

HB 1094 -- AGRICULTURAL DEER

SPONSOR: Houghton

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources by a vote of 9 to 2. Voted "Do Pass" by the Select Committee on Agriculture by a vote of 7 to 3.

This bill changes the laws regarding deer. In its main provisions, the bill:

(1) Removes captive white-tailed deer and captive elk from the definition of "captive wildlife" and adds agricultural deer to the definition of "livestock" for the purposes of sales and use tax exemptions;

(2) Defines "Agricultural Deer" as captive deer that have been legally acquired or their offspring and that are privately owned primarily for the purposes of agriculture, propagation, or the operation of a harvesting preserve;

(3) Defines "harvesting preserve" as an area of land where agricultural deer are released and harvested;

(4) Specifies that the Department of Agriculture has the authority to regulate agricultural deer;

(5) Authorizes the director of the department or his or her representative to enter on the premises of agricultural deer propagating licensees and agricultural deer harvesting preserve licensees if accompanied by the licensee to conduct investigations and inspections or execute the duties necessary. The department must provide at least 48 hours' notice prior to entry, except in the event of an emergency;

(6) Creates the "Agricultural Deer Fund" in the state treasury to administer the laws relating to agricultural deer;

(7) Requires an individual or entity wanting to engage in the business of propagating and selling agricultural deer to apply in writing to the director of the department;

(8) Specifies the conditions under which the director may issue an agricultural deer propagating license to an applicant, including a \$100 license fee;

(9) Specifies activities which are allowed under an agricultural deer propagating license;

(10) Specifies that if the property on which the authorized enclosure of an agricultural deer propagating licensee is located is sold or transferred, the license may be transferred to the purchaser and all the existing deer on the property at the time of sale may remain on the property under certain conditions;

(11) Requires any property that is proposed to be used for agricultural deer propagating receive certification from the Department of Conservation that all wild deer have been removed from the enclosure;

(12) Sets forth requirements for the operation of an agricultural deer propagating licensee, including requirements relating to fencing, acquiring deer, notification of escaped deer, enrollment in herd certification programs, license renewal and record keeping;

(13) Prohibits any person from harvesting an agricultural deer except in a licensed agricultural deer harvesting preserve;

(14) Requires a person to obtain a license from the department before operating an agricultural deer harvesting preserve;

(15) Specifies the conditions under which the director may issue an agricultural deer propagating license to an applicant, including a \$300 license fee;

(16) Specifies that if the property on which the authorized enclosure of an agricultural deer harvesting preserve licensee is located is sold or transferred, the license may be transferred to the purchaser and all the existing deer on the property at the time of sale may remain on the property under certain conditions;

(17) Requires any property that is proposed to be used for an agricultural deer harvesting preserve receive certification from the Department of Conservation that all wild deer have been removed from the enclosure;

(18) Requires any agricultural deer preserve to be not less than 320 acres in area and be located in one continuous block of land;

(19) Sets forth requirements for the operation of an agricultural deer harvesting preserve licensee, including requirements relating to fencing, acquiring deer, notification of escaped deer, and record keeping;

(20) Authorizes a licensee to allow agricultural deer and any other livestock or exotic animals that are regulated by the department to be harvested within the confines of the harvesting preserve without regard to sex or harvesting season. However, a

licensee may allow wildlife to be harvested within the confines of the harvesting preserve subject to all applicable rules and regulations of the Department of Conservation;

(21) Requires all agricultural deer that are harvested from a harvesting preserve to be identified with an agricultural deer tag provided by the department before being processed or transported from the harvesting preserve;

(22) Allows the state veterinarian to set rules and regulations for Chronic Wasting Disease testing requirements for harvesting preserves;

(23) Prohibits any person from taking a wild deer into an enclosure that houses agricultural deer and releasing agricultural deer from an enclosure owned by a propagating or harvesting preserve licensee; and

(24) Adds agricultural deer to the definition of "livestock" for the purposes of the meat inspection law, Missouri Livestock Disease Control and Eradication Law, and the Missouri Livestock Marketing Law.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this bill would establish a framework from captive deer to be regulated by the Missouri Department of Agriculture.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Houghton; Charles James; Donald Hill; Missouri Federation of Animal Owners; and Missouri Cattlemen's Association.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.