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## President's Pasture What have we been doing – What's going on ?

by Jim Neil

In June Jim and Hank Dimuzio represented NDEF in Green Bay at the First Cervid Congress. Other NDEF members representing other groups were there as well. The group's focus was to gather as much current information on CWD as was currently available and to forge a multi-species/multi-organizational front. A unified position was struck.

New York faced the threat of having high-wire hunting operations closed down via a bill that had come before the legislature. With a letter writing campaign headed by Martha Goodsell (Chair of NY-NADeFA) and supported by Jim and other New York parties, this was successfully defeated.

The ban on imports in all the regional states has consumed much of Jim's efforts in letter writing, telephone calls, and email communication with various state officials throughout the summer and fall. Several members of NDEF have spear-headed state efforts to place rules that will again allow for cervid movement and industry growth.

Testimony in New Hampshire by Jim, Martha Goodsell of NY, Jim Griswold in NH, Henry Ahern of NH and several other NH cervid farmers against imposing a permanent import restriction proved somewhat successful. State Veterinarian Cliff McGinnis by regulation had little choice but to impose the ban following the emergency ruling that was running out. As a result of the testimony and presence of several cervid farmers, he did state he felt it would be for only a few months until more was known about how CWD spreads and known locations of the disease.

Regional State Veterinarians, Fish and Wildlife agencies, USDA representatives, and a few industry people (some forty or more persons in all) were hosted in Portland ME by the Maine Department of Agriculture's Dr. Don Hoenig in early November. The sole purpose of the meeting was to share current information on CWD and discuss the issue as it affects us regionally. Fortunately our association was able to secure forty-five minutes to present industry's perspective. Dave McGlinchey from Maine and Jim shared this slot with prepared presentations. The outcome was a better understanding of industry's issues and

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**Membership** is available to anyone at a cost of \$40 US per year. Checks should be made out to NDEF and mailed, along with the filled out Membership Application from Page 7 of the Newsletter, to Henry Ahern, Treasurer as listed below. Membership includes a newsletter subscription, and 2 free classified ads per year.

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Plymouth, NH 03264

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## President's Pasture

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the negative impact a long-term total ban will have on our businesses. It was agreed that efforts will be put in place to explore the possibility of movement within the region if CWD does not surface within the next few months. It was reported all seven states are doing hunter-harvested CWD testing during this fall's hunting season. This was a very positive meeting. A special thanks to Maine State Vet, Dr. Don Hoenig.

Jim was successful in obtaining a joint meeting with the New York State Veterinarians, the Chief of Wildlife, and policy writing persons from Department of Environmental Conservation. Martha Goodsell represented NADeFA-NY Branch, Jim represented NDEF. Jim and Martha both put a lot of effort throughout the summer and fall into setting the stage for such a meeting.

It took place in Albany, NY a few days before Thanksgiving. Our goal was to negotiate an agreeable compromise that will allow limited movement of cervids, preservation of hunting operations, and acceptable herd management and fencing protocol that will protect both the industry and the state's resources. State Veterinarian Dr. John Huntley led us through the issues of concern one point at a time. By days' end, with much debate, the small group had crafted the conceptual framework for a set of regulations that all parties present could agree with. These are to be formalized into a proposed set of regulations by early in the year for the hearing process to begin. If this effort turns out to be successful, I suspect it will be the first time in history that regulatory agencies and industry have actually sat at a table and hammered out mutually agreeable terms in one day. Our fingers are crossed.

The NDEF board of directors held a weekend meeting in Barre VT in mid November. All but one director was in attendance. Reports indicated we are making headway, albeit slowly, in the battle with the CWD issue. We were broad-sided by this issue in the spring and our efforts have been necessarily directed at it. We feel, however, that the association needs to get back on track with our venison and elk meat promotional efforts that we had hoped to be our focus for this year.

It is absolutely essential that every cervid owner enroll immediately in a CWD surveillance program with his state veterinarian. This effort along with testing being done in the wild herds is the only way interstate cervid movement will again take place.

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## We have a new Newsletter Editor/Publisher

We apologize for the interruption of the Newsletter, but, we have a new editor. It was the decision of the board of directors to contract with the newsletter publishing firm of Brookside Studio of Wolfeboro, NH to prepare the NDEF newsletter.

Send your articles, preferably in Word to Carol at email address: cvclutr@worldpath.net or snailmail: Brookside Studio, PO Box 1882, Wolfeboro, NH 03894.

We thank Missy for her efforts and hard work on our past newsletters and wish her well in the workplace.

## Meeting Dates

**NADeFA Meeting**  
March 19 - 23, 2003  
Jefferson City, MO  
Contact  
920-734-0934  
National Office

**NAEBA Meeting**  
July 30 thru  
August 2, 2003  
KCI Expo Center  
Kansas City, MO  
Contact: Peni Tussey  
816-431-3605  
peni@naelk.org

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# Quarterly State News

## News From Maine

During the month of June, most Maine deer farmers enjoyed a good hay season. Later, they were faced with dry conditions that effected most second crop. In our area of the state, being central Maine, hay supplies appear adequate at the moment.

Also in June, the Maine Deer and Elk Association participated in an event at Unity College sponsored by the Department of Agriculture called "Ag in the Classroom".

A chef prepared "high scale" recipes that included venison along with Atlantic Salmon, Maine potatoes and blueberries. It was a workshop for Maine teachers who learned of diversified agricultural educational opportunities that they could use as future resources for their students.

Our Maine association has received a \$15,000 grant for marketing and promotion. We currently have a marketing agent that is working with our association to help in this endeavor. Marketing is a given — we are working for all deer farmers, members or not. We are in the process of doing a marketing survey as we speak.

In August, we had a live animal display held at Maine Farm Days in Fairfield, Maine. Venison sausage and burgers were well received by the visiting public estimated at 1200. Volunteer workers were run ragged, but in the end agreed that we had a very successful event and decent fundraiser to boot.

Some Maine farmers also participated in Open Farm Days where the Department of Agriculture promotes farm visitation for the public. This is an annual event that is also well received by the visiting public.

We have had the State Veterinarian speak at one of our monthly deer farmer meetings to help keep us updated on the CWD issue as it unfolds. We have also had a USDA speaker come who educated us on the extreme need to return their Census being mailed in December. Currently we are seeking to improve and promote better relationships with our State agencies. We also have a deer farmer liaison that is currently working closely with both the Department of Agriculture and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife as new regulations are being formed by our state in relation to the border closure issues at hand.

We also continue to encourage deer farmers to join, not only our Maine association, but also NDEF, NADeFA and NAEBA to help strengthen our base on a regional and national level.

Plans for the immediate future include the annual Agricultural Trade Show in January in Augusta, Maine. MEDFA members have again volunteered to staff this three-day event. Come March, we will again be participating at the annual Sportsman's Show. The public exposure continues to educate others of the venison industry in our State.

We are told Maine currently has

approximately 100 licensed farmers. We continue to see growth of new farmers even with the CWD issue at hand. It will pay us all to remain positive and hopeful that the industry will weather the CWD issue in due time. We still see excitement with these new farmers even after they have been educated about CWD.

Happy Holidays from Tony and Beth Tuttle, Crown Point Farm

## Greetings from the Granite State

Promoting the Industry, several farms participated in NH Ag Day which stated mission is to strengthen, preserve, and promote agriculture by providing an opportunity for the public to experience the importance and necessity of food and fiber production as part of the heritage and life-style of New Hampshire... That said, member participants were Bonnie Brae Farms in Plymouth, Corn Hill Farm in Boscawen, and Kear-Wood Elk Farm in Wilmot. Offered were farm hay wagon tours with viewing of facilities and animals, talks describing the deer and elk industries, venison tasting, and the every day farm experiences we are all so familiar with. All farms reported great success with many visitors and all agreed it great exposure to promote the game

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## 2002 NDEF Officers

### President

James Neil  
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### First Vice President

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(315) 387-5562

### Second Vice President

Hank Dimuzio  
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Middlebury, VT 05753  
(802) 388-8979

### Third Vice President

Tony Tuttle  
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RR1 Box 1620  
Albion ME 04910  
(207) 437-4165

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Plymouth, NH 03264  
(603) 536-3880

### Secretary

Diane Rowlee  
Hollandeer Farm  
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Henry Ahern	NH	2003
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Mark Drew	ME	2003
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## Quarterly News

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farming industry and alternative agriculture.

Members report brisk sales of venison both at farm and Farmers Market locations. "Home grown" seems to be a desired quality and appears to be more popular with local grocery stores with either State or USDA inspection a must. In NH, Lemay & Sons Beef of Goffstown now process game animals and have the triangle symbol.

In promoting the Industry, several members participate in various State Ag Shows, namely the NH, ME, VT and NY shows. All agree its allot of work but important for our success.

Rumor has it that elk from the Celtic Moon Farm in Plainfield visited the City of Lebanon courtesy of a tree bringing the fence down. Not to panic, they enjoyed their outing and were found at the gate for their evening grain. Not to be outdone, two 6X6 bulls at Kear-Wood Farms journeyed forth through an unlatched gate during the opening of deer season, enjoyed the open fields and beaver pond, and also appreciated an open gate at grain time. Whew!

John & Julie's trip to Alaska through the Yukon in late spring found an "Elk Products" sign outside of Whitehorse, Yukon where they followed the high fences to meet the proprietors Smiley and Shirley Ford. A great visit between elk farmers and a great late night Mothers Day supper with the extended daylight hours in the north. Other elk farms

had been visited on an earlier trip in Alaska from Delta Junction farms to that on Kodiak.

The NH Farm Bureau and the NH Game Farmers Assoc. are sponsoring and have received a grant for a study of the need for a new processing facility located centrally in NH. Processing and "value added" products sometimes seem to limit our opportunities and affect our economic potentials so that we are hopeful this study will result in numbers favorable for facility construction/expansion.

Would appreciate any NH news of the Industry: John H. Morse: email: jjmorse@tds.net

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## Chronic wasting disease ruled out in hunters death

**Experts are still investigating two others at wild game feast who died of brain illness**

**by John Fauber**

One of three outdoorsmen who died of rare brain diseases after dining at wild game feast did not die from an illness related to chronic wasting disease, Wisconsin health officials said Thursday, September 12th.

The status report on the investigation two days before the start of the bow

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## Wasting

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deer hunting season and may provide some reassurance for hunters.

Test results from brain tissue samples preserved after the 1993 death of Roger Marten of Mondovi showed no evidence of prions or Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. Prions are a type of mutant protein believed to cause chronic wasting disease as well as Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, a fatal human brain illness.

Both diseases are related to mad cow disease, a prion disorder in cattle that has been linked to the deaths of more than 130 beef eaters in Europe. That disease is known as variant Creutzfeldt-jakob.

Marten was believed to have died of Pick's disease, a rarer neurological disorder that is not known to be caused by prions. Although the initial Pick's diagnosis may have been in error, a reanalysis of his brain tissue concluded that it "did not contain any detectable prions." However health officials have yet to get test results from the other two outdoorsmen. Wayne Waterhouse of Chetek and James Botts, a former Chetek resident who later moved to the Minneapolis area. Unlike Marten, both Waterhouse and Botts were diagnosed as having Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, a known prion illness. All three men were among a larger group of hunters and outdoorsmen who took part in wild game feasts during the 1980's and '90s in northwestern Wisconsin.

Investigators have contacted 43 of the people who attended the game

feasts which included deer from Wisconsin and deer and elk from Western states. No additional cases of rare neurological disease have been found. The division CDC are conducting the investigation of the three deaths. The investigation however, is far from complete.

William Hueston, director of the University of Minnesota Center for Animal Health and Food Safety examined the health departments status report on the investigation and said, "I would take away from this report, first that the state department of health and the CDC are taking this seriously and aggressively investigating these cases. And they are sharing the results as soon as they have them available, and that's reassuring."

Excerpted from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Sept. 13, 2002

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*Canadian Elevation*

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## NDEF Membership /Renewal Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Farm/Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Province/Country/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Web Address \_\_\_\_\_

New Membership       Renewal Membership      Is above an Address Change?  Yes  No

Currently Own Deer? \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Deer Owned \_\_\_\_\_

# of Deer Owned \_\_\_\_\_

Topics of Interest \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to be included in the Association Website?  Yes  No

Do you wish to be included in the Association Directory?  Yes  No

To join or renew membership in the Association, complete the information above with a check or money order for \$40, mail to:

**Northeast Deer & Elk Farmers**  
**Henry Ahern, Treasurer**  
**601 Daniel Webster Highway**  
**Plymouth, NH 03264**

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# Northeast Deer and Elk Farmers ANNUAL MEETING

April 25-27, 2003  
Ramada Inn  
Syracuse, NY



*Watch for registration forms in next newsletter  
Several excellent speakers to present at the meeting*

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For more information, contact  
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