

Results of Hunting Survey on Land
Surrounding Rose Lake Area

During the upland bird season just passed, a survey on hunting was made on the farm land surrounding the Experiment Station property in order that information could be gained as to hunting conditions in the general vicinity. Specifically we were interested in such data as hunting pressure (acres per hunter), yield of birds on basis of acreage (acres per bird), success of hunting (hunters per bird killed), the period of the season in which hunting was most successful, and effect of outside hunting on pheasant populations in our own area. The latter point will be more fully demonstrated after a post-season census has been taken.

Farmers were contacted each Monday and questioned as to hunting on the days preceding. The information thus acquired was then divided into three periods, (1) the 5 week days, (2) Saturday and Sunday. In all 15 farms comprising 1516 acres were under observation throughout the entire season while information on several others was for various reasons incomplete, and so is not included here. Most of the farms checked were those bordering the area while several more embracing a solid block of nearly a section to the west were also included.

In recording data no distinction was made between outside hunters, chiefly from the cities, and farmers hunting on their own land. The great majority of all hunters, however, probably 90% were of the first class. On the following three tables is summarized the information obtained on the survey.

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Table I

Daily Success of Hunting

	Oct. 15	Oct. 16	Oct. 17-21	Oct. 22	Oct. 23	Oct. 24-28	Oct. 29	Oct. 30	Oct. 31	Totals
No. Hunters	51	51	35	15	42	17	7	20	3	241
Pheasants killed	23	19	18	2	9	5	4	5	1	86
Hunters per bird	2.2	2.6	1.9	7.2	4.6	3.4	1.7	4.0	3.0	2.8
% of Success	45.1	37.2	51.4	13.3	21.4	29.4	57.1	20.0	33.3	31.5
Rabbits killed	0	0	7	0	2	0	0	1	0	10

Table II

Distribution of Hunting

	Oct. 15	Oct. 16	Oct. 17-21	Oct. 22	Oct. 23	Oct. 24-28	Oct. 29	Oct. 30	Oct. 31
% of all Hunters	21.1	21.1	14.5	6.2	17.4	7.0	2.9	8.3	1.2
% of all Birds Killed	26.7	22.1	20.9	2.3	10.4	5.8	4.6	5.8	1.1

Table III

Summarized Hunting

Total number of hunters -----	241
Total number of pheasants killed -----	86
Hunters per bird killed -----	2.8
Average percentage of success on basis of one bird per hunter -----	31.5
Average percentage of success on basis of 6 birds allowed during season -----	5.2
Total number of acres checked -----	1516
Acres per bird killed -----	17.6
Acres per hunter -----	6.3
Total number of rabbits killed -----	10

Summary and conclusions: It will be noted that nearly half, or 44.2% of the hunters were in the field the first two days of the season, while a similar figure or 48.9% was also true of the total number of birds bagged. On the other hand, the highest percentage of success, on the basis of one bird per hunter was attained on the last Saturday of the season when one bird was killed per 1.7 hunters, or a success rate of 57.1%. In fact while most of the hunting was done on the first few days, individual success per hunter remained high up to the end of the season. The average rate of success over the first 8 days and on the last 9 days was 36.7% and 32.2% respectively, or a difference of only 4.5%.

An interesting point brought out in Table I was the fact that only 10 rabbits were killed during the whole 17 days. While this may have been due partly to their apparent scarcity, it seems that other conditions such as rank cover making them hard to find, and the bird hunter's usual inclination to get his pheasant first were more important factors.

In general, interviews with farmers revealed that fewer hunters took the field this year than last, and fewer birds were bagged per hunter in spite of the fact the bird supply was probably larger this year. The latter was evidently canceled out by the present unfavorable hunting conditions caused by heat, dryness, and overabundance of cover. Regarding the decrease of hunters, many of the farmers contacted believed the larger amount of posted land, and the proximity of our own area into which birds sought refuge as soon as shot at, were factors which discouraged hunting in the immediate vicinity.

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