

Wisconsin Dove Baiting Regulations

Effective Sept. 1, 2000

BAITING FOR DOVES – STATE & FEDERAL RULES SUMMARY:

The State of Wisconsin adopted the Federal Migratory Bird Baiting Regulations in 2000. Therefore, a violation of the Federal rules is also a violation of state law. These regulations use several key terms to clarify the conditions under which you may legally hunt doves that are being attracted to bait or artificial food sources. These definitions are provided in this document to help you understand what is and is not legal. It is your responsibility to know and obey all State and Federal Baiting laws that govern this sport. The following is a summary of these rules. For further information, go to: www.fws.gov/le/huntnish/dovebaiting.htm

It is illegal to:

Hunt doves by the means of direct or indirect placing, exposing, depositing, distributing, or scattering of salt, grain, or other feed which could serve as a lure or attraction for the doves to, on, or over any areas where you are attempting to take them **when you know or reasonably should know that the area is or has been baited.** The following practices are legal:

You can hunt DOVES on, over, or from:

- Lands or areas where seeds or grains have been scattered solely as the result of **normal agricultural operations.**
- Lands planted by means of top-sowing or aerial seeding where seeds have been scattered solely as the result of a normal agricultural planting, a planting for agricultural soil erosion control, or a planting for post-mining land reclamation.
- Lands or areas where grain or feed has been distributed or scattered solely as the result of the manipulation of an agricultural crop or other feed on the land where grown.
- Standing or manipulated agricultural crops or wildlife food plots provided the seed was planted in a manner consistent with Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service recommendations for the planting of wildlife food plots or guidelines for planting a crop.
- Lands planted as pasture for the purpose of grazing livestock.
- For the purpose of hunting doves, it does not matter if the fields were planted with the intent to harvest the crop, provided the planting is carried out in a manner consistent with the recommendations of State Extension Specialists.
- Standing or manipulated natural vegetation.
- Hunting from a blind or place of concealment camouflaged with vegetation from agricultural crops, as long as such camouflaging does not result in the exposing, depositing, distributing or scattering of grain or other feed.
- Hunting from standing or flooded standing agricultural crops where grain is inadvertently scattered solely as a result of a hunter entering or exiting a hunting area, placing decoys, or retrieving downed birds. Hunters are cautioned that while conducting these activities, any intentional scattering of grains will create a baited area.
- The placement and use of sand, shell grit, or artificial corn used to attract, lure or decoy doves is allowed.

It is important to understand that the law prohibits hunting doves if bait illegal bait is present that could lure or attract birds "to, on, or over areas where hunters are attempting to take them."

The regulations for hunting waterfowl and coot are more restrictive than for hunting doves. It is not always legal to hunt waterfowl or coots over the same areas used for hunting doves.

Important Distinction on Manipulation: Although you can hunt doves over manipulated agricultural crops, food plots or natural vegetation you **cannot hunt waterfowl or any other species of wild animal** over these same manipulated agricultural crops or food plots. The only time it is legal to hunt other species on, over or which are being attracted to manipulated crop lands or food plots is when the manipulation occurs after the field has been subject to a normal harvest and removal of grain. Any species of game may be hunted over a field manipulated post-harvest.

Other Agricultural Practices: Agricultural activities other than planting or harvesting may also scatter grain or other feed in agricultural areas. You can hunt doves in such areas provided the agricultural operation involved **is a normal agricultural practice** (i.e., one that produces livestock or a crop) and follows recommendations of State Extension Specialists. Examples include "hogged down" fields (where livestock have been allowed to enter fields and feed on standing crops) and feedlots (small enclosed areas where farmers feed livestock to increase their weight).

Dove Hunting on Agricultural Lands: Agricultural lands offer good dove hunting. You can hunt doves in fields where grain has been distributed or scattered solely as the result of a normal agricultural operation. Relevant factors include recommended planting and harvest dates, proper seed distribution and storage, seed bed preparation, application rate, and seed viability.

Purpose of planting or distribution of seeds or grain: For the purpose of hunting doves, it does not matter if the fields were planted with the intent to harvest the crop, provided the planting is carried out in a manner consistent with the recommendations of State Extension Specialists. However, seeds freshly planted or otherwise distributed for the purpose of luring, attracting, or enticing doves within gun range is considered baiting. To avoid any question, planting of wildlife food plots should occur early enough to allow time for the seeds to germinate.

Manipulation of Crops and Other Vegetation for Hunting Doves: You may hunt doves over manipulated crops, such as corn, wheat, milo, sorghum, millet, sunflower, and buckwheat. Wildlife food plots and natural vegetation may also be manipulated to improve **dove** hunting. Manipulation means the alteration of natural vegetation or agricultural crops by activities such as mowing, shredding, disking, rolling, chopping, trampling, flattening, burning, or herbicide treatments. **Manipulation does not include:** the distributing or scattering of seeds, grains, or other feed after the seed or grain had been removed from or stored on the field where grown after it was harvested. This is not legal.

Areas of Potential Confusion or Misinterpretation of the Baiting Rules

1. Wisconsin Waterfowl & Dove Baiting rules & definitions are different than the baiting rules for deer, bear and other game.
2. The use and application of the term "Normal Agricultural Practice"
 - **It is legal** to hunt Doves, Deer, Bear or game other than Waterfowl over feed or bait deposited all normal agricultural practices.
 - **It IS NOT legal** to hunt waterfowl that are being attracted to seeds or grain that are deposited or exposed by all normal agricultural practices. It is only legal to hunt waterfowl over grain or seeds deposited or exposed by 4 normal agricultural practices. They are a normal planting, normal harvesting, post harvest manipulation or normal agricultural soil stabilization practice.
3. The meaning of the terms "Normal Agricultural Harvest" & "Normal Agricultural Planting"
 - These are Normal Agricultural Practices, but there are others that are not allowed for hunting Waterfowl.
 - A normal agricultural planting or harvest to be legal for hunting waterfowl over must be done in a manner recommended by the State Extension Specialists of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and for the purpose of producing and gathering a crop.
 - For hunting doves the crops do not have to be planted for the purpose of harvest, but must be planted in accordance with USDA's recommendations.

Definitions:

"Bait" means any salt, grain, seeds or other feed that could serve as a lure to attract migratory game birds.

"Baiting" means the direct or indirect placing, exposing, depositing, distributing, manipulating or scattering of salt, grain, or other feed that could serve as a lure or attraction for migratory game birds to, on, or over any areas where hunters are attempting to take them.

"Baited area" means any area on which salt, grain, or other feed has been placed, exposed, deposited, distributed, or scattered, if that salt, grain, or other feed could serve as a lure or attraction for migratory game birds to, on, or over areas where hunters are attempting to take them.

"Manipulation" means the alteration of natural vegetation or agricultural crops by activities that include but are not limited to mowing, shredding, discing, rolling, chopping, trampling, flattening, burning, or herbicide treatments. This term does not include the distributing or scattering of grain, seed, or other feed after removal from or storage on the field where grown.

"Natural vegetation" means any non-agricultural, native, or naturalized plant species that grows at a site in response to planting or from existing seeds, but does not include planted millet unless the millet has grown on its own in subsequent years after the year of planting.

"Normal agricultural planting" is a planting undertaken for the purpose of producing and gathering a crop. Normal plantings do not involve the placement of grain in piles or other concentrations.

"Normal agricultural harvest" is a harvest undertaken for the purpose of gathering a crop. The arrangement of harvested grain in long rows or piles, or when redistributed on the field should raise questions about the legality of the area for waterfowl hunting.

"Normal agricultural operation" means a normal agricultural planting, harvesting, post-harvest manipulation, **or other agricultural practice** that is conducted in accordance with official recommendations of State Extension Specialists of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"Normal soil stabilization practice" means a planting for agricultural soil erosion control or post-mining land reclamation

"Post-harvest manipulation" means a manipulation of a field or crops after the harvest and removal of grain. A normal post-harvest manipulation first requires a normal agricultural harvest and removal of grain before any manipulation of remaining agricultural vegetation, such as corn, wheat or oat stubble. You should be aware that although you can hunt doves over manipulated agricultural crops, you cannot hunt waterfowl over such manipulated agricultural crops except after the field has been subject to a normal harvest and removal of grain (i.e., post-harvest manipulation).

NOTE: To be considered normal, all such planting and harvesting must be conducted in accordance with official recommendations of the State Extension Specialists of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. Relevant factors to be considered normal include recommended planting dates, proper seed distribution, seed bed preparation, application rate, and seed viability. However, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service will continue to make final determinations about whether official recommendations were followed.

REFERENCES:

www.fws.gov/le/huntfish/waterfowl_baiting.htm.
www.fws.gov/le/huntfish/dovebaiting.htm

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