



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Health

ROBERT B. STROUBE, M.D., M.P.H.
STATE HEALTH COMMISSIONER

P.O. BOX 2448
RICHMOND, VA 23210

April 10, 1992

MEMORANDUM

TO: Regional Directors
District Directors
Sanitarian Coordinators
Sanitarian Managers

From: Robert B. Stroube, M.D., M.P.H.
State Health Commissioner

Subject: Venison Donated to Charitable Food Establishments

Venison which has been donated by the Hunters for the Hungry program is exempt from state and federal meat inspection. Under the venison donation program meat processing plants, inspected by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, should process the slaughtered deer. This processing is allowed by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the venison is processed under the same conditions as inspected meat. The venison is then donated to charitable food establishments (i.e., soup kitchens, homeless shelters, etc.) which prepare it for service to needy persons. Due to the meat inspection exemption, venison is not labeled approved. However, the meat processing plant should attach its plant label, stating it is venison and is not for sale.

The incidence of disease in deer slaughtered in Virginia is reported to be low. The organizers of the Hunters for the Hungry and Virginia's food banks are working with us, the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to ensure the wholesomeness of the venison prior to processing.

Please be advised that donated venison processed in a meat processing plant, inspected by the Department of Agriculture and consumer Services, is approved for use in charitable food establishments. If such an establishment in your jurisdiction has received venison, please re-emphasize to food managers the storage, handling, preparing, and serving requirements for handling potentially hazardous foods.