

HB 1412 -- AGRICULTURAL DEER

SPONSOR: Houghton

This bill 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 (Section 144.010, RSMo).

The bill specifies that the Department of Agriculture has the authority to regulate agricultural deer. Agricultural deer is 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. With 48 hours' notice to the licensee, the Director of the Department or his or her representative are authorized 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 (Section 261.352).

An individual or entity wanting to engage in the business of propagating and selling agricultural deer must apply in writing to the department. If the individual or entity meets specified conditions, including payment of a \$100 license fee, the director may issue an agricultural deer propagating license to an applicant. The bill also specifies activities which are allowed under an agricultural deer propagating license. The operation of an agricultural deer propagating licensee must meet requirements relating to fencing, acquiring deer, notification of escaped deer, enrollment in herd certification programs, license renewal and record keeping (Section 261.354).

If the property on which the authorized enclosure of an agricultural deer propagating licensee or an agricultural deer harvesting preserve 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. Any property that is proposed to be used for agricultural deer propagating or harvesting must receive certification from the Department of Conservation that all wild deer have been removed from the enclosure (Sections 261.354 and 261.356).

No person may harvest an agricultural deer except in a licensed agricultural deer harvesting preserve. A person must obtain a license from the department before operating an agricultural deer harvesting preserve. If the individual meets specified conditions, including payment of a \$300 license fee, the director may issue an

agricultural deer harvesting preserve license to an applicant (Section 261.356).

An agricultural deer preserve may not be less than 320 acres in area and must be located in one continuous block of land. The bill 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 (Section 261.360).

A harvesting preserve may 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, if a licensee allows wildlife to be harvested within the confines of the harvesting preserve, the harvesting of the wildlife is subject to all applicable rules and regulations of the Department of Conservation. All agricultural deer harvested from a harvesting preserve must be identified with an agricultural deer tag provided by the department before being processed or transported from the preserve (Section 261.360).

The state veterinarian may set rules and regulations for Chronic Wasting Disease testing requirements for harvesting preserves. No person may take a wild deer into an enclosure that houses agricultural deer or release agricultural deer from an enclosure owned by a propagating or harvesting preserve licensee (Section 261.360).

Agricultural deer is added 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 (Sections 265.300, 267.565 and 277.020).

This bill is the same as HB 1094 (2015).