



For Immediate Release

November 17, 2023

Chronic Wasting Disease Detected in Cherokee County Deer Breeding Facility

AUSTIN, TX — Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) received confirmation of a case of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in Cherokee County, marking the first detection in a deer breeding facility in the county.

A four-year-old buck tested positive using postmortem testing conducted to meet annual CWD surveillance requirements for the facility.

Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory initially analyzed the samples, and the National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Iowa confirmed the CWD detection.

CWD has an incubation period that can span years, so the first indication of the disease in a herd is often found through surveillance testing rather than observed clinical signs. Early detection and proactive monitoring improve the state's response time to the detection of CWD and can greatly reduce the risk of further disease spread.

Any person interested in having their harvest tested for CWD should contact a [local biologist](#), found on the [TPWD website](#).

CWD is a fatal neurological disease found in certain cervids including deer, elk, moose and other members of the deer family. This slow, progressive disease may not produce visible signs in susceptible species for several years after infection. As the disease process continues, animals with CWD may show changes in behavior and appearance. Clinical signs may include progressive weight loss, stumbling or tremors with a lack of coordination, loss of appetite, teeth grinding, abnormal head posture and/or drooping ears, and excessive thirst, salivation or urination.

In Texas, the disease was first discovered in 2012 in free-ranging mule deer along a remote area of the Hueco Mountains near the Texas-New Mexico border. CWD has since been detected in Texas captive and free-ranging cervids, including white-tailed deer, mule deer, red deer and elk.

For more information on previous detections in Texas and CWD best management practices for hunters and landowners, visit [TPWD's CWD page](#) or the [TAHC's CWD page](#).

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