



# Why Should You Shoot More Deer in Unit CWD?



The short answer is an increased harvest will result in fewer deer in Unit CWD, meaning fewer CWD-positive deer, resulting in less deer interactions where disease transfer can occur.

TWRA's goal is to keep CWD from spreading and to keep the number of infected deer to a minimum, reducing infection rates where possible. Hunter harvest is the only feasible way to accomplish this.

An increase in both buck and doe harvest is needed in Unit CWD. Bucks are the most likely to spread this disease since they have larger home ranges than females and testing results show they are twice as likely to have CWD. Increased doe harvest is needed to decrease the deer population so social interactions between deer lessen, which will then decrease the risk of disease spread.

Fayette and Hardeman counties are the most heavily impacted. High disease rates there indicate the environment is a source of infection in addition to animal-to-animal contact. Left unchecked, infection rates will continue to grow, causing a population decline and a younger

overall deer population.

Population reduction is also needed in the remaining Unit CWD counties (Chester, Haywood, Madison, McNairy, Shelby and Tipton) to help ensure CWD does not spread quickly if it reaches these areas. Madison is CWD-positive, but CWD is only known to exist in the southwest portion of the county.

If we do not harvest more deer, CWD will result in a change to an unhealthy deer population in the Unit and the chances of hunters harvesting non-CWD-positive deer will lessen. Increased disease rates will also increase the potential of these counties serving as a source of spreading the disease to unaffected areas of the state.

Hunter harvest is the primary means to best manage CWD in Tennessee. If we are responsive as hunters and harvest more deer, we will continue to enjoy an overall healthy deer population. But if we don't, CWD will do its dirty work, leaving us and future generations mostly diseased, younger and fewer deer.