

Project Summary

The following is intended as a brief overview of the study and what to expect from participation. A detailed outline of procedures and requirements has also been provided for review as a separate document.

Research Purpose

In this study, we aim to validate a field-based method for predicting parasite burden in cervids. This effort will serve to equip producers and veterinarians with a rapid, non-invasive, easily-implementable parasite control modality.

Eligibility & Participation

Any client of Aggield Veterinary Services (current or future) owning/managing cervids (e.g. deer species) is eligible for participation. Data collection for this study will take place between August 1, 2023 and August 1, 2024. Contribution is entirely voluntary. There are no commitment requirements for frequency of scheduling or number of animals. Participation may involve pre-arranged visits for sample collection during routine herd work (e.g. AI, fawn release, etc), or sampling during scheduled veterinary appointments as part of provided services.

Animals must meet the following basic criteria for inclusion:

1. Classification as a cervid species
2. At least 4 months of age
3. Have not been treated with antibiotics or dewormers within 30 days of sample collection
4. Be currently free of disease/illness unrelated to parasites (e.g. pneumonia)
5. Have not suffered substantial blood loss within the last 180 days (6 months)
6. Have not contributed samples to this study within the last 180 days (6 months)

Participant Obligations

For inclusion, each individual animal must contribute the following data during the same visit:

- General health assessment by Dr. Brady or other approved veterinarian.
 - If able, a rectal temperature and photos of the eye may be taken.
- Blood sample (maximum 3ml)
- Fecal sample

General background information will also be requested from the producer as part of data analysis. This includes each animal's age, sex, general health history, pregnancy status and/or breeding date (if applicable/known), and the date of last deworming and product used (if applicable/known).

Benefits of Participation

Immediate benefits to participating clients include:

- Determining levels of parasite burden within individuals and/or herds
- Establishment of recommendations for future deworming practices
- Evaluation of the success of previously performed deworming
- Indications of individual and overall herd health
- Identification of “problem animals” who may benefit from additional care or removal from the herd

Complimentary services for included animals:

- Health assessments including a physical exam, body condition score, and documentation of findings in the patient/client's medical record
- Fecal analysis via McMaster's Fecal Egg Count
- Blood screening tests for anemia
- Reports and recommendations for management of current parasite burden

Complimentary or discounted travel & hourly fees:

**Please review the accompanying Detailed Project Outline for specific terms.*

- Scheduled visits for sample collection **only** during routine producer herd-work days
 - Minimum 15 animals sampled per visit (exceptions only with approval)
 - No travel or hourly fees/costs associated
- Sampling during routine or non-routine veterinary appointments
 - Conducted concurrently with veterinary services (pre-scheduled or by opportunity)
 - Eligible for discounted or complimentary travel fees
 - ☞ *Dependent on location, number of contributed samples, and services requested*
 - Eligible for discounted hourly service fees
 - ☞ *Dependent on number of samples contributed and services requested*

Ethics & Confidentiality

Animal welfare will be prioritized and animals will not be forced to participate. All sampling methods are considered non-invasive and can be collected on awake animals.

Animal identities will be kept **confidential**, and specific identifiers such as ownership, tag numbers, unique ID's, or other markers **will not** be included in any published study. Clients and facilities will have the option to be recognized in the "acknowledgement section" of the study as they see fit.

Scheduling

As detailed above, there are various ways you can elect to partake in this study, and we hope you will keep us in mind as you plan your fall or spring herd-work dates! If you would like to schedule a sample collection date (with or without veterinary services) please contact our Client Liaison directly via the information provided at the bottom of this document. Alternatively, we may reach out directly regarding participation.

Final Remarks

The information above represents a condensed summary of our goals, expectations, and the benefits of participation. We strongly encourage you to read the accompanying Detailed Project Outline for a full understanding of the project. After you have read the materials provided, one of our team is happy to answer any questions you may have or facilitate scheduling. In addition, we encourage you to refer other cervid producers to us for inclusion in this study as well!

We understand and respect your busy schedule, and will make every effort to facilitate your needs in conjunction with this research! We are hopeful that this study is the first of many, and will provide both cervid veterinarians and producers with strategies for improved herd health!

Contact Us

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