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VVMA Position Statement

Captive Hunting

Captive hunting refers to a privately owned facility where customers pay to hunt animals that are housed within the facility. These animals may be native or exotic to the location of the facility, and are often transported from elsewhere. Imported animals may carry disease that could spread to other animals within the facility, to native wildlife and domestic animal populations, and to humans. Escape of the captive animals poses risks for spread of disease, as well as disruption or damage to local ecosystems. As of the writing of this position statement, there are no known captive hunt facilities legally operating within the state of Vermont.

The Vermont Veterinary Medical Association expresses serious concern about the infectious disease risk inherent in the importation of cervidae from outside of Vermont's borders, and is opposed to such importation for the purpose of captive hunt. Many states have identified the presence of Chronic Wasting Disease in both captive or wild deer and elk. In addition, several states have identified wild ruminants (deer or bison) as reservoirs for *Mycobacterium bovis* (bovine tuberculosis). Importation of these animals thereby presents a significant medical risk, not only to native white-tail deer and moose populations of Vermont, but also to the state's valuable herds of dairy and beef cattle. In some parts of the country, escape of imported boar has led to the development of feral hog populations that are destructive to land and crops, as well as a reservoir for infectious animal and zoonotic diseases. Such importation for any reason other than captive hunt, if allowed to occur at all, should be under strict regulation and surveillance by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture and/or the Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife.

Adopted by the Executive Board on November 11, 2020