

CODE OF ETHICS

The Texas Deer Association holds its officers, board members, staff and individual members to a high professional standard. Any member of Texas Deer Association may have any or all of its membership privileges suspended for a period of time, or may be expelled with loss of all membership privileges, or other disciplinary action taken by the State Board for any violation of TDA's Bylaws or Code of Ethics and Conduct.

1. Wrongful conduct as it pertains to the deer industry and may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- A. Deceit.
- B. Extreme carelessness or recklessness.
- C. Intentional misstatement or misrepresentation.
- D. Convicted of civil or criminal fraud.
- E. Making false statements to the Ethics committee during the investigation of an ethics complaint or during testimony to the committee, with knowledge that the statements were false.
- F. Filing an ethics complaint that is determined by the Ethics committee to be groundless, frivolous, or materially and recklessly false in substantiating all allegations, or to be disruptive of an already pending ethics proceeding or of other business of TDA.
- G. Unethical or wrongful taking of a whitetail or mule deer as defined by the State of Texas statute or regulation.

2. Any member or entity of Texas Deer Association in good standing may file a complaint with the Executive Director, the Executive Committee, or an Ethics Committee member against any individual, organization, business, or other legal entity that is also a member of TDA, and in the event of a written withdrawal of a complaint by the complainant, the committee may, at its discretion, retain jurisdiction in the case. The complaint must be in writing, signed and sworn to before a notary public or other person authorized to administer oaths. The complaint shall distinctly describe any act that the complainant contends is contrary to or in violation of TDA by-laws and or the Code of Ethics and Conduct.

3. No member of TDA suspended or expelled will be entitled to any refund or reimbursement of dues or contributions already paid.

4. If a party or member of Texas Deer Association is requested in writing to respond in writing to the Ethics committee and within thirty (30) days of receipt of notice fails or refuses to do so, the Ethics committee may draw an adverse inference from such failure or refusal. If a party or member is requested to answer questions during a hearing and refuses to do so on the grounds that the testimony may be self-incriminating, the Ethics committee may draw an adverse inference from such refusal to answer questions.

5. No member on behalf of Texas Deer Association may directly or indirectly introduce, propose or submit any legislation, rules, regulations, actions, or testify on behalf of legislation in direct conflict or not approved in principle by the State Board of Texas Deer Association to any governing person, agency or body having jurisdiction or authority over the whitetail deer, mule deer, whitetail deer breeders, mule deer breeders, and white-tailed or mule deer hunting in the State of Texas. Any of the above action(s) taken by a member may be deemed as a violation of the TDA Code of Ethics and Conduct.

6. During the consideration of the member in question, the board will be in executive session. At this time, the member may not be present during the discussion or during the vote of the Board of Directors.

7. The code of Ethics and Conduct may be amended by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

HUNTING RANCH CODE OF ETHICS

PURPOSE – To enhance and promote wildlife conservation and the practice of wildlife management and hunting of big game species on privately owned or leased hunting ranches in Texas. Hunting ranches must maintain a safe hunting environment. Additionally, hunting ranches must promote and provide high standards of ethical conduct while promoting responsible management practices and communication of this code of ethics to clients, guests and other key constituents.

GOAL – To provide an ethical, positive and safe outdoor, wildlife and/or hunting experience while ensuring the welfare of the wildlife.

Canon No. 1 – The personal safety of owners, guides and the clients visiting the ranch is of paramount importance. All weapons, ammunition and hunting equipment should be maintained and stored appropriately and in a safe manner at all times.

Canon No. 2 – The facilities provided and the management action undertaken should ensure and maintain the health and welfare of the wildlife within the ranch.

Canon No. 3 – The hunting ranch operator should only offer an environment of and hunt in a fair chase hunting environment which should be defined as hunting in any area by any appropriate and legal method which provides the hunted wildlife a reasonable chance and opportunity to escape or elude the hunter.

Canon No. 4 – The method of hunting employed on hunting ranches should ensure that wildlife is hunted in a responsible and ethical manner, and should take every precaution as is reasonable to ensure that the meat and products of any game is fully utilized, in accordance with applicable law.

Canon No. 5 – The dispatching of sick animals should not be referred to as hunting.

Canon No. 6 – The hunting ranch operator should maintain appropriate records and follow all State and Federal laws applicable to that operator and operation.

Canon No. 7 – Hunting ranches should accurately represent the hunting opportunities offered to the client. It is not ethical to advertise photographs or images of specific game animals raised in captivity, to be later released for hunting, with an express or implied guarantee of success in harvesting the specific animal.

Canon No. 8 – All advertising and promotional materials prepared for distribution, circulated or provided by the hunting ranch operator or on his or her behalf should responsibly convey a positive image consistent with ethical hunting of wildlife.

Canon No. 9 – Hunting ranch operators should take every opportunity to promote a positive image to the general public.

Canon No. 10 – The hunting ranch operator, guide and hunter should exhibit personal actions and ethics that are consistent with or promote the preservation of our hunting heritage and responsible conservation and wildlife management practices.

CODE OF ETHICS & CONDUCT FOR BREEDING OPERATIONS

The following is the Code of Ethics and Conduct of the Texas Deer Association (TDA) governing the conduct and practices regarding the handling, transportation, holding and marketing of White-tailed and Mule Deer held in breeder facilities permitted by the State of Texas.

1. General

- A. All members of the TDA have an obligation to report any suspected violation of this Code of Ethics to the organization.
- B. Any member convicted of a violation of a state or federal law involving Whitetails or Mule Deer may be reprimanded or disciplined, including temporary or permanent suspension of membership as decided by the TDA Board of Directors, after recommendation by the TDA Ethics Committee.
- C. The Board of Directors may, by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, temporarily suspend the membership of any member under investigation for the violation of any state or federal law involving White-tailed and Mule Deer.
- D. The Board of Directors may, by majority vote, refuse membership (either temporarily or permanently) to anyone who is, or has been, under investigation, or convicted of, a violation of a state or federal law involving Whitetails and Mule Deer.

2. Care

- A. All Whitetails and Mule Deer raised, or held for any purpose, shall be maintained in a suitable enclosed area, pasture, or structure.
- B. All deer raised or held shall be provided with appropriate veterinary care, as may be required, to maintain the general health and vitality of such animals.
- C. If deer are held in a fenced area, the fencing should be of a type, design and quality to prevent injury to the animals and to contain the animals, and should be inspected, monitored and maintained on a regular basis.
- D. Any escaped deer should be recovered as soon as possible, consistent with the laws of the state/county/local area.
- E. TDA supports the practice of managing healthy deer herds, including the practice of growing superior deer through generally accepted procedures and techniques including selective breeding, maintaining good health and providing improved habitat and nutrition. We support the use of pharmaceuticals for the treatment of illness or disease, as recommended by or in consultation with a licensed veterinarian. We also support advances in modern technology and veterinary science in the fields of enhanced nutrition, genetic preservation, and reproductive health. TDA condemns the use of any substance used illegally.

3. Handling

- A. In handling any deer in preparation for transportation, marketing, or other lawful purpose, such handling shall be by method, or methods, calculated to inflict the least amount of stress on the animal being handled.
- B. Deer handling operations shall be conducted by persons familiar with the animals and the handling procedure being utilized, and who are qualified and competent to carry out such capture operations without inflicting undue stress to the animals. Deer shall not be handled more often, or for longer periods, than is reasonably necessary to properly manage, control, care for, or market such animals.

4. Transportation

- A. All Transportation of White-tailed and Mule Deer engaged in by, or on behalf of, the TDA members shall be as follows:
 - I. All transportation of deer shall be in vehicles, trailers, or containers suitable in design and materials for the transport of the specific deer being transported. It should also be constructed in a manner so as to minimize stress and the possibility of injury.
 - II. Deer should not be consigned for transportation to any common carrier not properly equipped to transport or care for deer during transportation.
 - III. Any transportation of deer must be consistent with all applicable state and federal laws.

5. Marketing

- A. It shall be unethical to misrepresent the age, condition, score or bloodline of any deer sold or advertised for sale.
- B. Deer should not be sold to anyone unqualified to properly care for or keep such animals. Nor shall any deer be sold to any person for any unlawful purpose whatsoever.
- C. No marketing method shall be used which causes undue stress to the deer so marketed.
- D. All advertising and promotional material provided by the breeding operations should convey an image consistent with the Mission Statement of the TDA.