

PSU Deer Pens Are Tourist Attraction

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — The best place to spot white-tail deer this November might be right on Penn State's University Park Campus.

Along with being a center for study, Penn State's Deer and Duiker Research Facility — known as the Deer Pens — is one of University Park's most popular tourist attractions. Each year thousands of visitors come to see the 22-acre facility, which is home to

145 white-tailed deer and 18 blue duikers, an endangered species of miniature antelope native to South Africa.

"During the fall, visitor numbers peak as people come to see the large bucks," said Dr. Margaret Brittingham, assistant professor of wildlife resources in the College of Agricultural Sciences. "In late spring, parents bring their children to see the fawns."

To better accommodate visitors

and to provide them with educational materials, Brittingham and Dr. William Sharpe, coordinator of forest resources extension, have established an information center called Deer Pens Camp. Located in a one-room building next to the pens, the center is open from May through November. It contains information on the animals and research projects at the facility, along with general information on deer hunting and management.

"This fall, we put up a display that tells where the large bucks, yearling bucks, does, fawns and duikers are located," said Brittingham. "Right now, the center has displays showing how to tell a deer's age from its teeth and jawbones and one demonstrating the difference between antlers and horns. Next spring we're going to provide publications and fact sheets for children."

Deer Pens Camp was established in the fall of 1992 as a project for students in a course on wildlife information and education. As part of the course, the students surveyed visitors to the facility. During 10 weekends that fall, they recorded a total of 6,400 visitors coming from 49 Pennsylvania counties, 10 states, and two countries.

"Sundays after home football games were the most popular visiting days, averaging 340 visitors," said Brittingham. "Most people surveyed said that they came to the pens about four times a year to view, watch and photograph deer."

The Penn State Deer and Duiker Research Facility is located along Fox Hollow Road a mile north of campus, just past the Route 322 bypass. It's managed by the Department of Dairy and Animal Science, and the School of Forest Resources is in charge of

public education at the center.

Researchers have used the deer to study the effectiveness of repellents and fencing, to determine how nutrition influences antler growth and to develop health profiles.

The deer also have been used to determine food preferences and to quantify the impact of browsing. The duikers, originally used for ruminant nutrition research, now are kept for visitors to see. Their offspring are donated to zoos.

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Pa. Trout Production Valued At \$4.48 Million

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Pennsylvania's 39 commercial trout growers sold 1.78 million pounds of trout valued at \$4.48 million during the 12 month period ending August 31, 1993, according to the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service (PASS).

PASS, a joint operation of the National Agricultural Statistics Service and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, compiles data on Pennsylvania food and fiber production as part of a nationwide effort.

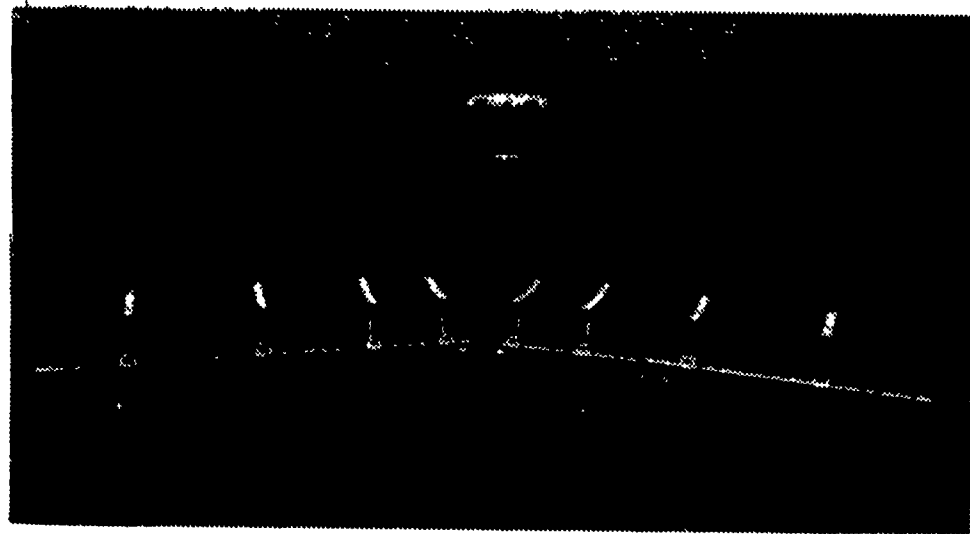
Sales of food-size trout (usually 12 inches or longer) by the state's growers totaled 1.42 million pounds, or 80 percent of the total production sold during the period. Averaging \$2.40 per pound, the food-size trout were valued at \$3.40 million. Fee and recreational sales accounted for 50 percent of the food-size production.

Sales of stocker trout (usually 6 to 12 inches long) by Pennsylvania

growers totaled 737 thousand fish, or 357,000 pounds live-weight during the period. At an average of \$2.81 a pound, stocker sales were valued at \$1 million, with 72 percent of the volume sold to fee and recreational establishments.

The National Agricultural Statistics Service surveyed over 630 commercial trout growers in Pennsylvania and 14 other states: California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Michigan, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin. Information was collected by mail, telephone and personal interview.

For the 15 selected states, all trout sales during the year ended August 31, totaled 58.5 million pounds valued at \$62.8 million. Food-size trout sales accounted for 93 percent of the pounds sold with 63 percent of that amount purchased by processors.



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