

ENGLAND & WALES **BEST PRACTICE GUIDES**

Cull Records.

Deer Management





Introduction

The aim of this guide is to outline which cull data should be recorded.

Cull records are a key part of a deer management plan as they are a means of monitoring the success of culling efforts against the overall objectives.

Cull records are increasingly required for legal purposes (e.g. Carcass traceability), regulatory authorities (e.g. Natural England) and grant awarding bodies (e.g. Forestry Commission).

This guide links to the Management Plans and Cull Planning guides.



Reasons for keeping cull records

Cull records are used for a number of reasons:

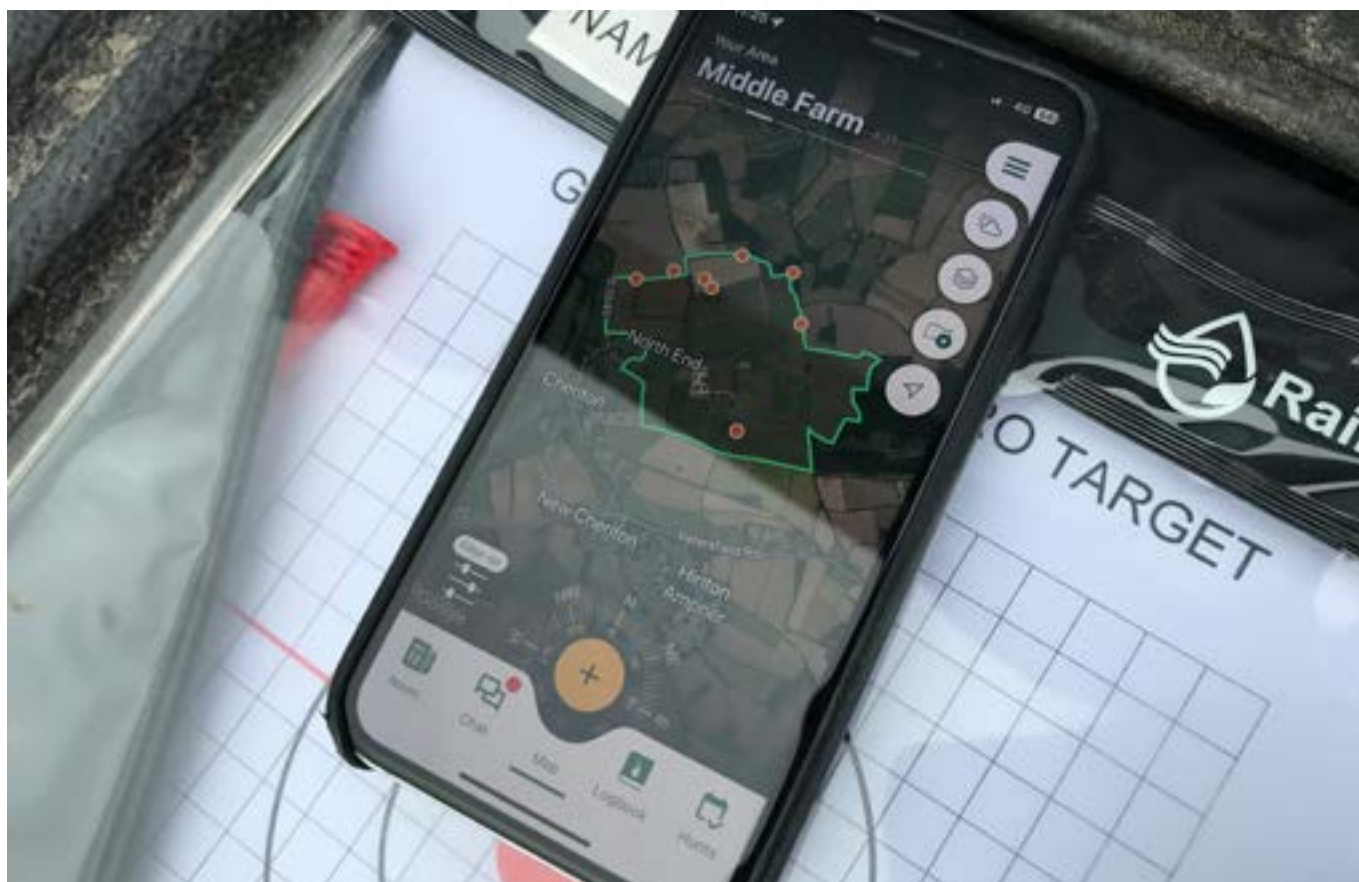
- Complying with legal requirements e.g. detail required for completion of AGHE tags.
- Contributing to meat assurance standards e.g. HACCP based principles of venison hygiene and tracking carcass sales.
- Recording cull progress against cull plans and planning future culls.
- Providing information on populations, e.g. ages and performance measures such as body weight and reproductive status.
- Recording natural mortality and accidental deaths such as deer vehicle collisions.

- Some cull data should be considered as essential, either because it is required by law for AGHE declarations and certain elements of carcass traceability, or because it has an important role in population management planning.
- Additional data can be recorded and will depend on circumstances. These should be reviewed occasionally to ensure that it is still relevant and being used for the intended purpose.
- Some data may not appear to have an immediate use but if it is easy to record, do so, as it may turn out to be useful later.
- Different bodies may have different templates or formats that they require cull records to conform to. Always check you are recording the correct information and format to comply with the relevant parties.

Whilst many deer managers will keep paper records in the larder, computerised systems can be more accurate and allow for more analysis and comparison further down the line. There are also a number of Apps on the market for smart devices that allow cull data to be created instantly and shared very conveniently. This can be highly efficient when multiple stalkers are operating on a single piece of ground.

Smart devices can also be useful to take pictures of any abnormalities or points of interest that may come in useful at a later date.

Whatever method of recording is used, make sure that the quality of recording remains consistent throughout the culling period.



What to record

As stated on the previous page, there are many factors that can be recorded on a cull record. Below are some of the most important and useful headings to be recorded.

Description		Carcass traceability and HACCP (including AGHE supply)	Cull and management plan
Data that should be considered essential			
Tag number	Unique number to identify the carcass throughout the process	✓	
Date	Date the deer was culled	✓	✓
Time	Time to the nearest hour the deer was culled	✓	✓
Species	Species of deer culled	✓	✓
Sex	M/F	✓	✓
Age	Either specific ages in years or coded age class (Y-young, YR-Yearling, A-Adult, O-Old etc.)	✓	✓
Weight	Weight of carcass (head off, legs removed, in-fur) in KG	✓	✓
Inspected by	Name and details of "trained" person who inspected carcass and signed declaration	✓	
Abnormalities	Any abnormalities found during inspection	✓	✓
Destination	Who/where the carcass was supplied to (AGHE, Supplier, Private etc)	✓	
Storage data			
Chiller temperature	Temperature of chiller before placing carcass into chill	✓	
Time into chiller	Time the carcass entered the chiller	✓	
Additional useful data			
Embryo	Presence and number of embryo/foetus in culled female deer		✓
Milk	Visual check, was the deer producing milk when culled?		✓
Kidney fat cover	Visual check, presence of kidney fat relating to overall condition		✓
Antlers	Description/score of antlers on culled male deer		✓
Shot placement	Where the deer was shot (could include exit wound also) can relate to carcass value and animal welfare		✓
Shot by	Who shot the deer		✓
Effort	Used to record unsuccessful stalks, hours logged show effort which is often required for grants etc	✓	✓