

Of The Outdoors | Gary Howey

Putting In Food Plots Correctly

BY GARY HOWEY

Hartington, Neb.

I have hunted food plots for years and truly believe they make a difference, not just for the hunter, but also for wildlife.

Food plots, if planted properly are there year round, spring, summer fall and winter, giving wildlife-needed food especially after corn and soybeans are no longer available.

As most of you know, the rut is hard on deer, especially the bucks as they are running hither and yon, looking for receptive does and having to fight any-and-all bucks they run into.

Since food plots are available during the winter after the rut, they give the bucks, many of which are worn out, needed nutrition, helping them to make it through the winter.

Winter is also hard on the does and fawns and any additional food they can get will help the pregnant does to have healthy fawns and the fawns to make it to spring.

No matter what mass merchandiser catalogs, sporting goods store or sporting goods department you look at or are in, you are going to see tons of food plot seed.

I have tried numerous brands and varieties, all which have worked, some were better than others were.

I let the deer and turkeys tell me what they liked best and with game cameras it became apparent the deer and turkey in the area I hunt preferred plantings containing some rye, clover, wheat, rape, chicory or oats. I am not saying others will not work; those I mentioned seemed to do the best job of drawing turkey, deer and other critters.

You must consider several things before you plant a food plot including time of planting, rainfall, location and soil type.

Recommended planting time in this area, depending on the weather in the spring would be March 1 through May 15 and in the fall August 1 through September 1.

Some of you are probably thinking that you do not have a large enough area for a food plot, no problem, as even the smaller food plots are beneficial to wildlife. Others may think the area where they may have room for a food plot would be too hard to get equipment in to put in a food plot. If you have access to a four-wheeler, like the John Deere Gator I use, you will find there are numerous manufactures out there, which make the pull be-



Gary HOWEY



Foodplots when established properly will hold and attract deer, helping them to make it through our tough northern winters. Jimmy Christensen (Hartington, Nebraska) took this buck during the 2015 Nebraska rifle deer season while hunting over a foodplot in northeast Nebraska.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

hind equipment needed to put in a food plot. If you do not have a four-wheeler, there are other options available.

My smallest food plot, which was in close proximity to several other larger plots was one twenty yards wide and 40 yards long, not really all that accessible to larger equipment, so we put in with a garden tiller and my John Deere Gator and as small as it was, it was one of my most productive plots.

Where you plant a food plot is important, as the location you choose is very important to its success. If you want to establish one to hunt over, of course, you will want it within clear view and close proximity to your stand or deer house.

If you are planting a plot to feed deer, increase body size, promote overall herd health and improve their antler mass, select a site that is isolated. A secluded, undisturbed area will draw more wildlife to the plot, allowing wildlife to travel to and from it without fear. They will work best if they are close to the animals travel route and close to cover, making it easier for them to get to the food plot without using up a lot of energy. Deer, especially the bucks can be in tough shape after the rut and the less distance they travel to get nourishment the better. The same goes for turkeys, if they need to come out into the open in order to get to food, they are more visible and easier to go after.

Establishing a food plot does take some time, but if done cor-

rectly, the work you put into it will be rewarded.

Listed below, you will find some of the things I have done food plots to establish my foodplots.

Seed Selection

Seed selection is very important, as you want to make sure the seed you are planting is one that will grow well up north and tolerate our winter temperatures.

Numerous companies including Mossy Oak Biologic, Hunter's Specialties, Whitetail Institute, Teco-mate and Evolved Habitats all offer foodplot seed.

Soil Testing

The first thing and perhaps the most important thing you will need to know is the fertility of the soil; to do this, you will need to take a soil test, letting you know what nutrients and PH will need to be added. I picked up my soil test kits from our local Central Valley Ag and had them test the sample, so I would know what I added to the site in order to make it successful.

Weed Control

Weeds could be your biggest problem and killing them first, will be an important step towards getting your food plot off to a good start.

On all my plots, the first thing I did was to spray them with Roundup using a hand, backpack or a sprayer mounted on my Gator. After you spray, it is a good idea to

hold off ten to fourteen days before doing any further work on the plot.

Site Preparation

Next, you will need to prepare the site using a tiller on the smaller plots or a disk and harrow on the larger plots and then dragging it, creating a smooth seedbed.

Once you have a smooth seedbed, it is not a bad idea to let things settle down for ten to fourteen days to see if new weeds will appear and reapply herbicide as needed. If you do re-spray, hold off for a week to ten days before planting your seed.

Fertilization

Once the ground is prepared, is the time to apply fertilizer, spreading it, depending on the size of the foodplot with a hand spreader or one mounted on your four-wheeler. You will want to make sure you get all of the clods broken up, making for a smooth seed bed.

Planting

Now it is time to spread the seed using a hand or four-wheeler spreader. It is a good idea to plant in two directions as it helps to make sure you to cover the entire plot.

Then, work the seeds into the soil, do not make the mistake many hunters and I have made, burying the seed too deep as smaller seeds such as clover, brassica or chicory need only be planted a 2" deep. Smaller seeds have less packed into them and need to germinate and get

to the surface to grow, unlike the larger seed, which can be buried up to 1 1/2"

Then it is time to pack the soil assuring a firm seedbed, which can be done using a log, wood pallet, heavy drag, or cultipacker.

As the plot grows, depending on what you planted there could be some maintenance involved, as crops such as of clover or alfalfa needs to be clipped to promote the fresh growth deer love.

Mineral Supplements

If you are going to all the trouble to put in a foodplots, why put in a mineral lick. Do not think that by putting in a salt block that you have given deer what they need, as salt will attract deer, but does not contain what the bucks and does need to prosper. A buck's antler when hardened is made up of 30 to 35% calcium and phosphorus, so it just makes sense to have a mineral supplement that contains these two nutrients. The does will also need a higher amount of minerals for milk production to feed their fawns. I have used RAKS minerals for years and have seen the overall size of the bucks' increases as well as the overall health of the herd.

You do not want to just pitch the mineral on the ground, mix it into the dirt as deer are used to digging for it.

I have had some mineral licks that have been tore up shortly after I put them in and others looked as if the deer had paid very little attention to them. If the deer in your area do not need the minerals they will leave it alone and when they need them dig deep to get to it. At different times of the year, they will require more minerals, and because of this, your mineral lick may show very little sign of use in some months and a lot in others. It is also recommended that you freshen up your mineral licks from time to time, having it out there when the deer decide they need it.

Things may not happen as fast as you would wish with your foodplot, do not panic, give it time and it will take off and be there when you and wildlife need it.

Gary Howey, Hartington, Nebraska, is the Producer/Host of the award winning *Outdoorsmen Adventures* television series, seen in the Yankton area on local channels 2 & 98 Saturday at 6:30 pm and Sunday@ 7:00, on KTTM/KTTW-TV Fox-Sioux Falls and Huron at 6:30 am Saturdays and on the MDCCO Sports Network Thursday at 5:30 pm and Friday at 10:00 am. He and Simon Fuller Co-Host the *Outdoor Adventures radio program on Classic Hits 106.3, ESPN Sports Radio 1570 in Southeastern South Dakota and Northeast Nebraska. In Northwest Iowa, it airs on KCHE 92.1 FM. If you are looking for more outdoor information, check out www.outdoorsmenadventures.com.*

OUTDOORS DIGEST

Take Precautions To Avoid Hypothermia

LINCOLN, Neb. Enjoying the Nebraska winter can be some of the most fun a person spends outdoors. Whether it's hunting, ice fishing, cross country skiing, sledding or snowshoeing, the state has great outdoor opportunities.

Being outdoors in the winter also means being safe in the coldest of temperatures. Avoiding hypothermia is key. Hypothermia is a low body temperature most often is caused by exposure to cold weather or immersion in a cold body of water.

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission suggests hunters, anglers and other outdoor enthusiasts dress warmly in layers of clothing that may be added or removed as necessary. Warm hats, gloves or mittens and boots will prevent heat loss through the top of the head, hands and feet. Anglers should wear a life vest on the ice.

Hypothermia can affect judgment, which is critical to hunters handling loaded firearms and anglers venturing onto potentially unsafe ice.

Symptoms of moderate to severe hypothermia include:

- Shivering
- Clumsiness, lack of coordination, stumbling, slurred speech
- Confusion, difficulty thinking or poor decision making
- Drowsiness or very low energy
- Gradual loss of consciousness
- Weak pulse
- Slow, shallow breathing

A person with hypothermia usually is not aware of his or her condition, because the symptoms often begin gradually and because the confused thinking associated with hypothermia prevents self-awareness.

GFP Seeking New Operator At Oahe Marina

PIERRE — According to the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP), entrepreneurs interested in operating Oahe Marina and Resort located within Oahe Downstream Recreation Area on upper Lake Sharpe can now begin submitting their proposals.

The prospectus for the operation of Oahe Marina and Resort is now available online and through the GFP website. Proposals must be received by March 1, 2015.

Oahe Downstream Recreation Area is located approximately 5 miles north of Ft. Pierre directly below Oahe Dam off Highway 1806. The area offers many recreational opportunities both land- and water-based.

Commission Approves Amendment To Custer SP Contract

PIERRE — SD Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission recently approved an amendment to the department's concession agreement with the Custer State Park Resort Company that would lead to \$11 million in improvements and additions to facilities within Custer State Park.

"The amendment is contingent on passage of bonding legislation," said State Park Director Doug Hofer. "GFP will propose legislation for \$11 million in bonding authority during the 2015 Legislative Session to implement improvement projects at Custer State Park."

Planned improvements include the

renovation and replacement of cabins, renovation of the Legion Lake Lodge, State Game Lodge guest room improvements, improved employee housing, several new reunion-type cabins and upgrades to a variety of existing facilities and infrastructure.

"Providing the guests of Custer State Park a unique experience with exceptional customer service is our number one priority," said Resort Operations Director Josh Schmaltz. "The improvement plan that has been proposed will enhance our guests' experience and allow the state to renovate or replace some of the smaller cabins and other outdated structures that don't

meet today's visitor expectations."

The current contract with Custer State Park Resort contains three annual financial requirements. The resort company pays a 10.4 percent franchise fee on all gross receipts; in addition, they are required to invest 5 percent of gross receipts back into state-owned facilities in the way of repairs and maintenance, and they must invest 1.8 percent to replace personal property such as furniture, fixtures and equipment.

The amendment increases the resort's franchise fee beginning next year by 4 percent and extends the lease by five years. Franchise fees paid

by the concessionaire will be used to pay off the bond. No money from the State's General Fund will be used.

"Interest rates are currently low. So, we will be able to pay off the bond in 15 years. This is an opportune time for us to do these needed improvements in a timely manner," stated Hofer.

The amendment extends the contract with Custer State Park Resort Company until Jan. 31, 2027, at which time the bonds will be paid off. The amendment will not go into effect until the proposed bond legislation is approved.

SPORTS DIGEST

Boys' Hockey: Mitchell Downs Yankton

Mitchell jumped out to an 8-0 lead and held on for a 10-2 victory over Yankton in boys' varsity hockey action on Friday at Alcoa Arena.

Jacob Cersosimo, Jacob Thill, Jordan Grosdidier and Bryce Geraets had two goals each for Mitchell. Jacob Rice had four assists, with Cersosimo posting three helpers and Thill and Grosdidier recording two assists each.

For Yankton, Austin Barger and Trey Bakke scored goals. Jacob Hubbs recorded an assist.

Joshua Loecker stopped 15 shots in goal for Mitchell. Tyler Wenande made 32 saves for Yankton.

Yankton hosts Sioux Falls II today (Saturday) at 7 p.m.

Coyote Sports Network Adds R.C. Affiliate

VERMILLION — Rapid City radio station 1150 AM/106.7 FM KIMM has joined the Coyote Sports Network from Learfield

Sports and will air all of the South Dakota men's basketball team's Summit League games this season beginning with Friday's home matchup with Omaha at 7 p.m.

Coyote fans in the Black Hills will now be able to listen to all 16 of USD's Summit League games this season. Award winning play-by-play announcer Joe Van Goor will have the call for the games.

With the addition of KIMM, all broadcasts of USD men's basketball's league games will be aired on five stations. 106.3 KVHT in Yankton serves as the Coyote Sports Network's flagship station, while KIMM, 98.3 KUQL in Mitchell, 95.7 KQSF in Sioux Falls and 620 KMNS in Sioux City serve as affiliates. All men's game broadcasts will also be streamed live on www.kvht.com.

The Coyote men are 6-8 entering league play under first year head coach Craig Smith.

Bowling: Tomek Rolls Perfect Game

Kenny Tomek rolled a 300 game dur-

ing Industrial League bowling action on Monday.

Tomek, who also rolled a 299 game, finished with a 711 series.

Bald Eagle Days Jan. 24-25

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will host the annual Bald Eagle Days event Jan. 24-25 at the Lewis and Clark Visitor Center overlooking Gavins Point Dam west of Yankton.

Live raptor shows will be held at 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Shows fill fast, so attendees are asked to show about 30 minutes prior to start time. No reservations can be made.

Also, there will be activities for children and adults.

For more information, call (402) 667-2546, email gavinspoint.nwo@usace.army.mil or visit www.nwo.usace.army.mil/gavinspoint/.

Iowa Falls Behind Early, Falls 45-28 In TaxSlayer

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP) — Iowa coach Kirk Ferentz had blood above his right eye after the game, remnants of getting whacked on the sideline.

That was nothing compared to the abuse his players took on the field.

Joshua Dobbs accounted for three touchdowns. Jalen Hurd ran for two scores and Tennessee beat Iowa 45-28 on Friday in the TaxSlayer Bowl for its first postseason victory since the Phillip Fulmer era.

"They were ready right from the start, and we certainly couldn't match their tempo in the first half," Ferentz said. "Best execution that we've seen from their football team all season long."

The Volunteers (7-6) scored on their first four possessions, leading 28-0 before Iowa (7-6) managed 70 yards.

Hurd, Dobbs and a bit of trickery

helped Tennessee build the big lead.

Hurd broke tackles on nearly every run, capping Tennessee's first possession with a 3-yard score and adding a 29-yard touchdown scamper on the next drive.

Tennessee made it 21-0 late in the first quarter when Dobbs threw a lateral to running back Marlin Lane in the right flat. Lane, a senior from nearby Daytona Beach, turned and hit Vic Wharton in stride down the sideline.

It was a nice send-off for Lane, one of just a handful of Tennessee's seniors.

www.yankton.net

AM 1450

MORNING COFFEE
WEEKDAYS MONDAY-FRIDAY

Monday, January 5
7:40 am Yankton County Commission (Donna Freng)
7:50 am Yankton Area Arts (Julie Amsberry)
8:45 am RCDVC (Desiree Warren-Johnson)

Proceedings of New Underwood School District #51-3 Regular Session January 16, 2013

The New Underwood School District Board of Education is hereby giving notice that it will hold a meeting for the purpose of receiving proposals for professional and technical services and technical services on the following dates and times: Monday, January 19, 2015, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Board Room, 200 South Main Street, Yankton, South Dakota.

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