

APPENDIX J

Harvest Records: An Essential Element in Deer Management

1. **Date of Kill:** Record month and day of kill.
2. **Ranch of Kill:** Record name of ranch on which deer was killed.
3. **Hunter:** This will assist the manager in keeping track of deer records.
4. **Age:** Record age of deer in one-half year units (because they are born in summer), as determined by replacement and wear on the jaw teeth (example: 1½, 2½, or 5½). If the age of the deer can not be determined, remove one or both lower jaws so that a biologist can determine the age at a later date. If several jaw bones are retained, number each set so that once the age is determined, it can be associated with the other information collected from each respective deer.
5. **Field-dressed Weight:** Record the weight of each harvested deer. The deer should be eviscerated and the hide, head, and feet must be attached to carcass. If only a "live weight" (non-eviscerated) was obtained, the field-dressed weight can be closely approximated by multiplying the live weight by 0.75 for bucks (example: a live weight of 106 lbs. equals 80 lbs. field dressed) and 0.70 for does.
6. **Points:** Record the total number of antler points. Points are projections that extend at least 1 inch or 25mm from the surface of the antler. You may want to separately record the number of points present on the left and right sides.
7. **Antler Spread:** Record in inches or millimeters the widest distance between the main beams (inside spread).
8. **Antler Base:** Record the circumference of the antler in inches or millimeters immediately above the burr. If measuring only one antler, you should consistently use either the left or right antler (i.e., if you measure the right antler base on the first deer, then continue to use the right antler on all deer).
9. **Main Beam:** Record the length of the main beam in inches or millimeters from the antler base (bottom of burr) around the outer edge of the main beam to the farthest tip of the main beam. If measuring only one antler, use the same antler that was used in measuring the circumference.
10. **Body Condition:** Record whether each harvested deer is in good, fair, or poor condition. (example: "good"= fat across back and base of tail; fat on kidneys and in body cavity "fair"= little excess fat but no bones showing "poor"= ribs, backbone, and pelvic girdle are prominent)

11. **Lactation:** Record whether or not does are lactating (producing milk). This can provide important information about fawn survival.

Age-specific information on body weights, condition, and antler measurements can provide valuable information about the nutrition of the deer herd. This can provide immediate feedback concerning harvest and habitat management decisions. The age data alone can provide important information about the harvest intensity and resulting age structure of the deer herd. In addition to the annual use of harvest records for making deer harvest recommendations, comparing harvest information over a period of years can assist the deer manager in evaluating the trend of the deer herd. Only then can you determine whether you are approaching desired management goals.