

Farmed Cervidae Facility Licensing Explained

This guidance document is a reference and only covers the practical portions of the applicable regulations. It is recommended to read the Oklahoma Farmed Cervidae Act (2 O.S. § 6-501 through 2 O.S. § 6-515) and Oklahoma Administrative Code for the Farmed Cervidae Act (OAC 35:15-44-1 through OAC 35:15-44-20) in their entirety.

- Facility Construction
 - Facilities must be constructed of eight foot high game fence and built in a manner to prevent the access of wild cervidae and the escape of farmed cervidae.
 - Limit the facility size to the largest area to practically manage the herd. If an Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry (ODAFF) inspector cannot easily determine that no wild cervidae reside within the facility, a flushing procedure must be performed and approved by the local game warden prior to facility license approval.
 - Although possible, flushing is difficult and requires many people in a coordinated effort. If planning to build a facility larger than a few acres, it is recommended to call ODAFF before beginning construction.
 - Additional facilities owned by the same person (that do not share a common fence) must be licensed separately.
 - Exceptions may be made for facilities that reside on or near the same property.
- Initial License Application
 - The facility must be licensed **prior** to acquiring farmed cervidae
 - This does not prevent the purchase or ownership of farmed cervidae which are maintained at another licensed facility.
 - The license application includes contact information for the owner(s) and operator, facility/farm name and address, facility legal description, facility map, driving directions, carcass disposal method, criminal record in relation to animals and wildlife, signature under oath, and \$200 fee (includes inspection).
 - Persons not listed on the license application will not be considered a licensee.
 - Payment must first be processed and cleared before the inspection assignment can be made. Depending upon the payment method, the earlier an application and payment is submitted: the earlier the inspection can be assigned and completed.
 - The facility map can be printed or hand drawn. All major structures and fences should be marked. The map does not need to be perfectly to scale and should take no more than 10 minutes to complete.
 - For the initial license application only, the licensing year will be determined by the date of application submission:
 - If submitted January-June, the licensee will receive a license for the current and following licensing year (i.e. if the initial license application is submitted in January-June, the applicant will receive a license that expires June 30th of the following year instead of June 30th of the current year).
- Facility Inspection and Approval
 - Facility construction must be complete before the initial inspection can take place.
 - License applications may, however, be submitted prior to completion of construction. This will generally speed up the licensing process since the application and payment will have been fully processed by the time facility construction is complete.
 - The initial inspection will be assigned to an ODAFF inspector shortly after payment clears and the application processed. The inspector will then call to arrange an inspection.
 - The inspection will include a review of fencing, gates, feed bunks, shelter, pen conditions, carcass disposal areas, and other associated facilities.
 - ODAFF may request appropriate changes to the facility prior to approval.
 - If a follow-up inspection is needed, a \$100 fee will be assessed to the applicant.
 - Within five working days of an approved facility inspection, the licensee will be mailed a licensure packet (license card, license certificate, official sale forms, etc.).

- Renewal License Application and Inspection
 - Licenses expire June 30; renewal applications are mailed in early February and due by April 1.
 - Licensees may request a different due date with proper justification in writing to ODAFF by no later than April 1.
 - The application is the same as the initial application with an additional inventory form.
 - The licensee is exempt from completing the inventory if the herd has current status in the Chronic Wasting Disease Herd Certification Program.
 - The licensee is exempt from completing the facility portion of the application if no changes have occurred since the previously submitted application.
 - The renewal license application fee is \$100 (includes inspection).
 - Facilities must be inspected annually prior to licensure renewal. Inspections will occur between April and June. An ODAFF inspector will contact the licensee to schedule an inspection.
 - Following an approved inspection, a licensure packet will be mailed in mid-to-late June prior to license expiration.
- Pen Additions
 - If the facility is expanded with new pens, these new areas must be inspected and approved prior to use. Call ODAFF once construction is complete to arrange an inspection.
- Facility/Animal Management
 - All farmed cervidae should be provided adequate water, feed, space, and shelter (natural or manmade).
 - Pens shall not have excessive standing water, mud, or other pen conditions which negatively impact animal well-being.
 - All farmed cervidae must be within the confines of a licensed facility. If farmed cervidae escape, the licensee shall immediately notify ODAFF and the county game warden.
 - The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation has the authority to destroy escaped farmed cervidae if the licensee is unable or unwilling to capture them.
 - If escaped farmed cervidae are killed by a licensed hunter during legal hunting season, the hunter shall not be liable to the owner of the farmed cervidae.
 - It is unlawful to intentionally integrate wild cervidae into a farmed cervidae facility. The licensee shall notify ODAFF within two working days if wild cervidae are discovered within the facility.
 - Damage to facility perimeter fencing should be repaired expeditiously and reported to ODAFF within two working days.
- Animal Identification
 - All farmed cervidae one year of age or older must be individually identified by at least one form of visible identification.
 - Non-breeding hunting animals (that are natural additions and do not participate in the CWD Herd Certification Program) are exempt from this requirement.
 - All farmed cervidae (regardless of age) must be identified with at least one form of visible identification prior to movement from the original herd premises.
 - Non-breeding hunting animals (that are natural additions and do not participate in the CWD Herd Certification Program) are exempt from this requirement if being moved directly to a licensed commercial hunting area.
- Record Keeping
 - ODAFF Farmed Cervidae Sales Reports are distributed to all licensees for record keeping purposes. These forms have a carbon copy which is to be issued to buyers. The original reports must be made available to ODAFF upon request.
 - The following records shall be maintained for 3 years: farmed cervidae purchased, born, sold, killed, died, given away, or transported from the facility. Records shall show individual identification.
 - All animals sold, given away, or transported should be documented on an ODAFF Farmed Cervidae Sales Report (supplied to licensees).
 - All animals purchased should be documented on a receipt from the seller (if purchased within Oklahoma, this should be on an ODAFF Farmed Cervidae Sales Report).
 - All animals that are born, killed, or died should be documented in a reasonable manner. The ODAFF Farmed Cervidae Sales Report is adequate.
 - Animal health documents such as certificates of veterinary inspection (health certificate), tuberculosis test charts, brucellosis test charts, chronic wasting disease test results, etc.

- The licensee shall maintain an inventory of all farmed cervidae over one year of age with listed sex, age, identification, origin, and disposition (if applicable).
- Sellers of farmed cervidae shall confirm that buyers hold a valid farmed cervidae facility license or a valid commercial hunting area license.
- Carcass Disposal
 - Carcasses should be properly disposed of to protect air quality and water quality. This is also a good practice to protect a herd from disease, predators, and prying neighbors.
 - Carcass disposal areas shall be a minimum of thirty feet from any farmed cervidae.
 - Legal methods of carcass disposal include: rendering, landfill, burial, closed incineration, and composting. For more detailed information on legal carcass disposal, see the Carcass Disposal Options document on the Farmed Cervidae Webpage or call the ODAFF Agricultural Environmental Management Service division at (405) 522-4659.
- Slaughter
 - An owner or operator may slaughter farmed cervidae for personal or noncommercial consumption at any time.
 - Farmed cervidae are not to be killed and/or hunted by anyone other than the owner or operator of the facility.
 - Commercial slaughtering of farmed cervidae may be performed pursuant to the Exotic Livestock and Exotic Livestock Products Inspection Act (2 O.S. § 6-290.1 through 6-291). For more information, contact ODAFF Food Safety division at (405)522-1060.
- Antlers and Hides
 - There is no restriction on the sale of farmed cervidae hides or antlers that are not attached to the skull plate (antler sheds).
 - Any antlers that are attached to the skull plate must be individually identified with sufficient documentation to link it to the farmed cervidae facility it originated from. This may include, but not limited to, photographs, lock on tags, DNA testing, or other proof of ownership.
 - The sale of hides or antlers with attached skull plates shall be documented on an ODAFF Farmed Cervidae Sales Report with both the seller and buyer maintaining copies.
- Cervidae Import Requirements from Outside of Oklahoma
 - Imports of cervidae from any county where chronic wasting disease exists in wild cervidae shall be prohibited. A current map of chronic wasting disease positive counties is available on the Farmed Cervidae Webpage.
 - All cervidae imports must come from a source herd that has CWD herd certification status.
 - All cervidae must be listed on a valid certificate of veterinary inspection with permit number.
 - All cervidae must have proper tuberculosis and brucellosis testing.
 - See the farmed cervidae permit application on the Farmed Cervidae Webpage for more information.
 - When transporting cervidae out of Oklahoma, the exporter must meet the importing state's entry requirements (not Oklahoma's requirements). A list of state contacts for entry requirements is available on the Farmed Cervidae Webpage.
 - Effective November 1, 2012, no cervidae shall be imported or transported through Oklahoma unless it originates from a state that allows Oklahoma farmed cervidae to be imported or transported through.
- License Expiration
 - If a licensee wishes to withdraw from the facility licensing program, please call and inform ODAFF. A close-out inspection (free of charge) must be performed once the farmed cervidae have been disposed of in a legal manner.
 - Failure to withdraw from the licensing program or renew the facility license shall result in the facility being quarantined which may result in an administrative hearing, revocation of license number, and removal of farmed cervidae.
 - Upon expiration of a license, the licensee will have until November 1 to dispose of the cervidae in a legal manner. This may include selling to a licensed farmed cervidae facility or commercial hunting area. In no case shall farmed cervidae be released into the wild.