

February 2017

Hello again from the Extension Office. It seems like the unseasonably warm temperatures are here to stay with spring just around the corner. I have been busy attending Major Livestock Shows the past month and still have a few more to go. So, if you don't see me around the office or around town I am more than likely at a stock show trying not to get sick.

Since we last talked there has been a confirmed case of CWD in Medina County on a free ranging whitetail deer. So, I thought it would be wise to spend some time talking about CWD. Chronic Wasting Disease affects the nervous system of white-tailed deer, mule deer, red deer, elk, and moose. The precise origins of the disease are unknown and it was first detected in 1976 in a research mule deer herd in Colorado. CWD is in a group of diseases like the scrapies in domestic sheep and goats. Symptoms occur 16 to 36 months after infection and include emaciation, decreased activity, excessive drinking and slobbering, grinding of teeth, and loss of fear for humans. The disease is spread by direct and indirect contact with saliva, feces, urine, and carcass. Some research suggests that antler rubs may even spread the disease.

I want to stress that there is no indication that CWD can affect Livestock or humans but it is always safe practice to remain cautious. Experts advise that hunters only harvest healthy appearing animals. If a diseased animal is encountered be sure to note its location and contact the nearest Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Game Warden or Wildlife Biologist. There is currently no vaccine to prevent the infection, and once infected there are no known treatments. Researchers are working to develop such tools. To prevent the spread of CWD is to manage susceptible populations. We have a lot of literature here at the office if you have more questions on this topic. Please feel free to drop by anytime.

On a positive note we have been staying in constant contact with Tyson Broad at Texas Tech Junction. For those of you that may not know Mr. Broad was very instrumental in the development and approval of the Watershed Protection Plan for the South Llano Watersheds. Please stay in contact with us, as there will be numerous educational opportunities in the future. Currently, there is a Texas Watershed Steward Workshop scheduled for May 6, 2017 at Texas Tech Junction. We will have more information on this great workshop in the months to come. Also, we are seeking volunteers who may have properties that are being affected by Arundo or Giant Reed. We are looking for test plots to seek a treatment method for this invasive species. Please contact us if you are interested in Cooperating!

Sam Silvers

CEA Kimble County

Office: 325-446-2620

Cell: 830-234-7021

Email: gssilvers@ag.tamu.edu

<http://kimble.agrilife.org/>