Certification Standards
for a Canadian Chronic Wasting Disease
Voluntary Herd Certification Program

February 12, 2003

Contents:

Part A: Overview

The objective of the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Voluntary Herd Certification Program is to provide owners with the opportunity to have their herds identified as elite with respect to CWD. Membership in the certification program provides assurances to potential purchasers of animals that a purchase from a herd with the same level has the same risk of being infected with CWD. The level of assurance of CWD freedom depends on the length of time the herd has been enrolled in the program. Any owner of elk or deer premises who agrees to comply with the outlined provisions of the CWD Voluntary Herd Certification Program may enroll.

As there is no test to diagnose CWD in live animals, CWD status is determined on a herd basis by testing every cervid that dies, the absence of clinical signs, and the lack of exposure to CWD over a designated period of time.

There are six levels in the certification program, from the entry level, Level E, to the highest level, certified. A minimum of five years is necessary for an enrolled herd to reach the certified level.

For the purpose of this program:

The National Administrator is the CFIA. The National Administrator is responsible for:

- developing and setting the program standards;
- consulting with provincial governments and industry;
- reviewing regional programs to ensure that the program design is equivalent to the national standard;
- auditing the implementation of regional programs;
- approving laboratories to test for CWD including design and implementation of a quality assurance program;
- conducting confirmatory testing of all suspicious and positive samples tested in recognised laboratories;
- publishing a national list of enrolled herds and their status, updated quarterly; and
- negotiating to have international trading partners recognize the program, and endorsing CFIA export certification for regional certification programs that have been judged by CFIA as meeting the national standards.

The Regional Administrator is the provincial authority in Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Yukon and British Columbia and the Canadian Cervid Council in provinces that do not offer a voluntary herd certification program. The Regional Administrator is responsible for:

- developing a program that meets the national standard;
- developing a contract (application form), which is signed by the owner and the

accredited veterinarian and which sets out the requirements to be met by the owner;
- the contract must include a statement protecting the CFIA from any liability for the voluntary herd certification program;
- enrolling as members of the program, owners of premises on which deer or elk are kept;
- developing forms required for the program including application forms, annual reports, inventory reports, and certificates;
- appointing and training status assessors and program delivery staff;
- informing members of developments in CWD and the certification program;
- collecting and collating all data on enrolled herds in that region;
- maintaining a data bank used for inventory;
- producing an inventory report, based on the previous year's inventory for use by the individual responsible for delivery of the program;
- issuing certificates indicating the status of a herd;
- issuing a certificate indicating that a cervid is a member of a herd enrolled in the certification program and indicating the status of the herd;
- informing the CFIA of the status of all enrolled herds on a quarterly basis;
- setting up an appeal process to exempt owners that failed to comply with testing requirements; and
- setting up an appeal process for decisions made with respect to the voluntary herd certification program.

The Status Assessor is the provincial authority in Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Yukon and British Columbia and the CFIA in areas in which the Canadian Cervid Council is the Regional Administrator. The Status Assessor is responsible for:

- verifying reports such as initial and annual inventories;
- approving applications including the level at which the herd will enter the program;
- approving all changes in status;
- investigating irregularities;
- suspending membership status, conducting hearings and revoking status;
- reporting to the Regional Administrator on the status of herds; and
- implementing the appeal process to determine whether an exemption should be granted for owners who failed to comply with testing requirements.

Program Delivery is carried out by veterinarians accredited by the CFIA for that purpose or by provincial staff . The inventory portion of the initial or annual report may be conducted by CFIA staff, an animal health technician registered under the appropriate provincial licensing body, supervised by the accredited veterinarian, or staff of a provincial department or agency that is the regional administrator. Program delivery personnel are responsible for:

- reviewing the requirements of the program and responding to questions of the

owner of premises applying for or enrolled in the program;
- teaching the owner to recognize the clinical signs of CWD, providing information on the epidemiology of the disease and herd management;
- assessing the facilities on premises proposed for membership in the program;
- conducting a herd inventory;
- assessing the health of the herd to determine whether any cervid is demonstrating signs of CWD;
- reconciling records to assure that the herd meets the program requirements;
- signing and submitting reports, including the annual inventory to the status assessor;
- reporting any suspected case of CWD to the CFIA District Veterinarian;
- collecting samples and submitting samples if the owner has not sent them directly to a provincial laboratory.

A recognised laboratory is a laboratory that participates with the National TSE Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Network and meets the guidelines set by the CFIA Laboratory Directorate for testing cervids for CWD (See Appendix A.). Recognised laboratories are responsible for:

- collecting, preparing, and testing samples submitted for this program in accordance with the standard operating procedure provided by the CFIA Reference Laboratory for CWD;
- participating in inter-laboratory Quality Assurance activities under the advice of the CFIA Reference Laboratory for CWD, as described in the Quality Guidelines of the Network;
- providing required forms;
- notifying the owner, status assessor, and accredited veterinarian responsible for herd of negative test results;
- forwarding suspect samples to the CFIA Reference Laboratory for CWD for confirmation (the results are not reported to the owner or accredited veterinarian);
- providing appropriate shipping containers;
- assessing whether a sample is adequate to permit diagnosis of CWD and notifying the owner, status assessor, and accredited veterinarian of samples that are not suitable.

Provincial laboratories that are not recognised to test for CWD may collect specimens and forward them to a recognised laboratory.

Owners are persons who have responsibility for the care and handling of all cervids on a premises. Individuals who own or lease cervids but do not have responsibility for all cervids on the premises cannot apply for herd enrollment under the voluntary herd certification program.

Owners are responsible for:
- submitting samples from all cervids over 12 months of age that die;
- maintaining facilities and fences, and must meet any provincial standards;

- keeping records of all cervids on the premises and moving onto or off of the premises;
- employing an accredited veterinarian; and
- conducting annual inventories.

Part B: Criteria

All voluntary herd certification programs must meet the following criteria:

1. Eligibility of herd The certification program must be open to any owner of a premises on which cervids are kept provided the owner and the premises meet the program requirements and the owner of the premises has not had the right to participate in the herd certification program removed.

2. Eligibility of program The program must meet the requirements of this certification standard.

3. Contract The contract between the Regional Administrator and the owner of the premises must be signed. The premises must meet the requirements of the Regional Administrator's certification program. The contract must include a clause protecting CFIA from any liability arising from the certification program.

4. All cervids on a premises must be included in the herd enrolled in the certification program, ownership notwithstanding.

5. Multiple premises may be listed under the same certification contract if the premises belong to the same owner and are located in proximity to each other, and if the premises collectively meet the requirements of the program. Nevertheless, transport permits from CFIA are still required for any movements between the premisses. "

6. Facilities must be appropriate as follows:
facilities must allow for the easy handling of cervids and for examination of all cervid identification devices including CFIA Health of Animals Tags;
fences must be adequate to prevent the escape of cervids and must meet any provincial standards; and
the freezer must be adequate to freeze a cervid head.

7. Program Delivery Qualifications A veterinarian trained and accredited by a provincial government or the CFIA in delivery of the program must be on contract with the owner of the premises for the care of the cervids and for program delivery.

8. Information sharing requires all herd information, including inventories, test results, movement permits, movement of embryos and semen, deaths, or sales relevant to CWD or to the population of the herd, to be available to the owner, the CFIA, the appropriate

provincial department or agency, the Regional Administrator and the accredited veterinarian. The owner must also agree to allow publication of the status of the herd under the program.

9. Inventories (initial inventory and those conducted at the end of the first and second years of participation in the program) will be conducted by the accredited veterinarian, an animal health technician registered under the appropriate provincial licensing body and employed by the accredited veterinarian, or the staff of a provincial government department or agency. The inventory will identify all cervids on the premises. Once every three years the CFIA will conduct the portion of the annual inventory for those animals undergoing the CFIA's triennial tuberculosis and brucellosis testing, and the accredited veterinarian will be responsible for the identification and inventory of any remaining animals and for the reconciliation and submission of the annual inventory report.

   The initial inventory, the inventories at the end of the first and second years of participation and every third inventory after will identify all cervids by comparing all identification devices, including the Health of Animals tags. Those inventories not conducted by a third party will be done by the producer and he/she may identify the cervids by the use of unique dangle tags which are visible at a distance. If for any reason the cervids cannot all be identified by viewing the dangle tag at a distance, the cervids must be identified accurately using the official tag.

   The initial inventory must have been completed within three months of the time the application is submitted. Each annual inventory must be completed and reported within the three months of the anniversary of the initial inventory (anniversary quarter).

10. The annual inventory report is the responsibility of the Program Delivery person. The annual report lists the following:

   - all identification of each cervid on the premises at the time of the inventory;
   - all identification devices placed on each cervid, including the current calf crop and any cervids that have lost identification devices;
   - all cervids that have entered or left the premises since the last inventory;
   - all deaths or escapes;
   - the destination of every cervid moved off the premises as established by a bill of sale or, if the animal has not been sold, a signed document showing the destination of the cervid; and
   - the test report for every cervid tested for CWD.

   The report must account for every cervid over 12 months of age that died (within the standards set in section 14. Sample Submissions) and state that all the records required to be kept by the owner have been examined and found satisfactory.

The report must be forwarded to the Status Assessor within the anniversary quarter.

11. Identification is required for all cervids before they reach eleven months of age and by two unique identification devices, one of which is an official tag. Cervids must also be tagged if moved off the premises or if a change of ownership occurs.

12. Records are the responsibility of the Regional Administrator, who maintains a data bank with an inventory of all cervids on each enrolled premises and all the information necessary to determine that each cervid has been accounted for. The Regional Administrator will be responsible for producing a report which is sent to the program delivery person responsible for the premises, providing all the information from the previous annual inventory at least one month before the start of the anniversary quarter.

    The owner must keep detailed herd records of every cervid that is born on or enters the premises no matter who the owner is or who is responsible for the cervid. The records must be kept for a period of five years after the animal has left the herd or has died. The records must be made available to the program delivery person or the CFIA inspector at any reasonable time and must be presented at the time of each annual inventory.

    For any animal purchased or moved onto or from a premises identified on the application form, the following animal records must be kept:

    - the animal's official identification numbers and any other identification;
    - sex;
    - species and any identifying marks;
    - date of birth (day, if available, month and year);
    - official identification number and any secondary ID of sire and dam if known;
    - official identification number and any secondary ID and sex of progeny if known;
    - if dead, the date and cause of death, post mortem report and laboratory report;
    - any movement permit required under section 76 of the *Health of Animals Regulations;*
    - if removed from the premises, the date of removal, the premises to which the animal was moved, and the name address and telephone number of the person to whom the animal was sold (owners are required to keep bills of sale);
    - if an animal was brought into the herd:
        - source premises and certification program level;
        - name and address of the person from whom the animal was acquired; and
        - the day, month, and year.

13. Reporting of sick cervids must be made by the owner of an herd to the accredited veterinarian for any illness in a cervid over 12 months of age, except a physical injury lasting longer than two weeks. The accredited veterinarian will be responsible for monitoring the outcome of the case and for reporting the case to the CFIA if CWD is a differential diagnosis.

14. Sample submissions for CWD testing require the heads of all cervids 12 months of age and older that die on the premises of an enrolled herd to be submitted immediately after death to an accredited veterinarian or recognised laboratory, with exceptions outlined below. The head must retain all identification devices. The head must be cooled immediately and, whenever possible, should be submitted fresh. When the cervid is not found immediately or the accredited veterinarian or recognised laboratory will not be available, the head should be frozen immediately and submitted as a frozen specimen. This will allow testing of cervids that might not be suitable otherwise.

Where a head is presented to an accredited veterinarian and there is no brain present to forward for testing, the accredited veterinarian will provide the owner with a letter certifying that the head was 'submitted' and no brain tissue was present to test.

The specimen must be submitted to a recognised laboratory for the immuno-histochemistry test and must follow the methodology approved by the CFIA at the time of the test. All suspect test results will be confirmed by a CFIA laboratory and the CFIA will be responsible for reporting the results to the owner.

Removal of the brain by anyone other than an accredited veterinarian or provincial laboratory will not be counted as submitted.

14 a) Handling the Specimen

In removing the head from the body all the flesh including the spinal cord, should be cut cleanly 15 cm (6 inches) from the head. The spinal cord cannot be pulled or stretched, as it may damage the obex so that it is not possible to test the brain in the proper manner.

Brains in which the obex of the medulla is not present will not be accepted as testable. The most likely reason for the failure to have an obex is killing the cervid with a bullet in such a way as to destroy the obex. Owners should obtain specific instruction from their veterinarian or association as to how to shoot a cervid without destroying the obex.

The head must be cooled immediately and if it is not possible to submit it immediately, the head should be frozen and not allowed to thaw until it reaches the recognised laboratory. This will allow testing of cervids that might not be suitable otherwise.

No matter what condition the head is in it must be submitted to the recognised laboratory.

14 b) Condition of Specimens

Brains that are submitted to recognised laboratories in putrefied condition may not be acceptable for normal testing. If the carcass has deteriorated sufficiently, brain tissue may not be able to be found and no test is possible.

The protein that is associated with CWD appears first in an area of the brain called the 'obex of the medulla'. That very specific location must be identified by the laboratory doing the test, in order to detect cervids that are in the earliest stages of the disease. In the final stages of CWD, the protein can be found in most parts of the brain.

When the correct area to test cannot be found, the ability to determine whether the cervid was infected is greatly reduced. The normal test of the brain of a cervid for CWD will identify animals which are in the early stages of the disease perhaps as long as one year before any signs of the disease are detectable. The test requires that the brain of the cervid be in good physical shape so that the anatomy of the brain can be used to identify the very specific area of the brain that is required to be identified so that the earliest stages of CWD can be seen. The most common reason for not being able to perform such a test is deterioration of the brain from heat.

When the cervid is in the final stages of CWD, the prion is identifiable throughout the brain and the test can be done on any part of the brain that can be found. Testing using this material will not identify cervids in the early stages of the disease. However, it will identify the cervids that are most likely to transmit CWD to other cervids. Ensuring that all cervids are tested to this standard will minimize the chances that a cervid in the herd has transmitted CWD to other cervids.

If the brain is damaged severely enough, the laboratory or accredited veterinarian may not be able to find brain tissues to test. Cervids submitted to the recognised laboratory where brain tissue cannot be identified are not considered to have been tested.

14 c) Results of Analysis on Cervids submitted for CWD Testing.

1. Where the specimen submitted was adequate for diagnosis of early (incubating) CWD - diagnosis of '**not incubating**'

'The obex of the medulla was stained using a CWD specific antibody and was negative for detectable pathological deposits.

Based on the above results, the animal shows no signs that it was incubating CWD when it died.'

2. Where the specimen submitted had deteriorated sufficiently that the obex of the medulla could not be identified - '**not in final stages**'.

'The brain of the animal had undergone significant deterioration and the obex of the medulla could not be identified. Staining of the (name of assumed anatomical region depending on specimen submitted) portion of the brain available using a CWD specific antibody was negative for detectable pathological deposits.

Based on the above results, it is impossible to determine whether the animal was in the early stage (incubation) of CWD, however, the animal shows no signs that it was in the final stages of CWD when it died.'

3. Where the specimen submitted, did not have identifiable brain tissue - '**not tested**'.

'The specimen had under gone sufficient deterioration that it was impossible to identify brain tissue to test for CWD.'

14 d) Exemption from submission of heads.

The Status Assessor should consider the following as automatic exemptions from the requirement to submit unless the status assessor suspects the conditions set out were not met or that the exemption is being abused to the detriment of the herd certification program.

A. Destruction of cervids by fire.
- a certificate or letter of an appropriate fire official must accompany the herd report

B. Destruction and carrying away the head of a cervid by a predator.
- a certificate or letter of an appropriate wildlife officer or other government official responsible for investigating such incidents must accompany the herd report

C. Theft.
- a report of the police officer who investigates the theft must accompany the herd report

D. Loss or destruction of the sample when it is no longer in the control of the owner, e.g., by an accredited veterinarian or laboratory. Recognised laboratories should note on reception of the specimen that the obex is not present and the reason why.
- a letter setting out the details of the loss of the sample by the individual responsible must accompany the herd report;

E. Slaughter Cervids that are slaughtered as part of a group of healthy animals in a provincial or federally inspected abattoir with a veterinarian present at the time of slaughter are exempt from this requirement. This exemption does not apply to a cervid slaughtered on an emergency basis. To ensure that a cervid is not considered to have been slaughtered on an emergency basis, arrangements must have been made at least two weeks in advance of the date of the slaughter.
- a document from the abattoir stating that arrangements had been made to slaughter the cervid at least two weeks before the actual slaughter date and.
- a document from the veterinarian who was present when the cervid was slaughtered, must accompany the herd report.
If the above two documents cannot be obtained the owner should have the cervid tested.

Carcasses or parts of carcasses of cervids tested for CWD must be held pending test results, and for that reason, arrangements must be made with the slaughterhouse before sending animals. The owners should consult with those responsible for inspection of the meat while making arrangements.

F. Any other reason over which the owner could not reasonably be expected to have control which results in the destruction or disappearance of the body such as a flood.
- a letter or report by an acceptable third party which sets out the details of the reason for failure to submit the sample must accompany the herd report.

15. Acquisitions, Movements, and Introduction of live cervids and genetic material

Acquisitions of live cervids and embryos must come from herds of an equivalent or higher level.

For the two first levels of the certification program, additions can only be made from five herds per year. Herds that exceed this limit are considered to be assembled herds and must re-enroll as such. Herds that are in the third, fourth or fifth level of the certification program or have reached certified status are exempt from this requirement.

Equivalent or higher status sources include:

- Canadian herds enrolled at the same level of a herd certification program that has been assessed by CFIA to meet the minimum national standards;
- herds enrolled at an appropriate level of a herd certification program in another country or state of the United States, which has been assessed by CFIA as equivalent to the Canadian minimum national standards; and
- herds in countries assessed and recognised by CFIA as free from CWD.

Acquisitions of live cervids or embryos from herds of a lower status will result in the lowering of the certification level to that of the source of the cervids.

Cervids can be sold at a live auction provided the district veterinarian is satisfied that steps will be taken to prevent direct contact with cervids of a lesser certification status. All cervids must be from enrolled herds whose status is greater than Level E. (After 2004 all cervids must be from Level C).

Embryos collected within 18 months of the time the donor is diagnosed as positive for CWD shall not be used.

There is no evidence that semen can transmit CWD. Semen can be brought into the herd provided the requirements of the *Health of Animals Regulations* governing semen collection are met.

16. Sanitary precautions Any cervid showing an illness of more than two weeks duration is not to be moved off the premises or into contact with any cervid it has not previously been in contact with, unless the accredited veterinarian approves the movement for the purposes of treating the animal and the movement will not expose any additional cervids.

If management practices include separating the year's calf crop from the yearlings or adults, no sick adult will be placed in the pens with the calves.

Every third party vehicle that transports cervids must be cleaned and disinfected before loading the cervids. The owner will require the transporter to provide a statement that the truck was cleaned and disinfected and will keep a copy of the statement.

17. Certification Program Levels and Advancement

Owners will have the opportunity to apply for a level other than the initial level, Level E, if they meet the requirements of the certification program for that level (fast tracking). The fast track requirements are set out in Appendix B.

A herd's level upon acceptance into the certification program is based on the day the herd inventory is completed. The anniversary quarter is that quarter in any succeeding year.

If the herd is suspected or proven to be infected at any time during its membership, the herd will be investigated under the CFIA's CWD control program and membership in the CWD Voluntary Herd Certification Program will be automatically suspended.

Level E (the year between the initial inventory and first inventory)

A herd will retain its Level E status for one year. Herds that do not meet the requirement for submission of diagnostic samples from all cervids that cannot be accounted for in the first year will be suspended from the program until that requirement is met.

Level D, C, B, and A

A herd will retain its status for each level for one year, advancement will then be considered as outlined below based on the annual report and inventory. Failure to submit an annual report for any level within 15 months of the time the herd reached that level will result in suspension of the herd from the CWD Voluntary Herd Certification Program.

Certified herd level

Fully Certified- After a herd has been at level A for one year the herd will be considered certified and will remain at that level if the herd continues to comply with the conditions set for advancement in levels C, B and A.

A herd will retain its certification status indefinitely if it meets the requirements of the CWD Voluntary Herd Certification Program as shown by the annual inventory report. The criteria set out below for levels A, B, C, and D also apply to the certified herd level. Failure to meet the requirements may result in suspension or revocation of the herd.

Advancement in Status Level

A herd in the program may advance one year in status if:
all eligible cervids (more than 12 months of age) that were in the herd or entered the herd in the period of time between the last and current inventory, are accounted for in the reconciliation of the herd inventory, because they:
- are alive and meet the conditions of section 15 of this standard,
- have been granted an exemption as set out in section 14 d) of this standard,
- died other than by slaughter, and

between the initial and the first annual herd inventories and between the first and second inventories, 100% of the eligible cervids that die have been tested (advancement to levels D and C);

during all subsequent periods between inventories either
- all of the eligible cervids that have died have been tested, or
- 80% of the cervids that have died (other than by slaughter) have been tested and 10% of the total eligible cervids in the herd have been tested following death or slaughter;

tested in this part means an recognised laboratory has certified that three out of four (75%) cervid samples tested met the standard set out above as '**not incubating**'. The fourth must meet the requirement '**not in final stages**'.

The certificate of the recognised laboratory and an explanation as to why the brain was not submitted in acceptable condition must be attached to the herd report.

Herds that meet this requirement will advance to the next level.

A herd on the program will not advance if:

The herd has not met these requirements but has submitted specimens for all cervids which die and at least 50 per cent are testable.

Herds which are in the first two levels (D) and (E) of the program may stay in their current levels but will be suspended for one year until they have met the requirements to advance.
Herds in (C)(B)(A) and will not advance, stay at their current level for one year and certification is not suspended.

If a herd does not meet the requirements to advance the next year, the herd will drop one

year and its certification will be remain suspended.

A herd on the program will drop one level if:

it has not submitted all the specimens required but has submitted three out of four specimens and 50 per cent are testable. Level E herds will not drop out of the program but will stay at that level of the program for one year. All herds will be suspended and investigated. If the herd does not meet the requirements to advance for the next year the herd will drop one level and be suspended for that year.

Suspension

Herds whose certification is suspended will not be issued status certificates under the voluntary certification program for either the herd or cervids in the herd and until the suspension is lifted. Consequently they may not sell to other herds in the voluntary certification program. Suspension does not have any impact on the status of the herd for the CWD national eradication program nor will it interfere with the issuance of movement permits except to note that the voluntary herd status is suspended nor the ability to sell to producers who are not participating in the voluntary program.

A herd at any levelwill be suspended if:

it has failed to meet all of the above criteria, for instance it has not submitted 3 out of 4 heads;

it does not meet the requirements to advance two years in a row or repeatedly fails to meet the requirements for advancing;

the status assessor feels that some other aspect of the programm is not being met.

Suspended herds should be inspected by the status assessor to determine why the owner is not able to comply with the program. The inspection should include a discussion by the owner as to why he cannot comply and to ensure he understands the requirements of the voluntary program and steps are taken to help the owner comply. Where it appears the herd will not be able to comply with the requirements of the program, the status assessor should revoke the membership.

The herd will be reinstated after the herd meets the requirements of the program for a year but only if the status assessor is satisfied that the owner will comply with the requirements of the program. Conditions may be imposed both during the years suspension and first year after suspension.

18. Appeals

The owner can appeal a decision:

not to accept an automatic exemption,

that the specimen was untestable,

to suspend or revoke a herds status,

to impose conditions before the herd is allowed to participate in the program after a suspension or revocation.

See Appendix C for the Appeal Process

Appendix A

RECOGNISED LABORATORIES

Laboratories which can test Samples
for the Voluntary Herd Certification Program

Colorado Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory
Attn: Dr. T. Spraker
College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523, USA

Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory
Attn: Dr. E.S. Williams
Department of Veterinary Sciences
University of Wyoming
1174, Snowy Range Road
Laramie, Wyoming 82070, USA

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
Attn: Dr. B. Miller
Agri-Food Surveillance Systems, Food Safety Division
Main Floor, O.S.Longman Bldg.
6909- 116 Street
Edmonton, AB T6H 4P2

Prairie Diagnostic Services
Attn: Dr. K. West
52 Campus Drive
Saskatoon, SK S7N 5B4

Animal Health Laboratory
Laboratory Services Division
University of Guelph
Box 3612
Door P2,Building 49, McIntosh Lane
Guelph, Ontario N1H 6R8
Phone: 519-824-4120, ext 4502
Fax: 519-821-8072

Fast Tracking
CWD Voluntary Herd Certification Program

Fast tracking (grandfathering) is allowed for owners with cervid herds that have previously established programs equivalent to the CWD Voluntary Herd Certification Program.

1. Producers must enroll in a program before March 31, 2003.

2. Fast tracking will only be approved for the first two levels, i.e., the second or third level of the program.

3. The requirement for CWD testing of all mortalities would apply during the first two years the herd is enrolled in the program.

4. The following requirements must be met for fast tracking:

    a) an initial inventory and annual inventory must have been completed by a CFIA or provincial inspector, or an accredited veterinarian. The inventory must have included all cervids on the premises, ownership notwithstanding.

    b) detailed herd records must be available, showing all movements into and out of the herd, natural increases, use of artificial insemination and embryo transfer. All animals must be accounted for by their presence in the current herd, by documented sale to another producer or hunt farm, by export, by slaughter at an abattoir under the direct inspection of a veterinarian working for the federal or provincial government, or by an approved test on the brain of the deer or elk

    c) the fast tracking report must be signed by the veterinarian responsible for the herd stating that the veterinarian has been responsible for the veterinary care of the herd and is not aware of any cervid that had symptoms of CWD or died in the herd for the number of years requested.

    – all animals that died at more than 12 months of age must test negative by immunohistochemistry. Animals slaughtered as part of a group in an abattoir under the direct supervision of a veterinarian employed by a federal or provincial government agency are exempt from this requirement.

    – there must not have been movement from any herd that does not have the same status, i.e., that has been fast tracked to the same year.

- the herd must not be under investigation or surveillance for CWD, nor must any trace out animal that died before being tested or placed under surveillance by a CFIA veterinarian have been present in the herd.

- all animals in the herd must have been identified by two unique tags, one of which is a Health of Animals tag or a tag approved by a provincial government.

Appendix C

Appeal Process

At the request of the owner, the Regional administrator will appoint a committee of three to consider all appeals. The committee will consider all appeals and provide the status assessor with a recommendation as to whether the appeal meets the criteria and should be accepted. A representative of the status assessor will be the non-voting chairman of the committee. A representative of the appropriate cervid organisation may assist the committee to provide information relating to the cervid industry. CFIA may ask that a representative of the Agency observe the appeal as a non-voting member of the committee.

The three individuals will each represent one of the following groups:

A. an employee of the provincial veterinary authority;
B. a representative of the provincial veterinary association;
C. a professional employee of a college or university who is familiar with the cervid industry;
D. a representative of a livestock association other than one associated with the cervid industry;
E. a representative of the provincial medical authorities such as the office of the provincial Medical Officer of Health;
F. a representative of the provincial authority responsible for the responsible for wildlife;
G. the representative of the status assessor from another certified herd program, either provincial or CFIA;

The person who will make the decision for the status assessor will be the ex officio chairman of the committee.

The committee will recommend an exemption from the requirement to submit a specimen to the status assessor where, in spite of an appropriate management system, some unusual occurrence has caused the owner not to be able to submit a specimen. The committee in considering the appeal is considering the reason for the failure to test the specific specimen not determining the overall risk of the herd having CWD.

Requests for appeal will be in writing and will set out the reasons why the appeal should be considered. Where there is specific information concerning the circumstances surrounding the death of the cervid or an incident in the herd, the request shall be countersigned by the practising veterinarian responsible for the herd.

The committee may consider requests for exemption in written form and need not meet in person.

Where the status assessor believes that the recommendation of the committee would jeopardize the status of the certified herd program, the status assessor may convene a further committee consisting of a representative of the CFIA national animal health program and two other

provincial veterinarians from provinces where the government is responsible for the program. A representative of the national cervid organisation will be an ex-officio member of the committee.

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