

# CWD Best Practices

## General Information



### What is Chronic Wasting Disease?

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a neurological disease of deer, elk, and moose caused by misfolded proteins called prions. These defective prions damage brain and nervous system tissue, eventually causing the animal to die. There are no vaccines or treatments. It is fatal, transmissible and degenerative.

### CWD Detection in Georgia:

- The Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) confirmed two positive cases of CWD along the Lanier/Berrien County line.
- WRD established the CWD Management Area (CMA), which includes the county where the positive samples were found and any county touching a 5-mile radius around the location.
- The current CMA includes Lanier and Berrien counties.

### Testing Deer: Inside the CMA

- Who? WRD recommends testing of all deer harvested in CMA affected counties.
- Where? To assist with those efforts, WRD is partnering with processors and taxidermists to obtain samples needed for testing, and additionally setting up stand-alone freezers where hunters can drop off their deer heads for testing.

### Testing Deer: Outside the CMA

- Who? Hunters outside of the CMA wishing to have their deer tested can do so on request.
- Where? Taxidermists and processors located outside the CMA are assisting WRD by collecting a pre-determined number of samples per County or by collecting samples for testing at the request of the hunter.

**Getting Test Results: After dropping off their deer, hunters can visit [GeorgiaWildlife.com/CWD](https://GeorgiaWildlife.com/CWD) and select the CWD Testing Dashboard to view the status of their sample.**

*Find more information, including an interactive list of participating processors, taxidermists, and freezer locations by scanning the QR Code or visiting [GeorgiaWildlife.com/CWD](https://GeorgiaWildlife.com/CWD)*



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## Recommendations for Processors and Taxidermists

As a trusted partner in Georgia's deer management efforts, your role as a taxidermist or processor is vital in helping monitor and manage Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). WRD relies on your support to ensure accurate and efficient sampling across the state. Please see recommendations below for sampling deer:

### Avoid Batch Processing

Refrain from using batch processing for deer in your facility. Process deer individually and avoid mixing meat from multiple deer.

### Age Requirements for Sampling

Deer that are 1.5 years of age or older should be sampled. Avoid sampling younger deer.

#### Best Practices for Processing a CWD - Positive Deer

Follow the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) Best Management Practices (BMPs) for guidance on proper handling, cleaning, and disposal. Scan the QR code below for more info.



#### Human Consumption Guidelines

For information regarding the consumption of meat from CWD - positive deer, scan the QR code below for more info or visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).



### Not Participating in Sampling Yet?

If your facility is not currently participating in CWD sampling, you can still join the effort. Visit [GeorgiaWildlife.com/cwd](https://GeorgiaWildlife.com/cwd) or email [cwd@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:cwd@dnr.ga.gov) to get started.

### Need Help or Have Questions?

Contact us at [cwd@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:cwd@dnr.ga.gov) or visit [GeorgiaWildlife.com/cwd](https://GeorgiaWildlife.com/cwd) for more resources and support.