

Cervid Tuberculosis (TB)

Tuberculosis (TB) is a contagious and zoonotic disease in animals and humans. TB is caused by a gram-positive, acid-fast bacterium. This bacteria can survive outside the host in the environment for several months, especially in cold, moist and dark conditions. Most species of farmed and free-ranging cervids are susceptible to TB.

Tuberculosis can be transmitted by the inhalation of aerosols, by ingestion, or through breaks in the skin. In some deer, severe disease can develop within a few months, while in other deer it may take years to become symptomatic. Common clinical signs (symptoms) may include progressive wasting, a low-grade fluctuating fever, weakness, and loss of appetite. Animals with pulmonary involvement usually have a moist cough, rapid or difficult breathing, or, in the terminal stages, animals may become extremely emaciated and develop acute respiratory distress. In some animals, the retropharyngeal or other lymph nodes enlarge and may rupture and drain. Greatly enlarged lymph nodes can also obstruct blood vessels, airways, or the digestive tract. If the digestive tract is involved, intermittent diarrhea and constipation may be seen. Once clinical signs are apparent, death often occurs within 1 week to 2 weeks.

Cervid Tuberculosis Accredited Program

The Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) has requirements for obtaining and maintaining an Accredited Tuberculosis-Free cervid herd. Two annual complete herd tests, conducted at least 9 months and no more greater than 15 months apart, of all eligible animals are required to attain free status. A summary of requirements are as follows:

- Testing must include all farm-raised cervids and other hoof stock older than 12 months of age.
- Animals younger than 12 months of age must also be tested, unless they are natural additions or originated from an accredited herd.
- Animals added to the herd must originate from one of the following and meet listed requirements.
 - Accredited-Free Herd: No additional testing
 - Non-accredited Herd: Individual animals for addition must be isolated from all other members of the herd-of-origin and must have negative results on two official tests for tuberculosis conducted at least 90 days apart. The second of these tests must be completed within 90 days prior to the movement into the accredited herd premises. Upon movement, additions must be kept in isolation until each has a negative result on an official tuberculosis test conducted at least 90 days following the date of entry.
- **Tuberculosis Reaccreditation**: Accredited herds must pass a whole-herd test within a period of 33 to 39 months of the date the herd was



Indiana State
Board of Animal Health

(317) 544-2400
animalhealth@boah.in.gov

declared to be accredited (referred to as the anniversary date). The accreditation period will be 36 months from the anniversary date (not 36 months from the date of the reaccreditation test).

Cervid Tuberculosis In-State Movement Requirements

Any cervid moving within the state of Indiana must meet one of the following:

- Originate from a Tuberculosis Accredited-Free Herd
- Originate from a herd that has had a whole-herd test within the last year
- Test negative to an official TB test within 90 days prior to movement

Cervid Tuberculosis Import into Indiana Requirements

If cervids are moving into an accredited herd, one of the following applies:

- If the cervid is from an accredited herd: No TB testing required.
- If the cervid is from a herd that has had a whole-herd test within the last year: A negative test within 90 days prior to movement, then isolated until tested negative again at least 90 days after movement.
- If the cervid is from an untested herd: Two negative tests at least 90 days apart, second test within 90 days prior to movement. Upon movement, additions must be kept in isolation until each has a negative result on an official tuberculosis test conducted at least 90 days following the date of entry.

If cervids are moving into a non-accredited herd, one of the following applies:

- If the cervid is from an accredited herd: No TB testing required.
- If the cervid is from a herd that has had a whole-herd test within the last year: A negative individual animal test within 90 days prior to movement.
- If the cervid is from an untested herd: Two negative tests at least 90 days apart, second test within 90 days prior to movement. Tested animals are to be isolated from the rest of the source herd during the entire testing period. No additional test required after entering the new herd.