APPRENTICE DEER

The Apprentice season was separated into Youth and Apprentice seasons in 2021. See separate Youth season report for license sales and estimated harvest.

There were 487 resident single-tag antlerless licenses issued for the 2025 Apprentice Deer hunting season. All license holders that provided a valid email address were surveyed and 178 responses (37%) were received.

The Apprentice season ran from September 13, 2025, through January 1, 2026. Respondents reported hunting an average of 3.76 days each, which projects to 1,832 recreation days for the season.

Projections for the season indicated that 27 whitetail buck fawns, 209 adult whitetail does, 24 whitetail doe fawns, 3 mule deer buck fawns, and 23 adult mule deer does were harvested for a total of 318, and an overall success rate of 59%. The five deer management units with the highest reported harvest were the Black Hills, Minnehaha, Brookings, Butte, and W Meade, which accounted for 45% of the total season harvest.

The average satisfaction rating for those responding (1 being very dissatisfied and 7 very satisfied) was 5.88.

Comparison of the 2018 - 2025 Apprentice Deer hunting seasons

		Harvest						Avg	
	Licenses	Bucks		Does				Days	Average
YEAR	Sold	WT	Mule	WT	Mule	Total	Success	Hunted	Satisfctn
2018	4,845	264	35	1,823	377	2,499	52%	3.85	5.72
2019	4,424	263	37	1,722	297	2,319	52%	3.93	5.70
2020	4,302	249	26	1,846	372	2,493	58%	3.71	5.73
2021	641	21	0	323	18	362	57%	3.09	6.10
2022	527	29	4	210	22	263	50%	4.10	5.82
2023	653	36	3	292	29	361	55%	4.27	5.69
2024	567	25	6	276	12	318	56%	4.38	5.65
2025	487	27	3	233	23	287	59%	3.76	5.88

*The Apprentice season was separated into Youth and Apprentice seasons in 2021. See separate Youth season report for license sales and estimated harvest.

2025 Apprentice Deer Harvest Projections

Last Revised:									Harvest Projections							Average	Avg
11-Mar-26	License	Licenses	Licenses Sold			Response	Hunter	Tag	Whitetail			Mule Deer			Total	Satisfaction	Days
Unit-Type	Holders	Available	Resident	Nonresident	Tags Sold	Rate	Success	Success	Bucks	Does	Doe Fawns	Bucks	Does	Doe Fawns	Harvest	Score **	Hunted
APD-03	96	Unlimited	96	0	96	31%	69%	69%	3	33	3	3	23	0	66	--	--
APD-13	391	Unlimited	391	0	391	39%	56%	56%	24	176	21	0	0	0	220	--	--
Totals	487		487	0	487	37.3%	58.9%	59%	27	209	24	3	23	0	287	5.88	3.76

** Refers to a satisfaction scale of 1=very dissatisfied to 7=very satisfied.

2025 Apprentice Deer Harvest Distribution

Last Revised:
11-Mar-26

	Projected Harvest							
	Whitetail			Mule Deer				
	Bucks	Does		Bucks	Does		Total	
Unit	Fawn	Adult	Fawn	Fawn	Adult	Fawn	Estimate	%
01A (Minnehaha)	3	14	3	0	0	0	19	6.6%
02A (NE Penn/SE Meade)	0	0	0	0	7	0	7	2.3%
02C (SE Pennington)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
03A (Brown)	0	5	0	0	0	0	5	1.9%
04A (Beadle)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
05A (Codington)	0	3	3	0	0	0	5	1.9%
06A (Brookings)	3	22	3	0	0	0	27	9.5%
07A (Yankton)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
08A (Davison)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
10A (Aurora)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
11A (N Bennett)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
11B (S Bennett)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
12A (Bon Homme)	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
13A (Brule)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
13L (Brule GPA's/Corps)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
14A (Buffalo)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
15A (Butte)	0	8	3	3	7	0	21	7.2%
15B (SW Butte/Lawrence)	0	3	0	0	3	0	6	2.1%
16A (Campbell)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
17A (Charles Mix)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
18A (Clark)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
19A (Clay)	3	3	0	0	0	0	5	1.9%
20A (Corson)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
21A (E Custer/S Penn)	0	8	3	0	0	0	11	3.8%
21B (C Custer/C Penn)	0	11	0	0	0	0	11	3.8%
22A (Day)	0	14	0	0	0	0	14	4.7%
23A (Deuel)	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0.9%
24A (Dewey)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
24B (Little Moreau)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
25A (Douglas)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
26A (Edmunds)	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
27A (NW FRiver/SW Cust)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
27B (Fall River)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
27L (Hill Ranch Area)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
28A (Faulk)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
29A (Grant)	0	8	0	0	0	0	8	2.8%
30A,B (Gregory)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
31A (Haakon)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
32A (Hamlin)	0	5	0	0	0	0	5	1.9%
33A (Hand)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
34A (Hanson)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
35A (W Harding)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
35C (E Harding)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
35L (Custer Nat Forest)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
36A (Hughes)	0	5	0	0	0	0	5	1.9%
37A (Hutchinson)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
38A (Hyde)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
39A (N Jackson)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
39B (S Jackson)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
40A (Jerauld)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
41A (Jones)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
42A (Kingsbury)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
43A (Lake)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
44A (Lincoln)	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0.9%
45A (W Lyman)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
45B (E Lyman)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
45C (NE Lyman/SE Stanley)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
45D (Ft Pr Nat Grslnd)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
46A (McCook)	3	5	3	0	0	0	11	3.8%
47A (McPherson)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
48A (Marshall)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
49A (W Meade)	3	8	0	0	7	0	17	6.1%
49B (NE Meade)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
50A,B (Mellette)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
51A (Miner)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
52A (Moody)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
53A (N Perkins)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
53C (S Perkins)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
54A (Potter)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
55A (Roberts)	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0.9%
56A (Sanborn)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
57A (Spink)	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
58A (Stanley)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
59A (W Sully)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
59B (E Sully)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
60A (Tripp)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
61A (Turner)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
62A (Union)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
63A (Walworth)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
64A (Ziebach)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
65A (Oglala Lakota)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0.9%
67A (Todd)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
BH (Black Hills)	5	41	0	0	0	0	46	16.1%
TOTALS	**27**	**209**	**24**	**3**	**23**	**0**	**287**	

Use these figures for approximations only!