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EXTENSION

# CERVIDAE HEALTH RESEARCH INITIATIVE

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## Message from the Director

Spring is turning into summer and its fawning season! This is a busy time of year for Florida deer farmers. In this newsletter, Dr. Juan Campos provides some tips for dealing with deerpox virus which is especially deadly in newborn fawns. We also welcome our new necropsy interns to CHERI! We look forward to seeing you all in person at the SETDA BBQ in August. Until then...

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

Dr. Samantha Wisely  
Director, CHERI

## Deerpox: What Farmers Need to Know and Do

By: Dr. Juan M. Campos Krauer

### What is it?

Deerpox is a fast-spreading virus that mainly affects fawns, especially during warm weather. It spreads through the air (like when sick deer sneeze or cough), direct contact with infected deer, through shared equipment, tools, or shelters and possibly through bites from insects.

### What should you look for?

- Blisters or scabs on a deer's face, lips, ears, and hooves.
- Ulcers inside the mouth, throat, or stomach
- Hair loss
- Eye swelling
- Weakness
- Weight loss
- In serious cases, infected deer may die from not eating or from other bacterial infections.

### What should you do if you suspect deerpox?

- Isolate any deer showing signs of deerpox right away.
- Contact a veterinarian to verify if it is deerpox. PCR tests on lesion swabs can confirm the presence of the virus. Contact CHERI for more info.

- Clean and disinfect all tools, pens, and equipment using strong disinfectants like bleach (1%) or sodium hydroxide (0.8%).
- Wear gloves and long sleeves when handling sick animals. Always wash your hands and clothes afterward.
- Control pests (insects and rodents) and check any new deer for signs of illness before adding them to your herd.

Catching the disease early and taking quick action helps prevent more animals becoming infected.



## SETDA Spring Fling 2025

CHeRI attended the SeTDA Spring Fling in March. Vilma Cooper gave exciting updates on how to manage the midges responsible for hemorrhagic disease transmission, while Dr. Campos provided updates deer health research. Miranda Imeri, our new PhD student working on deer nutrition, accepted a scholarship from SeTDA. As always, we enjoyed catching up with deer farmers from Florida, Missouri and Pennsylvania.



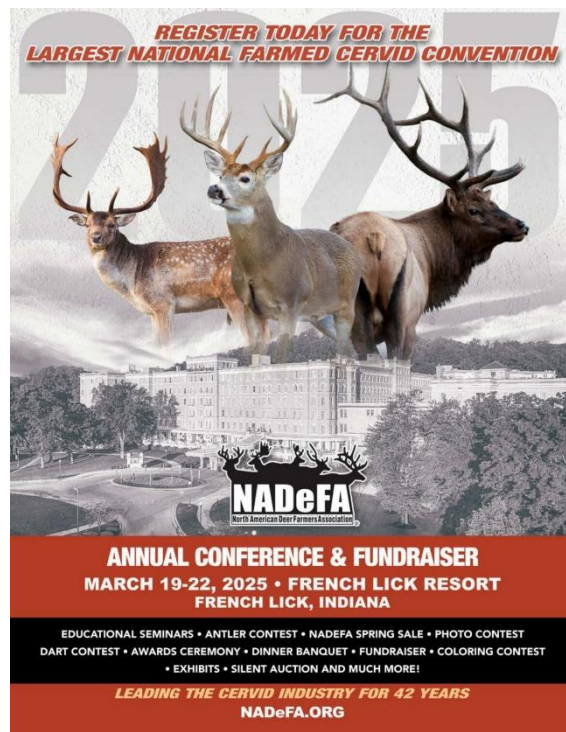
## Hemorrhagic Disease Testing- First Quarter

It's been quiet so far this year. While we've received 15 submissions for HD testing, none have tested positive. As we head into the summer months, we expect an increase in submissions and HD cases. Now is the time to prepare your herd for the upcoming "HD season." You can browse our informational resources on our website [here](#), call our deer hotline (352-562-3337), or ask a question through our [submission form](#) on our website.

Total submissions (send-in/necropsy)	Total unique farms	Total BTV cases	Total EHDV cases	Total other virus cases
15	9	0	0	0

## CHeRI at NADeFA

CHeRI Director Dr. Sam Wisely recently attended the North American Deer Farmers Association annual meeting in Indiana. She gave a presentation on "Hemorrhagic Disease Research and Management." The event was well attended, and it was great to see so many Florida deer farmers there!





## Upcoming Events

### SeTDA Summer BBQ- Austin Cary Teaching Forest, August 2nd

We will be at the annual SeTDA Summer BBQ! As always we will have our table with informational packets and swag. Look forward to educational seminars and BBQ! We look forward to seeing our deer farmers again!



## CHeRI Spotlight!



### First Pacharapong- Postdoc

I earned my Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.) in Thailand. Later, I completed both my master's and Ph.D. degrees in the Department of Infectious Diseases and Immunology at the College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Florida, in spring 2020 and summer 2024, respectively. My primary research focus is on the genomic characterization of pathogens, particularly bacteria and viruses. I am also deeply interested in genetic engineering of bacteriophages, with the goal of developing potent phages to combat antibiotic-resistant bacteria. I enjoy exploring microbial genomes to understand disease mechanisms and how we can develop protection strategies.

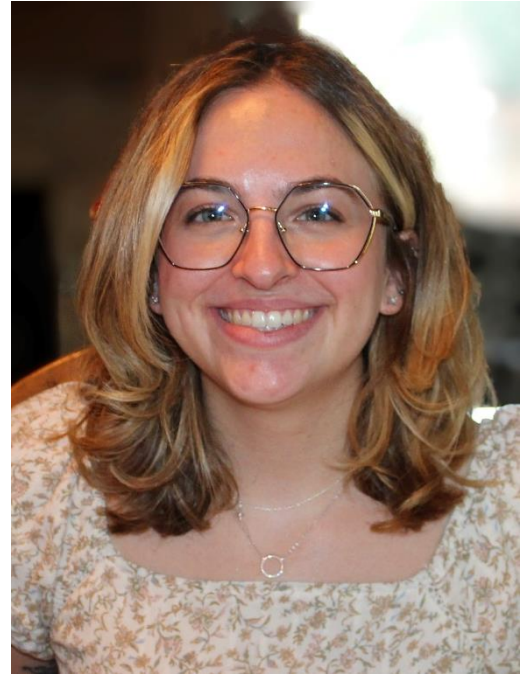
Outside of work, I am a portrait and landscape photographer (Nikon all the way!), and I love taking road trips across the U.S., visiting Florida's beaches, and scuba diving.

I am a postdoctoral associate in Dr. Subramanian's lab, where I focus on the genomic characterization of deer pathogens. My work involves using molecular techniques to study virus phylogeny and developing broadly applicable diagnostic methodologies for virus detection.

## Abigail Bierwerth- Necropsy Technician

Hi, I'm Abby! I am originally from Minnesota and got my degree in fisheries, wildlife, and conservation biology from the University of Minnesota. Through my studies as well as work in veterinary medicine and wildlife research, I discovered a passion for conservation medicine and disease diagnostics. I am very excited for the opportunity to be a part of CHeRI and look forward to learning from everyone here. Outside of work, I enjoy hiking, birding, photography, and crafts.

As a necropsy technician my primary role is to conduct deer necropsies and collect samples that are used to determine the cause of death and the presence of disease in farmed deer throughout the state.



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

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