Program Guidelines for the Voluntary Nebraska Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Herd Certification Program (HCP)

Part 1 – Definitions

Affected Herd: Any herd in which an animal has been determined to be CWD positive.

Animal: Any domesticated mule deer, white-tailed deer, sika deer, or elk.

Commingling: Animals grouped together having physical contact, e.g., sharing common pastures. Commingling does not include limited contacts, such as contact at auction/sales or during transportation, as long as animals are in separate compartments.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD): A non-febrile, transmissible, insidious, degenerative disease affecting the central nervous system of deer and elk. CWD, a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy may cause, but is not limited to, the following signs in affected animals:

- Weight loss, poor condition
- Salivating, drooling
- Behavioral abnormalities
- Abnormalities, such as incoordination
- Swaying of back end, weakness
- Recumbency

It is important to note that not all CWD-affected animals show all clinical signs.

CWD-Positive Animal: An animal which has had a diagnosis of CWD confirmed by the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Ames, Iowa.

CWD Suspect: An animal which displays clinical signs suggestive of CWD, or for which laboratory analysis is not conclusive.

Department: The Nebraska Department of Agriculture.

Enrolled Herd: A herd participating in the Program which has met the requirements listed in Part 2 of these Guidelines.

Enrollment Date: The date on which the Department approved the application, or the date the Department can verify that the requirements listed in Part 2 of these guidelines have been met.

Herd Status: Classification of a herd with regard to CWD in the Nebraska CWD HCP.

Herd: Any group of animals maintained on common ground for any purpose, or two or more groups of animals under common ownership or supervision, geographically separated, but which have an interchange of animals without regard to whether the animals are infected or exposed.

Owner: An individual, partnership, company, corporation, or other legal entity, which has legal or rightful title to an animal or animals, regardless of any liens held on the animal(s).

Premises: The ground, area, buildings, and equipment occupied by one or more herds of animals.

Program: The Nebraska CWD HCP.

Trace-back Herd: A herd in which a CWD-positive animal formerly resided, or a herd being investigated from which animals were purchased and added to the CWD-infected herd in which the CWD-positive animal was a natural addition.

Trace-Forward Herd: A herd that has received exposed animals from a CWD-positive herd within 60 months before the diagnosis of CWD in the positive herd or from the identified point of entry of CWD into the positive herd.

Part 2 – Requirements for entry into the Program

A. Applicant must have a Domesticated Cervine Animal Facility Permit and a herd identification number and be in compliance with Domesticated Cervine Animal Act and Domesticated Cervine Animal Regulations.

B. There must be no indication of CWD in the herd in the past 12 months, as attested to by the owner and his veterinarian or Veterinary Field Officer.

C. Program application form must be completed, signed, and submitted to the Department.

Part 3 – Program Protocol

A. General Provisions

The herd owner or manager who participates in the Program shall agree to do the following:

1. Identify all animals 12 months of age or over within the herd, as provided for in Title 23, Chapter 16, Nebraska Administrative Code, Domesticated Cervine Animal Regulations, Section 006. The Permanent Individual Identification must be a USDA-approved eartag and the visible Individual Identification complies with Title 23, Chapter 16, Section 006, as well as provide a unique identification for the individual animal within the herd. The identification requirements apply to all cervine species included in the national CWD HCP.

2. Report all death loss of animals over 12 months of age that die from any cause to Animal and Plant Health Protection (APHP) within twenty-four (24) hours of the discovery of the death of the animal and ensure that proper tissue samples are collected and submitted for diagnostic purposes.

3. Maintain a current herd inventory report which shall include the following records on animals present in the herd:

   a. All official and visible identification numbers.

   b. Sex, breed, and age.

   c. Disposition of animals – date and reason for removal from the herd, including the destination of the animal, if it was sold.

   d. Primary and secondary identification numbers and sex and birth dates of progeny.

   e. Date of birth, date of entry, and source for acquired animals.

   f. Copies of laboratory reports of CWD submissions.

These records will be kept on each animal for five (5) years after removal from the herd for any reason.

4. Prevent ingress and egress of cervidae by maintaining fencing, as provided in Title 23, Chapter 16, Nebraska Administrative Code, Domesticated Cervine Animal Regulations, Section 5. Report to the Department any domestic cervidae that escape from the herd enclosure or any wild cervidae found in the enclosure, as provided for in Title 23, Chapter 16, Domesticated Cervine Animal Regulations, Section 010.

   a. Make all animals and records available, as provided for in Title 23, Chapter 16, Nebraska Administrative Code, Domesticated Cervine Animal Regulations, Section 13.

B. Inspections

Inspections of CWD-Monitored Herds and their inventory records will be done once a year to reconcile inventories and verify that the Domesticated Cervine Animal (DCA) facility is meeting the DCA and Nebraska CWD HCP requirements.

A physical "hands on" inventory will be performed every three (3) years to verify that the animals listed on the inventory are present or have been accounted for with CWD tests.

C. Program Status

A herd will gain program status based on the herd's enrollment date and the continuous number of years in the program. Once a herd is approved to participate in the program, the herd will be considered an enrolled herd with the date of approval being the enrollment date. The status will be dependent on the herd being in compliance with the Program Protocol and being approved annually for advancement in the program.

1. DCA herds that are enrolled in the APHP CWD-monitored program, as of April 1, 2013, shall roll over to the new Nebraska CWD HCP at the status level that was attained in the previous program.

2. Enrolled herd refers to any herd that has been approved to participate in the Program. Program Classification will be as follows:

   a. Year 0 – herd is enrolled in the program, but has not completed one year of herd surveillance.

   b. Year 1 – one year of surveillance and successful completion of program requirements.

   c. Year 2 – two years of surveillance and successful completion of program requirements.

   d. Years 3, 4, 5, etc. – for each successive year of surveillance.

3. If an animal dies and is not tested for CWD at an approved laboratory, the status will be suspended until two additional animals are sampled following the missed animal. If no animals are sampled after a missed test, the status will be reinstated following two (2) years of no death loss in the herd.

D. Management of CWD Affected, Exposed, or Suspect Herds

1. Suspect and exposed animals will be promptly investigated and quarantined until results are returned to determine the disposition of the herd.

2. Affected Herd - If an enrolled herd has a confirmed diagnosis of CWD, the Department will immediately issue a quarantine, and the herd will be removed from the Nebraska CWD HCP.

3. The Department will conduct an epidemiologic investigation of CWD positive, CWD-exposed, and CWD-suspect herds that includes the designation of suspect and exposed animals and that identifies animals to be traced.

4. The Department will conduct trace backs of CWD-positive animals (including positive animals detected at slaughter) and trace-outs of

CWD-exposed animals and promptly report any out-of-state traces to the appropriate state.

5. Trace-back or Trace-forward Herd – If an epidemiologic investigation reveals an enrolled herd to be a Trace-back or Trace-forward herd, the Department will issue a hold order, quarantine, or suspend the Nebraska CWD HCP status, and will develop a herd plan based on the epidemiological investigation. Movement restrictions for these herds may only be removed after completion of the herd plan agreement.

6. The tissues from all CWD-exposed or CWD-suspect animals that die or are depopulated or otherwise killed will have obex and medial retropharyngeal lymph nodes collected and tested for CWD. Carcasses or tissues from these animals shall be disposed of in an approved manner, as described in the USDA Veterinary Services (VS) Chronic Wasting Disease Program Standards, July 2012.

E. Acquisitions and Commingling

1. Enrolled herds may acquire animals from another enrolled herd with the same or higher management level and the status will remain the same as before the acquisition. If the animals are of a lower status, the herd will take on the lower status of the animals that were acquired.

2. When establishing a new herd entirely from an enrolled herd, the herd of origin's status level will transfer to the new herd, if the new herd owner notifies the Department and submits an application for participation in the program within 90 days of the animals' arrival on the farm and before any herd additions.

F. Use of Semen and Embryos

Enrolled herds may not use germplasm from any donor herd found to be CWD positive.

G. Animals Imported From Foreign Countries

Imported animals from foreign countries may enter the program at the appropriate level; if they have an equivalent certification program, or are recognized free of CWD by Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) standards. If animals, at any time, commingle with animals of a lower program status before entering the recipient herd, the herd will assume the lowest status of the commingled herds.

Part 4 – Herd Information

APHP will maintain Quarantines, Herd Plans, Infected Herds, and Herd Certification in the federal Surveillance Collaboration Services (SCS) database. The individual animal data will be maintained in spreadsheets at the APHP office.

Part 5 – Laboratory Submission of Samples

It shall be the responsibility of the owner to immediately arrange for submission of the required CWD samples of all animals twelve (12) months of age or older, which die from any cause. The submission will include obex and medial retropharyngeal lymph nodes and be sent to an APHIS-approved laboratory. The collection of samples needs to be done by a State or Federal official, or an APHP certified-CWD sampler. All expenses shall be paid by the owner. The owner may contact the Department for information on certified CWD samplers at (402) 471-2351.

An APHP certified-CWD sampler will receive training from the APHP on the correct procedure to collect obex and medial retropharyngeal lymph nodes. Once approved as a certified-CWD sampler, the individual will be added to the CWD sampler list. If the certified-CWD sampler fails to collect proper samples, the APHP will remove them from the certified-CWD sampler list, and the owner will be required to utilize another certified CWD sampler to collect their samples. Once the certification is lost, it can be regained by retraining and demonstrating proper technique to APHP personnel. If the certified-CWD sampler continues to collect improper samples, APHP can permanently remove the CWD sampler from the list.

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Listing of Approved State CWD Herd Certification Programs (HCPs) – February 9, 2015

A current list of Approved and Provisional Approved State CWD HCPs is provided below with an explanation of the terms 'Approved State' and 'Provisional Approved State' for clarification of these statuses. Status updates will be posted as additional Approved State CWD HCPs are determined.

Approved State – A state that the Administrator has determined has an Approved State CWD Herd Certification Program (HCP) that meets the minimum requirements of the national CWD HCP.

Provisional Approved State – A state that the Administrator has determined has a State CWD HCP that does not meet all the national CWD HCP minimum requirements upon application to the program. APHIS and the State will work to develop a plan with appropriate time frame to meet all program requirements.

Approved State

Alaska
Colorado
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Michigan
Minnesota
Missouri
Montana
Nebraska
New Mexico
New York
North Carolina
North Dakota
Ohio
Oklahoma
Pennsylvania
South Dakota
Tennessee
Texas
Utah
Vermont
West Virginia
Wisconsin

Provisional Approved

Maine