



Deer & Elk Farmers'

Digest Newsletter



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VETERINARIAN LIABILITY:

GOOD NEWS FOR NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS



North American's love affair with their dogs is causing greater liability risks for veterinarians. Pet owners are increasingly initiating medical malpractice lawsuits against veterinarians. Pet owners who consider their animals to be family and not property are turning to the courts to be compensated for the loss of companionship and emotional distress.

Recently, a California jury awarded \$39,000 to Marc Bluestone, whose dog Shane died of liver failure after it was misdiagnosed by the vet. Bluestone was awarded \$9,000 for his vet bills, plus \$30,000 for the dog's "unique" value. The dog's market value was \$10.

In 1997, a Kentucky jury awarded \$15,000 to the owner of Sheba, a German shepherd who bled to death after an operation. The jury was told the dog had intrinsic worth to its owner that exceeded its market value.

A pending Illinois case is seeking more than \$50,000 in damages against a vet for allegedly botching corrective surgery on Missy, an 11-year old Labrador-German Shepherd mix that suffered from bad knees.

The key development in the United States has been the recognition by some courts that the emotional bonds between

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ABOUT THE DIGEST

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EDITOR'S DESK



The third issue of our new-look *Deer & Elk Farmers' Digest* again has articles on a wide range of topics.

Our lead article examines the growing liability risks veterinarians are facing as a result of increased malpractice lawsuits by unhappy pet owners. Next, we have a letter from the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association informing us that their Association, at this time, does not endorse the sole use of compression techniques for removing velvet antler.

The Canadian Cervid Alliance was recently formed to represent the interests of Canadian deer and elk producers. Their president, Randy Wehrkamp, tells us what the new organization plans to do. Dr. Clark, from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine, describes the status of BSE testing. Since BSE and CWD are related, this information is of interest to our producers.

Dan Marsh, a regular contributor, warns about the risks of states removing private property rights from your deer and elk. Ian Thorliefson writes that Canadian farmed cervids are now considered to be free of tuberculosis. We have a brief report on the Alberta Whitetail and Mule Deer Association Convention that was held this spring, along with selected results from the AWMDA and NAEBA antler competitions.

Finally, we have our *Industry News* and *Events Calendar* sections plus tips on training, cooking venison and setting goals.

I hope you continue to enjoy our *Digest* newsletter. Thanks to our writers and contributors. I always welcome comments, suggestions and articles.

Russell Sawchuk, Editor

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

In the March-April 2005 edition of the *Deer and Elk Farmers' Digest*, you printed an article on compression analgesia for the harvesting of elk velvet antler. This technique involves the placing of rubber tubing tightly around the antler pedicle with a specialized instrument to cause the antler to go numb before removal. If somebody read this article without any previous knowledge of this technique, they would surely have the impression that this form of analgesia is not only an acceptable, but a preferred method of eliminating pain during the velveting procedure.

The Alberta Veterinary Medical Association does NOT endorse sole use of compression for velvet removal.

At this time, we simply do not know if this technique provides adequate analgesia for human antler removal and as such it is premature to endorse its use. The only procedure approved by the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) for removing velvet antler in Alberta from cervids are a properly applied lidocaine block or general anesthesia.

Over the past several years, researchers have been trying to determine if the compression technique provides adequate analgesia for antler removal. There has been conflicting evidence in the scientific community. One group of researchers claim that the technique provides proper pain relief while another group states that the technique does not.

The AVMA has a keen interest in the welfare of animals and as such wants to make sure that any techniques used during the procedure of velvet antler removal do not cause the animal any undue pain and suffering. Based on the current scientific knowledge, we cannot endorse the use of compression as the sole source of pain relief during this surgical procedure.

We would like your readers to be aware that veterinarians may refuse to sign Alberta Velvet Antler Removal Certificates and Export Forms if this is the only form of analgesia used on producer's farms.

Sincerely,
Todd Shury, Chair
AVMA Wildlife Committee
June 29, 2005



**Veterinarian
Liability: Good News
for Natural Health
Products**
(continued)

humans and their companion animals runs deep, often making pets worth more to their owners than the animal's market value.

A handful of American state legislatures have stepped in to try and limit the liabilities. The first law, passed in 2000 by Tennessee, limited damages for emotional distress through the loss of a pet at \$4,000. Similar bills to cap the damages at \$250,000 failed in Oregon and Michigan.

Canadian courts have yet to follow a similar path. Malpractice awards against vets in Canada have been confined to the market value of the animal, plus the owners' out-of-pocket expenses. The paltry damage awards offer little incentive for pet owners or lawyers to sue. However, it is inevitable that Canadian courts and provincial legislatures will eventually recognize the special status of companion animals.

Aggrieved pet owners are getting more militant. For example, there were 170 complaints filed with the Ontario College of Veterinarians in 2004, up from 92 in 1998.

DRUGS HAVE RISKS

Pfizer pioneered the market for dog pain relief when it introduced Rimadyl in 1997. Nearly 15 million dogs have been given Rimadyl, many for pain associated with degenerative joint disease or osteoarthritis.

The market for dog arthritis pain medications is over \$130 million a year and is growing at about 13% a year. This makes it an attractive market.

Some 3,200 dogs have died or been put down after taking the drugs, Food and Drug Administration records show. Almost 19,000 dogs have had bad reactions to these drugs.

Through November 2004, the FDA received almost 13,000 adverse-event reports about Rimadyl, far more than any other dog pain reliever. Pfizer's database includes almost 20,000 adverse-events reports. The FDA's data include those "pos-

sibly" or "probably" linked to the drug. Adverse events for all drugs are believed to be under reported.

Deramaxx has been used by about 1 million dogs since its 2002 launch according to Novartis. The FDA's data include 2,813 adverse-events reports for Deramaxx, including 630 dogs who died or were put down.

Both Rimadyl and Deramaxx are non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, or NSAIDs, as are ibuprofen and aspirin for humans. Deramaxx is also a COX-2 inhibitor, like Celebrex and Vioxx, the pain relievers for people withdrawn from the market because they caused increased risk of heart attacks and stroke.

NSAIDs cause many of the same problems in dogs that they do in humans: vomiting, diarrhea and ulcers are the most common. Reports of heart problems associated with dog NSAIDs are rare according to the FDA.

Both drug makers now issue information sheets for dog owners describing the drugs' risks and proper use. Pfizer even attaches the sheet to Rimadyl bottles. But it may not get to consumers because veterinarians frequently repackage drugs into smaller vials. The FDA has said pet owners often complain about not getting the sheets.

The deaths and other adverse events are a reminder that all drugs pose risks, including those given to animals. As with human drugs, a drug's risks may not be fully known until the drug is widely sold and used, despite the FDA's stamp of approval.

Several million dogs received Rimadyl before its warning label was updated to mention risk of death in rare cases. Deramaxx, the second most popular pain killer for pets, was marketed for a year before its label was also changed to identify possible risks.

Despite strong warnings and other safeguards, the drug continue to create

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CANADIAN CERVID ALLIANCE

The Canadian Cervid Council (CCC) ceased to actively represent elk, deer and other cervid producers approximately 14 months ago. For those Board members on the Canadian Cervid Council the past year has been a very difficult one. The past months have been spent exploring options and trying to find a way for this valued organization to survive. In the end, the desire and the commitment of a handful of Board members wasn't enough. In May of 2005 the Canadian Cervid Council filed for bankruptcy.

Although the Canadian Cervid Council is gone, the Council was successful in bringing the cervid industry to a new level of national acceptance and recognition. During its tenure the Canadian Cervid Council was instrumental in negotiating the inclusion of cervids in national compensation programs resulting from CWD and BSE problems.

Although not successful in reopening the Korean or US borders to cervids, the Canadian Cervid Council met regularly with Department Ministers to ensure we weren't forgotten and that we would be included in negotiations with our trading partners. The Canadian Cervid Council participated in several trips to Korea to negotiate the reopening of the Korean border to Canadian cervid products.

The Canadian Cervid Council also made strides working with the Federal Government to develop stronger on-farm standards for animal and velvet handling processes under the "On Farm Food and Safety" program. The Canadian Cervid Council also provided a regular newsletter to producers on what was happening in the cervid industry. Brochures and recipe cards, marketing, trade shows, and industry profiles were all developed.

I feel privileged to have been part of this organization and hope that as a pro-

ducer you will consider the accomplishments and thousands of hours of volunteer time that were committed on your behalf.

Driven by the need to have representation at the national level, the provincial associations have regrouped and forged a new association, the Canadian Cervid Alliance (CCA). The Alberta Elk Commission, Alberta White-Tail & Mule Deer Producers Association, Saskatchewan Elk Breeders Association, Saskatchewan White Tail and Mule Deer Producers Association, Manitoba Deer Producers Association, Manitoba Elk Growers Association, Ontario Elk Breeders Association, Ontario White Tail Deer Producers Association, Quebec Red Deer Association, and Quebec Wapiti Breeders Association are all participants in the new association. Where the Canadian Cervid Council (CCC) had expanded its mandate, the Canadian Cervid Alliance (CCA) will be focused on:

1. Cervid health issues
2. Trade issues (international)
3. Movement of cervids within Canada
4. Education and promotion of the cervid industry

1. CWD surveillance programs and regulations need to be reviewed. As producers we need to assess the validity of the current programs and decide if they are doing what they were intended to do. TB and other disease testing and monitoring needs to be reviewed with the move to less controls and recognition of the work completed to date. The OFFS program needs to continue.

A Canadian panel of experts has been formed to look at CWD behind and outside of the fence. We need (and have) strong representation on this task force. We need to reestablish a relationship with the CFIA

The new Canadian Cervid Alliance (CCA) replaces the defunct Canadian Cervid Council.



Canadian Cervid Alliance (continued)

to ensure industry concerns are viewed from the perspective of industry, not government.

2. For velvet producers, Korea and the closure of off-continent borders continues to be a huge issue and contributing factor to the declining status of the industry. Work has already begun on a strategy to move this issue forward. The US border has greater significance for our deer producers; we will continue to battle the forces that work against the opening of this border.

3. Saskatchewan and Alberta have made significant strides to define cross border movement protocol. As an industry we need to bring this issue to a common standard based on health assurance and transparency of process. We cannot expect international borders to open easily if we cannot find ways to deal with this question within our own borders.

4. It is critical that Canadians understand our industry. We need to ensure that our opponents know who we are and that we will continue to grow and build an industry despite their protests. We need to ensure that the consumer understands the value of our product and sees that we are a viable, sustainable and environmentally sound industry.

These four areas represent the immediate (and longer term) priorities for the CCA. We have begun the process of rebuilding. As you read this we have filed for not-for-profit status nationally. I encourage you to contact your provincial association for more information. Remember, if you are not part of the solution you are part of the problem.

*On behalf of the CCA
Randy Wehrkamp, President*



SUGGESTED LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR THE CERVID FARMING INDUSTRY

- A level playing field – same rules and regulations as apply to all other livestock
- Farm-raised cervids need to be defined and treated as livestock.
- Farmed deer and elk producers need to be eligible for all government livestock programs
- Re-opening of national and state/provincial borders to movement of cervids and cervid products.
- Accredited TB-Free herds need TB testing done every 5 years instead of every 2 years.
- CWD should be treated as the non-threatening disease it is and governments should remove all unnecessary regulations.

TRAINING THE HIRED HAND

If you have hired someone to help out on your farm, here are some tips for effective training:

- Tell the hired hand what you want done, and have him/her repeat your instructions back to you.
- Show how to get started or do the entire task as the person watches. If it is a complex task, break it into segments. Be sure he/she can do one segment before moving to the next one.
- Have the person do enough of the task to demonstrate how well your instructions were understood. Make corrections and give praise.
- Make sure the tools needed to complete the tasks are available. Show him/her where everything is kept.



TESTS FOR BSE

A live blood test for BSE has been something of a Holy Grail for BSE researchers around the world. But it is proving very hard to develop. Part of the problem is that BSE is such an unusual disease. In most cases if you want to know if an animal has been exposed to a disease you have three options to confirm exposure:

1. Collect a sample and try to grow the organism in the laboratory. For bacteria and viruses this is pretty easy to do and takes 24 – 48 hours. However, we cannot grow BSE in the laboratory so this method doesn't work.

2. The second option is to use the body's immune system. After being exposed to most diseases the body makes antibodies. Antibodies can be easily detected in a blood sample and the diagnosis can be made. Unfortunately the immune system does not respond to BSE so this technique does not work either.

3. Finally, you can use high tech lab tests to directly identify the infectious agent without wasting time culturing samples in the lab. This is the approach currently used to identify BSE in brain tissue. However, since BSE is not really present in blood this technique does not work for a blood test.

Researchers have been forced to experiment with new and inventive methods to develop effective tests. Current tests have focused on identifying markers in the blood that are found only when an animal has serious brain disease. Such a test should help to detect advanced cases of BSE but will also presumably detect other common brain diseases such as listeria and possibly polio. How useful such a test will be remains to be seen.

WHY DO WE NEED A BLOOD TEST?

A blood test for BSE is useful for two main reasons. First, it would allow mass screening of live cattle with view to eradicating the disease from a country. Secondly, it would allow easy testing of breeding animals for international trade. The focus would not be on testing healthy slaughter animals as we already know that removal of the high risk materials from the carcass is an effective method of ensuring public health.

WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS WITH A BLOOD TEST?

The key thing about any test is going to be its accuracy; we need to know how good the test is at identifying the infected animals but we also need to have confidence in a negative result. That is, if the test says it is negative, we can be sure that animal is truly negative for the disease. This is particularly important with a disease like BSE. We know that most animals are infected before they are 6 months of age. The infection is then present in the body at extremely low levels typically for many years.

The main problem with the blood tests is going to be knowing when in the course of the disease it will test positive. Ideally the test should react in any animal that has been exposed to BSE in feed. However, it is more likely that the tests will react only in those animals in the late stages of the disease that are already showing clinical signs and have developed high levels of infection within their brains.

The key thing about any test is going to be its accuracy.

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LOSS OF PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

There is a trend in the country that is seeking to remove the private property aspect of your deer and elk. In particular, this movement seeks to recognize the release of deer into preserves as causing the loss of the private ownership status. We are seeing this in Michigan, Texas, and other states. You must be proactive with education and marketing the point that these are privately owned animals. You can then seek clarifying language in legislation to that effect.

You cannot go to the DNR and ask them if the deer are privately owned. They will tell you no. You must go to a lawyer that understands private property and is otherwise considered a constitutional law expert. Do not assume all attorneys are expert in this area—you must ask.

Recently in Texas, Texas Senate Bill 1504, as voted out of the Senate, was voted out of a committee chaired by Harvey Hilderbran. The bill states the deer are not privately owned once released from the breeder pen and into the preserve. I understand the Chairman's plan is to amend the Senate Bill on the floor of the Senate that recognizes private ownership of the deer after their release from the breeder pen. Support Texas in anyway you can to make sure this works—if not we are all affected.

Preserve Owners must organize a campaign of education and lobbying to stop this misunderstanding of property. If the private property status is lost, you will be subject to the DNR hunting seasons. You will also be subject to possible incarceration for violation of those laws. Just recently, an Indiana preserve owner was charged with Federal violations for hunting out of season, without a license, without orange, and injecting a chemical (a "reverser") without a vet license. He has been sentenced to one year and a day in Federal prison. Similar investigations are sure to be on-going in your state.

If DNR authority is lacking, there can be no Federal invitation to prosecute you for harvesting YOUR LIVESTOCK. Team up with the cattlemen that free range their cattle and get them to support removal of unreasonable restrictions on private property!

While this is an outrage, the real outrage is the lack of understanding by our own people of how serious this is! It will not go away. It is going to cost you more in the future to address the issue than it will cost you now. You are not immune, and it will happen. Do not listen to anyone that blows this off—they may do it to avoid taking responsibility for protecting their own industry and investment. Nobody else is going to do it—it is up to you!

Every industry has enemies; we are no different. The difference is that other industries organize and work together to educate and lobby. The deer and elk industry is not doing that and will suffer the natural consequences of that defect.

Daniel Marsh is a lawyer with extensive experience in the deer and elk industry. E-mail: danielmarsh@comcast.net

THE NEW TEST FROM CALGARY

The announcement of a new live animal test for BSE from Calgary last month is to be welcomed. However, until we know how effective the test is, it is best to keep an open mind. The test has now been given to the CFIA and regulatory authorities around the world for expert validation. This process will take a number of months and will give us independent evidence of just how effective the test is. Until we have the test validated we do not know how useful it will be.

Dr. Clark, Western College of Veterinary Medicine, Saskatoon, Canada





FARMED CERVIDS REGAIN TB-FREE STATUS

In the early 1990's, the fledgling elk and deer farming business was hit hard by the discovery of bovine tuberculosis in farmed elk in Alberta. The trace back led to farms in the United States who had been trading fast and loose with any elk they could get their hands on. The eradication effort involved the slaughter of several thousand elk at a time when breeding stock was quite difficult to obtain, and spawned a tremendous amount of bad publicity for the new industry. The effort seemed successful, as TB has never been found again in western Canada's farmed cervid population.

However, in the late 1990's TB was diagnosed in farmed elk in Ontario and Quebec, and again, it appeared that animal traders were involved with the spread. A thorough eradication effort was undertaken. Those actions have yielded positive results, in combination with restrictions on movement of stock from inadequately tested sources and from other jurisdictions, extensive testing of cervids slaughtered in Provincial and Federal plants, and whole herd skin testing every three years. Maria Koller-Jones, Senior Staff Veterinarian with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) in Ottawa, states, "As of December 31, 2004, Canada's farmed cervid herd was considered to be TB free, having attained 5 years surveillance without an outbreak. A review of current TB testing requirements is set to begin this spring."

This is good news for elk and deer farmers. The requirement to whole herd test every three years and obtain permits for every move of every animal has been somewhat costly. Some farmers look forward to the day when their livestock will be managed in the same way as all other farmed animals. All other farmed animals, that is, except those in the Riding Mountain Eradication Area (RMEA). Livestock producers inside that zone surrounding

Riding Mountain National Park in southern Manitoba face even greater restrictions and requirements for testing and permitting for movement, and the situation may get worse instead of better.

A Manitoba Government news release recently confirmed that two white tailed deer and one elk have tested positive for TB so far this past winter, with more results expected in the next few months. The most troubling statistic, and one that was almost overlooked in the news releases, was that although he was born and lived in Riding Mountain, the TB positive elk was now resident in the Duck Mountains. Dr. Koller-Jones comments, "This finding demonstrates the need to maintain high levels of surveillance in the Duck Mountains to determine the true TB status of this population.

The boundaries of the RMEA will be reviewed this summer before we commence the 2005 / 2006 testing season and any proposal to change the boundaries will be discussed during our September 2005 consultation meeting with industry stakeholder groups.

Thus far, Manitoba Conservation representatives have confirmed "the feeding and baiting ban currently in place is being extended to the Duck Mountain area as part of ongoing efforts to minimize interaction between wildlife and livestock." How much more the restrictions will be expanded remains to be seen, but discussions are ongoing. With only a single positive from within the Ducks, there will not likely be much pressure to increase restrictions.

If the next round of test results, currently in culture in Ottawa, shows more positives, then further action will almost certainly be taken. Those results are expected in June or July.

Ian Thorleifson is an elk farmer and regular contributor. E-mail: vike@mts.net

Canada's farmed cervid herd is considered to be TB free.



AWMDA CONVENTION REPORT

The 9th Annual Convention of the Alberta Whitetail and Mule Deer Association was held at the Best Western Denham Inn in Leduc, Alberta (Canada). The deer industry in Alberta is on a fast track to success.

The AWMDA's board of directors is comprised of very experienced and knowledgeable individuals along with new producers who have big goals and ideas. The main strength of the Board as a whole is that the deer industry is a major part of their business, making them extremely dedicated to the Association. The Board is as follows:

Jason Smith	President
Lisa Mueller	Executive Director
Perry Deering	Secretary/Treasurer
Gary West	Director
Tharen Soroka	Director
Murray Heisler	Director
Pat Calverley	Director

The Whitetail and Mule Deer industry is an agricultural business that is far more than a hobby. This has been proven by the political understanding and position that has been achieved in the past year. If ever it can be said that the deer industry is here to stay, it was supported by the information and attitude portrayed at this year's convention.

The Association would like to extend a special thanks to Rob Pulyk for his overview on starting a game farm, CWD surveillance status and the new LIDA regulations; Dr. Terry Church on meat and by-products; Dr. Murray Woodbury on herd health, pasture management and necrobacillosis; our Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Barry Mehr, representing the provincial support of our industry; and a special thanks to all of our sponsors too numerous to mention whose support is what makes this convention a success.

This year's convention had some new winners and repeat winners in the antler competition. Winning the Premiere Whitetail Breeder of the year was Jason, Stephanie, Dale and Val Smith. Tharen and Denise Soroka took home the honor of the Premier Mule Deer Breeder of the year.

In closing, the Alberta Whitetail and Mule Deer Industry is more stable than ever before and if the next 12 months are as positive as the past year our industry is heading in the right direction.

Perry Deering
Secretary Treasurer
AWMDA

AWMDA ANTLER COMPETITION WINNERS

Whitetail Yearling

Prairie Haven Whitetails with 7N at 120 3/8

Typical Whitetail 2-Year Old

Rocky Mountain Whitetail Deer Ranch with Matrix at 167 2/8

Typical Whitetail 3-Year Old

Rain Creek Whitetails with ABRR78 at 188 4/8

Typical Whitetail 4-Year Old

Wind Dancer Farms with K-2 at 205 7/8

Non-Typical Whitetail 2-Year Old

Shayne Deer Ranch with ADSh20M at 167

Non-Typical 3-Year Old

Rainy Creek Whitetails with ABRR99 at 177

Non-Typical 4-Year Old

Rainy Creek Whitetails with Cannon at 217 1/8

Non-Typical Mature

Wildtail Ranches with AJOR969J at 211 3/8

Mule Deer (all categories)

Alberta Trophy Mules





NAEBA ANTLER COMPETITION 2005

VELVET ANTLER - MATURE

1. Ralph Holcomb	Chico	41.51 lbs	131.12 CWI
2. Ralph Holcomb	Warhead	38.21 lbs	125.72 CWI
3. Miami Valley Elk	Buckeye Pride	38.00 lbs	125.50 CWI

VELVET ANTLER - SIX YEAR OLDS

1. Miami Valley Elk	Heavy Weapon	35.30 lbs	116.35 CWI
2. Ross & Kerman Copeland	Yellow Springs Jackpot	29.57 lbs	107.29 CWI
3. Rau's Bugling Prairie	Sutley 28J	26.47 lbs	105.49 CWI

VELVET ANTLER - FOUR YEAR OLDS

1. Groen Elk Farm	Bounty Hunter	29.10 lbs	104.55 CWI
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VELVET ANTLER - THREE YEAR OLDS

1. Groen Elk Farm	GEF 254	31.13 lbs	118.54 CWI
2. Miami Valley Elk	Royal Platinum	27.13 lbs	104.81 CWI
3. Groen Elk Farm	GEF 237	25.74 lbs	102.91 CWI

VELVET ANTLER - TWO YEAR OLDS

1. Groen Elk Farm	GEF327	14.49 lbs	81.11 CWI
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HARD ANTLER - MATURE TYPICAL

1. Indianhead Elk Inc.	Thunder Bold	447 3/8
2. Spring Coulee Elk Farm	High Rise	446 4/8

HARD ANTLER - MATURE NON-TYPICAL

1. Keeton Elk Farm	SHR Impressive	519 0/8
2. Patterson Ranch	Wide Angle	499 4/8
3. Early Morning Elk	Excalibur	489 5/8

HARD ANTLER - SIX YEAR OLD NON-TYPICAL

1. Coleman Farms	G169H	500 5/8
2. Amber Elk Ranch	B153	490 5/8
3. Early Morning Elk	Matador	480 2/8



Industry News



TEXAS CLOSES BORDER

At the Texas Parks and Wildlife commission meeting this past week, the commissioners accepted the recommendation of the White-Tail Deer Advisory Committee and passed a regulation that will prohibit the purchase of out-of-state white-tailed deer and mule deer (effectively closing the border to those species).

The anticipated effective date of that regulation was June 24, 2005. They have been asked for a clarification of whether that effective date will be the last date for movement or whether it will be the last date for issuance of a permit. At present, TPWD allows 30 days for the movement of animals from the date of issuance of a purchase permit.

The border is still open to elk and non-susceptible species. Texas Parks and Wildlife write the requirements for white-tailed deer and Texas Animal Health Commission control elk. It is not likely that the border will be closed to elk. However, there are new regulations being formulated for the movement of elk within the state.

TAHC believes that the regulations that are in place are adequate to protect the deer in the state from the legal movement of deer into Texas.

ALBERTA DEER CWD FREE

Almost 500 deer shot along the Saskatchewan border in mid-March by Alberta conservation officers have tested negative for chronic wasting disease.

The cull of 437 white-tailed deer and 48 mule deer in a small area around Chauvin, Alberta, was carried out by Alberta Sustainable Resource Development. The department wanted to see if chronic wasting disease was in the wild deer population in that region.

Earlier a wild deer on the Saskatchewan side of the border tested positive for the brain wasting disease. There was a concern that the disease could be transmitted within the winter herds in the area.

Government officials held a public meeting in Chauvin to talk to landowners about a plan for managing CWD in the area over the next five to 10 years.

GO TO STUDY CWD MULE DEER

Boulder Colorado's Open Space and Mountain Parks Department wants to study CWD in a radically new way, by tracking infected deer instead of killing them.

The first phase of the project, scheduled to begin this August, will involve capturing approximately 100 to 120 mule deer. These deer will be anesthetized and the project team will perform tonsil biopsy to test for CWD status, take blood for genetic genotyping, mark the deer with ear tags, and fit them with a radio collar. The deer will then be released and monitored for the next two to four years.

Among other things, the study will compare survival rates of CWD-infected and CWD-free deer; compare causes of death for the two groups; evaluate tonsil biopsy as a tool for CWD surveillance; and provide a field setting for evaluating live-animal tests for CWD in mule deer.





EVENTS CALENDAR

Here is a list of upcoming events of interest to deer, elk, and reindeer farmers. We have expanded these listings to include events that offer marketing opportunities for the industry.

Texas Deer Association will hold their 7th Annual Convention on **August 25-27, 2005** at the Westin La Cantera in San Antonio Texas. See <http://www.texasdeerassociation.com>

Whitetail Deer Farmers of Ohio will have their fall meeting and picnic on **August 27, 2005**. For information and location, contact Steve Laughlin at sklisret@earthlink.net.

Florida Veterinary Medical Association will hold their annual conference on **September 8 to 11, 2005** at the Wyndham Palace Resort in Orlando, FL. For more information, visit <http://www.fvma.com>

American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association 20th Annual Conference will be held on **September 17-20, 2005** at the Ogden Eccles Conference Center, Ogden, Utah. Phone 410-569-0795 or visit <http://www.ahvama.org>

Natural Products Expo East will be held in Washington D.C. on September 15-18, 2005. The Expo will include more than 1,700 exhibits representing over 1,100 companies, with business strategy seminars, cooking demos, food tastings, awards programs and numerous events, covering both natural and organic products. For more information, please visit <http://www.expoeast.com>

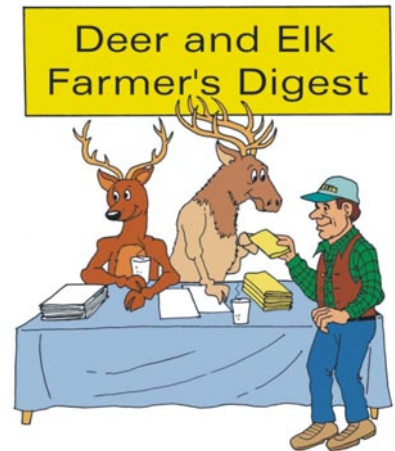
CanWest Veterinary Conference will be held at the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel, Banff, Alberta, Canada on **October 15-18, 2005**. Visit <http://www.avma.ab.ca> or <http://www.bcvma.org>

Illinois State Veterinary Medical Association 123 Annual Convention will be held **November 4-6, 2005** at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield, Illinois. For more information, contact Ann at 800-942-4246 or e-mail ann@ISVMA.org

Minnesota Elk Breeders Association 2006 Annual Conference will take place at the Holiday Inn & Conference Center in Willmar on **January 14, 2006**. An "Open Forum" is tentatively scheduled for the evening of January 13. For more information, see <http://www.mneba.org>

Iowa Elk Breeder's Association Annual Conference will be held on Saturday, **January 16, 2006** at Jester Park Lodge, Granger, Iowa. For more information, contact Peni Tussey at tusseyelk@yahoo.com.

Michigan Veterinary Medical Association will hold its conference on **January 27-29, 2006** at the Lansing Center in Lansing, MI. For more information, call 517-347-4710 or e-mail mvc@michvma.org





Events Calendar (continued)

The **Wisconsin Commercial Deer & Elk Farmers Association** will hold their 14th Annual Convention on **February 24-25, 2006**, at the Hotel Meda in WI Rapids, Wisconsin. For more information, contact WCDEFA at <http://www.wcdefa.org> or 608-583-7219.

Global Pet Expo, one of the world's largest pet products trade shows, will be held at the San Diego Convention Center, San Diego, California on **March 23 to 25, 2006**. For more information see <http://www.globalpetexpo.org>

Natural Products Expo West will be held in Anaheim, California on **March 23 to 26, 2006**. Last year, more than 2,500 exhibitors and 36,000 attendees from 86 countries took part in the show. More than 13,000 retailers and buyers participated. For more information, go to <http://www.expowest.com>

SupplyExpo will be held in Anaheim, CA on **March 24-26, 2006**. SupplyExpo is the leading suppliers' tradeshow for quality, new ingredients in the functional food and beverage, supplement and nutraceutical, and personal care and cosmeceutical markets. For more information, contact <http://www.expowest.com>

IV World Deer Congress will be held on **April 20-22, 2006** in Melbourne, Australia. For more information, e-mail shapiro@tca-online.com.au or fax: 61 3 5596 2313

American Veterinary Medical Association is holding its 143rd annual convention on **July 15 to 19, 2006** in Honolulu, Hawaii. For more, visit <http://avmaconvention.org>

Reindeer Breeders and Owners Association (ROBA) will hold their 2006 Annual Membership meeting at the Moon Deer Ranch in Parker Colorado in July of 2006. For more information, visit <http://www.reindeer.ws>

American Veterinary Medical Association is holding its 144th annual convention on **July 14 to 28, 2007** in Washington, D.C. For more, visit <http://avmaconvention.org>

COOKING VENISON

Meat can either be thawed in the refrigerator or cooked in a frozen state.

Consider using marinades to enhance the flavor of your meat and to ensure tenderness.

Fats such as butter, bacon, bacon fat, salt pork, beef suet or sour cream can be added while cooking to add moisture.

Try wrapping a roast in loose, oiled foil.

When frying, cook over high heat and keep the meat well basted.

Venison should not be cooked past the medium rare stage. Steaks can be cooked exactly as you would a beef steak. If you

do not like your steaks pink, cook them just past the medium rare stage and let them rest out of the oven until desired pinkness.

Barbequing venison also works well due to the leanness of the meat. For moist venison burgers, try using an egg to bind the meat together.

When barbequing venison, be sure to cook over the hot coals in order to keep the moisture in and cook the meat quickly.

Be careful not to overcook venison!

From Ventures in Venison



controversy. Some dog owners say the drugs are being over-prescribed by vets who don't always give risk information to owners, and who, like doctors of humans, are often educated on drug by pharmaceutical companies.

Veterinarian Liability: Good News for Natural Health Products
(continued)

NATURAL ALTERNATIVES

We know that natural products such as a elk velvet antler are effective in treating the symptoms of osteoarthritis. Natural products are safer and have less risk of negative side effects. Usually the worst thing that happens is that they do not work.

Veterinarians need to be made aware of these alternative therapies. Switching to natural products will decrease the risks to their "patients" and may also keep their malpractice insurance rates down.

By Russell Sawchuk. Information sources include CanWest News Service (June 22, 2005) and USA Today (April 11, 2005).

8 TIPS FOR SETTING GOALS

Goal setting is a useful tool to get things done! It is helpful both for your own farming business and for your deer and elk associations. Writing down your goals serves as a blueprint and "to-do" list as to what needs to be done. Here are some tips for setting goals.

1. Define your goals as clearly, concisely and specifically as possible. A goal should be clear enough that you know exactly when you have achieved it.
2. Get input from other people. This is especially true if you are setting goals for your association. Get ideas from your members and other key people.
3. Decide what you need to achieve your goals. This could include information, money, people to help do the work and so on. Then go ahead and get the resources you need.
4. Find out what obstacles you may face. Identify as many as you can in advance, and then plan strategies for overcoming them. Each project has built-in problems. It is up to you to anticipate and overcome them.
5. Set a deadline and work backward to your starting point. This will give you a time frame to solve the problems you must overcome to reach your goal. If you encounter unexpected
- obstacles, change your plans.
6. Make sure that you set achievable goals. Stick to reality and base your goals on it. Goals that are out of reach lead only to frustration.
7. Set up regular review and monitoring times. At every board meeting, require a report on the progress towards achieving your goals. If circumstances have changed, modify the goals and/or resources required to achieve them.
8. Celebrate your success. When you have achieved your goal, congratulate yourself and your team. Have a party!



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