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UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

CERVIDAE HEALTH RESEARCH INITIATIVE

Volume 8, Issue 4, November 2023

Message from the Director

Florida's white-tailed deer farmers excel at creating community even in the face of storms. Sometimes those storms are literal as with Hurricane Idalia that walloped Perry and Live Oak on August 30th, or those storms can take the form of disease emergence. The discovery of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in a doe this summer in Holmes County will bring new challenges to Florida deer farmers, but maintaining community connections and open communication will help deer farmers adapt to the new regulatory landscape. CHeRI is here to help.

Thank you, always, for your support and Happy Holidays! - *Sam*

Dr. Samantha Wisely
Director, CHeRI

Medgene Labs Vaccine Survey

Medgene is looking for feedback on EHD vaccine use in 2023. These data will be shared with USDA and allow Medgene to continue to provide the vaccine directly to producers each year. If you have a few minutes, Medgene would greatly appreciate your response to the survey. Please feel free to participate in the survey even if you did not use the vaccine! You can access the survey by clicking [here](#).



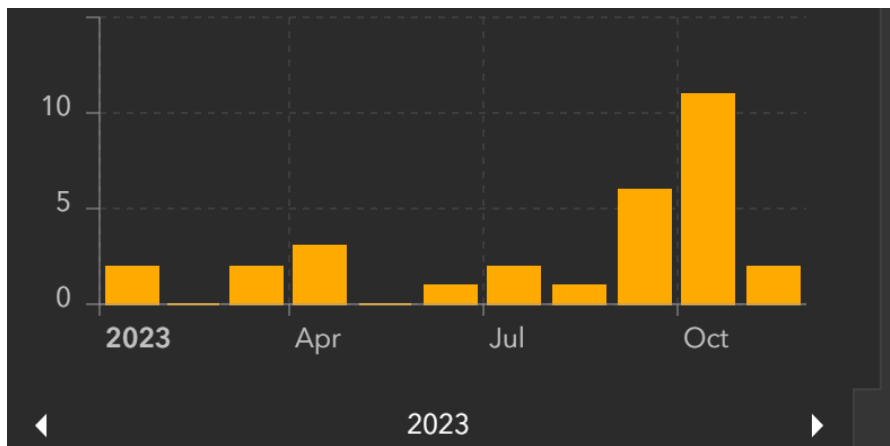
Summary of 2023

2023 has been an eventful year. Let's look at the numbers as of end of November 2023. We've handled 101 samples. Of those, 71 were necropsied by our technicians and 30 were sent in for testing. 94 were submitted for hemorrhagic disease (HD) testing while 12 were submitted for other tests.

Of the 94 necropsied and send-in animals submitted for HD testing:

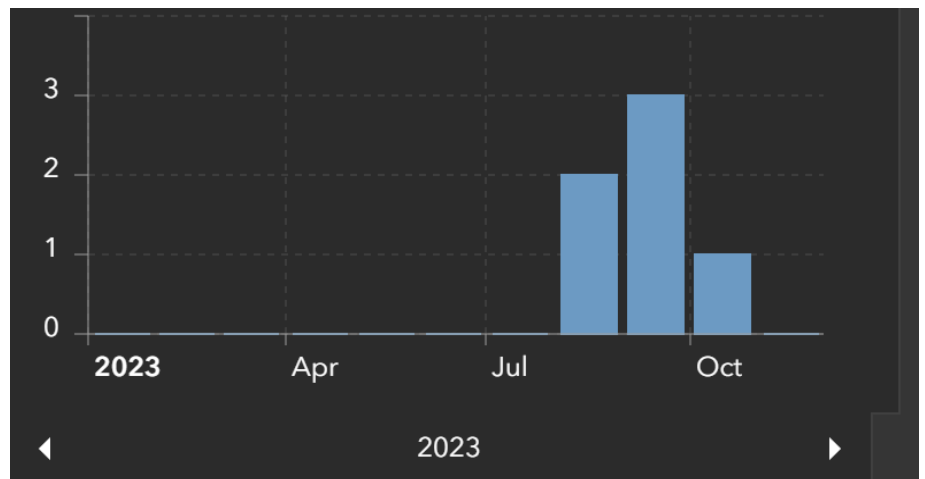
- 31 tested positive for EHDV or were suspect cases.
 - EHDV-2 and EHDV-1 were equally prevalent with 8 confirmed cases each. There was 1 case of EHDV-6
 - 12 samples were untypable. 3 samples need to be typed as of this newsletter.
- 6 tested positive for BTV.
- 1 tested positive for both EHDV and BTV.

Many of our positive coincided with the usual "season" of midge activity between July and November, but there are some cases outside of the range with a couple EHDV positive cases in January, April, and May.



EHDV deaths in 2023

BTV deaths in 2023



CHeRI Out and About

CHeRI researchers have been busy sharing our research at conferences and participating in extension events. As a collaboration between multiple labs in various disciplines we enjoy going out and networking with other researchers in the field as well as farmers and stakeholders to get a sense of what the industry needs and where it can go.



CHeRI extension veterinarian Dr. Juan Campos-Krauer with his PhD student An-Chi Cheng, and necropsy technician Merrie Urban at the 2023 Wildlife Disease Association conference.



CHeRI Entomology PhD student Vilma Montenegro giving a presentation on the importance of understanding pesticide labels and proper pesticide application at the 2023 SeTDA Summer BBQ Picnic.

EHDV-1 Returns to Florida in 2023

If an animal tests positive for EHDV, we conduct a typing assay which tells us which EHDV strain the animal had. Most cases in Florida are EHDV-2 and EHDV-6, but every 3-5 years we get an unusually large number of EHDV-1 cases. This is one of those years. According to Dr. Juan Campos most animals did not have clinical illness prior to death. The cases resulted in acute infection and a rapid death. Unfortunately, there is currently no vaccine available for EHDV-1 and vaccines for EHDV-2 or EHDV-6 do not protect animals against illness from EHDV-1.

CHeRI Spotlights!



Michael Lyons- Necropsy Technician

I earned my bachelor's degree in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Michigan in 2021. My honors thesis investigated the free-roaming dog population and gastrointestinal parasite diversity in Tulum, Mexico. As an undergrad, I worked as an intern at a wildlife rehab center, a field technician in Chile, and a zoology research museum technician. After graduating, I worked as a field technician for the Mariana Crow Recovery Project on Rota, an island near Guam. I am currently applying to DVM-PhD programs and plan to study disease transmission dynamics among livestock, wildlife, and humans. Outside of the lab, I like hiking, scuba diving, and photography.

I am a necropsy technician with CHeRI. When farmers call the CHeRI hotline to report that one of their deer has died, I visit their farms and collect samples from the deer for testing. We then use these samples to identify a probable cause of death. Being a part of the CHeRI team and Dr. Campos' Lab has been a great opportunity to learn about and contribute to the wildlife disease field.

Food Plots and Deer Health

Foraging extension specialist, Dr. Marcelo Wallau, and nutrition specialist, Dr. Diwakar Vyas, are collaborating with CHeRI to improve our knowledge about the best forages for food plots and how nutrition influences white-tailed deer production. Stay tuned to new research and Extension events in the coming year.



Dr. Marcelo Wallau



Dr. Diwakar Vyas

CHeRI HD Cases Dashboard Map

We've had quite an eventful HD season this year. Check out how Florida is doing overall with our interactive Hemorrhagic Disease Case Map. Stay up-to-date on EHDV and BTV around Florida. You can also go back through the years for when to anticipate HD in your region and develop your vaccination plan. This tool is particularly useful for planning vaccinations for animals that will be shipped.

Please check out our interactive Hemorrhagic Disease Case Map [here](#) or click the picture below.

CHeRI's interactive Hemorrhagic Disease Case Map displays incidence of EHDV and BTV from Florida deer farm submissions. You can track these deadly viruses in real time! Interactive layers allow you to look at changes in HD incidence over time - both monthly and yearly changes since 2016. Selecting a county will give you the number of EHDV and BTV cases we've received and tested from that specific county. Our map is a great tool for deer farmers as Hemorrhagic Disease caused by EHDV and BTV is the leading cause of death for farmed white-tailed deer in Florida.

UF IFAS Cervidae Health Research Initiative
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SUBMIT A SAMPLE
352-562-DEER

Ship us your specimens!

Did you know that you can ship us specimens from your animals for disease testing? We accept biological samples from live and dead animals, but its critically important that the samples are collected, stored and shipped correctly. Improperly prepared samples yield poor or no results. Call us prior to collecting specimens to determine which sample(s) to collect and how to store it. We will work with your veterinarian or your farm manager to ensure that the right sample is collected. To help facilitate the process we have updated our shipping address and requirements for sample shipment. These changes will ensure that your sample stays cold and that no cost is incurred by the shipper.

Call **352-562-3337** if you have any questions and please download this [pdf](#) and keep it for reference when sending CHeRI a specimen.

Contact Us:

Email: ufifas.cheri@gmail.com

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Website: <https://wec.ifas.ufl.edu/cheri/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UFIFAS.CHeRI/>

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