

Best Management Practices for Meat Processors & Taxidermists to Prevent CWD



Maine is taking several proactive steps to prevent the introduction of Chronic Wasting Disease into the state. The risk of CWD introduction via carcasses is unknown but can be significantly reduced by implementing proper disposal of higher risk tissues and ensuring cleanly practices in processing facilities. Help prevent the introduction of CWD in Maine by following these steps:

1. **Verify and screen all cervids that come in by asking the hunter where the animal was harvested.**
Ensure the hunter has complied with state regulations related to carcass movement. If the carcass was brought in from another state other than NH, immediately notify MDIFW.
 - a. It is illegal for individuals to bring into Maine cervid carcasses or parts, except that the following carcass parts may be imported and possessed: boned-out meat, hardened antlers, skull caps that have been cleaned free of brain and other tissues, capes and hides with no skull attached, teeth, and finished taxidermy mounts.
 - b. MDIFW prohibits the transportation of unprocessed deer carcasses, and/or parts, into Maine from states that are not directly adjacent to our state. **Note:** Cervid carcasses or parts from New Hampshire are exempt from this transportation restriction.
2. **Ensure your processing method is clean and sanitary. Try to keep carcasses separate from one another to prevent cross contamination.**
 - a. Wear rubber or latex gloves when handling and processing deer and venison. Change gloves between different animals/carcasses.
 - b. Avoid cutting through body parts where CWD prions are known to accumulate such as the brain, spinal cord, lymph nodes or spleen. Bone out muscles along the backbone and avoid cutting through the spinal column.
 - c. Use single-use, non-porous trash bags to line barrels for disposal.
3. **Clean and sanitize your area before processing a new carcass. Use bleach and water solution to clean equipment and countertops.**
4. **Do not attempt to burn any carcasses or dispose of carcasses near bodies of water.** If you need to dispose of deer carcasses, do so at your nearest cooperating landfill. You may need to contact the landfill ahead of time as not all landfills will take animal carcasses.