

# DNR: Hunters encouraged to participate in DNR's deer donation program

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The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) encourages hunters to donate Wisconsin-harvested deer to the department's Deer Donation Program. The program helps stock food pantries for the upcoming holiday season and supports residents in need throughout the state.

Since the program began in 2000, hunters have donated almost 100,000 deer, totaling more than 3.8 million pounds of venison distributed to Wisconsin food pantries.

Through the [Deer Donation Program](#), the DNR works with partnering meat processors to distribute thousands of pounds of donated venison to Wisconsin food pantries.

"Wisconsin hunters have an important opportunity to support families in their communities during the deer season through the Venison Donation Program," said Brad Koele, DNR Wildlife Damage Specialist. "Whether you harvest an extra deer or donate the only deer you shoot, we thank all deer hunters, meat processing and nonprofit partners who help make this program a success for those in need."

Those looking to support the Deer Donation Program can also do so through a monetary donation when purchasing a hunting or fishing license or a Wisconsin State Park pass.

## **Food Insecurity In Wisconsin**

Approximately one in 12 Wisconsin households did not have enough food before the

COVID-19 pandemic began in early 2020, and research shows this number continues to rise, according to the [University of Wisconsin-Madison's Food Security Project](#).

Additionally, the Wisconsin Food Security Project reports that food insecurity makes it harder for children to thrive in and out of school, increases the risk of health problems for children and adults, makes it more difficult to manage chronic conditions and contributes to short-term and long-term stress for children and families.

### **How To Donate Wisconsin-Harvested Deer**

Hunters interested in donating a Wisconsin-harvested deer to the DNR's Deer Donation Program can follow these steps:

1. **Field dress your deer.** Handle the carcass with care.
2. **Register your deer through [Game Reg](#).** Make a note of your registration confirmation number and keep it on hand when dropping off your deer.
3. **Test your deer for CWD if harvested from a [CWD-affected county](#)** that requires testing before taking the deer to a processor. To find a CWD sampling location near you to submit samples from Wisconsin-harvested deer free of charge, visit the DNR's "[Sampling For Chronic Wasting Disease](#)" webpage. Test results are usually available from the DNR within two weeks.
4. **Call ahead.** Contact [one of the participating processors](#) before dropping off your deer to make sure they have space to accept it. More processors may be added later in the season, so check back if you don't see one currently in your area. If donating a Wisconsin-harvested deer that is being tested for CWD, inform the processor at the time of the donation and provide your CWD barcode number. The processor will hold onto the donated deer until results are known and before distributing to an area nonprofit.
5. **Drop off** your deer at a participating processor.