

Wildlife Contraception: An Opposing View

Immuno-contraception (like SpayVac) on wildlife is not a clear-cut 'solution', and upon deeper thought and research raises a lot of concerns and conflicts. In addition to questioning unbridled human population growth, we ask animal advocates to consider the following:

Why are we controlling their reproduction? What right have we to do this? It's an important question from an animal rights and feminist perspective. It perpetuates an attitude of control and domination over wild animals who should be considered our neighbors. We're crowding them to the edges, yet demand their reproduction and freedoms be halted.

The chemical sterilant is not vegan, nor should be endorsed by vegans. It's made from pig ovaries, which stem from slaughterhouses.

It's a product of vivisection – aka animal testing. It's troubling to consider how many deer and other animals this has been tested on. We know seals, elephants and horses are on the list, as well as cats and dogs (who it doesn't work on). If you're opposed to animal testing, you should oppose SpayVac.



No long-term studies exist. The potency and efficacy as a 'control' method for deer and deer communities is unknown, and is a gamble.

The impact on deer health is questionable. There have been issues with deformities and other troubling health issues from immuno-contraception in deer.

It's expensive. Each dose is \$200, and cost is upwards of \$1000 per deer, as they're trapped and tagged as well.

It requires Clover traps. The deer must be trapped, and Clover traps are used, which are a dreadful experience for deer, often resulting in prolonged captivity and injury such as broken limbs (which requires euthanizing the animal.)

Where does it end? If advocates tolerate controlling deer reproduction, where does it end? Do we start injecting all 'problem' wildlife with SpayVac variants, and become 'gods' of wildlife?

It's not a realistic option. It's controlled by permit, and rarely allowed in BC. It's just not a likely option, even if you ignore all other arguments.



Other solutions exist. A false dichotomy is sometimes formed, presented as “immuno-contraception or death by hunters”. This is untrue – plenty of other options exist to allow peaceful coexistence with wildlife, and are referenced in our Living With Deer booklet. The right approach requires a change in attitude.

Deer are here to stay, and we need to learn to live with them and change our own behaviours. Common-sense actions like an education program would go a long way: Don't grow particular plants, drive the speed limit, and use your eyes. We can coexist with a little effort, which benefits deer and civilization. Visit www.TheVictoriaVegan.com/deer for more information.

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