

August 28, 2020

Dear CWD Program Participant,

As you are acutely aware of, CWD was first detected in both Pennsylvania captive and wild deer in 2012. Over the past two years the number of confirmed cases of CWD has ballooned to 326 cases in captive deer and 481 cases in wild deer. The vast majority of these cases have occurred in Blair, Bedford and Fulton counties. The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's efforts to mitigate this disease threat until now have focused primarily on tracking captive deer movements, tracing out dangerous contacts and quarantining and depopulating premises. While this method has had some success, the numbers indicate a new strategy is needed for the most heavily affected area of the commonwealth.

In order to combat the spread of CWD in Pennsylvania and maintain business continuity for farms in this region, a CWD Core Captive Management Zone (CCMZ) has been created. This new zone encompasses all of Bedford, Blair and Fulton counties. Cervid operations within these counties can continue to purchase deer from both within and outside of the CCMZ.

***How does the CWD Core Captive Management Zone Quarantine Order impact farms in Blair, Bedford and Fulton Counties?***

- Herd Certified farms will continue to be permitted to sell deer out of state, with a permit.
- Herd Certified farms who screen their entire herd using live animal rectal lymphoid screening for prion detection through a licensed, accredited veterinarian with non-detected results will be permitted to sell live deer, embryos and semen to other parts of Pennsylvania.
- Deer farms in this zone can continue to import deer into this zone.
- Deer farms in this zone can continue to offer hunts.
- Deer Farms will be able to buy, sell and transfer live deer if the annual rate of CWD positive animals in their herd remains below five percent. The formula for calculating this rate is included in the quarantine order.
- Deer farms crossing the 5% threshold will be required to segregate females from males and may continue hunting operations as terminal male hunting facilities until the 60-month quarantine period has expired.
- Herd Monitored farms cannot move live deer out of this zone to other parts of Pennsylvania.
- Farms will not be permitted to move high risk parts out of the zone. This includes the brain, eyes, tonsils, lymph nodes, backbone, spleen and anything containing visible brain or spinal cord material where the prions that spread CWD are concentrated.
- Farms will be permitted to move low-risk parts out of the zone including antlers, clean skull caps, capes and deboned meat.
- No new premises or businesses with CWD susceptible species may be established within the CCMZ established by this CCMZ General Quarantine Order.
- Pre-existing establishments with CWD susceptible species will be grandfathered at the time of publication of this CCMZ General Quarantine Order, as long as such establishments continuously maintain an active business inventory.

***How does the CWD Core Captive Management Zone Quarantine Order impact farms in other portions of Pennsylvania?***

- Deer farms can continue to sell breeding stock and trophy bucks for hunting and breeding purposes to farms located in the CCMZ.
- Deer farms will be restricted from transferring live deer from Blair, Bedford and Fulton counties unless they are choosing to buy from HCP participants that have screened their entire herd for CWD in the past three years using RAMALT CWD testing through a licensed and accredited veterinarian.
- By prohibiting purchases of captive deer from the CCMZ and not allowing high-risk parts to leave the zone, the Department is substantially lessening the odds that physical movement of captive deer from within the CCMZ to an area outside of the CCMZ will result in the spread of CWD.
- Deer farms in the CCMZ can maintain business continuity if they choose and are incentivized, even if CWD is detected in their herd, to utilize tools such as herd density and age management, genetic selection and other rapidly evolving scientific advancements to make their operations and herds less susceptible to CWD.

***When does this CWD Core Captive Management Zone Quarantine Order take effect?***

This quarantine takes effect immediately upon publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin. If an individual producer has a pending contract for a trophy buck or a group of trophy buck for export out of the zone for harvest this fall/winter at a hunting preserve, please contact your regional veterinarian immediately. Up until October 28, 2020 the bureau will consider issuing written permits on a case by case basis to assist businesses in fulfilling contracts they committed to prior the implementation of this quarantine order.

The goal of the CCMZ and associated procedures is to slow the spread of CWD outside the CWD-endemic portion of Pennsylvania while allowing business continuity and providing opportunities for herds in the zone to manage their herds as scientific advancements race forward to establish a long-term solution. In a time of increasing uncertainty regarding the availability of federal indemnity dollars, this zone will also produce business opportunities for those currently under quarantine both within and outside of the CCMZ by allowing the movement of deer from quarantined premises to hunting preserves in the zone where there may be a market for such deer to be harvested.

Additional information including a copy of the CWD CCMZ General Order of Quarantine can be found on our website <https://www.agriculture.pa.gov/Animals/AHDServices/diseases/Chronic%20Wasting%20Disease%20Program/Pages/default.aspx> or by contacting your regional PDA office. Please also see the enclosed map which lays out the CCMZ.

Kindly feel free to reach out to me directly if you should have additional questions.

Sincerely,



**Kevin Brightbill, DVM | State Veterinarian | Director**

