

WSGW RADIO PRESENTATION

Hunter Food Safety

November 8, 2016

Michigan has a strong and proud deer hunting tradition and is at or near the top of the list in deer hunting states in number of deer hunters, number of days spent hunting, and the number of deer harvested each year.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE) estimates the nearly 700,000 hunters in Michigan spend over \$700 million each year on food, lodging, transportation, equipment and hunting licenses.

Food Safety Factors to Consider:

- Proper processing can help keep food safe from the field to the fork.
- Wear rubber gloves when field dressing your deer.
- Deer, elk, wild pigs and other game can carry pathogenic bacteria like E.coli 0157:H7, Salmonella, and Campylobacter jejuni.
- Hunters should take precautions to prevent the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). Minimize handling and cutting of the brain, spinal tissue, and lymph nodes of any animals killed during a hunt.
- Remove fat and connective tissue while boning-out meat from deer.
- The heads, legs, and other body parts must be properly disposed of in a licensed incinerator or buried in a licensed landfill.
- Anyone preparing their own venison should follow standard food safety practices such as maintaining the meat at 41° F or below during processing to prevent the growth of pathogenic bacteria.
- Meat that will not be consumed within 5 days should be frozen.
- Meat used for jerky should be heated to a temperature of 165° F or above before it is dried.
- Keep a separate set of tools that are used only for butchering deer.
- Big game animals should be field-dressed immediately to cool the carcass and then hung by the head to allow the body cavity to drain thoroughly.
- Ice bags can be used to cool the carcass quickly.
- Wash hands with soap and warm water before and after handling the meat.

Sources: Food Safety News
Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment