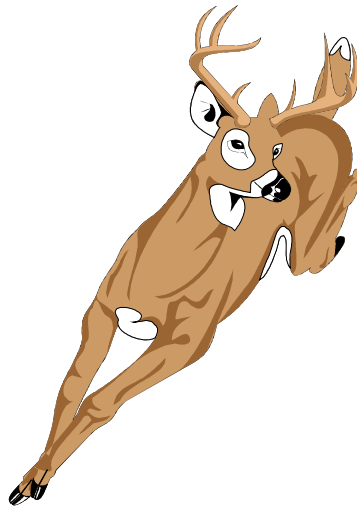


Safety Tips:
**Caring for
venison in
warm
weather**



**Wisconsin Department of
Agriculture, Trade and
Consumer Protection**

Keep it clean and cold

Take care of your harvest as soon as possible during warm weather. When the air temperature is over 40° F, harmful bacteria capable of causing foodborne illness grow quickly. To make sure your venison stays safe to eat:

- Field dress the carcass immediately after harvest.
- Wash the body cavity with cold, clean water if possible. Carry a clean towel to wipe your hands and prevent cross contamination.
- Place the heart and liver in a food-grade plastic bag if you wish to keep them.
- Spread the rib cage to cool the carcass more quickly. If the air temperature is over 40° F, consider packing the carcass with clean ice.
- Refrigerate the carcass, if possible.
- Use food quality plastic bags or buckets to store cut meats. Do not use dark-colored garbage bags; they may contain toxic resins and are not intended for food use.

Register your deer as soon as possible.
Remember, bacteria grow quickly in warm weather.

- Do not leave venison or other wild game in a car trunk where warmer temperatures promote bacterial growth.
- Use a cooler filled with ice or dry ice to store cut meat.
- In very warm weather, it is important to register and process venison as soon as it is harvested. Venison will spoil if it hangs without refrigeration in warm weather.
- Let the registration station know if you wish to donate your harvest to the "charitable venison program."



Selecting a processor

Most licensed meat plants in Wisconsin will process venison. However, it's best to call before going.

A good meat processor will:

- Accept only fresh-appearing venison in food quality containers.
- Store and process venison separately from other meat and foods.
- Include your name, cut of meat and the statement "NOT FOR SALE" on each package.
- Store carcasses in a cold, clean place.
- Hang the carcass rather than throw it on the floor.
- Have a clean processing area free of insects and rodents.
- Keep doors and windows closed.
- Practice safe food handling techniques (clean aprons, no smoking or chewing tobacco while handling food or in the food processing areas).
- Handle your venison in a manner you'd expect for all foods.

Keep it cool... keep it safe

To keep your venison fresh, observe the following:

- Keep uncooked venison frozen at 0^oF or less. Keep thawed venison refrigerated at 40^oF or less.
- Thaw uncooked venison in the microwave or refrigerator. Do not leave packages on the countertop to defrost.
- Make sure juices from uncooked venison do not touch other foods, especially those that are ready-to-eat, as this can cause cross-contamination.
- Always wash your hands with hot, soapy water before touching food.
- Use clean plates, cooking pans and serving utensils to cook and serve venison. Do not put cooked foods on plates that have held uncooked meats.
- Refrigerate leftovers promptly. Cut cooked meat in smaller pieces and refrigerate separately to allow meat to cool quickly.

