

**Import Protocol for Farmed Elk, White-tailed Deer and Mule Deer from
Saskatchewan to Approved Registered Abattoirs in Alberta
FOR SLAUGHTER ONLY**

This protocol was developed cooperatively among Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, and cervid industry representatives.

**Permits to import under this protocol can be requested in writing from:
Licensing Program Administration,
Animal Health and Assurance Branch,
#106 Agronomy Centre
6903 – 116 Street NW,
Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5Z2.
Phone: 1 780 427 5083
Fax: 1 780 422 4513**

DEFINITIONS

This protocol is limited to elk (*Cervus canadensis manitobensis* = *Cervus elaphus manitobensis* = Manitoban elk, *C.c. nannodes* = *C.e. nannodes* = Tule elk, *C.c. nelsoni* = *C. e. nelsoni* = Rocky Mountain elk, *C.c. roosevelti* = *C. e. roosevelti* = Roosevelt elk), white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), and mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus hemionus*).

A request for the import of any other species not covered by Alberta's Livestock Industry Diversification Act (LIDA) will need to be directed to Alberta Environment and Parks.

APPLICATIONS

ALBERTA'S CHIEF PROVINCIAL VETERINARIAN MUST BE INFORMED AND AN APPLICATION TO IMPORT FOR SLAUGHTER MUST BE SUBMITTED AT LEAST 10 BUSINESS DAYS IN ADVANCE OF THE PROPOSED DATE AND TIME OF TRAVEL TO SLAUGHTER.

ORIGIN & HERD HEALTH

All animals imported to Alberta for slaughter must come from:

Premises which are a provincially licensed domestic game farm in Saskatchewan on which a minimum of 90 percent of the heads of all dead cervids over 12 months of age (both natural & slaughtered animals) have been submitted for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) testing for at least the previous two (2) contiguous years, as verified by Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture. This should be calculated by dividing the total number of heads tested in the past 24 months by the total number of deaths and slaughters in the same time frame.

Premises that do not meet the 90% testing requirement for CWD surveillance may be considered for import based on a farm assessment that will evaluate potential risk. Please see Appendix 1

Further to this:

Animals originating from or residing on farms that are currently under quarantine or movement restriction for CWD may not be imported into Alberta for slaughter unless the producer obtains approval from Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian, and meets the conditions described in Appendix 2.

All animals that die in transit or prior to slaughter at the abattoir, must have their heads removed, placed in a leak proof container, and submitted to Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (AF) for CWD testing separately from slaughter animals. **Unless Appendix 2 applies**, the remainder of the carcass must be condemned and then disposed of in accordance with the abattoir's existing inedible offal disposal process. **If Appendix 2 applies**, the method of carcass disposal must be approved by the Alberta CPV.

All pertinent documents (including Import Permit, Export Permit, Federal Cervid Movement Permit, Livestock Manifest and any other applicable documents) must accompany the animals to the abattoir in Alberta. After completion of slaughter activity and after cleaning and disinfection of conveyances, a completed set of the documents must be returned to Alberta Agriculture and Forestry at the earliest opportunity. Once the information has been reconciled, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry will share copies of the documents with Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture.

TRANSPORT

The transport vehicle used to transport the animals into Alberta shall be thoroughly cleaned and washed prior to loading any animals to ensure that no old bedding or fecal material is present. New, clean bedding must then be added to facilitate transport of animals to Alberta for slaughter.

Cervids must be transported in full accordance with Federal Health of Animals Regulations.

All transport vehicle doors must have a secondary securing device. In the case that a transport vehicle does not have a double latching system on the door, an alternate secondary securing device must be used, such as a secured chain.

All cervids must have an official Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture identification tag and a readable dangle ear tag that is unique within the shipment. All tag numbers must be recorded on the import permit and the appropriate schedule signed and dated by the transport vehicle operator.

At the last location where animals are loaded prior to entering Alberta, all doors on the transport vehicle shall be sealed, the appropriate schedule signed, and the time and date recorded by the operator of the transport vehicle. Trailer sealing options include either of the following options (or combination of) on all transport vehicle doors through which an animal could enter or exit:

1. Seals approved by Alberta's CPV. Seals to be verified as being intact on arrival at the approved abattoir by the inspector or designated plant official, or
2. An approved electronic lock device that records times when the lock has been opened and closed. Lock records showing that the locks remained intact during the entire transit time through Alberta must be provided to the Office of the Chief Provincial Veterinarian within seven days of each shipment

On leaving the approved abattoir the transport vehicle operator must seal the transport vehicle doors with seals provided for this purpose and sign the appropriate schedule at the processing facility.

The transport vehicle shall be designed to eliminate opportunities for escape, yet provide adequate ventilation. Open-top vehicles are not permitted. **The transport vehicle must have solid surfaces at least two (2) feet high at the bottom of all walls and doors.**

The transport vehicle must be covered by transportation liability insurance and must take the most direct route to the abattoir using paved roads where possible in Alberta.

Each male cervid with antlers must be transported in an individual compartment according to the Recommended Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals (Farmed Deer – Cervidae) section 5.6 and 5.7.

Immediately prior to transferring the animals to the abattoir kill floor or an ante-mortem holding area that meets fencing requirements for cervids, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) meat inspector, provincial meat inspector or approved individual will remove the seals or unlock the transport vehicle seal. The inspector shall verify the dangle tags and the official tags once the animals are slaughtered, and the heads are removed. Any discrepancies in tag reconciliation need to be reported to Alberta Agriculture and Forestry and this information will be shared with Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture.

Inspection and Investigation Section (1-403-755-1474) and the Alberta Chief Provincial Veterinarian (1-780-427-3448) must be notified immediately if any farmed cervid escapes either from the transport vehicle or the approved federally or provincially inspected abattoir. The escaped animal must either be:

1. killed immediately - the head must be sent for CWD testing and the carcass must be disposed of in accordance with Alberta's Disposal of Dead Animals Regulation or
2. captured and slaughtered - the head must be submitted to Alberta Agriculture and Forestry for CWD testing, as per any cervid going for slaughter in Alberta.

ABATTOIR

The abattoir must be a federally or provincially registered establishment in Alberta that is also approved by the Chief Provincial Veterinarian for slaughter of imported cervids. Currently the list includes two federally registered facilities in Lacombe and Fort McLeod. Other approved facilities may be added by addendum to this protocol.

Provincial plants must be inspected and approved by Alberta Government staff prior to slaughtering any Saskatchewan imports.

Prior to the arrival of the animals at the abattoir, all runways and chutes at the abattoir shall be made secure enough to prevent the escape or injury of any animals. All

windows and outside doors within the animal holding area must be closed while live animals are being moved.

Any approved abattoirs slaughtering imported cervids under this protocol are required to have a containment fence or coral system around the transport vehicles and/or the entire facility during unloading to prevent accidental escape of cervids from the slaughter facility premises. Alternatively, animals can be unloaded directly into the interior of the building in a manner that would prevent escape from the facility.

All the animals shall be slaughtered in individual lots on the same day and all heads placed in leak proof containers and sent to an AF facility for sample collection and testing (animals processed under Appendix 2 will be tested by CFIA laboratories). A copy of the test results will be sent to the approved facility within 24 hours of test completion and **before** the carcasses are released. All animals that die in transit or prior to slaughter at the approved abattoir (federal or provincial), must have their heads removed, placed in a leak proof container, and submitted separately from all slaughter animal heads, for sample collection at an AF facility for CWD testing. The remainder of the carcass must be condemned and then disposed of in accordance with the plants existing inedible offal disposal process.

Animals must be off-loaded directly onto concrete or other impervious material that can be cleaned and disinfected to prevent contamination from bedding material and excreta. All precautions shall be taken to avoid removing bedding material from the transportation vehicle. Any material inadvertently removed shall be collected and returned to the truck for removal from Alberta and the area sanitized.

Any contact between the animals, their bedding/excreta and the ground (i.e. dirt surfaces) is to be avoided. Runways and chutes shall be constructed of a material that prevents animal contact with dirt surfaces and can be cleaned and disinfected following slaughter.

Any fecal and bedding material deposited in the runway or chutes shall be collected and put back in the transportation vehicle and *must be disposed of outside Alberta*. Alternatively, if arrangements can be made with the rendering facility, as per 6 b) in Appendix II, materials can be disposed of through that option.

Animals shall be stunned in the abattoir (NOT IN THE TRANSPORTATION VEHICLE) in order to minimize the potential for dragging bedding material onto the ground or runways, unless an animal needs to be euthanized for humane reasons due to injury

during transport.

All cervids shall be stunned in such a way that does not render any tissues unsuitable for appropriate CWD testing. Slaughter workers must be experienced in cervid slaughter procedures to prevent damage to the base of the brain.

Once unloading and killing is completed, the leak proof containers containing the heads shall be loaded and delivered to an AF facility or another testing facility approved by the Chief Provincial Veterinarian (i.e. Prairie Diagnostic Services) for sample collection and CWD testing.

If for any reason the slaughter cannot occur on the day scheduled, the cervids (elk, white-tailed deer or mule deer) must be confined to a secure/locked area that is designed to prevent escapes and is constructed of a material that can be cleaned and disinfected. If delays are extended such that animals are required to return to SK, the SK CVO must be notified, the animals, all bedding and all fecal material must be placed in the transportation vehicle. The vehicle must then be sealed and returned to Saskatchewan, and the animal holding area is to be sanitized. A designated official approved by Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian shall verify the seal on the transport vehicle after the vehicle arrives back in Saskatchewan and inform the Alberta Office of the Chief Provincial Veterinarian (1-780-427-3448). If the seal is found to be broken or the trailer empty, the Alberta Chief Provincial Veterinarian and the Inspection and Investigation Branch (1-403-755-1474) must be notified immediately.

INEDIBLE OFFAL

All inedible offal shall be collected and placed in the approved leak-proof containers at the plant and disposed of in accordance with the "Destruction and Disposal of Dead Animals" regulation. Once CWD test results are available and results are negative for CWD, offal collected from carcasses after that point may be directed to the non-SRM stream.

MEAT AND EDIBLE OFFAL

Meat and edible offal shall be held at the abattoir pending the CWD test results and release by the CFIA or AF inspector.

Appendix 1

Saskatchewan cervid farm premises that do not meet the 90% testing requirement may be considered for import, based on an assessment of risk of the farm applying for the import permit under all of the following guidelines:

1. All animals being considered for export have been resident on the farm for a minimum period of 60 consecutive days. This information is to be attested by the exporting producer and verified to the extent possible by the registered veterinarian. Information required will include the following:
 - a. A detailed list of all animals being exported to Alberta for slaughter that have been born on that farm.
 - b. For animals not born on the farm a detailed list that includes the date the animal arrived on the farm and the appropriate CFIA issued Cervid Transport Permit number are required.

And

2. The producer is compliant with Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture's licensing and cervid inventory registration requirements including:
 - a. Annual inventory reporting
 - b. License is current/valid
 - c. A whole herd audit has been conducted in the previous 15 months.

And

3. Adult on-farm mortality rates are less than 5% per year for elk and 10% per year for deer, in the 24 month period prior to applying for a permit to import farmed cervids to Alberta for slaughter, where the on-farm mortality rate is calculated by:
 - a. excluding the on-farm slaughter of healthy animals
 - b. including natural on-farm deaths
 - c. including emergency slaughter of animals for humane reasons.

And

4. Within 30 days of a scheduled slaughter date, a registered veterinarian has examined the herd and signs a declaration that, in his or her opinion, no cervids on the facility are displaying clinical signs of CWD or other infectious disease.

If a farm does not meet the above requirements under Appendix 1, they may be considered for import approval under the following additional conditions:

Within 30 days prior to the shipment date, the animals have been inspected by a registered veterinarian who has provided a written, signed declaration that indicates that no cervids on the premises are displaying clinical signs of CWD or other infectious disease. The document must also be signed by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture indicating that the animals originate from a farm with a valid game farm license that has been inspected within the last two years.

1. Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian must approve the travel route in Alberta to the abattoir.
2. Prior to or at the time of loading in Saskatchewan, the following conditions will be adhered to:
 - a. Before loading at the farm, a designated official approved by the Alberta Chief Provincial Veterinarian must ensure that all animals are uniquely identified with an activated tracking device that is approved by the Alberta Chief Provincial Veterinarian and rated to track animals up to 3km or more.
 - b. Shortly before loading, the animals are marked with a highly visible temporary livestock marker in a manner approved by the Alberta Chief Provincial Veterinarian.
 - c. The trailer is sealed with approved seals at the farm in Saskatchewan by the designated official immediately prior to transport.
3. At the abattoir in Alberta, the seal is removed to allow offloading of animals by an approved individual (Plant quality control officer, CFIA inspector or another individual approved by the Alberta Chief Provincial Veterinarian).
 - a. After the animals are unloaded at the abattoir any loose bedding and manure is placed back on the trailer.
4. The empty trailer is to be sealed by an approved official and the trailer is either:
 - a. Returned to Saskatchewan, where the seal is broken by an approved individual in Saskatchewan and signed confirmation documentation is sent to Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian; or
 - b. Transport vehicles remaining in Alberta must be washed and sanitized at a facility in Alberta which has been approved for this purpose. A copy of the receipt and the appropriate schedule is submitted to Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian within 48 hours.
 - c. All bedding material from within the transport trailer that remains in Alberta (as per item b above) is disposed of in the same manner as bovine specified risk material (SRM).

5. If any animal(s) escape(s) during transport within Alberta or at the abattoir:
A Fish and Wildlife officer and the Chief Provincial Veterinarian will be notified immediately

OCPV 24 hour line 1 800 524 0051

Fish & Wildlife 24 hour line 1 800 642 3800

- a. The Chief Provincial Veterinarian will work with appropriate authorities in regards to locating and destroying the animal(s).
- b. All animals destroyed in this manner will be tested for CWD and disposed of in a manner approved by the Alberta Chief Provincial Veterinarian.

Appendix 2

Animals within a herd currently under quarantine or movement restriction for CWD may not be imported to Alberta for slaughter unless the producer obtains approval from Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian. Under this provision, the following additional conditions must be met:

1. Within forty-eight hours prior to loading, all animals destined for slaughter are inspected by a CFIA veterinarian and are clear of clinical signs consistent with CWD or other infectious diseases. In the event that the CWD case is being dealt with under the authority of the province of Saskatchewan, a provincial veterinary inspector or a combination of a provincial game farm investigator and private veterinarian may fulfill complete this task.
2. Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian must be informed at least 10 business days **in advance** of the proposed date and time of travel and slaughter.
3. Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian will stipulate the travel route in Alberta to the abattoir.
4. Loading of animals prior to transport between the farm in Saskatchewan and the abattoir in Alberta is to be done under the supervision of CFIA or a designated official (see appendix 3) approved by Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian, who are responsible to ensure all animals loaded are included on the transport manifest.
 - a. Before loading at the farm, a designated official approved by the Alberta Chief Provincial Veterinarian must ensure that all animals are uniquely identified with an activated tracking device that is approved by the Alberta Chief Provincial Veterinarian and rated to track animals up to 3km or more.
 - b. Shortly before loading, the animals are marked with a highly visible temporary livestock marker in a manner approved by the Alberta Chief Provincial Veterinarian.
 - c. The trailer is sealed with approved seals at the farm in Saskatchewan by the designated official immediately prior to transport.
5. At the abattoir in Alberta the seal is broken by a CFIA inspector.
 - a. After the animals are unloaded at the abattoir any loose bedding and manure is placed back on the trailer.

6. The trailer is sealed by a CFIA inspector and the trailer is either:
 - a. Returned to Saskatchewan, where the seal is broken by a CFIA inspector in Saskatchewan or a designated official approved by Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian, and signed confirmation documentation is sent to Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian; or
 - b. Sent to the SRM rendering plant in Calgary for removal of all materials and cleaning & disinfection of the trailer. The seal is broken by a CFIA inspector or a designated individual at the rendering facility and a signed confirmation of the appropriate Schedule with entry and departure times from the facility is sent to Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian as soon as possible after the trailers have been cleaned.
 - c. All bedding material disposed of in Alberta will be done in the same manner as bovine specified risk material (SRM).

7. If any animal(s) escape while enroute or at the abattoir:
A Fish and Wildlife officer and the Chief Provincial Veterinarian will be notified immediately

OCPV 24 hour line 1 800 524 0051

Fish & Wildlife 24 hour line 1 800 642 3800

- a. The Chief Provincial Veterinarian will work with appropriate authorities in regards to destroying the animal(s).
- b. All animals destroyed in this manner will be tested for CWD and disposed of in a manner approved by the Alberta Chief Provincial Veterinarian.

Appendix 3

List of designated officials approved by Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian. Other suggestions should be submitted to Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian for consideration:

- 1. CFIA Inspector or Veterinary Inspector**
- 2. Alberta provincial meat inspector – only for removing seal from trailers arriving at their facility**
- 3. Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture Investigator**
- 4. SVMA Registered Veterinarian or Veterinary Technologist working for a Registered Veterinarian**
- 5. Livestock Services of Saskatchewan Inspector**
- 6. West Coast Reductions staff – only for removing seal from trailers arriving at their facility**
- 7. Abattoir Quality Control Officer – only for removing seal from trailers arriving at their facility**

It should be noted that any certification of health status or health claims for the herd must be made by a veterinarian.