

Good Browse Necessary For Antler Development

If you shot a buck this deer season (or get one later) with a good sized rack and several points, you can be certain that the animal was well fed during late Spring and early Summer.

This conclusion can be drawn from deer nutrition studies at the Penna State University. These studies conform the viewpoint that plenty of good deer browse is necessary during the Spring Summer period of antler development if bucks are to bear large antlers.

Although some hunters believe that large racks show mature age, several years of research on deer feeding by Penn State's Department of Animal Nutrition indicate that some bucks may never carry more than spike antlers due to poor feed conditions.

Early studies at Penn State indicate that good feed must contain essential minerals such as calcium and phosphorus, in adequate amounts, for bucks to grow big racks.

Fortunately for hunters, the newest information show that mature bucks do not need to be quite as well fed as yearlings to grow good racks. The latest report by researchers T. A. Long and R. L. Cowan, in charge of the nutrition studies, is Progress Report 209, published by the Agricultural Experiment Station at Penn State.

Since young bucks still are growing, Long and Cowan point out, body growth takes precedence over antler development. This is borne out in their nutrition studies of deer. They also claim that a good supply of mast (acorns and other nuts) will help supply the deer with fat for the winter.

Small antlers, they say, are usually due to young age of bucks plus the large deer herds in the State and consequent lack of adequate browse. Game Commission records show that most of the deer shot by hunters are yearlings and two-year olds.

The claim made by hunters that buck deer sometimes

shed their antlers during the hunting season is probably true, in light of current research findings. Penn State's experiments showed that deer on restricted rations shed their antlers earlier than well fed bucks.

Well-fed bucks not only grew the largest racks, Long and Cowan report, but sometimes these bucks did not shed their antlers until early spring.

Deer on restricted rations during the winter, but well-

fed in April or May, started development late but made rapid progress. These deer produced as large racks as bucks full-fed throughout the year and rubbed off the velvet about the same time.

Previous studies at Penn State indicate that deer eat about twice as much during fall as during the winter months, provided they can find enough browse that suits them. In one 3-year feeding experiment testing 26 growing bucks, the deer went on half rations from November through March no matter how much good feed was offered. This confirms findings by hunters that some wild deer tend to shun hay and grain when it is left for them in mid-winter.

Fried Chicken Is No Longer 'Special' On U.S. Menu

The famous "Good Old Days" when chicken was a Sunday treat or even a once or twice a year affair are over. Now homemakers serve chicken once or twice a week, researchers report.

The development and improvement of poultry farming has increased the supply and decreased the price of chicken so much that many housewives now consider it one of their best meat buys.

A recent survey of 576 Wilmington Delaware and suburban homes, conducted by University of Delaware agricultural economists, showed that 44 percent of the Wilmington homemakers and one-third of the suburban housewives serve chicken one or more times per week. Also the level of family income did not appear to influence the frequency of serving chicken.

Want Dated Packages
Freshness was given as the reason for buying their chicken from a particular source by more than a third of the homemakers.

Seventy-five percent wanted packages dated. A number of homemakers mistakenly thought chicken offered in weekend specials in retail stores was old chicken that had to be moved fast before it spoiled. Putting a date on packages would assure them

that these chickens are fresh, the researchers believe. Many people do not realize how quickly broilers move through the marketing channels or that often these sales are run at a loss in order to attract customers.

Characteristics most preferred in broilers were meatiness and plumpness. In both Wilmington and suburban areas approximately one out of four housewives indicated a preference for yellow skinned birds. Hardly any of the homemakers rely on a brand name and none mentioned "grade" as a characteristic they look for when buying.

A complete summary of the survey information is available in the new bulletin "City and Suburban Families Preferences and Buying Habits for Frying Chicken." It is available on request from the School of Agriculture, University of Delaware Newark.

Farm machinery investment and operating costs have increased 300 per cent since 1940. Penn State extension agricultural engineers report that one third of all farm expenses today is for machinery. Twenty years ago it was one-fourth. The purchase of larger equipment has contributed to rising costs.

AVOID FREEZING

It is easier to prevent water pipes from freezing than to do without water after they are frozen. So says Henry Wooding, Penn State extension agricultural engineer. He urges that new water lines be laid below the frost level and exposed lines be protected by electric heating cable.

cable.

Crop insurance is a means of insuring against many unavoidable causes of loss that can destroy a crop.

Hog expansion appears to be slowing down, according to Ohio State University Extension economists. They expect hog slaughter next year to exceed the 1959 total.



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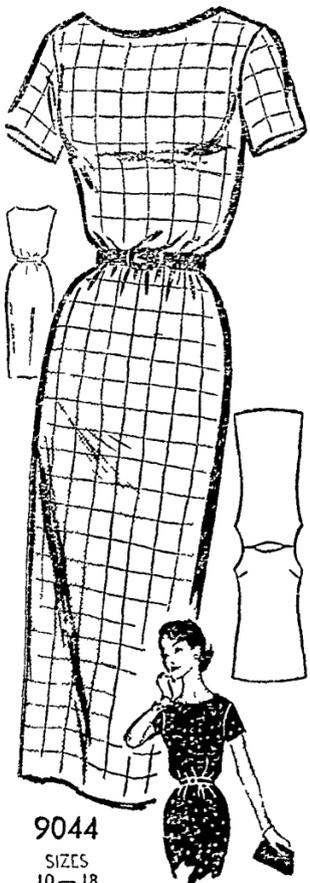
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