

KDFWR Deer Program

Summary Data: 2025 October Harvest

3rd November 2025



Season Summary

Kentucky hunters have harvested 23,756 deer since the season opener in early September, nearly 2,000 deer more than the five-year average up to this point in the year (Figure 1). Over 20,000 hunters have harvested at least one deer so far this season.

Fifty two percent of the total harvest thus far has been females (12,410), 44% (10,336) have been antlered males, and 4% (1,010) have been buck fawns (Figure 2). Of the antlered males taken so far this season, 79% of them were 2.5 years old or older (8,165; Figure 3).

Regionally, the Bluegrass Region has seen the most deer harvested so far this season with 7,014 (30%). The Bluegrass is followed closely by the Green River (25%; 5,835), Southeast (21%; 5,029), Northeast (13%; 2,977), and Purchase (12%; 2,901) regions. Hardin County currently holds the highest harvest in the state with 579 deer, followed by Christian (517), Pulaski (462), Nelson (461), and Washington counties (461; Table 1, Figure 4).

October Harvest

Kentucky hunters harvested 15,614 deer during the month of October. This total is the second highest harvest in the last five years and is nearly 1,000 animals over the five-year average (14,703; Figure 5). This higher than anticipated harvest is encouraging, especially when considering that years of [high mast availability](#) often see reduced harvests. Fifty-three percent (8,295) of the harvest in October were females, while 44% (10,336) were antlered males and 4% (1,010) were buck fawns (Figure 6).

Of the 7,319 male deer harvested in October, 64% of them were 2.5 years old or older, while 24% were 1.5 years old and 11% were fawns (Figure 7). This metric is estimated by asking successful hunters to measure the inside spread of antlered deer harvested and comparing it to thousands of datapoints collected for decades by KDFWR.

October's harvest saw a total of 1,782 deer taken by nonresident hunters (11%), while 9,367 (60%) were taken by Kentucky residents and 4,465 (29%) taken by hunters of unknown residence (youth hunters are difficult to discern residency status; and there was an extended youth season in 2025).

Nearly all Kentucky public hunting areas are open to archery and crossbow hunting across the state during October, with several open to Youth Firearm and Early Muzzle-loader hunting opportunities. In the month of October, 1,101 (7% of harvest) deer have been harvested on public land throughout the Commonwealth. The state-maintained Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) with the highest deer harvest during the month of October were Peabody (70), Green River Lake (56), Clay (47), Taylorsville Lake (47), and Big Rivers (30) WMAs. Deer harvests have been reported on more than 100 WMAs or public hunting areas across the state so far in 2025 (Table 2).

Youth Firearms Season

The KDFWR Commission extended the early October youth season from two to nine days (October 11 – 19) for the 2025-2026 season. Youth hunters harvested 5,645 deer across Kentucky during this inaugural hunt, exceeding the five-year average by nearly 2,000 deer (Figure 8).

Of the 5,645 deer harvested by youth hunters, 47.7% were female (2,695), 46.7% were antlered males (2,634), and 5.6% were buck fawns (316). Nearly half of the males harvested (52%; 1,543) were 2.5 years old or older, while 37% were 1.5 years old and the rest (11%) fawns. Youth hunters are typically less selective in their deer harvests than adult/ general hunters, a fact supported by the inflated yearling harvest during youth season compared to the rest of the year.

The new season format proved extremely successful in providing more opportunity for youth hunters to get afield with their mentors. A total of 5,003 youth hunters successfully harvested a deer during this 9-day season.

Early Muzzleloader Weekend

Kentucky's Early Muzzleloader Season occurs for two days beginning on the third Saturday of October. The harvest is typically correlated with weather during the short two-day season, and this year's was no different. A large tropical system moved through much of the state on Sunday that dissuaded rain averse black powder hunters from participating. A total of 1,599 deer were harvested, less than half of the five-year average (3,243; Figure 9).

Of the 1,599 deer harvested during this season, 54.3% were female (868), 39.3% were antlered males (628), and 6.4% were buck fawns (103). Seventy-one percent of the males harvested were 2.5 years old or older (516), while 15% were 1.5 years old (112) and 14% were fawns (103). Kentucky residents harvested 73% (1,170) deer during the two-day season, while 19% were taken by nonresident hunters (298) and 8% were taken by hunters of unknown residence (131).

Antlerless Harvest Goals

Deer managers are often quick to call for harvesting additional antlerless deer, particularly in places that have reached, or are on the cusp of reaching, biologic and social carrying capacity. However, deer managers seldom tell hunters how many antlerless deer to harvest or why it is important to do so. Beginning in the 2025-26 deer season, the KDFWR has established harvest goals for antlerless deer across all of Kentucky's Zone 1 and 2 counties where deer populations are at or approaching overabundance. The primary goal of this is to reduce populations where applicable (e.g., Zone 1 counties) and maintain others where deer are at more appropriate levels (e.g., Zone 2).

Eight counties have reached at least 15% of their harvest goal so far this season: Meade (20%), Lincoln (18%), Madison (18%), Hardin (17%), Nicholas (16%), Taylor (16%), Adair (16%), and Breckinridge (16%; Figure 10, Table 3). Typically, 70-80% of the total annual harvest is taken during Kentucky's modern firearms season, beginning the second Saturday in November and running for 16 consecutive days statewide. Many hunters wait to participate until modern firearms begins, so there is still ample opportunity to meet antlerless harvest objectives in 2025.

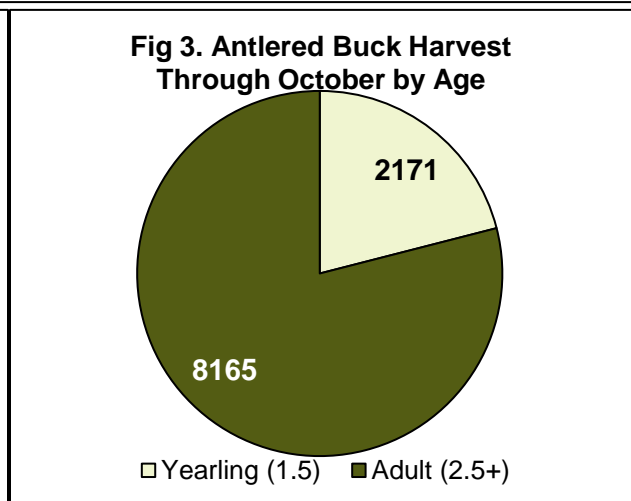
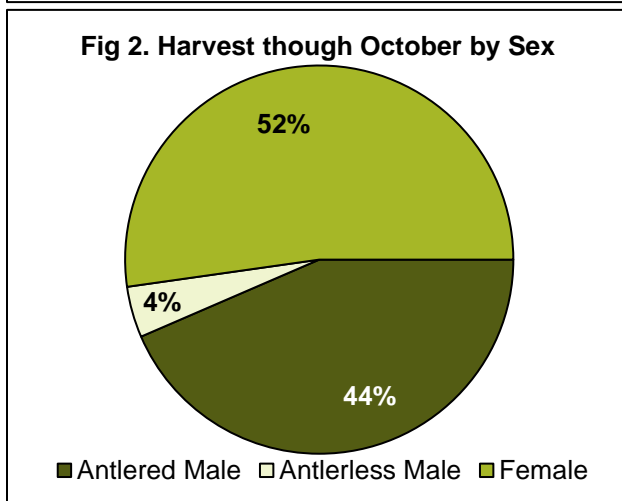
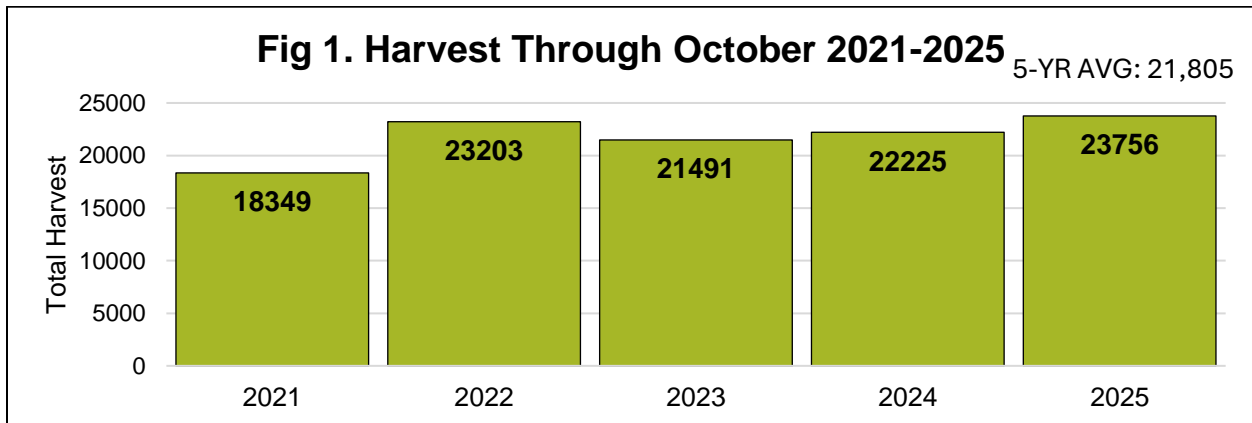


Fig 5. October Harvest 2021-2025

5-YR AVG: 14,704

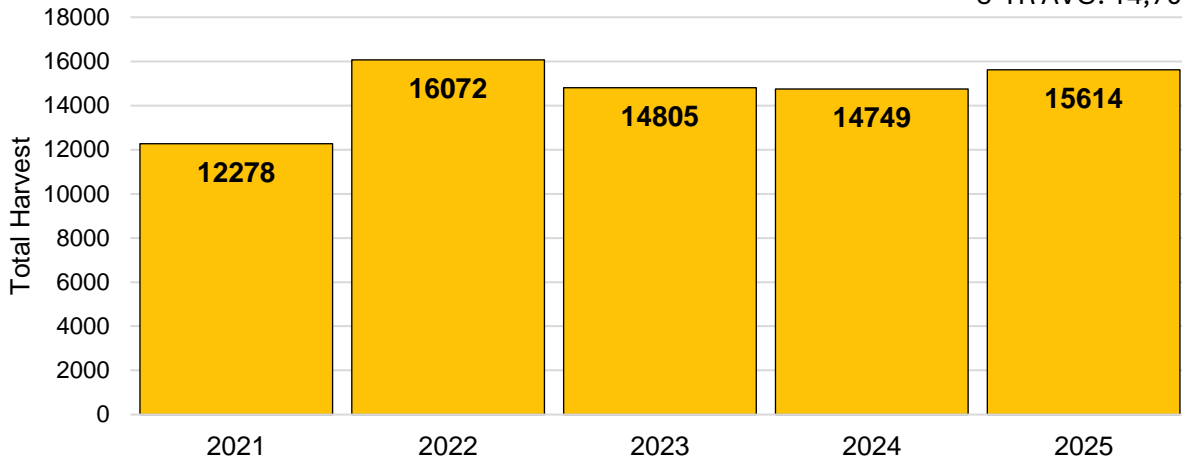


Fig 6. October Harvest by Sex

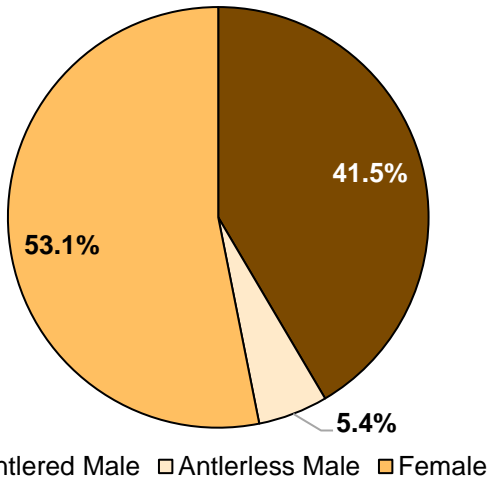


Fig 7. October Male Harvest by Age

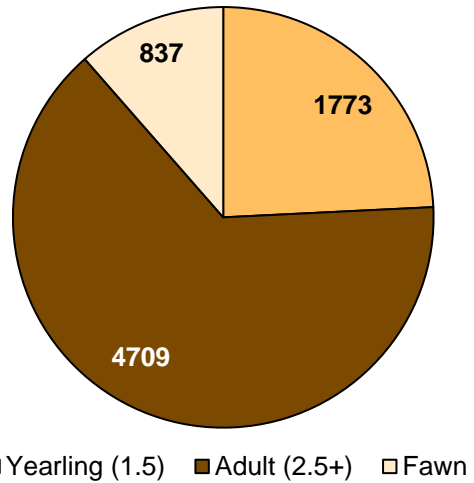


Fig 8. Youth Season Harvest 2021-2025

5-YR AVG: 3,609

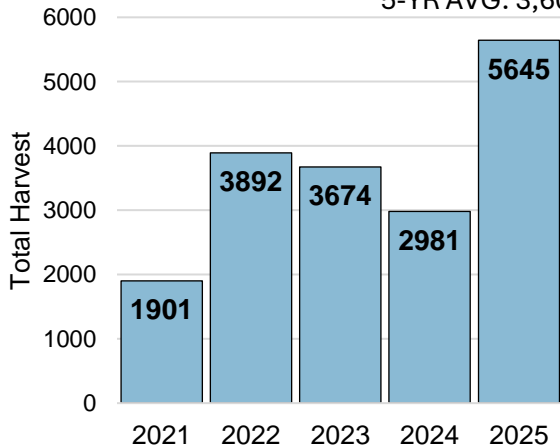
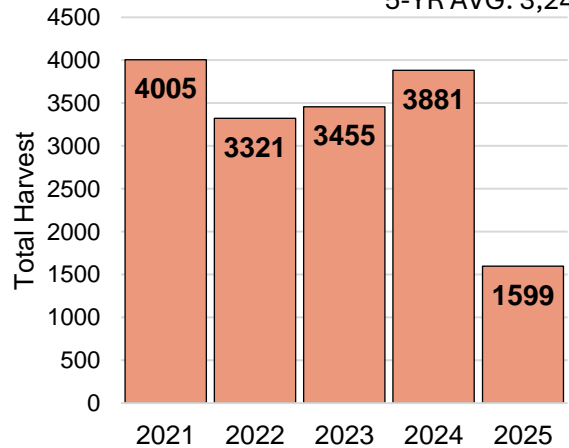


Fig 9. Muzzleloader Harvest 2021-2025

5-YR AVG: 3,243



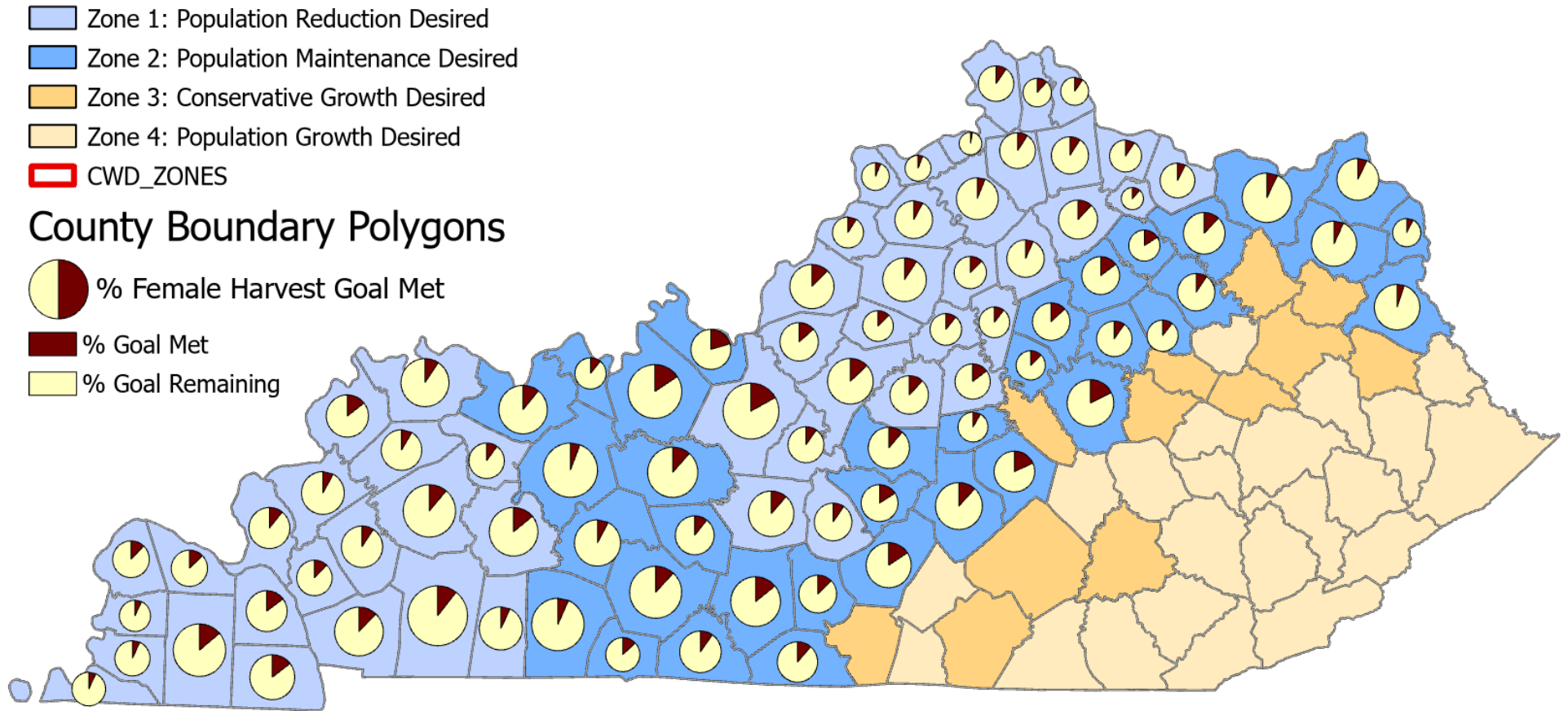
Hardin	579	Owen	312	Logan	223	Knox	172	Woodford	125	Edmonson	93
Christian	517	Bullitt	309	Warren	220	Rockcastle	170	Daviess	122	Boyle	88
Pulaski	462	Adair	304	Ohio	217	Union	163	Boyd	121	Ballard	87
Nelson	461	Mercer	299	Livingston	209	Fleming	163	Leslie	120	Magoffin	83
Washington	461	Meade	298	Caldwell	208	Carter	159	Bath	118	Rowan	83
Shelby	429	Henry	293	Wayne	204	Lewis	153	Bell	116	Martin	77
Pendleton	428	Franklin	289	Metcalfe	200	Madison	152	McLean	113	Powell	74
Breckinridge	410	Bracken	280	Casey	196	Lyon	152	Morgan	113	Lee	65
Pike	410	Grant	279	Clay	194	Knott	151	Letcher	109	Montgomery	64
Hopkins	403	Lincoln	278	Jackson	194	Johnson	149	McCracken	108	Clark	62
Graves	390	Whitley	273	Perry	192	Oldham	148	Jessamine	106	Elliott	62
Muhlenberg	386	Calloway	272	Campbell	188	Monroe	148	Simpson	102	Bourbon	52
Anderson	383	Taylor	260	Nicholas	185	Mason	147	Estill	102	Hickman	52
Hart	374	Green	253	Scott	180	Larue	146	Garrard	101	Gallatin	51
Spencer	362	Boone	251	Marshall	180	Greenup	141	Breathitt	101	Carlisle	50
Laurel	355	Marion	243	Floyd	178	Cumberland	141	Clinton	101	Owsley	46
Grayson	343	Jefferson	231	Kenton	177	Lawrence	133	Carroll	99	Fayette	40
Trigg	326	Barren	229	Todd	176	Robertson	130	Harlan	98	Wolfe	38
Harrison	321	Webster	225	Henderson	174	McCreary	130	Hancock	95	Fulton	37
Crittenden	313	Allen	223	Butler	173	Russell	130	Trimble	94	Menifee	28

Table 1. Total harvest through October by county. Blue = Bluegrass, Green = Green River, Yellow = Northeast, Purple = Southeast, Orange = Purchase

Public Area	Harvest	Public Area	Harvest
Daniel Boone National Forest	177	Pennyrile State Forest	22
Land Between the Lakes NRA	174	Nolin River Lake WMA	21
Fort Knox Military Reservation	133	Kentucky Lake WMA	18
Green River Lake WMA	99	Blue Grass Army Depot	17
Peabody WMA	84	Clarks River NWR	16
Big Rivers WMA & State Forest	72	Kentucky River WMA	14
Taylorville Lake WMA	61	Veterans Memorial WMA	14
Wendell H. Ford RTC	58	West Kentucky WMA	13
Clay WMA	58	Livingston County WMA and SNA	11
Yellowbank WMA	45	John C. Williams WMA	11
Higginson-Henry WMA	37	Cumberland Forest WMA	11
Barren River Lake WMA	37	Wells Hunting Access Area	11
Lake Cumberland WMA	36	Yatesville Lake WMA	10
Sloughs WMA	35	Griffith Woods WMA	10
Ballard WMA	29	Grayson Lake WMA	10
*All other areas <10 deer harvested			

Table 2. Public land harvest through October

Figure 10. Female Harvest Goal Progress through October



Zone	County	Total Female Harvest Goal	Female Harvest	% Goal Met	Zone	County	Total Female Harvest Goal	Female Harvest	% Goal Met	Zone	County	Total Female Harvest Goal	Female Harvest	% Goal Met
1	Anderson	1647	177	11%	1	Livingston	1321	142	11%	2	Boyd	806	60	7%
1	Ballard	496	60	12%	2	Logan	1328	87	7%	2	Boyle	385	32	8%
1	Boone	1602	151	9%	1	Lyon	642	77	12%	2	Breckinridge	1711	267	16%
1	Bracken	1574	147	9%	1	Marshall	758	112	15%	2	Butler	1060	80	8%
1	Bullitt	1363	183	13%	1	Mason	803	61	8%	2	Carter	1257	85	7%
1	Caldwell	1264	117	9%	1	McCracken	574	73	13%	2	Casey	758	89	12%
1	Calloway	1202	175	15%	1	McLean	788	78	10%	2	Clark	313	30	10%
1	Campbell	1032	100	10%	1	Mercer	882	129	15%	2	Daviess	696	76	11%
1	Carlisle	497	34	7%	1	Muhlenberg	1517	213	14%	2	Edmonson	350	37	11%
1	Carroll	740	44	6%	1	Nelson	2002	257	13%	2	Fayette	170	22	13%
1	Christian	2224	235	11%	1	Oldham	961	86	9%	2	Fleming	606	73	12%
1	Crittenden	2410	192	8%	1	Owen	2894	175	6%	2	Grayson	1575	181	11%
1	Franklin	1344	168	13%	1	Pendleton	2500	226	9%	2	Greenup	949	69	7%
1	Fulton	381	26	7%	1	Robertson	647	75	12%	2	Jessamine	321	41	13%
1	Gallatin	750	20	3%	1	Scott	1196	80	7%	2	Lawrence	1343	69	5%
1	Grant	1709	156	9%	1	Shelby	2399	221	9%	2	Lewis	902	63	7%
1	Graves	2019	280	14%	1	Spencer	1517	192	13%	2	Lincoln	803	146	18%
1	Green	1210	114	9%	1	Todd	1148	81	7%	2	Madison	513	90	18%
1	Hancock	531	57	11%	1	Trigg	1325	162	12%	2	Marion	1083	121	11%
1	Hardin	2090	353	17%	1	Trimble	733	45	6%	2	Meade	842	172	20%
1	Harrison	1353	160	12%	1	Union	801	116	14%	2	Metcalfe	907	114	13%
1	Hart	1617	184	11%	1	Washington	1836	219	12%	2	Monroe	677	77	11%
1	Henderson	1165	109	9%	1	Webster	1725	146	8%	2	Montgomery	289	30	10%
1	Henry	1734	137	8%	1	Woodford	598	62	10%	2	Nicholas	550	88	16%
1	Hickman	568	39	7%	2	Adair	965	151	16%	2	Ohio	1815	104	6%
1	Hopkins	1863	207	11%	2	Allen	964	93	10%	2	Simpson	324	42	13%
1	Jefferson	1015	125	12%	2	Barren	860	122	14%	2	Taylor	796	126	16%
1	Kenton	825	94	11%	2	Bath	505	47	9%	2	Warren	853	101	12%
1	Larue	723	70	10%	2	Bourbon	183	27	15%	<i>*only Zone 1 and Zone 2 counties included with female harvest goals</i>				

Table 3. Female harvest goal progress through October