

Program: Assessment of Deer Feeding on Field Crops in Eastern Ontario

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In Partnership With Community Stewardship Council of Lanark Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Objective

- To quantify local crop losses to deer over time
- To assess potential economic impact

Program Description:

20 years ago deer were scarce in the Ottawa area. However, their number has increased over the period of 20 years. They cause damage to crops, gardens, orchards and natural forest regeneration. There are few natural controls to this problem. Before management strategies can be developed, the impact of deer must be determined.

Hypothesis:

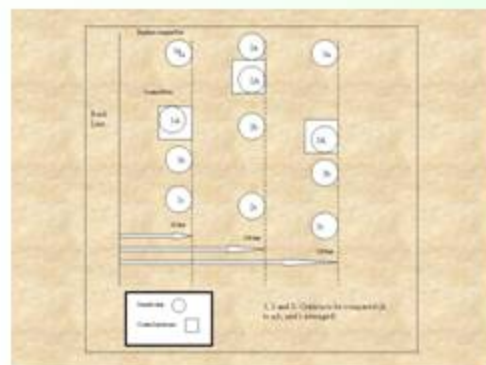
1. The deer will do more damage to crops closer to bush cover
2. There will also be more damage in unprotected crops
3. The highest perceived deer pressure = highest yield loss
4. Differences in yield impact among crops

The project involved:

- farm cooperators
- forages, cereals, soybeans
- 3 deer population pressures: low, medium, high
- 3 distances: 50, 100 and 150 feet
- exclosure cages for controls (1)
- un-caged samples (3 per distance)
- crop height at harvest
- hay yield samples at each cut
- grain, soybean and corn yield samples at maturity

The 1 year results for 2004 showed that some of the hypotheses were partially supported

Community Benefits Include: Reduced damage to crops from deer, better understanding and management of deer in the Ottawa area



Support Appreciated from:

Lanark County Soil and Crop Improvement Association &

