



Eric J. Holcomb, Governor
Bret D. Marsh, DVM, State Veterinarian

INDIANA STATE BOARD OF ANIMAL HEALTH

Office of the State Veterinarian
Discovery Hall, Suite 100
1202 East 38th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46205-2898
Phone: 317/544-2400

ANIMAL HEALTH ADVISORY

Update: Cervid Ear Tissue Submission with Official ID

(11 January 2018)

In the past, the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) has recommended that a nickel-sized piece of ear tissue attached to the official ID tag be submitted in the formalin jar with the obex and retropharyngeal lymph node in case DNA was needed for matching purposes.

Staff at the USDA National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) recently stated that during sample processing this combination of tissue and formalin can interfere with the quality of samples for DNA testing after being in formalin for greater than one week.

For this reason, USDA is recommending that the ear tissue attached to the official ID tag be submitted in a separate, sealed plastic bag labelled with the date, official ID, and producer name. The bag should be leak-proof (Ziploc or Whirl Pak bags preferred). Samples should be shipped immediately to prevent decaying of the ear tissue. If the samples cannot be sent immediately, the bag with the ear tissue should be refrigerated not frozen.

This bag will be frozen at the laboratory until the CWD results are finished. The bag with the ear tissue attached to the tag should be sent to the laboratory alongside the formalin jar in the same shipping container. When **samples are shipped overnight (UPS and FedEx both ship next-day to the diagnostic lab (ADDL), an ice pack is not necessary.**

While we understand that, sometimes, cutting a larger hole is not economically feasible when the head is to be used for taxidermy purposes, we encourage all producers to submit ear tissue attached to the official tag whenever possible. If a CWD sample tests positive, valuable information would be lost for DNA matching and sequencing without the ear tissue. Other tissue from the cervid (not attached to the official ID tag) is not acceptable, because the proof of origin could be brought into question. Ear tissue attached to an official tag recorded with BOAH is ideal.

Cervid owners, hunting preserve owners, certified samplers and veterinarians who have questions, should call Dr. Shelly Chavis at: 260-450-2139.

#