

WILDLIFE DAMAGE ABATEMENT AND CLAIMS PROGRAM SUMMARY

If you have damage to *agricultural crops, orchards, nursery stock, livestock, or beehives by deer, bear, Canada geese, or wild turkeys*, the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program can provide you with assistance. The program will help you prevent or lessen additional damage (abatement) and/or provide payments for damage that has already occurred (claims). The Taylor County Land Conservation Department administers the program under a contract with USDA– Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) and Wisconsin DNR. The Animal Damage Specialist for Taylor County is Ed Zydzik, telephone 1-800-228-1368.

In order to be eligible for the program, the enrollee (landowner or operator) must meet certain requirements including:

- Enrollment is required in order to be eligible for the program.
- The enrollee must have control of hunting access to owned and leased contiguous properties. The enrollee must follow the minimum hunting requirement for all enrolled properties.
- There are two hunting options, Open Public Hunting and Managed Hunting Access. In the Open Public Hunting option hunting access is unrestricted, but hunters are required to notify the enrollee of their intent to hunt. In the Managed Hunting Access option land suitable for hunting will be determined by the Animal Damage Specialist. The enrollee must allow at least two hunters at any given time per forty acres of suitable hunting land. Hunters must register, and the enrollee must keep a log. Most enrollees used the Managed Hunting Access option. Enrollees may not charge a fee in either option. Regular hunting seasons and regulations apply. (Hunting under animal damage shooting permits is regulated separately.)
- The Animal Damage Specialist must be notified within 14 days of the beginning of eligible damage in order to be eligible for claims payment. In other words, fields and other potential damage areas must be checked on a regular basis. The 14 day requirement does not apply to abatement assistance.
- Enrollees must notify the Animal Damage Specialist at least 10 days prior to harvesting enrolled fields so that the fields can be inspected.
- Enrollees must follow abatement measures that are prescribed by the Animal Damage Specialist. Abatement measures include practices such as fencing, scare devices, repellents, and shooting permits. The measures used are dependent on the situation.
- Damage abatement practices are paid for on a 75/25 (county/enrollee) cost-share basis.
- The standard deductible on claims is \$250.
- Where shooting permits for deer have been issued, eligibility for claims payments is dependent on meeting certain permit program requirements. For claims to be approved, the enrollee must:
 - Adhere to the hunting access requirement.
 - Harvest a certain percentage of their prescribed quota by specific date.
 - All participating hunters must wear blaze orange.
- For additional information and requirements contact the LCD office (748-1469) or Ed Zydzik (800-228-1368).