Deer can catch COVID: Here's what hunters should know
2 December 2021, by Matt Shipman

Research has shown that deer can become infected with COVID-19, raising questions among some hunters about whether field-dressing deer or eating venison can pose a risk of contracting the disease.

"At this point, deer are not considered a significant vector for spreading COVID-19, but there are some simple things hunters can do to reduce their risk of contracting COVID-19 and keep themselves and their loved ones safe," says Ellen Shumaker, a food safety expert at NC State.

With that in mind, Shumaker and her colleagues on the FoodCOVNet team, led by NC State, have created a one-page factsheet on deer and COVID-19 aimed specifically at sharing information with hunters.

Here are the best practices they outline for reducing COVID-19 risk when hunting deer:

- Wear a face covering when in close contact with a breathing deer.
- Wear gloves while field dressing deer.
- Wash hands thoroughly after hunting.

The FoodCOVNet team has also assembled a host of online resources providing basic background on COVID-19 prevention, as well as steps you can take in your home and community to reduce your risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19.

Provided by North Carolina State University