A Deer’s Diet Along the Edge

Soft Mast:
• Blackberry
• Blueberry
• Elderberry
• Persimmon
• Plum
• Crabapple
Do Your Woods Look Like This?
Timber Management

• In hardwoods, aesthetics are nice, but mast and browse (aka food) is priority
• Retention Cut for Wildlife (or Thinning)
• Reduce canopy cover to ~30%
• Release favored crowns
• Stimulate understory
• Ask a professional
It’s All About Managing Sunlight

Shade Intolerant

- species of trees and shrubs are those that require full sunlight to thrive. They are sometimes called pioneer species because they are the first to become established on large, open, disturbed sites. They include cedar, blackgum, dogwood, hazelnut, blackberry, cherry and redbud.

Shade Tolerant

- species of trees and shrubs are those that grow well with limited or very little sunlight, and may outcompete pioneer species over time. They include beech and sugar maple.
Timber Stand Improvement Techniques

- Cut and Fell
- Girdle and Spray
- Hack and Squirt
Edge Feathering/Patch Clearcut
Plant Soft Mast
Results…
Wetlands/Waterholes
FOOD PLOTS
A Guide to Successful
Wildlife Food Plots
Blending Science with Common Sense
Craig A. Harper
Think of Your Food Plots as a Checkerboard, Not a Monoculture
Food Plots

• Various forbs (broadleaf herbaceous plants) make up approximately 70 percent of a white-tailed deer’s diet during the warm growing season.

• Legume-dominated, warm-season forage plots provide high levels of protein and total digestible nutrients – exactly what growing deer need during summer.
Food Habits

• All green stuff doesn’t make good deer food. It’s seasonal
• Stress Periods: Late Summer and Winter
• Focus on High Protein
• Annual vs Perrenial Plots
Diversity of Plantings Throughout the Year Are Critical

Fig. 6.7 These data show standing crop (forage available) of two perennial and four annual forages averaged across three fields in Tennessee (all forages present in separate plots in each field) over several years. Standing crop will vary greatly depending upon deer density and habitat quality. Here, standing crop has been averaged across three areas where deer density ranged from 30–90 deer per square mile. Of particular interest is forage...
They Don’t Like Everything

White-tailed Deer

Table 6.1  Production of three annual forages and orchardgrass grown in separate plots in the field shown in Fig. 6.48 and 6.49 from October 2005 to April 2006. These data were collected at the end of each month, except April, when data were collected prior to flowering for each of the forages. It is clear these annual forages out-produce and are highly preferred over orchardgrass by white-tailed deer. The deer density in this area was approximately 70 per square mile.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Forage produced (pounds per acre – dry weight)</th>
<th>Percent eaten by deer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>crimson clover</td>
<td>4050</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oats</td>
<td>3676</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>triticale</td>
<td>4049</td>
<td>89</td>
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<tr>
<td>wheat</td>
<td>3952</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orchardgrass</td>
<td>2212</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alfalfa
SOY BEANS
Grain
Size Matters....Exclusion Fences
Nothing Magic to Food Plot Mixes
Experiment to see what works on Your Farm
Warm Season Annuals

- 40# Quail Haven soybeans
- 5# peredovik sunflowers
- 50# iron-clay cowpeas
- 10# lablab
- 5# peredovik sunflowers
- 60# iron-clay cowpeas
- 8# corn
- 15# American jointvetch (Aeschynomene)
- 5# alyceclover
- 20# buckwheat
Cool Season Perennials

- 5# alsike clover
- 4# ladino white clover
- 5# berseem clover
- 40# oats or wheat

- 10# alfalfa
- 5# red clover
- 3# chicory
- 30# oats or wheat

- 4# ladino white clover
- 5# red clover
- 2# chicory
- 1# dwarf essex rape
- 40# oats or wheat
Cool Season Annuals

- 100# wheat or cereal rye
- 20# Austrian winter peas
- 2# dwarf essex rape (or other forage rape)
- 10# crimson clover
- 5# arrowleaf clover
- 20# Austrian winter peas
- 40# wheat or oats
The Key to Food Plots

ROTATION

ROTATION

ROTATION

ROTATION
1 YR OLD MILO FIELD
1 YR OLD CORN FIELD
Points to consider….

- Are you providing food during the stress periods?
- Are you considering pests and disease?
- Diversity is key to maximize food plot potential.
- Consider where you are planting plots adjacent to cover.