



FIELD TO TABLE GUIDE FOR HUNTERS

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Chronic Wasting Disease

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a contagious neurological disease that has been found in cervids which include deer, elk and moose.

Field to Table Guide



Signs & Symptoms

Generally, an animal will show no outward signs of CWD until the disease is in its final stages, which can take around 18 months to two years due to CWD's long incubation period. If an animal survives to the final stages of CWD the most clear and consistent signs are:

- Extreme weight loss or emaciation
- Lack of coordination
- Drooping head and/or ears
- Excessive drooling
- Excessive drinking
- Excessive urination

What counties has CWD been found?

- Clinton
- Dickenson (UP)
- Ionia
- Ingham
- Jackson
- Kent
- Gratiot
- Eaton
- Montcalm



How is CWD Transmitted

- Direct contact between deer
- Indirect contact through prions being shed into the environment through saliva, feces, urine, blood, carcass parts of an infected animal, and contaminated soils and plants.
- Prions on the landscape can stay infectious for years.

Is there a risk to humans?

CWD is not known to affect humans, although the Centers for Disease Control and World Health Organization both recommend not eating infected cervid meat.



How is CWD detected?

- The only conclusive diagnosis can occur by an examination of the brain, tonsils or lymph nodes after death.
- To have your deer tested in Michigan, you may take your deer head to a DNR Check Station, partnering meat processors and taxidermists, or a DNR drop box. To learn more about this process visit the DNR website, [CWD Testing](#).

2020 Movement Restrictions



Field to Table Guide

Movement Restrictions Apply to Animals Harvested in the Following Areas:

- All of Montcalm County
- Otisco, Orleans, Ronald and North Plains Township in Ionia County and Nelson, Spencer, Courtland, Oakfield, Grattan, and Cannon Townships in Kent County, unless:

It's deboned meat, quarters or other parts of a cervid that do not have any part of the spinal column or head attached, antlers, antlers attached to a skull cap cleaned of all brain and muscle tissue, hides, upper canine teeth, or a finished taxidermist mount may be moved out of the area.

Movement Restrictions Apply to Animals Harvested in the Following Areas:

Waste created from carcasses from CWD Management Zone affected areas should be bagged and placed in dumpsters or receptacles to be sent directly to a regulated landfill.

Do not render, burn, compost, or place in the environment parts from deer that potentially have CWD as this could contaminate the environment or soil and spread the disease.





How to Properly

FIELD DRESS A DEER

Field to Table Guide



2020 Tips for hunting in the CWD Zone during the Michigan Deer Hunting Season.

- Proceed with caution when handling and moving a carcass in the CWD Zone (***Barry, Calhoun, Clinton, Eaton, Gratiot, Hillsdale, Ingham, Ionia, Isabella, Jackson, Kent, Lenawee, Mecosta, Midland, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Ottawa, and Shiawassee Counties***)
- Avoid long distance movements with your deer carcass
- Handle and dispose of your deer in a responsible manner in the field

What You Will Need:

- Latex Gloves
- Sharp Knife with a blade no wider than 1 inch and at least 4 inches long
- Plastic sheet/tarp/cardboard (avoid using anything white because of the potential danger of showing anything white in the woods during deer hunting).
- season.one length of rope 10 to 15 feet long
- Double-lined trash bag
- Gut hook: sometimes present on hunting knife
- Tag and properly identify your deer
- Any other field-dressing gear would be helpful but not necessary
- Remove all watches and jewelry



- To reduce your risk of exposure to disease, such as Chronic Wasting Disease, wear disposable plastic gloves while handling animals. Wash hands and arms thoroughly with soap and water before and after dressing. Using clean water, pre-moistened wipes, or alcohol wipes, clean your knife frequently between cuts to prevent bacterial contamination.
- Field dress deer as soon as possible to ensure rapid loss of body heat, prevent surface bacteria from growing, and maintain overall quality of the meat.
- Field dressing means removing the animal's internal organs, also known as the entrails, which is necessary to preserve its meat.

Here's a step-by-step guide to field dressing a deer:

Step One:

Lay the deer on its side. Attach one end of the rope to one hind leg and the other end of the rope to a nearby bush or tree so that the rope holds the leg in the air and exposes the belly of the deer for easy access. If you wish, tie the front leg up as well.



Step two:

If the deer is a buck, grasp the male reproductive organs and cut the skin between the reproductive organs and the belly. (Fig. 2) Do not cut the belly muscles yet. Once the initial cut is made, cut the skin from the inside and pull the reproductive organs away from the body of the deer. The urinary and reproductive tubes run deep between the legs and should be carefully removed by cutting the tissue covering them and pulling them free of the body. Continue this procedure all the way around to the anal vent. Remove the scrotum and all hide from the penis. Use a short piece of cord to tie off the bowel and the urine tube. If the deer is a female, begin with the next step.



Step three:

Insert the knife blade between the anal vent and the hip bone. Cut around the anus and the reproductive tubes, keeping the point and edge of the knife against the bone of the hip opening. Be careful not to puncture the bowel or urinary tubes, but insert the knife as deeply as possible to sever all the connective tissue between the bone of the hip opening and the bowel and urinary and reproductive tubes. Tie off the bowel and urine tube with a short piece of cord.



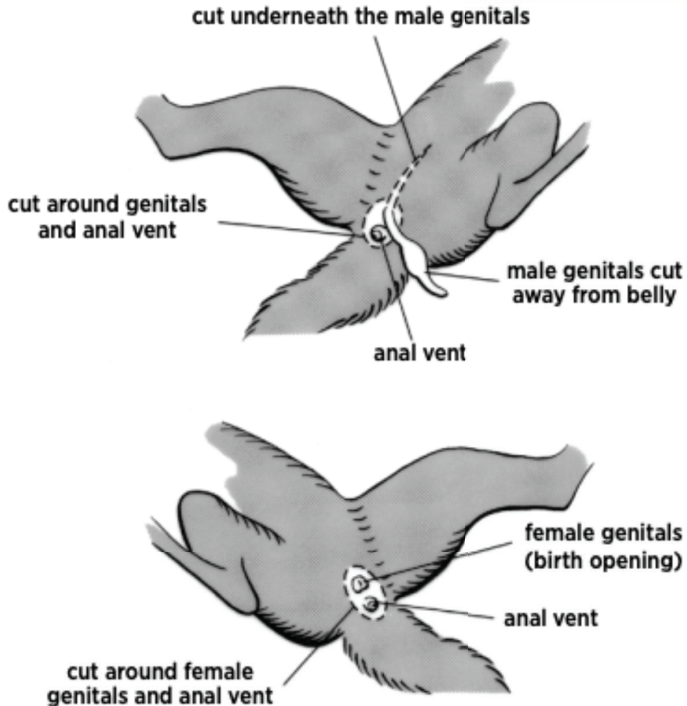


Figure 2. Diagram of where to cut around male and female reproductive organs during field dressing.

Step four:

Use your knife to make a very small cut in the hide of the belly and pull the hide apart to expose the muscles of the belly wall (Fig. 3). Slowly and carefully slice through the muscle, being careful not to cut the intestines, which lie just inside the thin muscle wall. After you have made the initial cut, one way to avoid puncturing the bowels is to hold the blade between your index and middle so the point is not exposed (Fig. 3). Insert the knife into the initial cut, sharp edge to the outside, and then cut the belly wall open from the inside toward the chest cavity and back toward the joint of the hind legs. Once the belly muscle is completely cut open from the joint of the hind legs to the rib cage, insert the knife into the chest cavity and open the chest cavity by cutting the gristle between the ribs and the breast bone. If you do not wish to have the head of the deer mounted, cut the chest cavity open all the way up to the throat and then cut the hide and the muscles of the throat, exposing the windpipe and the food pipe all the way up to the deer's chin. If you plan to have the head of the deer mounted, stop cutting open the chest cavity at the point where the front legs join the chest.



Figure 3. Diagram of where and how to cut belly to expose belly muscles, avoid gut rupture, and remove internal guts out of carcass during field dressing.

Step five:

Now that the body cavity of the deer is open, reach into the cavity and grasp the bowel, reproductive tubes and bladder where they enter the opening of the hip and pull gently. The bowel, bladder and reproductive tubes will slide easily through the hip opening and out through the opening in the belly if you cut them free from the hip when you cut around the anus and reproductive tubes. If they do not pull easily through the hip opening, then you will have to go back (step 3) to the anal vent and cut whatever connective tissue is holding the bowel and reproductive tubes to the hip. Once this is done, then you can again reach into the body cavity, grasp the bowel, bladder and reproductive tubes, and pull them out through the opening in the belly. Continue to pull all of the reproductive tubes, intestines and the bottom of the stomach out of the opening in the belly and roll them onto the ground (Fig. 3). As you roll the innards onto the ground, it may be necessary to cut some tissue holding them against the inside of the back. As these innards roll out on the ground, you will see a large, thin muscle separating these innards and the chest cavity containing the heart and lungs (Figs. 4 and 5).

Step five continued:

This muscle is called the diaphragm. Cut it where it joins the ribs and backbone, being careful not to puncture the top of the stomach where it joins the diaphragm. Once this is accomplished, all the deer innards can be rolled out onto the ground. As the stomach rolls completely free of the deer, you may wish to cut the large purple-pink organ, the liver, free from the stomach and place it in a plastic bag for later processing. As you pull the heart and lungs free of the chest cavity, you may wish to cut the heart free and place it also in a plastic bag for further processing. If you plan to have the deer mounted, insert your knife as far up into the chest cavity as you can reach and cut as much of the heart, lung and blood vessel tissue free as you possibly can. If you do not plan to have the deer mounted, continue to pull the food and air tubes free from the throat all the way to the chin and cut them off at the chin. If you have done a good job so far, then all of the organs of the deer will have been completely and cleanly removed from the body cavity. At this point, you may wish to take a few of the brown paper towels and wipe the blood from your hands. If you have blood up to your elbows or beyond, you probably didn't do the job properly.

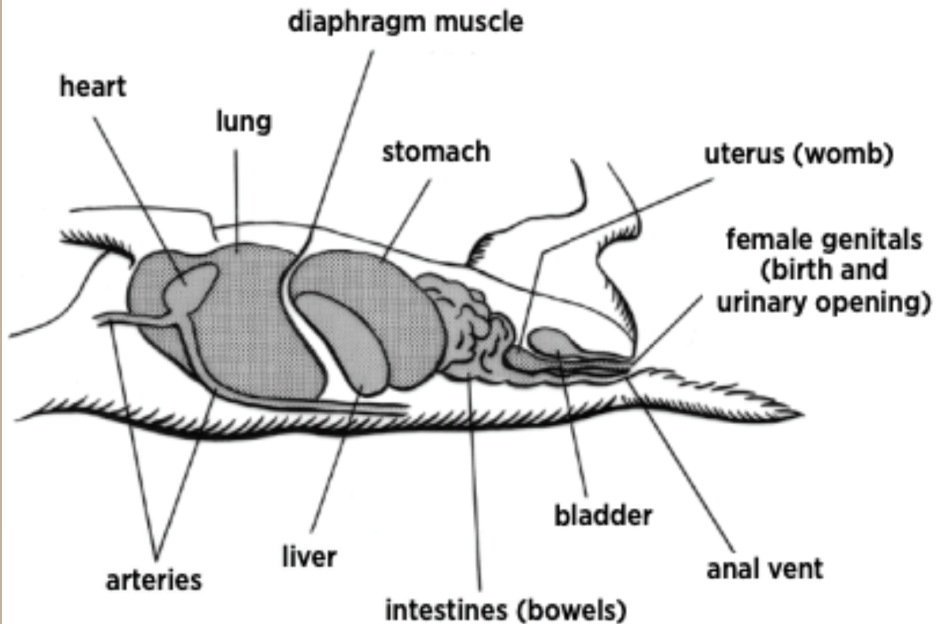


Figure 4. Diagram of internal organs and diaphragm muscle separating heart and lungs of female deer.

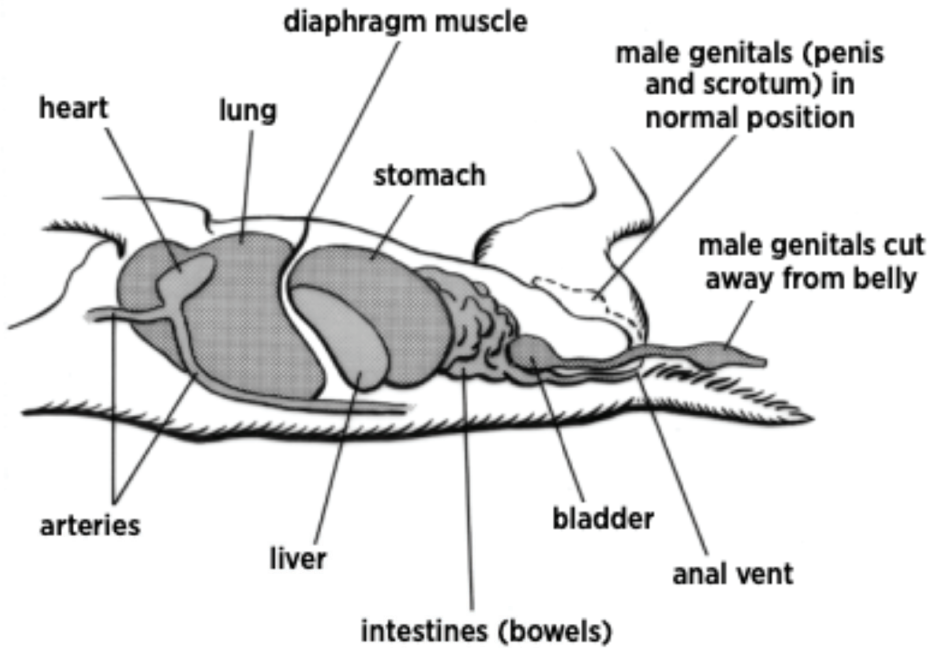


Figure 5. Diagram of internal organs and diaphragm muscle separating heart and lungs of male deer.

Step six:

Use additional paper toweling to wipe all the blood from the body cavity of the deer. Be as thorough as possible, keeping in mind that bacteria will grow very well in blood, and bacteria cause meat to spoil and possibly become unsafe. Do not use leaves or soiled cloth to clean the blood from the body cavity such items are loaded with spoilage bacteria.



Step seven:

Now that you have completed field dressing the deer, bury the paper towels or place them in the plastic bags in which you brought them to be carried out and disposed of later. Untie the deer legs and get ready whatever method you have decided to use to drag the deer back to your home, campsite or automobile. If at all possible, avoid dragging the deer through water, mud or dust in such a way that the inside of the body cavity is contaminated with water, mud or dust. When you put the carcass in your vehicle, wrap it so that dust, dirt or dirty water from your vehicle or from the road does not contaminate the body cavity.



HUMAN SAFETY

In the Field with CWD

Field to Table Guide



Hunter Precautions

- Hunters be aware that many states ban importation of whole carcasses and animals from states in which Chronic Wasting Disease has been reported; in fact, some states have check stations at their borders. For more information about the regulations for each state, visit the USDA's CWD pages.
- According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there is no current evidence that CWD passes to humans. However, cautionary measures should be taken by any hunter handling deer, moose and elk, including not eating the meat of an infected animal.



Visual Signs of CWD

- It is rare to see a deer that has visual signs of Chronic Wasting Disease; infected deer may exhibit the following symptoms:
 - Extreme weight loss or emaciation,
 - Lack of coordination,
 - Drooping head and/or ears,
 - Excessive drinking, urination, and drooling.
- The only way to determine if a deer is infected with CWD is to have it tested for CWD.
- If you see or harvest a deer that behaves strangely or appears sick, or if you find the fresh carcass of a deer that appeared to die of an illness, quickly report it to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources by calling 517-284-WILD (517-284-9453).

Visual Signs of CWD



Chronic Wasting Disease infected deer

Hunter Precautions

Hunters should check with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for any current reported outbreaks of CWD, and the following simple precautions should be taken when handling any deer, moose or elk:

- Do not shoot, handle or consume any animal that is acting abnormally or appears to be ill. Contact Michigan DNR if you see or harvest an animal that appears ill.
- Wear latex or rubber gloves when field dressing deer, moose or elk. When skinning the animal, use extra caution around the anus and other areas that may be soiled by stool. For more information please go to the 'How to Properly Field Dress a Deer' section.
- If removing antlers, use a saw specifically kept for this purpose and dispose of the blade afterward, and disinfect the rest of the tool.
- Remove bones from the animal by separating them at joints instead of sawing through the bones and avoid cutting through the brain or spinal cord except to remove the head. Use a knife specifically kept for this purpose to minimize the risk of contaminating meat.

Hunter Precautions

- Minimize handling of all brain and spinal tissues. Dispose of the remains in a double layered plastic garbage bag and dispose of in a landfill. If your deer test positive for CWD, discard all meat products from that deer in a double layered plastic garbage bag in a landfill.
- Wash and sanitize hands and tools thoroughly after field dressing is completed. To sanitize tools, soak them in a 50% bleach solution
- Avoid consuming the brain, spinal cord, eyes, spleen, tonsils and lymph nodes of harvested animals.
- If your deer has been submitted for CWD testing, do not eat any meat until test results have been returned. Results may take up to two weeks in Michigan.
- If you have your deer, moose or elk commercially processed, request that your animal is processed individually, without meat from other animals being added to the meat from your animal to avoid cross contamination of a deer with CWD.



Hunter Precautions

- There is no evidence dogs can become infected with CWD. However, it is best to avoid feeding brain and spinal cord tissues from killed game to dogs.
- There is also no evidence that livestock can become infected with CWD.
- Studies have demonstrated that CWD prions can be excreted in the saliva, urine and feces of infected animals.



Resources

- <https://www.avma.org/resources/public-health/disease-precautions-hunters#cwd>
- United States Department of Agriculture: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/wildlife>

- Quality Deer Management Association

<https://www.qdma.com/what-does-a-deer-with-cwd-look-like/>


- MSU Extension: Chronic Wasting Disease

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/hunters-look-for-signs-of-illness-in-deer>



Cleaning & Disinfecting Equipment

Field to Table Guide

A young woman with blonde hair, smiling, is wearing a camouflage jacket and an orange safety vest. She is holding the antlers of a deer. The deer is lying on a light-colored surface, possibly a table or a tarp, with some blood visible. The background is a dense thicket of green foliage. A rifle is visible in the lower-left corner.

Cleaning & Disinfecting Equipment

Cleaning and disinfecting all items that come into contact with your harvested deer such as truck beds, field dressing and processing tools and equipment is an important step!

- Using a brush, clean all organic material including hair, blood, or tissue.
- Wash the item with soap and hot water. Thoroughly rinse.
- Soak item in a bleach solution for at least 5 minutes.
- Allow item to air dry.

Common items to clean and disinfect

- Cleavers
- Common Surfaces (truck beds, counter tops, etc)
- Cutting Boards
- Grinding equipment
- Knives
- Saws



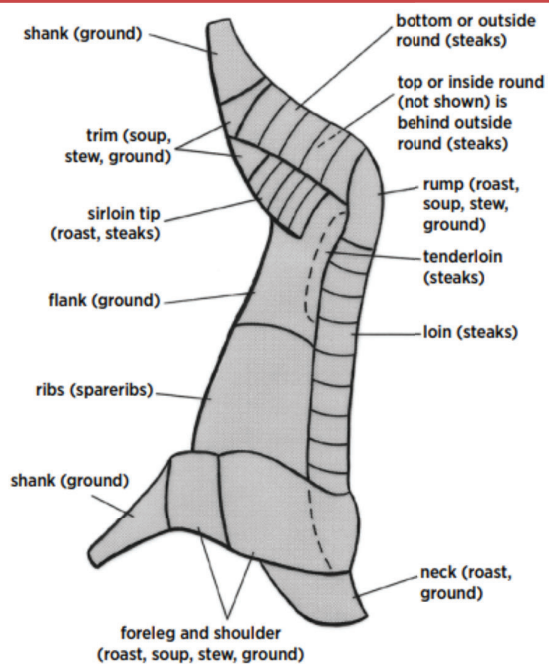


A woman with long dark hair, wearing safety glasses, a pink scarf, a dark jacket, and a bright orange safety vest, stands in a field of tall, dry grass. She has a rifle slung over her shoulder and is looking towards the camera. In the background, another person in a purple shirt is partially visible. The overall scene is outdoors in a natural, somewhat overgrown setting.

Home Processing

Field to Table Guide

Venison Cuts



Equipment Needed

- Knives
- Cleavers
- Hatchets
- Cutting Board

Make sure that all equipment is cleaned and sanitized before and after use.



Step 1: Remove tenderloins

The tenderloins are the two large muscles on the inside of the body cavity that run along the backbone to the hip bone.

- Avoid ripping them to be sure you get all the meat.
- Trim them from the carcass, wash them thoroughly.
- Consumption options
 - chill, cook and eat,
 - refrigerate and eat in the next 24 hours, or
 - wrap and freeze for later consumption.

Step 2: Remove the loin

To remove the loin, insert the knife into the carcass along the edge of the backbone and cut along the backbone from the hip to the shoulder, keeping the knife against the edge of the backbone.

Cut the loin off at the hip and shoulder and roll these muscles away from the spine, using your knife to cut the meat free from the backbone and rib cage.

Trim the connective tissue (white material) and dispose of it.

Cutting options for the loin:

- Butterfly steaks
- 1/4 inch thick medallions
- Chops

Step 3: Cutting the shoulder

Hold the front leg away from the rib cage and cut the muscle holding the shoulder to the rib cage all the way up to and including the meat on the backbone.

Place the shoulder and leg on a cutting board and cut the meat away from the lower leg (shank).

Trim all connective tissue and dispose of it.

Options for shoulder meat:

- Grind in to burger
- Cut into small pieces for stew or soup meat
- Shoulder roasts

Step 4: Neck meat

Cut the meat away from the neckbone in any way you choose.

Options for neck meat:

- Ground into burger
- Neck roast

Step 5: Flank meat

Cut the flank meat away from the sides of the deer.

Options for flank meat:

- Discard
- Ground into burger

Step 6: Ribs

Using a heavy knife, a small hatchet or saw, cut the ribs from the backbone.

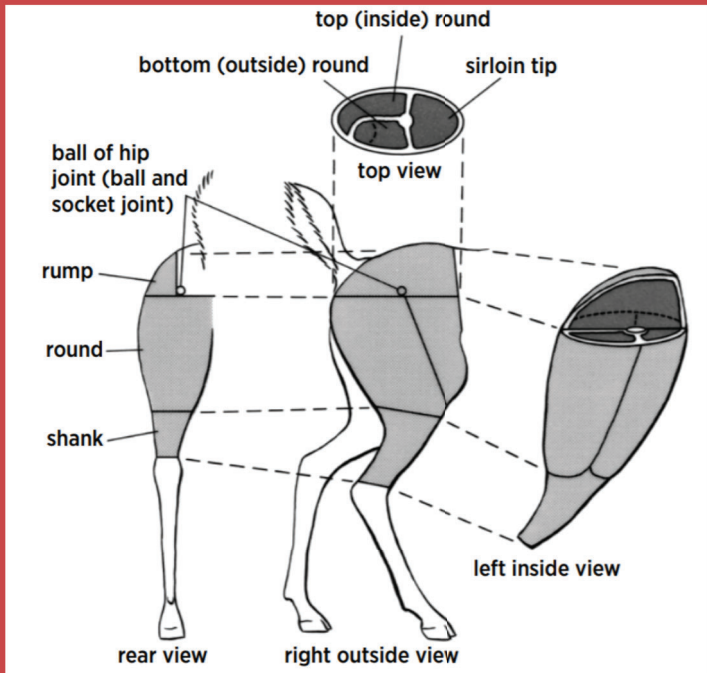
Cut into 4-to 6-inch squares for spareribs.

Step 7: Hindquarters

Separate the hindquarters from the remaining carcass by locating the hipbone on the back of the deer, and inserting your knife into the meat along the edge of the hipbone, cutting along the hipbone, keeping the edge of the knife against the bone of the hip.

The ball and socket joint will become visible. Insert the knife into the socket joint and sever the ligaments connecting the ball to the socket.

Lay the leg down on the cutting board and cut the meat of the lower hind leg (shank) away from the bone.



Rump:

The meat on the upper hind leg that extends beyond the end of the bone.

Cut it off just below the ball.

Options for the rump:

- Roast
- Cubed for stew, soup or grilling

Shank:

Handle the shank meat exactly the same as the front shank.

Round:

The round is the meat on the upper hind leg. The round is divided into three main muscles. The muscle on the top is almost round and the two muscles on the side are almost rectangular. Locate a seam between two of the muscles and separate them by cutting the connective tissue.

Do not slice through the meat.

Start with the half-round-shaped piece (sirloin tip), trim the tips from both ends of this piece of meat.

Tips can be used for cubes, stew meat, or burger.

The remaining pieces of meat can be tied with string into a roast or can be cut crosswise into 1-inch steaks.

Step 8: Grinding Burger

There are many ways to grind venison into burger, but the following suggestions produce excellent ground meat. For burgers, it is best to grind the venison with an additional 5-10% (by weight) beef fat (suet) or grind it with 30% (by weight) lean pork shoulder.

Using in dishes such as sloppy joes or chili, grind without additional fat or other meat.

Package the ground venison in quantities you find convenient to use, such as 1/2 pound, 1 pound, 2 pounds.

Wrap in freezer paper, shiny side in, tape closed and label with the date, the kind of ground venison.

RESOURCES

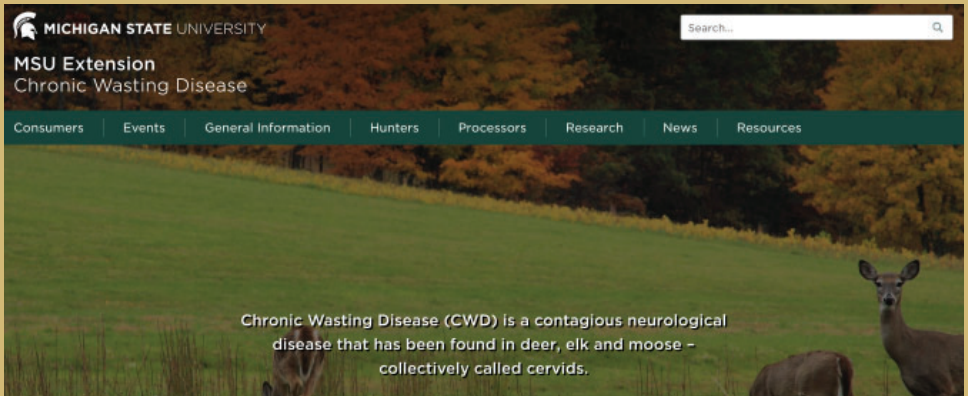


Field to Table Guide

CWD MSU EXTENSION WEBSITE

The Chronic Wasting Disease MSU Extension page has many resources included under the tabs shown below. This can be a great resource for Michigan hunters.

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/chronic-wasting-disease/index>



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Search...

MSU Extension
Chronic Wasting Disease

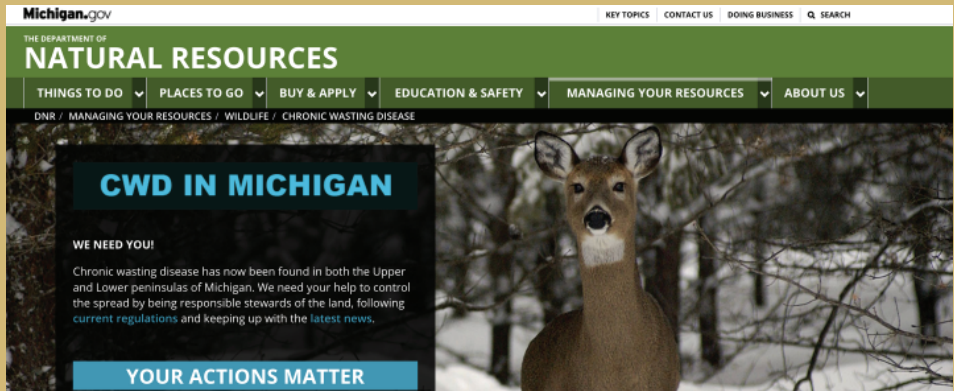
Consumers | Events | General Information | Hunters | Processors | Research | News | Resources

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a contagious neurological disease that has been found in deer, elk and moose – collectively called cervids.

THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The DNR Chronic Wasting Disease page is full of resources such as statewide CWD results, CWD information including an area for questions and answers.

https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79136_79608_90516---,00.html



The screenshot shows the Michigan Department of Natural Resources website. At the top, the Michigan.gov logo is on the left, and navigation links for KEY TOPICS, CONTACT US, DOING BUSINESS, and SEARCH are on the right. Below this is a green header with "THE DEPARTMENT OF" and "NATURAL RESOURCES". A secondary navigation bar contains dropdown menus for THINGS TO DO, PLACES TO GO, BUY & APPLY, EDUCATION & SAFETY, MANAGING YOUR RESOURCES, and ABOUT US. The breadcrumb trail reads "DNR / MANAGING YOUR RESOURCES / WILDLIFE / CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE". The main content area features a large image of a deer in a snowy forest. On the left side of this image, there is a dark blue box with the text "CWD IN MICHIGAN" in large, bold, light blue letters. Below this, it says "WE NEED YOU!" followed by a paragraph: "Chronic wasting disease has now been found in both the Upper and Lower peninsulas of Michigan. We need your help to control the spread by being responsible stewards of the land, following current regulations and keeping up with the latest news." At the bottom of this box is a light blue button that says "YOUR ACTIONS MATTER".

Michigan.gov

KEY TOPICS | CONTACT US | DOING BUSINESS | SEARCH

THE DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

THINGS TO DO | PLACES TO GO | BUY & APPLY | EDUCATION & SAFETY | MANAGING YOUR RESOURCES | ABOUT US

DNR / MANAGING YOUR RESOURCES / WILDLIFE / CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

CWD IN MICHIGAN

WE NEED YOU!

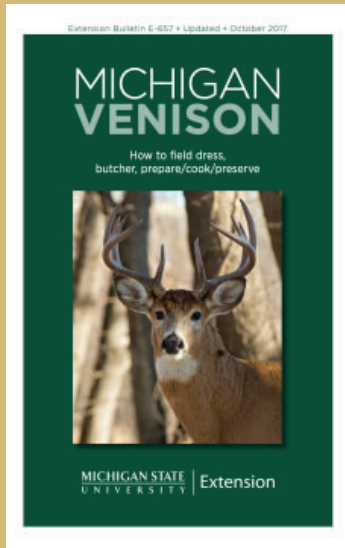
Chronic wasting disease has now been found in both the Upper and Lower peninsulas of Michigan. We need your help to control the spread by being responsible stewards of the land, following current regulations and keeping up with the latest news.

YOUR ACTIONS MATTER

Michigan Venison: How to field dress, butcher, prepare/cook/preserve

“Michigan Venison” describes proper methods to harvest, dress and cut venison. It recommends proper cooking techniques for the cuts and provides recipes for cooking and sausage making. The process of putting tender, good-tasting venison on the supper table begins with making a quick, clean kill.

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/michigan-venison-how-to-field-dress-butcher-prepare-cook-preserve>



University of Minnesota: Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy

The Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Response, Research, and Policy Program addresses the transmission of CWD in cervids and its potential for spread to humans and other animal species.

The program supports current and reliable information on CWD for the public, including hunters; the medical, veterinary and public health communities; wildlife scientists and managers; and public policymakers.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cwd>



The screenshot displays the CIDRAP website's Chronic Wasting Disease Resource Center. At the top, the University of Minnesota logo and CIDRAP name are visible. A navigation bar includes links for News & Perspective, Infectious Disease Topics, Antimicrobial Stewardship, and Ongoing Programs. Below this, a secondary navigation bar lists trending topics: COVID-19, Ebola, Antimicrobial Stewardship, and Chronic Wasting Disease. The main heading is "Chronic Wasting Disease Resource Center" with a deer icon. The page is divided into two columns. The left column features the "CWD Response, Research, and Policy Program" section, which describes the program's focus on CWD transmission and provides information for the public, medical, veterinary, and public health communities, wildlife scientists, and managers. It includes three buttons: "About CIDRAP's CWD Program", "About CWD", and "CWD Advisory Group". The right column features the "Expert Advisory Group" section, which states that the program includes 57 national and international world-renowned and distinguished leaders in public health, medicine, science, wildlife, and agriculture. Below these sections is a news article titled "Minnesota finds CWD in wild deer in just 1 area; new Wisconsin county affected", dated Jan 23, 2020, by Jen Wassenaar, Editorial Director. The article text indicates that 27 detections from the 2019 hunting season were confined to a specific area. An image of two deer in a snowy field is positioned to the left of the article text.

Chronic Wasting Disease FAQ

This site includes many different resources at a national level. There is also a tool on this site that includes a search bar where you can search CWD news by state and province if interested in seeing the effects of CWD around the nation compared to Michigan.

[http://cwd-info.org/faq/#:~:text=Chronic%20Wasting%20Disease%20\(CWD\)%20is,of%20bodily%20functions%20and%20death.](http://cwd-info.org/faq/#:~:text=Chronic%20Wasting%20Disease%20(CWD)%20is,of%20bodily%20functions%20and%20death.)

CWD-INFO.ORG

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Chronic Wasting Disease FAQ