

Northeast Deer and Elk Farmer News



Fall/Winter 2011

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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 that can be found on our website www.ndef.org to Mark Drew, Treasurer as listed below. Membership includes a newsletter subscription, and 2 free classified ads per year.

Advertising rates:

Full Page \$50.00
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Quarter Page \$12.50
Classified Ads \$.15 per word

Camera Ready Ads for the NDEF newsletter should be sent to Robert Root, Mariah Elk Farm, 13055 Route 38, Berkshire, NY 13736 or e-mailed to Rootnyelk@aol.com.

Payment for Ads to be sent to:

Mark Drew, Treasurer
17 Cunliffe Rd.
New Limerick, ME 04761

2012 Annual Convention

With Special Guests New York Deer and Elk Farmers Association

April 13 – April 15

Greek Peak Mountain Resort, Hope Lake Lodge & Indoor Waterpark
2177 Clute Rd.
Cortland, NY 13045

Friday April 13th

Sign In

Meet and Greet, with Fellow Cervid Ranchers/Farmers
and Hunt Preserve Operators
Cash Bar

Saturday April 14th

Sign in

Full Breakfast for Overnight Guests
Days Activity will include Informative Guest Speakers
Antler Measuring
Coffee Breaks, Luncheon
Evening Banquet
Antler Competition Results and Presentations
Benefit Auction

Sunday, April 15th

Full Breakfast for Overnight Guest
Closing Meeting, All Welcome, Comments and Suggestions

Rooms Available – Call 1-800-955-2754 (option 1)

Website: www.greekpeak.net

*New York State has a lot to offer, come early and stay late, enjoy it's many scenic areas.
Take in some farm tours and enhance your business opportunities!*

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President's Paddock By Bob Root

Hello all, to start with; I would like to thank Ken Swett, Mark Drew and their families, for a job well done, setting up and presenting to the membership, our annual conference this past April in Brunswick, Maine, at the Captain Daniel Stone Inn. A good time was had by all. "Henry at his best" as our auctioneer became a You Tube sensation, along with Tom Peryea and Mark Drew, as opposing mineral salesmen, hawking their wares. Things seem to click right along, good speakers, presentations, lodging, food, and above all good camaraderie among the attendees. And then all to soon it closes, with promises of a new meeting, in the upcoming year. A special thank you to Shawn Schaefer for traveling the farthest, to attend and add a positive message of support from NADeFA.

The late summer rain has been heralding in Fall. In late May and early June the rain wouldn't stop, causing a late start to getting hay in, then there wasn't enough rain combined with stifling heat to grow sufficient second cut hay. The real kicker was the late summer rain made it so we had a hard time getting the second cut in, just enough wet weather to hold off haying. Farming; I don't know why I should say anything, I have lived with farming and dealing with weather for near 65 years, why should I expect a change.

Some of us have participated in a comparative blood testing for Tuberculosis, which was conducted by the National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames Iowa, as in all comparative testing there will be varying results. The scenario is that when running our animals through for the TB

customary injection test, a blood sample was also taken. The blood sample was sent to NVSL for testing with the Chembio Cervid TB Stat-Pak, the results were then compared with the results of the injection test. Our test proved negative for the blood serum, and 1 reactor for the injection test which required a return of that animal a few days later, with a negative result at that time.

The idea here is to gather enough test samples and compare the results of both to assure accuracy. Not wanting to get too far into the particulars, the end result would be (if approved as a creditable TB test procedure), a one time run through of our animals for TB testing would be required as opposed to two cycles. It would require taking a blood sample, apply sample to test strip, read the results, negatives return to the field and reactors will be set aside to be retested. This would be a much better situation, as opposed to the two time run through, required by the patch test and again for reactors. The end result; less stress on the animals, an accurate test for TB, with a large savings of time, money, manpower.

I am asking for your consideration to look ahead to our next annual conference to be held at Greek Peak Mountain Resort and Hope Lake Lodge & Indoor Water Park, in Virgil, NY. The reason for the advance notice is that some members of the Board have suggested; and the Board has approved, that we pair our annual conference with The New York Deer and Elk Farmers Association. This should be a large conference, which will be held the weekend of April 13 through 15, 2012.

Your hosts will be Robert and Beverly Root, we look forward to a busy schedule and growing attendance. Please take the time to checkout Greek Peaks website at www.greekpeak.com, there will be a bank of rooms set aside with reasonable rates, more information to follow. Keep track on our website at www.ndef.org information will also be posted there as well. Have a great Winter Season!

Bob

News From New Hampshire By Jim Neil

The flooding experience in the Connecticut River Valley and surrounding communities, particularly our Vermont neighbors, is now pretty much history. Other than for those directly impacted of course.

As far as I am aware, the only damage experienced by deer or elk farmers was flooding of pastures and the loss of Bonnie Brae Farms second cutting of the meadow land along the Pemigewasset River.

A shopping plaza just to our north in West Lebanon sustained heavy damage with water several feet deep running through many of the stores. Most report they will be operational again for the Christmas shopping season.

It is sad to see the damage to the areas along many of the waterways. Helping those farms less fortunate with the cleanup of their fields not only does them some good, but is also good for the soul.

On the legislative front, Representative Ken Kreise of Canterbury is introducing a bill to remove deer and elk farming from the jurisdiction of the Fish & Game Department. As I understand the

logic of the effort is supported by the definition of domestic cervids defined as "livestock" by law, which fall under the Department of Agriculture. Be prepared to throw your support behind Ken when the bill is heard.

With ever tightening federal budgets, services provided at government expense are continually being shuttled to state departments. Such is the case with the CWD testing. Our State Vet has informed us that the producer will now be asked to shoulder the cost of the test estimated at twenty-five dollars per head plus shipping costs. Dr. Crawford's department will continue to lend support in collection and handling of the heads.

From personal experience, I pass on the need for vigilance in tick detection and immediate removal. I have no idea when I was infected from a tick bite, and at this point it remains somewhat unclear as to what I may have been infected with, having tested negative for Lyme three times. I suffered malaria like symptoms which are also consistent with Babesia (many of us have lost elk to this disease). Fortunately the treatment is the same for Lyme and Babesia. It's apparent that it worked anyway.

TAKE TICKS SERIOUSLY!

Until next time,

Jim Neil, Eastridge Elk Farm

News From New York

By Bob Root

An e-mail from Dr George Merrill has indicated that a discussion with USDA-APHIS-VS and the Diagnostic Lab to determine what are acceptable "ways forward" for the CWD program in light of the Federal Budget funding cuts has begun. What effect this will have on the New York deer and elk industry

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is yet to be determined.

It is my hope that it remain status quo, however a quick look to our neighbor states to the east and you will see a sharing of cost, by the producer and the state for CWD diagnostic work.

In a recent conference call with the Board of Directors of the Northeast Deer and Elk Farmers, this issue was discussed. The consensus is that it is important for the industry to keep CWD clear and the only way to insure that this is done is to keep and maintain testing. If the producer has to share the cost (not bare the cost) then so be it. I hate the words "cost of doing business" because it always comes right off the top, which in turn effects the bottom line.

The New York Deer and Elk Farmers Association had a good turnout at it's Deer and Elk Cervid Farming Seminar and Auction held in Niagara Falls, New York. We will keep you posted, have a great Winter. -Bob

News From Vermont

By Hank Dimuzio

On Nov 30, 2011, three commercial deer farmers met with representatives of the VT Dept of agriculture about the USDA/APHIS funding (or lack thereof) of CWD. Punkee Rowlee, Richard Frost, and Hank Dimuzio met with State Veterinarian Kristen Haas, Asst State Vet Joel Russo, and two members of the legal and political advisory departments. The letter from APHIS deputy administrator Dr John Clifford was reviewed. In part there will likely be a reduced budget in FYE 2012 for CWD with no more than \$1.925 million available. This would mean that APHIS would discontinue funding for indemnity, cooperative agreements with State wildlife agencies for wild cervid surveillance, funding for CWD research, and funding for CWD testing of farmed cervids as of December 31, 2011.

The state of Vermont's position is that they want to continue testing farmed cervids, but have no funds in this years or next years budget to pay for it. Because testing is part of the law relating to the farming of cervids in VT, the bill would necessarily pass onto the farmers. At current rate this would be \$25.00 per test, with a lab proposed accession fee of \$10.00 (per shipment whether one or 100 samples) plus postage. The current numbers being tested is around 70 per year so total costs would be in the range of \$2300.00 - \$5000.00 (the upper end would be if hunt preserve animals and possible sampling of wild cervids are included). Members calculated this would add between

\$0.10 -\$0.50 per pound to the cost of production depending on species and carcass weight.

A sampling of animals was proposed, but the USDA region I epidemiologist created spreadsheet was deemed not viable, as to get 75% certainty you would have to sample 80% of the herd. The ramifications of such testing are obvious.

At the meeting's conclusion, members were going to see what other states are going to do and find out what, if any, sampling sizes are being used by other state Ag Departments. In the meantime, as of Jan 1, 2012, the producers will have to cough up the money for testing.

23rd ANNUAL NADEFA CONFERENCE March 15-17, 2012 Sheraton in Dallas

400 North Olive Street, Dallas, TX
75201

Book online at sheratondallashotel.com or call 1-800-325-3535

\$135 room rate

Parking \$11 per day

DART travels between Amtrak station and the Sheraton for \$2.50

DFW Airport 20 minutes away

Love Airport 10 minutes away

New Deer Farmers Seminar
March 14th & 15th - \$50 per person/
\$75 per couple

SCI Scoring Seminar

March 14th - \$150

Dart Gun Competition

Antler competition

Photo contest

Coloring Contest

Annual Benefit/Silent Auction

Mother Nature

By Bob Root

It is not new, news, that the northeast has been delivered some bad luck by mother nature. In the past few months Hurricane Irene, and Tropical Storm Lee, have put the Northeast in disarray. If that were not enough; a very generous helping of early season snow, up to 2 feet in some areas, was added to the mix.

The devastation has been wide spread from the Susquehanna River Basin in New York, and Pennsylvania, east into Vermont then up through Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire Massachusetts and into Maine.

Even at this writing there are people without housing, power and heat. FEMA has stepped in from the beginning and is now setting up emergency housing, all seeming a very slow process because of regulations.

We see such catastrophes on the news and wonder how do people cope with that much destruction. The ones who are in the path will almost always say that someone else was even worse off than they.

We ourselves were not unscathed with extensive damage to three properties, one a total loss, with remnants strewn along the river bank. All is dwarfed by the devastation we travel through each day to repair our loss.

Above it all is the resilience, and sacrifice of the people effected, and the volunteers who are there to help, one word AMAZING. In just over two months these areas are showing signs of recovery. Homes, stores, service stations, banks and businesses are reopening with a new look and a

determination to succeed and grow.

I will echo the sentiments of several people. If your travels bring you into these effected areas, please stop and spend some time, use and enjoy their services, and hopefully spend some money. You will not only meet some very determined people, who have meet mother nature head on, you will be helping in the recovery of their local economy as well. -Bob

New York State Press Release

September 7, 2011

Contact: Lori Sevorino

(518) 402-8000

EPIZOOTIC HEMORRHAGIC DISEASE (EHD) CONFIRMED AS CAUSE OF DEATH IN ROCKLAND COUNTY DEER

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has confirmed that approximately 100 white-tailed deer found dead in the Town of Clarkstown, Rockland County, over the last two weeks were killed by Epi-zootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD). EHD is a viral disease of white-tailed deer that is transmitted by the biting midge in the family Culicoides. The EHD virus does not infect humans and humans are not at risk by being bitten by the infected midge also known as a no-see-um or punkie.

DEC wildlife biologists collected a sampling of deer carcasses in Rockland County and submitted them to the Fish and Wildlife Health Unit for necropsy. Tissue samples were then sent to the Animal Health Diagnostic Center at Cornell University and the National Veterinary Services Laboratory where the diagnosis of EHD was identified.

The EHD virus was last

confirmed in New York in 2007 in Albany and Niagara Counties. EHD outbreaks are most common in the late summer and early fall when the midges are abundant. The symptoms of EHD include fever, small hemorrhages or bruises in the mouth and nose, swelling of the head, neck, tongue and lips. A deer infected with EHD may appear lame or dehydrated. Frequently, infected deer will seek out water sources and many succumb near a water source. An infected deer may die within 1-3 days after being bitten by the midge or the disease may progress more slowly over weeks or months. There is no treatment and no means of prevention for EHD. The dead deer do not serve as a source of infection for other animals.

EHD outbreaks do not have a significant impact on deer populations. Generally, EHD outbreaks occur in a specific geographic area and about half of the EHD infected deer may die in an outbreak. In the North, the first hard frost kills the midges that transmit the disease and the EHD outbreak ends.

Hunters should not handle or eat any deer that appears sick or acts strangely. DEC will continue to monitor the situation. Sightings of sick or dying deer should be reported to the nearest DEC Regional Office or to an Environmental Conservation Officer. For more information on EHD and helpful related links, visit the DEC website directly at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39767.html>.

**Life of an Elk Farmer's Wife
By Gloria Peryea**

November 23, 2011 Entry 1
The last thing I ever expected was to be an elk farmer's wife. I'm not exactly sure how all my university

credits stack up to this task but, I do know it has been an adventure. Now I wouldn't call this adventure exciting necessarily, as anyone who knows me would attest. The suit and heels have been replaced by an interesting fashion mix. My summer attire features scrub pants and t-shirts dabbed with tools of the trade – paint and grease stains to begin with and how the look ends – well use your own imagination! My winter fashion statement includes lined work pants, a 25 year old Far West Canadian made red mountain wear jacket, winter lace up boots with rubber bottoms, a stocking hat and even a face mask for those blizzard conditions when the laneways and pens need to be cleared and the bins shoveled out. Now why is it that I never learned to plow so I could be the one in the heated backhoe?

One of the first of many adventures that comes to my mind involves a visit we made to our elk when they lived at another place. Now I don't suppose that any of you would have guessed that I might have preferred that they remained there. Anyway, my parents were visiting us so they joined in on the adventure. At first, Tom and his buddy were with us and then they decided to check on something else so they left the hospital administrator along with the preacher and his wife to walk in the pen. All was fine until we were surrounded by elk. We had unknowingly gotten too close to a mom and her calf. We all froze. After what seemed like forever, Tom and his buddy began to wonder what happened to us and came to our rescue. My post traumatic stress syndrome would last for years and color my view of all things elk. To be continued

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