



Hunting Regulations **April 2013**

INTRODUCTION

Ohio Farm Bureau has a substantial amount of member-developed policy on wildlife issues, including: wildlife management; wildlife control; and regulations on hunting, fishing, and trapping. Consider the following issues concerning hunting regulations and whether current policies should be amended.

1) Deer Hunting During Harvest

ISSUE

ODNR has proposed a statewide two-day antlerless-only muzzleloader season during the second weekend in October. This would replace the six day either-sex early muzzleloader season in mid-October that is currently limited to a handful of state parks and state wildlife areas.

Additional Background

Some members have raised concerns that mid-October is the peak of harvest season and that an early muzzleloader season during this time could create dangerous situations for farmers in the fields, and possibly cause some landowners to deny access to hunters during this time. Muzzleloaders are a great tool for harvesting deer due to their range and accuracy. However, during the second weekend in October, most trees are still carrying their leaves which could cause hunters to hunt on the edge of fields where they have a better chance of seeing deer in the open. The concern has been raised that these circumstances could lead to the possibility of missed shots that can travel long distances.

OHIO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION STATE POLICY

Current OFBF State Policy regarding Issue

There is a great deal of current OFBF policy calling for a reduction in the size of Ohio's deer population and for expanded incentives and opportunities for deer hunting, particularly the harvest of more does. In addition, two current OFBF policies speak specifically to this issue. Policy 572, Lines 43-44, supports having a three-day muzzleloader deer season the last week of October, while Policy 572, Lines 10-11, supports expanding the early primitive weapon season for deer to include increased hunting areas, later dates to accommodate crop harvest, and increase number of days.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Should Ohio have a muzzleloader season during harvest season? How early should the muzzleloader season start? Do you feel that this poses a risk to farmers in the fields? What

other ideas do you have for increasing the harvest of does during the earlier part of the hunting season, which Division of Wildlife says is the optimal time to harvest does.

2) Hunter Access & Management

ISSUE

Some members of the hunting community feel that farmers and other landowners are not allowing adequate access to private lands for hunting, or not allowing access to *enough* hunters to effectively manage the deer population on a particular parcel of land.

OHIO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION STATE POLICY

Current OFBF State Policy regarding Issue

Policy 562, Lines 19-20, encourages landowners to allow hunting and trapping on their property to help in the control of wildlife populations. Lines 31-32 encourages landowners to give permission for hunters to follow wounded game onto their property. Lines 1-2 encourages those landowners who oppose Sunday hunting to exercise their right to prohibit hunting on their property.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Are farmers and landowners allowing adequate access to private lands?
- If some landowners are not allowing access for hunting, why not?
- How can we encourage more landowners to allow hunting on their land?
- How active should farmers be in managing hunting on their land?
- Should landowners engage in more “active management” of their land for hunting (such as granting access to more hunters to achieve an optimal hunter per X acres ratio, granting access to more hunters on different dates and/or different parcels or zones rather than blanket access to one hunter or one hunting party, and requiring the harvest of does before bucks)?
- Should OFBF Policy encourage this “active management”? What educational resources are needed?

3) Automated Game Check System

ISSUE

Landowners, who are not required to purchase a permit, are currently unable to utilize the phone method of the automated game check system if they do not have a permit.

Additional Background

Hunters with deer and fall turkey permits can complete the automated game check and permanent tagging process by utilizing any one of the following three options: (1) by phone, (2) by internet, or (3) by visiting any authorized license sales agent. Hunters qualifying for the landowner exemption and therefore not required to purchase a permit may only utilize the internet and authorized license sales agent options, and not the phone option. Many hunters have complained that in some rural areas, internet connectivity is very limited, and it can be difficult to get to a computer with a good internet connection and a printer by the check-in deadline. There are also fewer authorized license sales agents available under the new system. ODNR says the reason the phone option is unavailable is that the phone option

requires hunters to enter a permit number to enter the system, and that landowners hunting without a permit do not have a permit number to enter.

OHIO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION STATE POLICY

Current OFBF State Policy regarding Issue

Policy 562, Lines 35-36, supports the new automated game check system, but recommends that landowners and registered hunters have consistent access for registering harvested animals.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Should ODNR modify the automated game check system to allow landowners hunting without a permit to utilize the phone method and enter all necessary information over the phone?
- If it is not possible to enter all necessary information over the phone, would hunters be willing to *voluntarily* utilize an option of free pre-registration (or issuance of a free permit) over the internet or through an authorized license sales agent if it would then enable the landowner to utilize the phone method at the time of harvest?

4) Pistol Caliber Rifles

ISSUE

Hunting regulations currently allow the use of certain handguns/pistols for deer hunting so long as the handguns/pistols meet the following four criteria: (1) have a barrel length of at least 5 inches, (2) use straight-walled cartridges, (3) are .357 caliber or larger, and (4) are not shoulder-mounted. Some groups are asking ODNR to legalize the use of rifles which utilize the same cartridges already allowed for handguns/pistols (i.e. straight-walled cartridges only (no “neck” or “shoulder”), .357 caliber or larger).

Additional Background: See attached Buckeye Farm News article for more information.

OHIO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION STATE POLICY

Current OFBF State Policy regarding Issue

Ohio Farm Bureau currently doesn't have a position on this issue.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Should pistol caliber rifles be legalized for deer hunting in Ohio?

Should pistol caliber rifles be legalized for deer hunting in Ohio? > News > News & Events > Ohio Farm Bureau Federation (OFBF)

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Buckeye Farm News

Here's a debate taking place in Ohio's hunting community. Ohio Farm Bureau currently doesn't have a position on this issue. What do you think?

Legalize pistol caliber rifles

Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia and Pennsylvania all allow rifle hunting in one form or another, the Buckeye Firearms Association noted in a proposal to legalize pistol caliber rifles for deer hunting in Ohio,

But the organization is quick to point out that these

guns are not high powered rifles.

"There is a negative perception with pistol caliber rifles because people don't get past the word rifle without thinking high powered," said Dan Allen, a Buckeye Firearms volunteer.

According to Aaron Kirkingburg, a Buckeye Firearms leader, pistol caliber rifles are similar to pistols, with a longer barrel and a stock for stability. The group acknowledges that perception is an issue and that some education will be necessary.

"This is a tool for keeping the deer population under control and the pistol cartridge rifle is an easy, effective and inexpensive tool that appeals to many," Kirkingburg said.

"These guns have a reduced recoil and are lighter, which appeals to women, youth and those with medical conditions," Allen said. "My father has a pacemaker;

"There is a negative perception with pistol caliber rifles because people don't get past the word rifle without thinking high powered." ~Dan Allen, Buckeye Firearms volunteer