

Breadcrumb

1. [Home](#)
2. Print
3. Pdf
4. Node
5. Entity Print

APHIS Announces Listening Sessions on Chronic Wasting Disease Herd Certification Program Standards

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will hold five virtual listening sessions on the [Chronic Wasting Disease \(CWD\) Herd Certification Program \(HCP\)](#) standards. During each of these sessions, we will seek input on the direction of the program, methods for increasing enrollment, biosecurity, and CWD prevention. We will also seek input on barriers and other options for preventing interactions between farmed and wild cervids.

The listening sessions will take place via Zoom on the following dates and times:

- Topics of discussion on July 27, 2023, at 12:00 p.m. EDT will be:
 - The overall direction of the program.
 - Increasing herd certification program participation.
 - Biosecurity.
 - Prevention of contact between farmed and wild cervids.
 - Prevention of CWD not including genetics.
- Topics of discussion on August 10, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. EDT will be:
 - Inspection and inventory, including:
 - animal identification (ID);
 - electronic ID; and

- annual and physical inspections.
- Topics of discussion on August 17, 2023, at 2:00 pm EDT will be:
 - Surveillance.
 - Use of ante-mortem tests.
 - Postmortem sampling.
 - Penalties for HCP non-compliance.
- Topics of discussion on August 24, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. EDT will be:
 - Disease response including use of predictive genetics to manage CWD positive, suspect, and exposed herds.
- Topics for discussion on September 14, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. EDT will be:
 - Indemnity approach, including role of indemnity in predictive genetics herd management; and
 - Use of predictive genetics to prevent CWD within the HCP.

• Members of the United States Animal Health Association requested a review of—and potential revisions to—the current HCP program standards. The Chronic Wasting Disease Research and Management Act also instructs USDA to review program standards and update them as necessary. APHIS is committed to working with stakeholders to ensure our programs are as effective as possible.

For more information on this or other listening sessions or to register for them, please visit USDA's [CWD topic](#) page. If you would like to speak on one or more of the session topics, please indicate this on the registration form. The deadline to register to speak at the first listening session is July 20, 2023. The deadline to register for the remaining sessions will be one week prior to each session. Registration instructions and updated session information can be accessed on the [Cervid Health Program](#) website. Comments will be limited to 3 to 5 minutes depending on the number of requests to speak.

You may provide written comments at the sessions by using the meeting chat function or file written comments before, during, or after the meetings by emailing: CWD@usda.gov. Written comments by attendees or other interested stakeholders will be welcomed for the public record up to close of business Monday, November 13, 2023. Please refer to Docket No. APHIS-2023-0042 when submitting your comments. To receive announcements on upcoming listening sessions, please register for cervid stakeholder announcements through [GovDelivery](#) and select the

“Deer and Elk (Captive/Farmed)” topic.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America’s food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.