

CWD Surveillance Program Results - 2019-20

During the 2019-20 hunting season, submissions to the Government of Saskatchewan's chronic wasting disease (CWD) hunter surveillance program increased to 3,300 submitted animals from 2,000 in the previous year.

The program detected 528 positive cases, including 414 mule deer, 107 white-tailed deer, six elk and one moose. Another 36 animals were submitted by conservation officers in the course of their duties (investigations, sick animals reported by the public, killed on highway, etc.). In 2018-19, 349 positive cases were detected in the province.

In male mule deer, the prevalence among tested animals was just over 40 per cent in 2019-20. Approximately 250 heads were collected at self-serve kiosks across the province.

The Ministry of Environment has been monitoring the progress of CWD in the province since 1997, after the disease was first detected in a captive elk farm. CWD is invariably fatal to members of the deer family and decreases survival rates. Although population declines have not yet been documented in Saskatchewan, the disease has led to population decline in Colorado and Wyoming.

The disease was detected in seven new wildlife management zones (WMZs) in 2019-20 for a total of 55 of 83 WMZs in Saskatchewan. CWD is considered endemic across most of the southern part of the province, and has now been detected in the boreal forest in WMZ 59.

The Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture are working on a CWD Strategy to help limit transmission of the disease, and reduce the risk of CWD spreading to new species and areas. The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for the health of game farm animals; the Ministry of Environment is responsible for wildlife on Crown lands.

Thank you to all hunters who participate in the CWD surveillance program.

See map
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Chronic Wasting Disease 2019 Positive Test Results

