



UF | IFAS
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

CERVIDAE HEALTH RESEARCH INITIATIVE

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Message from the Director

It has been another tough hurricane season for many deer farms in Florida. Our hearts go out to those impacted. So far, the increase in hurricanes has not translated to an increase in EHDV. In fact, the prevalence has been the lowest reported since CHeRI started. Vaccination and herd health management have gone a long way to reducing the impact of EHDV. CHeRI is now focused on pest management and supporting vaccine development for BTV and poxviruses which have become the most important diseases of fawns and yearlings.

Thank you, always, for your support - *Sam*

Dr. Samantha Wisely
Director, CHeRI

2024 CHeRI Hemorrhagic Disease Summary

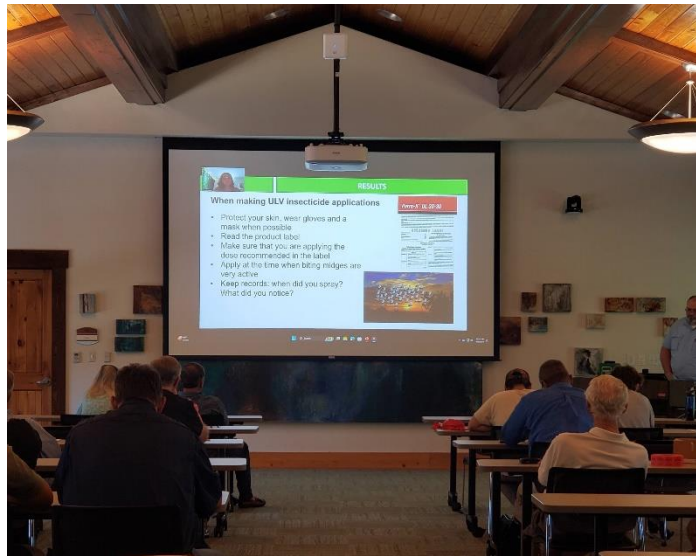
As of this publication, we've received **110 submissions** of animals suspected to have HD. 105 samples were from white-tailed deer and 5 were exotic species.

- **1** animal tested positive for EHDV-1
- **17** animals tested positive for BTV
- **36/51** fawns were suspected to have deerpoxvirus
 - **15/36 (42%)** suspects tested positive

We've seen a dramatic decrease in EHDV cases this year compared to other years. The single EHDV positive we've had so far was EHDV-1 for which there is no vaccine. BTV has been our main player this year, with cases occurring in late winter and again picking up during the expected HD season.

2024 SeTDA Summer BBQ

Did you catch us at the Summer BBQ? We enjoyed chatting with farmers that attended. Educational seminars included proper pesticide application, fawn care and bottle feeding, with updates from CHeRI and SeTDA.



2024 CHeRI publications

CHeRI researchers published two scientific papers!

[*A Case of Severe Abomasal Sand Impaction in a Farmed White-Tailed Deer \(*Odocoileus virginianus*\) in Florida*](#)

Summary: Abomasal sand impaction occurs when an animal has a low-quality diet or abnormal eating behavior. The animal in this case had a severe case of chronic abomasal sand impaction which is theorized to have led to a compromised immune system and to secondary infections. This is the first reported case of sand impaction in white-tailed deer in Florida. Future studies will focus on how to optimize nutrition for farmed deer in Florida.

[*Culicoides Midge Abundance across Years: Modeling Inter-Annual Variation for an Avian Feeder and a Candidate Vector of Hemorrhagic Diseases in Farmed Wildlife*](#)

Summary: CHeRI researchers utilized occupancy modeling to estimate the abundance of gravid (egg-laden) and parous (most likely to transmit the virus) females of two putative vector species, *C. stellifer* and *C. venustus*, and one species, *C. haematopotus*, that was not considered a putative vector. **Results:** There were differences in habitat preferences and spatial distribution between the parous and gravid states for *C. haematopotus* and *C. stellifer*. Gravid midges preferred areas close to water on the border of well and poorly drained soil. These results will improve integrated pest management of EHDV and BTV vectors



CHeRI Spotlights!

Thien Nguyen- Necropsy Technician

Hi, my name is Thien (Tin). I graduated from UF with a degree in biology and zoology. As an undergraduate, I spent most of my time studying reptiles and amphibians, along with conducting research on their disease ecology. Before doing deer necropsies, I conducted necropsies on invasive animals, such as Tegus and caecilians. In my free time I like fishing, hiking, catching bugs, and taking care of my turtles.

As a necropsy technician, I am on call to visit deer farms and conduct necropsies to investigate the cause of death. I also help maintain the lab and equipment. I am constantly trying to streamline things so that we can get results and recommendations back to farmers as soon as possible.

Website Resources

The CHeRI website is full of [educational resources](#) and [publications](#) and we're always updating the site to keep information up-to-date and easy to understand. If you have any questions on deer and deer health, check out the resources or if you have a question that isn't covered by our resources, ask a question [here](#).

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 it's 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. *Proper shipping and notification* will ensure the sample stays viable for testing and that no cost is incurred by the shipper.

Call **352-562-3337** if you have any questions about requirements when sending CHeRI a specimen.

Contact Us:

Email: ufifas.cheri@gmail.com

EHD Hotline Phone: 352-562-DEER

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

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