

CWD Testing Exception for HD Events

Overview

A requirement of the federal CWD interim final rule is that every qualifying cervid twelve months of age and older that originates from a herd participating in the CWD Herd Certification Program be sampled and tested for CWD at the time of death. In addition, herd owners enrolled in the program are required to report these deaths to the office of the State Animal Health Official (SAHO).

An exception to this requirement can be made by the SAHO in the case of a mass casualty / mortality event such as Hemorrhagic Disease (HD) caused by (Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease Virus (EHDV) or bluetongue virus (BTV). In these events, CWD sample collection can be limited to two (2) animals per event. When only two animals are to be sampled, the sample collector will sample the highest risk animals available for testing. This includes older animals, males preferentially over females, and those animals having any known pre-existing health conditions. In addition to the above, since one cannot predict which animals may die during a HD event, all males 4 years of age and older that die during the event must have samples submitted for testing. All animals 12 month or older that die and are in poor body condition must be sampled regardless of the ongoing HD event. All deaths must continue to be reported even if an HD event is ongoing.

Definitions

HD Event: *A HD event is considered to be ongoing when there is acute, mass morbidity / mortality occurring in a herd during the time of year when biting midges are active and a diagnosis of HD has been made in the herd by the herd veterinarian. The event will be considered to be over 10 days after the first killing frost has occurred since the diagnosis was made.*

Diagnosis: *A veterinary diagnosis of HD will be considered to be valid if it meets one of the following criteria:*

- 1. The veterinarian has submitted blood samples from one or more animals in the herd and the testing laboratory has confirmed HD infection.*
- 2. The veterinarian or herd owner has submitted one or more animals to a veterinary diagnostic laboratory and the laboratory has made the HD diagnosis.*
- 3. The veterinarian has submitted tissues from a field necropsy to a veterinary diagnostic laboratory and the laboratory has made the HD diagnosis.*

4. *The veterinarian has substantial knowledge of HD, has conducted a herd visit, and has made a clinical diagnosis of HD based on knowledge of the disease and presenting clinical signs.*
5. *The veterinarian has substantial knowledge of HD being present in the practice area and that other herds in the area have been diagnosed with the disease and the clinical signs in the affected herd are consistent with HD.*

Procedures to Qualify for Testing Exception

In order for a producer to qualify for the testing exception, the following procedures must be followed:

1. The herd owner must contact the office of the SAHO and report a mass morbidity / mortality occurrence.
2. All deaths and animal identification must be reported to the office of the SAHO.
3. The herd veterinarian must submit in writing verification of the diagnosis of HD and an HD event and the method whereby the diagnosis was made.
4. Any qualifying animal that dies during the HD event and that the death cannot be attributed to HD must be sampled and the sample submitted for testing.

The SAHO may rescind the testing exception if the herd owner and herd veterinarian do not comply with the provisions of the exception or if it is determined that HD is not the cause of the mass morbidity / mortality event.