

Reps. Hager, Ehardt, Meyer, Vander Veen, Accavitti, Adamini, Brown, Byrum, Clack, Dennis, DeRossett, Elkins, Farhat, Garfield, Gleason, Hoogendyk, Hune, Julian, Koetje, Kooiman, McConico, Milosch, Mortimer, Murphy, Nitz, Nofs, Pastor, Richardville, Rocca, Sak, Sheltroun, Spade, Stallworth, Tabor, Vagnozzi, Voorhees and Zelenko offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 143.

A resolution designating November 2003 as Michigan Venison Month.

Whereas, The agriculture and food sector is Michigan's second-largest industry, annually contributing more than \$37 billion to the state economy. Production agriculture and the food industry employ approximately 500,000 Michigan residents; and

Whereas, Michigan agriculture is the second most diverse in the nation, producing more than 125 different commodities, including the raising of privately owned cervidae (deer and elk); and

Whereas, Michigan has approximately 735 privately owned cervidae facilities across the state, with more than 28,000 head of livestock. This ranks our state near the top for privately owned cervidae inventories in the United States, with Kent and Genesee counties ranking among the highest producing counties nationally; and

Whereas, In cooperation with the Michigan Department of Agriculture, the privately owned cervidae producers in our state have elected to develop the Deer and Elk Marketing Program to promote the raising and selling of deer and elk and their products, especially venison; and

Whereas, Michigan is the eighth most populous state in the nation, providing an extensive and diverse marketplace for venison producers; and

Whereas, Deer hunting is one of our state's most popular recreational activities, as well as a time-honored, annual tradition for thousands of Michigan families; and

Whereas, Every autumn, more than 700,000 hunters spend over 10 million combined days in the field attempting to tag a deer and fill their freezers with venison. Consequently, Michigan hunters were successful in harvesting more than 476,000 deer during the 2002 hunting seasons; and

Whereas, Private cervidae operations, deer hunting and other hunting-related purchases generate millions of dollars for Michigan's economy each year; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body hereby designate November 2003 as Michigan Venison Month; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Michigan Department of Agriculture, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the Michigan Deer and Elk Marketing Program, and the Michigan Deer and Elk Farmers Association.