



For Immediate Release  
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## Chronic Wasting Disease Discovered at a Deer Breeding Facility in Duval County

AUSTIN, TX – Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) has been discovered in a deer breeding facility in Duval County, marking the first positive detection of the disease in the county.

The tissue samples were submitted by the deer breeding facility as part of required CWD surveillance programs. The samples indicated the presence of CWD during testing at the Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (TVMDL) in College Station on August 18. The National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa confirmed CWD in those tissue samples on August 25.

Officials have taken immediate action to secure all deer at the facility and plan to conduct additional investigations for CWD. In addition, other breeding facilities that received deer from this facility or shipped deer to this facility during the last five years are under movement restrictions and cannot move or release deer at this time.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) are working together to determine the extent of the disease within the facility and evaluate risks to Texas' free ranging deer populations. Quick detection of CWD can help mitigate the disease's spread.

"Early detection and containment remain critical strategies in our efforts to help mitigate the risk of further spread of this disease," said Carter Smith, TPWD Executive Director. "There is too much at stake across Texas to do otherwise."

Animal health and wildlife officials will conduct an epidemiological investigation in an effort to determine the source and potential dispersal of the disease from this facility, but the nature of CWD will likely prevent definitive findings.

"The incubation period of CWD can span years creating disease detection and management challenges," said Dr. Andy Schwartz, TAHC State Veterinarian. "Response staff are diligently working to address each herd affected by this new detection to manage further spread."

CWD was first recognized in 1967 in captive mule deer in Colorado. CWD has also been documented in captive and/or free-ranging deer in 26 states and 3 Canadian provinces.

In Texas, the disease was first discovered in 2012 in free-ranging mule deer along a remote area of the Hueco Mountains near the Texas-New Mexico border and has since been detected in 260 captive or free-ranging cervids, including white-tailed deer, mule deer, red deer and elk in 14 Texas counties. For more information on previous detections visit the [CWD page](#) on the TPWD website.



CWD is a fatal neurological disease found in certain cervids, including deer, elk, moose and other members of the deer family. CWD is a slow and progressive disease. Due to a long incubation, cervids infected with CWD may not produce any visible signs for a number of years after becoming infected. As the disease progresses, animals with CWD show changes in behavior and appearance. Clinical signs may include progressive weight loss, stumbling or tremors with a lack of coordination, excessive thirst, salivation or urination, loss of appetite, teeth grinding, abnormal head posture, and/or drooping ears.

To date there is no evidence that CWD poses a risk to humans or non-cervids. However, as a precaution, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization recommend not to consume meat from infected animals.

For more information about CWD, visit the [TPWD web site](#) or the [TAHC web site](#).

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*The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) was established in 1893 as the Livestock Sanitary Commission and charged with protecting the state's domestic animals "from all contagious or infectious diseases of a malignant character." TAHC remains true to this charge while evolving with the times to protect the health and marketability of all Texas livestock and poultry. Learn more about the TAHC by visiting [www.tahc.texas.gov](http://www.tahc.texas.gov).*