

Policy Statement Concerning Velveting in Farmed Deer

1. The harvest of velvet (growing antler) from farmed cervids is a commercially viable and renewable resource which, when done properly, does not harm the health or reproductive status of the animal.
2. Removal of velvet antler is a surgical procedure and requires adherence to the following tenets:
 - a. Relief of pain (analgesia)
 - b. Antisepsis (cleanliness)
 - c. Homeostasis (control of blood flow)
3. Because the removal of velvet antler is an amputation, the harvest of velvet antler must be conducted within the bounds of a valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship. Such a relationship is of duration long enough for the veterinarian to have current knowledge of the husbandry practices and health status of the herd and for the veterinarian to be confident in the ability of the deer farmer to perform any needed treatments to the standard defined in this policy statement.
4. Humane removal of velvet requires a combination of restraint and analgesia. The following are examples of acceptable restraint/analgesia combinations.
 - a. Mechanical restraint (chute or crush) and application of local analgesia around the pedicle of the antler.
 - b. Chemical sedation with application of local analgesia around the pedicle of the antler.
 - c. A combination of chemical immobilization and a dissociative anesthesia.
 - d. Chemical immobilization and general anesthesia using a chemical agent and a narcotic anesthetic.
5. The following are unacceptable methods of velvet antler removal.
 - a. Mechanical restraint without the appropriate use of local analgesic.
 - b. The use of paralytic agents without the appropriate use of local analgesic.
 - c. General electro-immobilization.

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