



Volume 10, Issue 1, February 2025

## Message from the Director

It's a privilege to work along side all of the UF veterinarians, geographers, entomologists, virologists, ecologists and their students and staff that make up the Cervidae Health Research Initiative (CHeRI). Together we have made a difference in the deer farming industry in Florida. And none of it would happen without the support of Florida deer farmers. Here's to the next 10 years!

Thank you, always, for your support - *Sam*  
**Dr. Samantha Wisely**  
Director, CHeRI

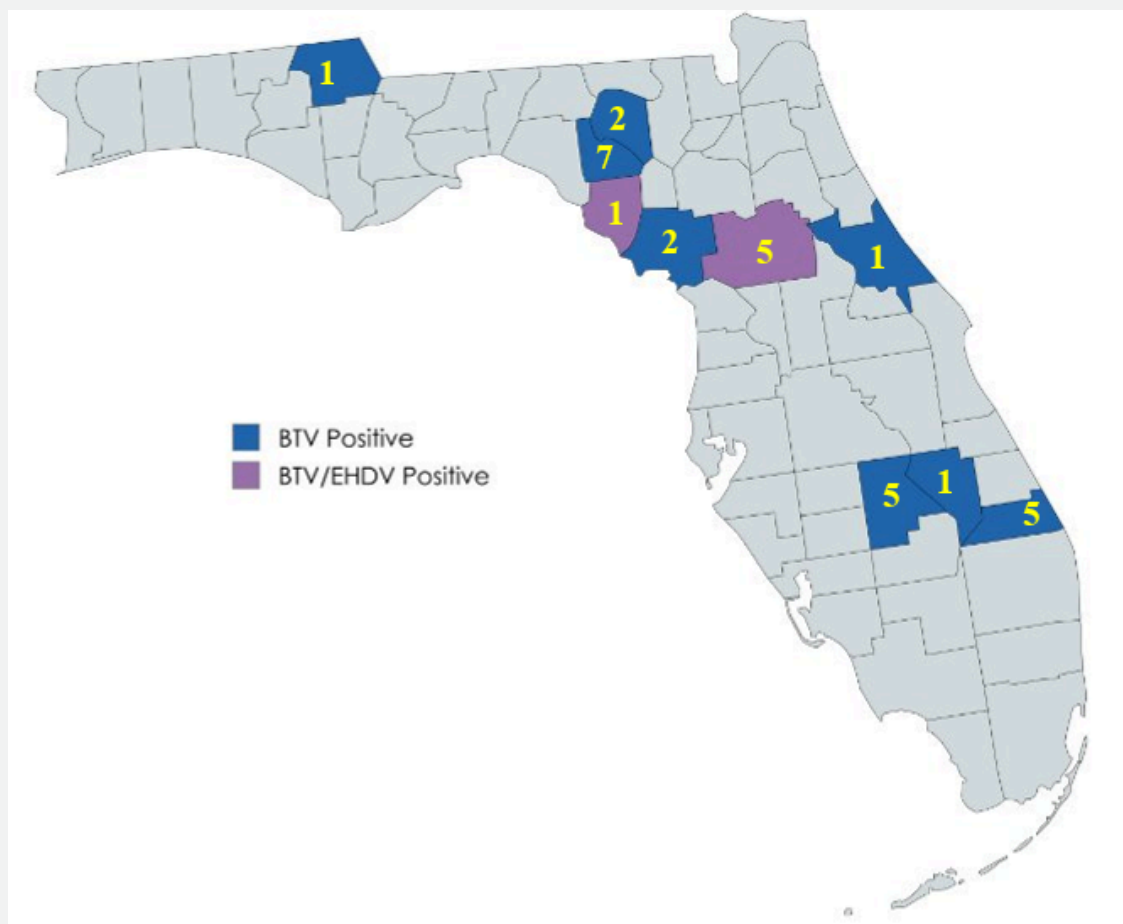
## 10 Years of CHeRI!

This year CHeRI turns 10 years old and our commitment to increase production for Florida deer farmers remains steadfast. Since 2015, we have provided disease diagnostics and veterinary reports for 2086 deer and visited 222 deer farms. We have facilitated the development of an effective vaccine for the deadly EHD virus and have seen steady decreases in EHDV deaths each year. In 2024 only 2 EHDV cases were recorded by CHeRI! We are also committed to producing the next generation of scientists, veterinarians and managers that can contribute to the industry. We have supported 53 graduate students or post-docs and provided internships to 23 interns. Our 50 scientific publications have been cited 542 times, indicating that we produce meaningful science that advances deer health. But much remains to be done. Back to back hurricanes brought an uptick in deer deaths due to several emerging viruses like bluetongue virus and deerpox virus. We remain committed to finding effective, sustainable solutions for the deer farming industry.

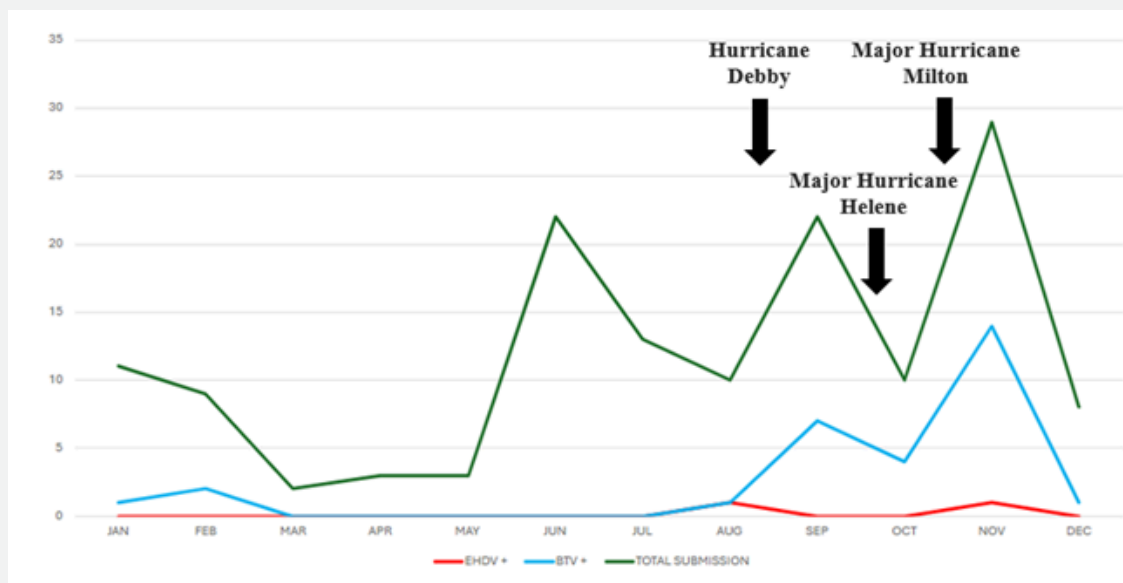
## 2024 Summary of Hemorrhagic Disease Testing

In 2024 we received 142 samples from 32 Florida farms from 19 counties and 1 out-of-state farm for hemorrhagic disease testing. 137 samples were from white-tailed deer and 5 were exotic ruminants.

- **1** animal tested positive for EHDV or were suspect cases.
  - EHDV-1 cases: 1
  - EHDV-2 cases: 0
  - EHDV-6 cases: 0
  - Untypeable cases: 1
- **30** tested positive for BTV
- **2** tested positive for coinfection of EHDV and BTV
- **15** tested positive for deerpox virus
- **0** tested positive for CHerI orbiviruses 1-3, West Nile virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus, Mobuck orbivirus, Yunnan orbivirus, Big Cypress orbivirus, or orthoreovirus.



Map of HD distribution in Florida by county for 2024. Yellow numerals indicate the number BTV positives.



Hemorrhagic disease cases by month in 2024. Green line shows the number of submissions, red line indicates EHDV positives, and the blue line indicates BTV positives. Major weather events are indicated by arrows. The initial spike in submissions (June) coincides with fawning season whereas spikes in EHDV and BTV positive submission may be attributed to major weather events this past year.

## 2025 CHeRI Retreat

CHeRI scientists, students and staff met in St. Pete last month for the annual Researcher Retreat. The event gives everyone an opportunity to provide updates on current research and industry trends and make plans for future research based on farmer needs. It's always great to get the CHeRI herd together!



## Upcoming Events

March 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, Orlando, FL

The 2025 SeTDA Spring Fling is coming up soon and CHeRI will be there! We can't wait to see and speak with farmers. We will have a booth, so come check out new research we're doing, grab some swag, and say hi! PhD student Vilma will be giving a presentation on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Dr. Juan Campos-Krauer will give CHeRI updates. We're looking forward to those!

March 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, French Lick, IN

CHeRI will have a booth at the 2025 annual NADeFA conference in Indiana this year! Come stop by booth 607 to grab some swag and learn about our research and work with farmed cervids in Florida!





**March 7-8, 2025**

# SPRING FLING

*All Year Long We're Florida Strong!*

- THROUGHOUT BOTH DAYS -  
**RAFFLES & GIVEAWAYS!!**  
**EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS!!**

- AUCTION INCLUDES -  
**ANIMALS, EXOTICS, SEMEN, HUNTS,**  
**SCI HUNTS, GUNS, FURNITURE,**  
**& MUCH, MUCH MORE!**

**SCHEDULE of EVENTS**

**FRIDAY**  
 8am Set up  
 Noon Doors Open  
 5pm Supper & Raffles  
 Meet and Greet Vendors,  
 & SETDA Board of Directors

**SATURDAY**  
 8am Expo Opens  
 9-11:45 am Seminars  
 Noon Lunch - on us  
 2pm AUCTION STARTS!!

**LOCATION**  
 Double Tree by Hilton Orlando Airport  
 3555 Hialeah National Dr. | Orlando, FL 32812  
 Call to Reserve Rooms: 407-456-0100  
 Reservation Link on our Website!

**CONSIGNMENT / AD / BOOTH FEES DUE...  
 JANUARY 8**

Consignment & Carcasses: 8 Items/Species  
 Email ads to: [whitetailmarketing@gmail.com](mailto:whitetailmarketing@gmail.com)  
 Ads: \$2.00 x 400-500 word limit. Item, include photo, logo or pdf file accepted.

**TO RESERVE YOUR BOOTH** Contact  
 Bill Lafferty at 407-217-7233, [bill@setda.com](mailto:bill@setda.com)

Log onto [SOUTHEASTTROPHYDEERASSOCIATION.COM](http://SOUTHEASTTROPHYDEERASSOCIATION.COM) for our Full Event Schedule & Updates!

REGISTER TODAY FOR THE  
 LARGEST NATIONAL FARMED CERVID CONVENTION



**NADeFA**  
 North American Deer Farmers Association

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE & FUNDRAISER**  
**MARCH 19-22, 2025 • FRENCH LICK RESORT**  
**FRENCH LICK, INDIANA**

EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS • ANTLER CONTEST • NADEFA SPRING SALE • PHOTO CONTEST  
 DART CONTEST • AWARDS CEREMONY • DINNER BANQUET • FUNDRAISER • COLORING CONTEST  
 • EXHIBITS • SILENT AUCTION AND MUCH MORE!

**LEADING THE CERVID INDUSTRY FOR 42 YEARS**  
**NADeFA.ORG**

## Congrats to our recent CHeRI grads!

A huge thanks to all the deer farmers and collaborators who've allowed access to deer and land, and who have participated in our research. CHeRI and our students are successful because of passionate farmers and collaborators. Your support is forever appreciated!



**MORGAN  
ROCKWELL**

MS Entomology



**AUSTIN  
SURPHLIS**

MS Veterinary  
Medical Sciences



**AN-CHI  
CHENG**

PhD Veterinary  
Medical Sciences

**CONGRATS TO OUR FALL  
2024 CHERI GRADUATES!**



## **CHeRI Spotlight!**

### **Miranda Imeri- PhD Student**

With a background in Animal Sciences from the University of Prishtina, Kosovo and a stint in Hungary at Szent István University, I embarked on my journey in wildlife studies. I earned my MSc in Wildlife Engineering from MATE University, becoming the first Wildlife Engineer in my country. Afterward, I ventured to Germany, where I delved into wildlife ecology as a scientist fellow at both the Goethe University in Frankfurt and German Federal Environmental Foundation. Passionate about wildlife conservation, I founded the



As part of CHeRI, I will conduct research related to white-tailed deer nutrition and forage systems. My work aims to assess the role of forages in

Kosovo Wildlife Organization, (KW), conserving nature in Kosovo through advocacy, research, and awareness initiatives. Currently, I'm pursuing a PhD in the Agronomy Department at the University of Florida. I'm thrilled to become a part of the Forage Team and CHeRI, and eager to contribute to our shared goals!

improving deer health and performance, focusing on nutrition, parasite management, and rumen health. I will also contribute to the development of non-invasive techniques for data collection in collaboration with farmers and researchers.

## Updates on our Dashboard Map

We've been extensively revamping our Dashboard Map over the past year. We thank you for your patience as we know many farmers utilize our map for planning vaccinations and use it to see where HD viruses are circulating. Our new and improved map will be functional and ready to go very soon!

## Ship us your specimens!

Are you experiencing an abnormal level of mortality of deer on your farm? Are you outside of Florida or want to necropsy your animal yourself? You can ship us samples for 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 your 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.**

And remember, if your farm is in Florida, we will come to your farm, perform a necropsy on the deceased animal, and provide diagnostic results for free! All results are confidential.

## Contact Us:

Email: [ufifas.cheri@gmail.com](mailto:ufifas.cheri@gmail.com)  
EHD Hotline Phone: 352-562-DEER  
Website: <http://wec.ifas.ufl.edu/cheri/>  
Facebook: [@UFIFAS.CHeRI](https://www.facebook.com/UFIFAS.CHeRI)  
X: [@UF\\_IFAS\\_CHeRI](https://twitter.com/UF_IFAS_CHeRI)



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