

Dear Texas Deer Breeder,

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission recently adopted rules that offer deer breeder permit holders additional options to qualify for Transfer Category 1 (TC 1) status. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) staff have received numerous questions regarding the TC 1 upgrade process. Options for a TC 2 breeding facility to upgrade to TC 1 status are addressed in detail below.

Option 1: Ante-mortem (live animal) testing

Any facility that is not under a Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) Hold Order or Quarantine may conduct ante-mortem testing to qualify for TC 1 status by providing CWD “Not Detected” results for at least 50% of the total number of eligible-aged deer (i.e., 16 months or older) present in the facility on the day sample collection begins. In order to qualify as a valid ante-mortem test result, the tissue sample must be collected from deer that are at least 16 months of age and that have not been tested in the past two years. The attached spreadsheet provides a list, organized by facility ID, of the current eligible-aged population present in each facility that has at least one eligible-aged deer as of June 23, 2016. This list also provides the total number of CWD “Not Detected” ante-mortem test results required from each population to achieve the 50% benchmark, should testing commence now. Please keep in mind that these numbers will change over time, and it is the facility owner's responsibility to verify the correct number of tests to be collected, and from which deer tests must be collected. TWIMS updates to be launched in August 2016 will assist with this verification process.

In order to accommodate ante-mortem testing that may have been conducted prior to the adoption of the new rules, a facility may submit CWD “Not Detected” results for at least 25% of eligible-aged population present when testing began in order to receive a temporary TC 1 status for the 2016-17 hunting year. In order to maintain that TC 1 status in subsequent years, the facility must provide the remaining tests required to achieve the 50% benchmark by no later than May 15, 2017. The number of additional tests required will be based on the population size at the time the initial tissue samples were collected, and all samples must be taken from eligible-aged deer that were present when sample collection was initially conducted. A facility that fails to provide the required balance of test results by May 15, 2017 will be downgraded to TC 2 status, and will be required to begin the ante-mortem testing process again if they choose to regain TC 1 status. Any previous test results will be excluded from consideration. Please note: The receipt of deer from a TC2 or TC3 facility during the ante-mortem testing process will disqualify the facility from upgrading to TC1 for a period of 6 months. Once the 6 months have passed, that facility will be able to begin ante-mortem testing but may not use the deer that were tested during the previous upgrade attempt.

All tissue samples must be collected by a qualified, licensed veterinarian. A list of licensed veterinarians who are familiar with collecting tissue samples for ante-mortem

CWD testing purposes is attached. This list is not comprehensive, but may be of help to schedule live animal testing for your herd. Please verify any veterinarian's qualifications to conduct tissue sampling prior to working deer.

TPWD is actively building new tools in TWIMS to accommodate ante-mortem testing. These tools are expected to be available on August 15, and will allow deer breeders to notify the Department that they intend to upgrade their permit status, and then easily export a list of deer eligible for testing. We appreciate your patience while we build these enhancements.

Option 2: Post-mortem testing over the past 5 years

Deer breeders who have submitted CWD "Not Detected" results for at least 80% of all eligible-aged mortalities over the past 5 report years, and who have also provided sufficient CWD "Not Detected" results equal to 3.6% of the facility's cumulative eligible-aged population (including mortalities), will achieve TC 1 status. A facility must have been in operation for at least the past 5 report years to meet this standard. You can determine if your facility has achieved the 80% testing requirement by accessing the CWD Test Results page in TWIMS. Any facility that has achieved 80% Not Detected over the past 5 report years is eligible to be upgraded. Eligible facilities must also have provided a minimum number of CWD "Not Detected" results to equal 3.6% of the sum of the eligible-aged population present in the facility on March 31 of each of the past 5 years plus all eligible mortalities that occurred during those same 5 report years. Ante-mortem tests may be substituted to meet the 3.6% minimum, but may not be used to achieve the 80% minimum mortality testing requirement.

For example, a hypothetical herd has 95 eligible-aged animals every year on March 31, and had 5 eligible-aged deer die each report year. Over a 5-year period, this facility would have a cumulative population of 500 eligible-aged animals (including deaths). Therefore, this facility would have had to submit at least 18 "Not Detected" CWD tests over that 5-year period in order to meet the second standard (i.e., 3.6% of 500 equals 18). If a facility had not provided enough test results to meet the minimum 3.6% requirement, ante-mortem test results may be substituted for each of the missing results at a 3-to-1 exchange. For example, if this facility had reported only 16 eligible-aged mortalities over the previous 5-year period, and had submitted "Not Detected" test results for all 16 of those mortalities, then 6 additional "Not Detected" test results (i.e., 2 missing test results x 3 ante-mortem tests) must be submitted from ante-mortem tests. If "Not Detected" test results had been submitted for only 13 (i.e., >80%) of those mortalities, then 15 additional "Not Detected" test results (i.e., 5 missing test results x 3 ante-mortem tests) must be submitted from ante-mortem tests.

In order to determine the cumulative population in your facility over the past 5 report years, you will need to export your herd inventory on March 31 of each of the previous 5 years (2012-2016). From the Herd Inventory page in TWIMS, you can select March 31

of each year and export to Microsoft Excel. Sort the deer by their birth dates and count the number of eligible-aged deer on that day. Do this for each year, and then add the numbers together. Next, find the total number of eligible-aged mortalities (both tested and untested) in your facility from the CWD Test Results page and add that number to the total population. Multiply the sum by 3.6% (0.036) and round up to the nearest whole number to determine the total number of eligible-aged mortalities you would have needed to provide to qualify for TC 1.

Respectfully,

Deer Breeder Program Staff

Paul Crossley	paul.crossley@tpwd.texas.gov	512-389-8840
Megan Hahn	megan.hahn@tpwd.texas.gov	512-389-4688
Kathleen McLain	kathleen.mclain@tpwd.texas.gov	512-389-4423
Kristen Marchioni	kristen.marchioni@tpwd.texas.gov	512-389-4429