

Wisconsin Deer Baiting and Wildlife Feeding Regulations



Counties where baiting and feeding of deer IS prohibited (shaded counties)

WM-456-2017

Baiting wild animals for hunting purposes is prohibited. No person may place, use, or hunt over bait or feed material for the purpose of hunting any wild animals except deer (see below), bear (see Wisconsin Bear Hunting Regulations), or wolf (when season is open—see Wisconsin Wolf Hunting Regulations) unless authorized by a special permit or license issued by the department. Placing bait to hunt deer or feed for recreational viewing of deer is illegal in the shaded counties on the map found on the [baiting and feeding regulations](#) web page.

Scents: Scent may be used for hunting deer or other wild animals, but the scent may not be placed or deposited in a manner that it is accessible for consumption by deer, and scents shall be removed daily at the end of hunting hours established for deer. However, two ounces or less of scent may be placed, used or deposited in any manner for hunting game and does not need to be removed daily at the end of hunting hours.

Natural Vegetation and Plantings: You may hunt with the aid of material deposited by natural vegetation, material found solely as a result of normal agricultural or gardening practices, or with the aid of crops planted and left standing as wildlife food plots.

Feeding wild animals for non-hunting purposes is prohibited. No person may place, deposit, or allow the placement of any material to feed or attract wild animals for non-hunting purposes including recreational and supplemental feeding, except as allowed below for birds and small mammals.

Feeding Birds and Small Mammals: Material may be placed solely for the purpose of attracting and feeding wild birds and small mammals if:

- placed in bird feeding devices and structures at a sufficient height or design to prevent access by deer.
- the structures and devices are within 50 yards of a dwelling devoted to human occupancy.
- when deer, bear, or elk are found to be utilizing bird feeding devices or structures the devices or structures shall be enclosed or elevated higher to prevent access by deer.

Note: The placement of plain water for drinking or for birdbaths is allowed.

Feeding Animals by Hand: Feeding deer, elk or bear by hand, including scattering or tossing feed for these animals, is not allowed. Feeding other wild animals by hand (including scattering or tossing feed) is not encouraged but is allowed if:

- feed is placed not more than 30 feet away from the person feeding.
- the person feeding cleans up the unconsumed feed before moving a distance greater than 30 feet from the deposited feed.

Natural Vegetation and Plantings: Feed that is deposited by natural vegetation or found solely as a result of normal agricultural or gardening practices, as well as standing crops planted and left as wildlife food plots, is not considered feeding for the purposes of these regulations, and is allowed statewide.

Counties where baiting and feeding of deer is NOT prohibited (non-shaded counties)

Baiting wild animals for hunting purposes is prohibited except as noted. No person may place, use, or hunt over bait or feed material for the purpose of hunting any wild animals except deer (see below), bear (see Wisconsin Bear Hunting Regulations), or wolf (when season is open—see Wisconsin Wolf Hunting Regulations) unless authorized by a special permit or license issued by the department. Placing bait to hunt deer or feed for recreational viewing is legal in the non-shaded counties on the above map. See below for restrictions on deer baiting and feeding.

Scents: Scent may be used for hunting deer or other wild animals, but the scent may not be placed or deposited in a manner that it is accessible for consumption by deer, and scents shall be removed daily at the end of hunting hours established for deer. However, two ounces or less of scent may be placed, used, or deposited in any manner for hunting game and does not need to be removed daily at the end of hunting hours.

Natural Vegetation and Plantings: You may hunt with the aid of material deposited by natural vegetation or material found solely as a result of normal agricultural or gardening practices, or with the aid of crops planted and left standing as wildlife food plots.

Deer Baiting – What Is Allowed For Deer Hunting Purposes

Amount: No person may place, use, or hunt over more than 2 gallons of bait or feed at any feeding site.

Placement: No person may place, use, or hunt deer over:

- bait located in a county in which baiting and feeding of deer is prohibited.
- more than 2 gallons of bait on each contiguous area of land under the same ownership that is less than 40 acres in size, or for each full 40 acres that make up a contiguous area of land under the same ownership. **Note:** Parcels of land that do not touch but are separated only by a town or county road or state highway are considered contiguous. **Note:** Feed at feeding sites may be spread out or divided into more than one pile as long as the total amount of feed material is not more than 2 gallons per forty acres.
- any feeding site that is located within 100 yards of any other feeding site located on the same contiguous area of land under the same ownership.
- any feeding site if the person doing the hunting is within 100 yards of more than 2 gallons of bait or feed located on the same parcel of land.
- any feeding site that is located within 50 yards of any trail, road, or campsite used by the public, or within 100 yards of a roadway, having a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour or more.

Timing: No person may:

- place, use, or hunt over bait or feed during the closed season for hunting deer, but may start to place bait for deer hunting 24 hours prior to the first deer hunting season, which is the archery season. **Note:** The 24-hour period is the period from 12:00 A.M. to 11:59 P.M. on the day immediately before the archery deer season.
- hunt over bait or a feeding site that is in violation of these regulations, unless the area is completely free of bait or feed material for at least 10 consecutive days prior to hunting, pursuing animals, or dog training.

Content: No person may place use or hunt over any bait or feed material that:

- contains any animal part or animal by-product.
- is contained in or deposited by a feeder that is designed to deposit or replenish feed automatically, mechanically, or by gravity.
- contains or is contained within, metal, paper, plastic, glass, wood or other similar processed materials. This does not apply to bait or feed placed in hollow logs or stumps (see Wisconsin Bear Hunting Regulations) or to scent materials.

License: No person may use or hunt over bait or feed material placed for deer without possessing an appropriate valid archery or gun deer license and unused carcass tag.

Feeding Wild Animals Is Allowed For Certain Species For Non-Hunting Purposes

Feeding Deer:

Amount: No person may place or allow the placement of more than 2 gallons of feed material at any feeding site.

Placement: No person may place or allow the placement of:

- feed in a county in which baiting and feeding of deer is prohibited.
- more than 2 gallons of feed for each owner-occupied residence or business, regardless of property size.
- a deer feeding site more than 50 yards from an owner occupied residence or business.
- a deer feeding site within 100 yards from a roadway having a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour or more.
- a deer feeding site without the approval of the owner of the owner-occupied residence or business.
- feed at a deer feeding site that the person knows is being used by bear and elk. If the owner of the residence or business is notified by the department or otherwise becomes aware that bear or elk have been using a deer feeding site, the owner must discontinue feeding for a period of not less than 30 days.

Content: No person may place any bait or feed material for deer that:

- contains any animal part or animal by-product.
- is contained in or deposited by a feeder that is designed to deposit or replenish feed automatically, mechanically, or by gravity.

Feeding Other Wild Animals:

No person may place, deposit, or allow the placement of any material to feed or attract other wild animals for non-hunting purposes including recreational and supplemental feeding, except as allowed below for feeding birds and small mammals.

Feeding Birds And Small Mammals:

Material may be placed solely for the purpose of attracting and feeding wild birds and small mammals if:

- placed in bird feeding devices and structures at a sufficient height or design to prevent access by deer.
- the structures and devices are no further than 50 yards from a dwelling devoted to human occupancy.
- deer, bear, or elk are utilizing bird feeding devices or structures, the devices or structures shall be enclosed or elevated higher to prevent access by the deer, bear, or elk.

Note: The placement of plain water for drinking or for birdbaths is allowed.

Feeding Animals by Hand: Feeding deer, elk or bear by hand is not allowed. Feeding other wild animals by hand is not encouraged but is allowed if:

- feed is placed not more than 30 feet away from the person feeding.
- the person feeding cleans up the unconsumed feed before moving a distance greater than 30 feet from the deposited feed.

Natural Vegetation and Plantings: Feed that is deposited by natural vegetation or found solely as a result of normal agricultural or gardening practices, as well as standing crops planted and left as wildlife food plots, is not considered feeding for the purposes of these regulations, and is allowed statewide.

Definitions:

Animal part or animal by-product means honey, bones, fish, meat, solid animal fat, animal carcass, or parts of animal carcasses, but does not include liquid scents.

Bait means any material placed or used to attract wild animals, including liquid scent, salt, and mineral blocks.

Bird feeding devices and structures means any device or structure that has the primary purpose of attracting or feeding birds or small mammals.

Business means a building used primarily to carry out commercial activities at which regular scheduled business hours are maintained for employees and the public, such as restaurants and retail stores, but does not include associated lands, warehouses, outbuildings or other buildings that are not normally open to the public.

Feed means any material that may attract or be consumed by wild animals that is placed for any non-hunting purposes including recreational and supplemental feeding, but does not include plain drinking water.

Feeding site means any location or area in which bait or feed is placed or deposited or that contains bait or feed material used to attract wild animals for recreational and supplemental feeding or for hunting purposes.

Hunt over means hunting within 100 yards of any feeding site where a person knows or reasonably should know that the area contains a feeding site.

Owner-occupied residence means a dwelling or building devoted to human occupancy or as a residence by the owner or members of the owners immediate family, or when used as a residence by individuals as a rental property.

Roadway means that portion of a highway between the regularly established curb lines or that portion which is improved, designed, or ordinarily used for vehicular travel excluding the berm or shoulder.

Scent means any material, except animal parts or animal by-products, used to attract wild animals solely by its odor.

Small mammal means all mammals other than bear, deer, and elk.



NOTE: Additional counties may be included in the ban if: 1) a new CWD or bovine tuberculosis positive captive or free-roaming, domestic or wild animal is confirmed in the county; or 2) the county or portion of the county is within a 10 mile radius of a new captive or free-roaming, domestic or wild animal that has been tested and confirmed to be positive for CWD or bovine tuberculosis.