Other statutory changes include a moratorium on registration of white-tailed deer herds, prohibition of importation of farmed Cervidae from a state where CWD has been detected in the farmed or wild cervid population in the last five years, additional testing requirements for all farmed Cervidae 6 months of age and older, and requirements for exclusionary fencing on all premises with farmed Cervidae.

The Board continues to partner with farmers, researchers, and state and federal partners to utilize cooperative agreement funding provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Veterinary Services to prevent and control CWD in Minnesota's farmed Cervidae population. In FY23, the Board worked on three projects utilizing these funds:

1. Dr. Scott Wells and his University of Minnesota team continue to promote their work on environmental risk factors associated with CWD-positive herds, which resulted in an on-farm risk assessment tool available to cervid farmers and veterinarians. This assessment allows farmers to evaluate current biosecurity measures and assess the impacts of management changes to determine if they decrease a farm's risk of CWD introduction. This fiscal year, Dr. Wells and his team were awarded additional funding to work with cervid farmers to assess the ecology of wildlife near the perimeter of cervid farms. The intent of this study is to determine the level of risk wildlife pose as a potential pathway for CWD transmission.
2. The Board utilized FY23 federal cooperative agreement funding to pay the North American Deer Registry (NADR) to test farmed white-tailed deer and analyze their genetic code to determine a genomically-estimated breeding value (GEBV) for each animal sampled. The GEBV can be used by deer farmers to make breeding management decisions which may reduce a herd's susceptibility to CWD. In addition, NADR reports to the owner the genotype of five prion protein genes in white-tailed deer. Prion protein gene results can be used in tandem with GEBV results to minimize the risk of CWD.
3. Minnesota law requires registered farmed cervid owners to track the animals in their herd including when they are born, when they die, and any movements from one herd to another. The Board is utilizing cooperative agreement funding to create an online database farmed cervid owners can use to report movement and testing data to the Board in real time. This will result in more accurate and timely herd data, which is critical when tracing animals that may have been exposed to CWD.

In this next fiscal year, the Board will continue to build upon these projects and foster relationships with state and federal partners with expertise in animal health with the goal of stopping the spread of CWD and maintaining the health of herds in Minnesota. (See **Page 15** for updated herd and animal numbers as of June 30, 2023.)

Vet Corner by Glen Zebarth, DVM

A team led by Dr. Scott Wells from the University of Minnesota have been working to identify biosecurity measures that would help to protect farmed cervids from CWD sources outside the fence. The following article appeared in the November 2023 issue of the North American Elk Journal and is worth consideration.

Using Biosecurity to Combat Chronic Wasting Disease Risk to Cervid Operations

SJ Wells, ML Schultze, and B Birtcil

Dept of Veterinary Population Medicine, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN.

First detected in Colorado in 1967, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) has spread across the U.S. to wild cervids in 31 states and farmed cervid operations in 18 states. The U.S. CWD Voluntary Herd Certification Program was created in 2014 as national standards for a cooperative effort between state agencies and farmed cervid producers to control the incidence of CWD in farmed cervids (<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/cervid/cervids-cwd/cervids-voluntary-hcp>). However, control of CWD has been extremely challenging. There have been 144 CWD-positive farmed cervid herds detected since December 2016 (https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nwhc/science/expanding-distribution-chronic-wasting-disease?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects), and 60 of these CWD-positive herds had been previously enrolled in the U.S. CWD Voluntary Herd Certification Program (HCP). Most of these herds were white-tailed deer herds, though 25 herds included elk (13 enrolled in the HCP). Participation in the Herd Certification Program alone may not be enough to prevent infection, as the current U.S. control program is focused on use of surveillance to detect infection in herds prior to animal movements and preventing direct contact between susceptible farmed cervids and CWD-infected farmed or wild cervids. **What more can cervid producers do to protect themselves from CWD?**

It is helpful to understand that the spread of infectious, disease-causing pathogens from infected animals to susceptible healthy animals depends on an **Epidemiologic Triad** of interactions between the **agent (pathogen)**, the **host (animals)**, and the **environment**. This dynamic is unique to each disease-causing agent and all three of these components play important roles in disease transmission. For CWD:

- **Agent (pathogen):** Presence of infectious CWD prions (from infected farmed or wild cervids, as well as infected cervid tissues, contaminated water, feed, and/or plants). Research is underway to improve the speed, accuracy, and affordability of tests to detect the presence of CWD prions in different samples from animals or the environment, including animal samples collected before the death of the animal.
- **Host (cervids):** Susceptibility of cervids to CWD infection appears to vary, and research is also underway to evaluate the effectiveness of genetic selection for breeding to prevent infection or delay the onset of disease.
- **Environment:** Environment is a broad term that includes a number of other factors involved with determining the exposure of susceptible cervids (both farmed and wild) to CWD. Research is also needed to better understand the role of the environment as it contributes to the spread of CWD.

What do we know about CWD transmission to farmed cervids?

There are **multiple CWD transmission pathways to farmed cervids**. A recent review of CWD cases in farmed cervids in Minnesota and Wisconsin (Kincheloe and others, 2021) provided an outline of these potential pathways to susceptible farmed cervids, which include:

1. Direct contact with infected farmed cervids through new introductions to the farm.
2. Indirect contact with infected farmed cervids through sharing of contaminated equipment, vehicles, or other materials.
3. Direct contact with infected wild deer through fencing breaches or nose-to-nose contact through fencing.
4. Indirect contact with infected wild deer through contaminated feeds, shared water, and scavengers that bring infective material through the perimeter fence.
5. Indirect contact with infected cervids through hunting or taxidermy practices.

A recently published study comparing herd-level CWD risks among test-positive and negative white-tailed deer herds in Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin (Schultze and others, 2023) identified factors associated with CWD infection. Results from this study indicated that the most important pathways of transmission to susceptible cervid herds in these study herds included:

1. **Direct contacts with infected farmed deer** (only one-third of CWD-infected herds in the study imported one or more cervids from a herd that later tested positive), and
2. **Indirect contacts with infected wild deer.** Proximity to CWD-infected wild deer was an important risk identified, along with several other factors that appear related to transmission through movement of scavengers through the farm perimeter fence. Some of these factors included observations of mammalian scavengers inside or near the perimeter fence and factors that may attract scavengers inside the fence, including: location of waterer near the farm perimeter fence, forest cover crossing the farm perimeter fence, and disposal of carcasses of resident farmed deer above-ground (instead of buried at sufficient depth) on the property. Use of double perimeter fencing was associated with a reduction in the risk of CWD in farms where used, indicating the potential value in creating buffer distance between farmed deer and wildlife, but did not prevent CWD infection in all cases.

What is unknown about CWD transmission to cervid herds?

Over the long term, cervid producers need to continue to introduce new genetics to their operations. Given CWD surveillance involves post-mortem (dead animal) testing only, live animals are not tested prior to movements to other farms, resulting in risk of CWD spread if the herd was previously unknowingly infected. This points out the critical need for new antemortem (live animal) testing strategies that are not currently available. It also points out the importance of herd surveillance conducted through time (accumulating test results) to represent the CWD infection status of the herds that provide animals to other herds. The good news is there are many herds which have over 20 years of CWD surveillance already.

At this point in time, however, CWD poses a risk to cervid farms, and cervid producers need solutions to minimize CWD exposure risks, especially as infected wild deer are being detected in ever-expanding areas. One vital question is: Which specific transmission pathways (direct and indirect contact exposures) with infected wild cervids are the most important? From a Michigan study evaluating direct contacts between wild and farmed deer through the perimeter fence (Vercauteren and others, 2007), only 2 nose-to-nose contacts were observed during 77,000 hours of camera monitoring. These authors reported 'We documented little direct contact between wild and captive deer through fences and, therefore, believe there is limited potential for direct transmission of diseases.' A more recent camera study from Kentucky (Springer and others, 2023) reported that wild deer commonly used areas around farmed cervid operations. Although interactions between wild and farmed cervids in this study were uncommon (and primarily between males), an increase in the number of interactions between wild and farmed deer during the breeding season from October through January was observed. No interactions were reported between wild deer and farmed elk. This information, along with results from the study of white-tailed deer farms from Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, points toward the importance of indirect contacts with wild deer in CWD spread and the need for additional research to better understand these risks to help prevent disease.

What can you do to reduce risks of CWD introduction to your herd?

Using the framework of the **Epidemiologic Triad** of interactions that determine disease occurrence and spread:

- **Agent:** Routine herd surveillance is critical for early detection of CWD if it enters your herd, enters other herds in your neighborhood, or enters herds from which you may acquire new animals. Early detection is also critical to reduce the risk of spread from your operation, if it occurs, to other cervids.
- **Host.** Differences in genetic susceptibility among cervids to CWD shows the potential for breeding strategies to reduce herd susceptibility to disease. More research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of this approach in preventing infection and spread.
- **Environment.** This is the component over which you may have the most control, even if you are located in an area with CWD-infected wild deer. Knowing that infected wild deer pose a risk through both direct and

indirect contact exposures, you can evaluate your herd's current CWD risk based on the biosecurity practices used in your operation by following these steps:

- a. First, identify the CWD infection status in wild deer in your local area. What is the distance of the nearest CWD-positive wild deer to your operation? This information should be available from your state wildlife agency.
- b. Next, learn about the different CWD transmission pathways. We have created the **CWDbiosecurity.umn.edu** website that may be helpful.
- c. Use the **CWD Biosecurity Assessment** (found at **CWDbiosecurity.umn.edu**) to identify opportunities to improve your biosecurity practices to reduce risk. This can be performed as a self-assessment or with your private veterinarian, voluntarily and confidentially. Use of recommended CWD biosecurity practices should reduce (though not completely eliminate) the risk of CWD introduction to cervid operations, especially if your farm is located near infected wild deer. These recommendations are based on the most up-to-date knowledge of how CWD can enter and spread through cervid populations, and could include some of the following practices, depending on your situation:
 - Feed and water your farmed cervids away from the farm perimeter fence to avoid attracting wild animals to the pens.
 - Create an open zone immediately outside of the farm perimeter fence to minimize the attractiveness of pens to wild animals.
 - Dispose of cervid carcasses in a manner that doesn't attract scavengers.

In conclusion, use of biosecurity practices is critical to support prevention of CWD in cervid herds. CWD infection and spread depend on the **Epidemiologic Triad** (host-agent-environment) and understanding these factors is key to developing effective strategies to prevent infection. Early detection of CWD remains challenging at this time due to lack of availability of antemortem (live animal) diagnostic tests. Increasing a herd's genetic resistance to CWD may prove valuable in the long run, but its reliability to prevent infection is not currently well-understood. However, information is already known about environmental influences of CWD spread to cervid farms and provides evidence supporting use of biosecurity practices to reduce the risk of CWD exposures on your operation.

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2. Schultze ML, Horn-Delzer A, Glaser L, Hamberg A, Zellner D, Wolf TM, Wells SJ. 2023. Herd-level risk factors associated with chronic wasting disease-positive herd status in Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin cervid herds, *Preventive Veterinary Medicine*, 2023 Sep;218:106000.
3. VerCauteren KC, Lavelle MJ, Seward NW, Fischer JW, Phillips GE. 2007. Fence-Line Contact Between Wild and Farmed White-Tailed Deer in Michigan: Potential for Disease Transmission. USDA National Wildlife Research Center, Staff Publications. 721.
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Attention to Anyone TB Testing in the Next Few Weeks

Be Aware of Manufacturing Delays on TB DPP Test Kits

November 21, 2023 – The North American Elk Breeders Association (NAEBA) offers this update for American elk growers planning to TB test in the near future.

NAEBA has learned from USDA APHIS that there is currently a TB DPP test kit shortage due to manufacturing delays. USDA and NVSL are working to address the problem, but we want member ranchers to be aware. If testing results are urgent, TB skin testing is an available option.

NAEBA will keep members updated with more information as it becomes available.

Committee Reports

MnEBA Board Nominations Now Being Accepted!

This year there are two board seats up for re-election – Lance Hartkopf and Greg Lubinski. Lance Hartkopf will not eligible to run a new term.

Nominations for these open positions are now being accepted. If you know of anyone who would be a good candidate, or you as a member are willing to run, please contact the MnEBA Office at (320) 543-2686 or info@mneba.org. Elections will be held during the MnEBA Annual Conference on January 6, 2024 at the Best Western Plus Kelly Inn in St. Cloud.

Board Terms

Mark Luedtke, <i>President</i>	Term ends 2025
Lance Hartkopf, <i>Vice President</i>	Term ends 2024
Brian Wagner, <i>Secretary/Treasurer</i>	Term ends 2026
Greg Lubinski, <i>Director</i>	Term ends 2024
Jerry Campbell, <i>Director</i>	Term ends 2025

State Fair Recap and Thank You's

This year's Minnesota State Fair sales once again topped all-time sales numbers at nearly \$19,000 in total sales between meat and dog chew products. This was doubly special because the extreme heat of the final four days of the fair severely hampered the usual high attendance last weekend of fair. Even with the price increase on dog chews, the number of chews sold was equal to last year's big jump in the amount sold. Meat sales also equaled the big jump in sales experienced last year.

State Fair co-chairmen Paul Hueg and Greg Lubinski not only put up another tremendously professional booth, but they also worked either part or all of almost every day at the fair, including both weekends. The time, effort and personal funds both put into the MnEBA State Fair booth every year is truly remarkable and both deserve much thanks for all they do.

A special thank you to Greg Lubinski for donating a whole animal to make the sausage chubs sold at the booth and to both Greg and Paul for paying the cost of processing. This donation significantly helps the overall profit margin of products sold! Thanks also to Minnesota Grown for sponsoring the cost of the booth.

There were many other members who helped fill time slots in the schedule, several working multiple shifts. We are grateful for your time and support! Many thanks to all including Paul & Lynn Hueg, Greg Lubinski & Colleen Etzbach, Kelly Luedeke, Jim Byrne, Bryce & Kelly Lubinski, Mark Lucas, Wade Schimmelpfennig, Dale & Donna Wippler, Kraig & Jenny Wurst, Scott Salonek, Ron & Lynn Schmitz, Turek Family, Alayna Matrous, Marisa Rayburn, and Lance & Brenda Hartkopf. Thanks to all, your time and efforts were very much appreciated!



Temporary MnEBA Web Site Committee Needed!

MnEBA has recently been informed that the platform for the current MnEBA web site which was built in 2014 using a specific programming language (PHP), will no longer function correctly after the end of 2024 due to the impending end-of-life for that specific version of PHP. MnEBA will need to build a new website before then.

MnEBA is looking for MnEBA members willing to be part of a committee that would make recommendations to the MnEBA Board for what look and features the new site should have within the limited funding available for this project. Please contact the MnEBA Office with your willingness to join this short-term committee!

WANTED



In Memory of Morris (Morrie) Lee Evenson

November 17, 1941 – November 8, 2023

Morrie L. Evenson, 81, of New London, died Wednesday, November 8th at CentraCare Rice Hospital in Willmar. His memorial service was at 2:00 pm, Friday, November 17th at Peace Lutheran Church in New London. Visitation was one hour prior to his service. Burial was in Lake Andrew Cemetery in rural New London. Memorials are suggested to the Michael J. Fox Parkinson's Foundation, Peace Lutheran Church, Bethesda Foundation/Chaplaincy, the Shriners Children's Hospital, or donor's choice. His service was livestreamed on the church's Youtube page at (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZKFwy8UYMsk>). Arrangements were with Harvey Anderson Funeral Home in Willmar, www.hafh.org

Morris Lee Evenson was born November 17, 1941, at home in Albert Lea, MN. He was the fourth child born to Morris and Anna (Johannsen) Evenson, and their first son. He was a brother to three sisters who were 11, 16, and 20 years older than him. Morrie was eight years old when his father died. His oldest sister, Irene, and her husband, Alvin, farmed and needed extra help in the summers, so Morrie learned how to drive the horses pulling the hay wagon, and worked hard to do various chores assigned to him.

Graduating from Albert Lea high school in 1960, Morrie enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. After basic training he was assigned to the Air Force Base in Lincoln, NE as a crew chief on B52 bombers. The Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 found Morrie in a bomber loaded, in the air, and ready to head to Cuba. Luckily things ended peacefully. During this time period Morrie was married and they had a son, Michael Lee Evenson.

Willmar was the destination for the family after Morrie was honorably discharged in 1964. He sharpened his writing and photography skills as the "Area News Coordinator" for the West Central Daily Tribune. During this time, he was a Boy Scout leader at Vinje Lutheran Church, active in the junior chamber of commerce (the Jaycees), and the family lived in the upstairs apartment of the historic Sperry House (now a museum). Morrie spent many free hours in conversation with Brian Sperry. He also completed his A.A. degree at Willmar Community College (now Ridgewater). The family then moved to Bemidji where Morrie would get his B.S. degree in Social Studies and Psychology Education. He drove snowplow and worked for the Beltrami County Highway Dept. until the spring of 1971, when he was hired by the Willmar Public Schools to teach 9th grade social studies. The family moved to an 80-acre farm near Lake Florida where in the summers Morrie enjoyed life on the farm, working the land. But these were challenging times and the marriage ended in divorce. In 1975 he and son Michael experienced a horrible barn fire, saving all the horses boarded there, but losing almost everything else.

Gradually Morrie began to rebuild his life and the farm. Daphne Eklund came to teach music at Willmar Junior High in 1976. In 1979 they were married at Bethel Lutheran Church in Willmar. The building of their "forever home on earth" began that summer, with the help of three teacher/friends. He had drawn the original floor plan when he was a senior in a high school architectural drawing class in 1960.

Granted a five year leave of absence, Morrie was able to farm full time. The cow/calf herd had become more than an after-work hobby. However, a day spent at an elk farm convinced Morrie and Daphne that this was the direction they should go. Most of the cows were soon sold. Joining the Minnesota Elk Breeders and the North American Elk Breeders in 1995 and buying their first elk was life changing. Summers were spent putting up 8 ft. fences, having elk calves, and meeting other elk breeders. That first fall Morrie went back to teaching, but now at Willmar Senior High, until he retired in 1999. Being the coordinators for the Minnesota Elk Breeders booth at the Minnesota State Fair consumed the last 12 days before Labor Day for many years.

After retirement from teaching Morrie was elected to the Lake Andrew Township Board. He was happy when he was chairman, that the township was able to find a home for the old schoolhouse and build a new township hall in its place. All paid for without raising taxes! He retired in 2014 from the board when speaking loudly and clearly became a challenge. His Parkinson's had been diagnosed in 2008. He was determined to "keep going and doing" as much as possible. During this time, he was director/ manager of the New London Creamery Board. Traveling to elk conventions, to visit family and friends and going on trips with the Willmar High School music department took us to almost all of the fifty states, Mexico and Canada. In 2020 we had just come home from a trip when Covid caused

everything to shut down. From then on Morrie became more home bound. After a hospital stay and three months of rehab in nursing homes, Morrie returned home. His fervent wish was to never leave again. He was home for 14 months until his last day when he went to the hospital and died there that night.

Morrie held life memberships in three organizations: the American Legion (51 years), the North American Elk Breeders and the Minnesota Elk Breeders (since 1995) and the Retired Educators Association of Minnesota (since 1999).

Morrie is survived by his wife Daphne; his son Michael (Jodi); his grandson, Zackery (Cassandra) their children Mackenzie, Eliza, and Cecilia, his granddaughter Samantha (Jeremy) Westbrook and their children Avery, Gage, and Jacob Pederson, and Josephine. Also, special nephews and nieces and their children and grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his immediate family and Daphne's family.

Special thanks:

- * to Jeff & Maureen Barbour who made it possible for Morrie to come home
- * to friends Neal & Julene Haugen who have shared "Wednesdays with Morrie"
- * to neighbors Lyle Bengtson, Danny, Jason, Jessalyn, Devon Lien, Andrew Cors & Loren Hjelle who came whenever called to help
- * to nephews Donn (Deb), Terry (Val) and David (Julie) for their special times with Morrie
- * to our Winona "family" headed by Pat & Rita Prodzinski
- * to the VA of St. Cloud that generously provided equipment and home health services
- * to Peace Lutheran Church for live streaming services so we could "attend" church at 9:00 am on Sundays



Minnesota Farmed Cervidae Numbers Fiscal Year 22/23 (ending June 30)

Species Breakdown By Animal

Breed	Total Animals	Number of Herds
White-Tailed Deer	3,337	140
Elk	3,073	83
Red Deer	154	7
Reindeer	75	9
Fallow Deer	93	7
Sika Deer	27	4
Muntjac	23	5
Pere David's Deer	4	1
Moose	2	1
Caribou	2	2
White-Lipped Deer	1	1
TOTAL:	6,791	227

Herd Usage

Usage	TOTAL Herds
Breeding	57
Exhibition/Competition	17
Hobbyist	106
Hunting Preserve Site	12
Meat Production	45
Other Animal Products	8
Trophy/Hunting Animal Sales	71
Urine Production	4
Velvet Antler Production	16
Unknown	1
TOTAL:	227

Herd Totals by Fiscal Year 2013 to 2023

2013: 552	2016: 462	2019: 360	2022: 227
2014: 489	2017: 421	2020: 291	2023: 209
2015: 463	2018: 395	2021: 259	

**Minnesota Elk Breeders
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320-543-2686

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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**

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