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## **Hunters Eligible for \$200 if Deer is Culture Positive for Bovine Tuberculosis**

Sept. 23, 2011 Lansing - Today, the Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (MDARD) announced an incentives program to encourage more Michigan hunters to have their deer tested for bovine Tuberculosis (TB). Bovine TB is a contagious bacterial disease of cattle that can affect other mammals, including humans. In 1994, a unique strain of bovine TB was identified in Michigan's free-ranging deer. "Under this new program, if a wild free-ranging white-tailed deer harvested during the 2011 hunt is turned in for bovine TB testing, and it cultures positive, the hunter may apply for a \$200 incentive," said MDARD Director Keith Creagh. "MDARD recently announced 57 counties in Michigan's Lower Peninsula achieved bovine TB free status; but there is still a pocket of bovine TB in deer that can be transmitted to cattle. This new incentive program is one tool in our toolbox to help refine the footprint of the disease and protect Michigan's \$9.2 billion dollar beef and dairy industries."

"Some of the best hunting in the state is in Northeastern Lower Michigan," said State Senator John Moolenaar (R-Midland). "Our wildlife enthusiasts can show they care about TB eradication, and at the same time, Michigan's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development will reward them for removing disease from the landscape."

"I encourage landowners, hunt clubs and people who hunt on public land to aid in eradicating bovine TB by hunting in Northeastern Lower Michigan. Our efforts over the past decade have helped pinpoint areas where bovine TB is more commonly found in the deer herd," said Michigan Department of Natural Resources Director Rodney Stokes. "Most deer infected with bovine TB look and act like normal deer, so testing in the laboratory is the only way to confirm TB infection which is why it's so important to turn heads in for testing." Under the Incentives Program:

1. Hunters must take the deer to a DNR check station. They can have the antlers removed, but the head is submitted for testing.
2. DNR collects the heads from all the check stations and transports them to the Wildlife Disease Laboratory at Michigan State University's (MSU) Diagnostic Center for Population and Animal Health.
3. If the deer is confirmed to be TB infected, the hunter will receive routine test notification from the DNR laboratory which will include an Incentives Program contact number.
4. Notified hunters should contact MDARD with their confirmation code. A form will be mailed to the hunter's address for them to fill out and mail back for payment.
5. Upon receipt of the completed form, hunters will be mailed \$200 for each TB positive deer harvested.

Visit the Emerging Diseases website for an all-positives map and additional information, including an advertisement about the incentives program; or to join the Michigan Animal Health Listserv:

[www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases](http://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases).