

DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

Department of Agriculture and Forestry Office of Animal Health and Food Safety

Alternative Livestock—Chronic Wasting Disease; Transport of Deer Heads from Quarantined Facility within Louisiana for Taxidermy Purposes
(LAC 7:XXI.1705 and 1730)

In accordance with the emergency provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, R.S. 49:962, and under the authority of R.S. 3:3101, the commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry declares an emergency to exist and adopts by emergency process the regulations set forth herein for Chronic Wasting Disease for alternative livestock facilities.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a neurodegenerative disease found in most deer species, including white-tailed deer, mule deer, elk, red deer, moose, and caribou. It is infectious, always fatal, and has no known treatment. These diseases cause irreversible damage to brain tissue, which leads to salivation, neurological symptoms, emaciation, and death of the animal.

Pursuant to R.S. 3:3101, the commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry is vested with authority to regulate alternative livestock, including imported exotic deer and antelope, elk, facility-raised white tail deer and other exotic cervidae within the state of Louisiana.

Since 2009, the Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) has been working in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) CWD Program, and since 2011, Louisiana, through LDAF, has been a participating approved state, as defined by that program. In compliance with that program, LDAF submits annual comprehensive Herd Certification Program (HCP) Reports to APHIS for review and endorsement, whereby the state's compliance with the program requirements and disease control efforts is monitored.

Despite the successful measures by LDAF to control the transmission and environmental contamination of CWD within alternative livestock populations, CWD continues to pose threats to cervid populations across Louisiana. Left unchecked, CWD has the potential to infect entire cervid herds resulting in considerable economic loss to cervid farmers, the deer-hunting industry, and the state of Louisiana.

On November 7, 2024, LSU Diagnostics (Louisiana Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory), in coordination with the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL), confirmed to the Department of Agriculture and Forestry's Office of the State Veterinarian a positive (CWD) test from a deceased deer at a deer farm in Jefferson Davis Parish. The farm, a participant in the USDA CWD Voluntary Herd Certification Program administered by LDAF, has been issued a quarantine restricting movement into or out of the facility, including live deer or deer products, and a 25-mile radius surveillance zone has been activated.

The Office of the State Veterinarian has established a surveillance zone for herds near the affected deer farm and is diligently reviewing recent movement records. All deer farms in the surveillance zone are under restricted movement until further notice.

The provisions established in this emergency regulation are necessary to prevent the spread of CWD in Louisiana into alternative livestock facilities in the state of Louisiana. For these reasons, the potential spread of CWD in Louisiana presents an imminent peril to the public health, safety, and welfare to Louisiana's citizens, the state's alternative livestock, and the state's alternative livestock industry, as set forth in R.S. 49:962(A)(1)(a).

This Emergency Rule shall have the force and effect of law upon signature, on November 25, 2024, and will remain in effect for 180 days, unless renewed by the commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry. For more information about this Emergency Rule, please contact Amy L. McInnis at (225) 922-1250.

Title 7

AGRICULTURE AND ANIMALS

Part XXI. Plant Protection and Quarantine

Chapter 17. Alternative Livestock—White-Tailed Deer and Captive Cervids [Formerly Chapter 15]

§1705. Definitions [Formerly §1503]

A. ...

Quarantined Facility—any farm or deer pen that has been placed under quarantine by order of the state veterinarian.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 3:3101.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Office of the Commissioner, LR 24:282 (February 1998), amended LR 24:1671 (September 1998), amended by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Board of Animal Health, LR 38:961 (April 2012), repromulgated by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Office of Animal Health and Food Safety and the Board of Animal Health, LR 40:971 (May 2014), amended LR 42:1864 (November 2016), amended LR 49:234 (February 2023); amended LR 51:

§1730. Chronic Wasting Disease; Transport of Deer Heads from Quarantined Facility within Louisiana for Taxidermy Purposes.

A. Except as otherwise indicated herein, the transport of intact deer heads from within a LDAF-designated CWD Quarantined Facility to areas outside of the CWD Quarantined Facility is prohibited and shall be subject to enforcement action as set forth in this Chapter, including but not limited to seizure of deer parts.

B. Intact deer heads from within a LDAF-designated CWD Quarantined Facility may be transported to taxidermists within Louisiana for taxidermy purposes outside of the CWD Quarantined Facility only if:

1. a permit is first obtained from LDAF, specifically authorizing the transport of that particular intact deer head from the Quarantined Facility to a specified Louisiana taxidermist or taxidermy business;
2. the permit is obtained prior to transport of the intact deer head; and
3. the intact deer head must be delivered to the taxidermist or taxidermy business within 72 hours of the issuance of the permit.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 3:3101 and 3:2094.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Office of Animal Health and Food Safety, LR 51:

Mike Strain, DVM
Commissioner

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