The

South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Seasons Data Book

100th Anniversary Edition

Lonnie Shafer, Author

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On October 30, 1919, South Dakota held its first pheasant hunting season. *The South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Seasons Data Book* 100th Anniversary Edition is a commemorative issue containing season structures and statistics for each of South Dakota's first 100 pheasant hunting seasons. The objectives of the *Data Book* were three fold:

1. To assemble and record the history of South Dakota's pheasant hunting seasons in a uniform manner, and to present the material accurately in a single document.
2. To present a document worthy of honoring South Dakota's heritage as the world's premier pheasant hunting destination over the past century.
3. To have a useful document that will benefit the future of pheasants in South Dakota and the Midwest.

October 30, 2019—The 100th Anniversary of Pheasant Hunting in South Dakota

Above photo: Lonnie Shafer, the author, and Josie by Jeff Shafer.

Photo on front cover: South Dakota ring-necked pheasant rooster in flight at the Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge by Tom Koerner of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (public domain photo).

Photo on back cover: Pheasant chicks by Pheasants Forever.

Photo next page: NEBRASKAland Magazine/Nebraska Game and Parks Commission provided the photo to create the pheasant silhouette.

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Tracks of the Past Leading to the Future

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523 E. Capitol Avenue, Foss Building
Pierre, SD 57501
(gfp.sd.gov: Look under online shopping for gift cards, books and prints)

The author donated this book to the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks because of his enjoyable South Dakota pheasant hunts and his interest in pheasant history. The purpose of this note is to explain why the book is dedicated to the employees of the Department and published by the Department. It was the author's decision to dedicate the book to the employees, past and present. Upon receiving the book, the Wildlife Division personnel of the Department decided to publish it.

Dedication

This *Data Book* is dedicated to the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks employees, past and present, for their role in introducing the ring-necked pheasant to South Dakota and working to maintain a viable population for over a hundred years. The Department purchased ring-necked pheasants with state funds for the first time in 1911. These pheasants were released throughout the state.

The mission of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks is to provide sustainable outdoor recreational opportunities through responsible management of our state's parks, fisheries and wildlife by fostering partnerships, cultivating stewardship and safely connecting people with the outdoors. One part of the mission has been the management of the ring-necked pheasant. The success of this endeavor resulted in an annual pheasant hunting season for 100 consecutive years, 1919-2018.

Profile Sheet about the Author, Lonnie Shafer

1944: Born on a farm in rural Shubert, Nebraska (NE), son of Alfred and Caryll Shafer
1955: Started pheasant hunting with his dad, beginning a lifelong hobby of pheasant hunting
1956: Shot his first ring-necked pheasant in Webster County, NE

1961: Graduated from Shubert High School
1965: Graduated from Peru State College (Peru, NE) with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education, major in Physical Education, and minor in History
1965-1973: Taught history, geography, and government at Orleans Public School in Orleans, NE. Also coached junior high football and high school boys track and field
1966: Married Carol Diann French. Three children—Tom, 1969; Jeff, 1973; and Julie, 1976
1969: Began keeping a combination hunting diary and scrapbook. The diary contains information on successful hunts. The scrapbook contains hunting related information, especially on pheasants

1971: Graduated from Kearney State College (Kearney, NE) with Masters in Secondary Education, major in History
1973-1974: Taught and coached at Carson-Macedonia Public School in Carson, Iowa
1974-2002: Taught and coached at Exeter Public School in Exeter, NE
1976: Exeter Bicentennial and Town Hall Committee member, wrote a Historical Tour of Exeter School District #20
1979: Exeter Centennial Book Committee member, authored Chapter 7 on Civic Organizations for the book, *They Called It Exeter*

1981: Selected by the University of Nebraska-Omaha for the Distinguished Educator Award
1984 and **1985**: Coached back-to-back Nebraska State Champions Class D Boys Track and Field
1989: Special Teacher Award by KOLN-KGIN TV (Lincoln, NE)
1989: Received National High School Coaching Award—Track Coach Gold Award
1994: Became a member of Pheasants Forever and has been a member since
1995: Received the Level IV Career Milestone in Boys Track and Field from the Nebraska Coaches Association

2002-2006: Taught and coached at Exeter-Milligan Public School in Exeter, NE
2004: 125 Year Exeter History Book Committee member, authored Chapter 6 on Education for the book, *Voices From Exeter 125*
2006: Retired from teaching and coaching after a 41-year career
2006: Shot 1,000th pheasant, from 1956 to 2006
2006: During retirement years has carried out research on pheasant facts and pheasant history. This research resulted in writing articles and historical books relating to pheasants and pheasant hunting

2008: Began frequent pheasant hunting trips to South Dakota (SD)
2014: Upgraded Pheasants Forever membership to Life Member
2016: Celebrated 50th Wedding Anniversary, hosted by children and grandchildren
2016: After living 42 years in Exeter, NE, moved to York, NE
2019: Resides in York, NE, at the completion of *The South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Seasons Data Book*

<u>Published works related to pheasant facts, pheasant history, and pheasant hunting</u>:
Shafer's Nebraska Pheasant Hunting Almanac, January 2011
"The Phenomenal Pheasant," in *NEBRASKAland* magazine, October 2011
"Happy Hunting Ground" in *Dakota Country* magazine, November 2014
"Pheasants Difficult to Obtain in 1915," on SDGFP blog, November 2015
"Rooster Rush: South Dakota's Unofficial Holiday" in *Dakota Country* magazine, October 2016

Table of Contents

List of Charts

Photo F-1. The ring-necked pheasant rooster has an amazing array of colored feathers. This Asian transplant became the most popular game bird in South Dakota. A rooster is considered a challenging quarry to hunt and a trophy once in the hunter's bag.

Photo Credits

Photo F-2. The feathers of a hen pheasant are brown, tan, and beige with dark brown and black markings. This color combination allows a hen to blend into her surroundings and avoid predators. The norm for a hen pheasant is to devote from May to September raising her offspring.

Photo F-3. Amie, Lonnie Shafer, and Penny with a combination of South Dakota pheasants and prairie chickens. These birds were bagged with his son, Jeff. Lonnie assembled the data for this book.

Photo F-4. Jeff Shafer after a successful South Dakota ring-necked pheasant hunt. Jeff formulated the annual pheasant hunting season maps used in the text.

Preface

In 2006, Lonnie Shafer retired after a 41-year secondary teaching and coaching career. His classroom duties included teaching American History and World Geography, and his main coaching duties were junior high football and high school boys track and field. Since his retirement he has devoted more time to his lifelong hobby of pheasant hunting. An offshoot of his interest in pheasant hunting has been doing research on pheasant facts and pheasant history. One result of his interest culminated in the publishing of *Shafer's Nebraska Pheasant Hunting Almanac* in 2011. In 2008, he started going to South Dakota to hunt pheasants, and during the fall of 2012, he began doing research on the history of pheasant hunting in South Dakota. The outcome has been this work, *The South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Seasons Data Book*.

Acknowledgements

This book was made possible with the aid of Travis Runia, Chad Switzer, Jeff Shafer, and the staff at the South Dakota State Archives. Travis Runia, Senior Upland Game Biologist for the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (SDGFP), and Chad Switzer, Wildlife Program Administrator with the SDGFP, provided research materials for the South Dakota pheasant hunting seasons. Jeff Shafer, the author's son, produced the maps needed for each pheasant hunting season. Jeff resides in York, Nebraska, and is employed by the Nebraska Public Power District as a Water Resources Advisor. The staff of the SD State Archives assisted in gathering the Department of Game and Fish of South Dakota (SDGF) Commission Minutes containing the regulations for SD pheasant hunting seasons before 1945 and SDGFP Commission Minutes for regulations after 1945.

Appreciation is extended to Lynne Smith, SDGFP Secretary at the Huron Office, Travis Runia, and Chad Switzer for providing editing assistance. In addition, Travis designed the Preseason Population Estimates charts and Harvest Estimates charts used in the text. Chad handled the pre-printing details for the book. The author thanks Chad Coppess, Senior Photographer for the SD Department of Tourism; Shuree Mortenson, Information Officer for the SDGFP; Allie Hoeft, Graphic Designer for the SDGFP; Logan Hinners, Graphic Design Manager for Pheasants Forever; Jaclyn Vogt, Photo Librarian for NEBRASKAland Magazine; Chad Switzer; and Travis Runia for collecting the pheasant photos used in the book. The photo credits are listed on pages ii and ix.

Introduction

The definition of a pheasant hunting season as used in this *Data Book* was defined as the beginning of the first fall regional season to the conclusion of the last extended, amended or winter regional season that may have proceeded into the following calendar year. The criterion used for season length in the text was based on the total days of the entire fall regular regional zone seasons and all supplementary regional zone seasons combined. Additional hunting days on refuges, Waterfowl Production Areas, Game Production Areas, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land along the Missouri River were not added to the season length. Also, the extra hunting days allowed by the Youth Pheasant Season beginning in 1999 and the Resident-Only Pheasant Season beginning in 2001 were not used to calculate season length in the text. It was necessary to apply this criterion to generate a consistent document to deal with the variables found in South Dakota pheasant hunting seasons. The Appendices section gives more detail on this subject.

A criterion was also needed to establish a uniform standard for daily limit and possession limit used on the charts at the beginning of each sectional division. The standard used for a seasonal daily limit was the maximum daily limit in any regional zone on that particular zone's opening day. The standard used for a seasonal possession limit was the maximum possession limit allowed for residents in any regional zone during the entire season. In regard to possession limit the pheasant hunting regulations require it to be taken according to the daily limit.

Carl G. Trautman, biologist with the SDGFP from 1946-1978, created the norm adopted in this *Data Book* for pheasant population levels. On page 15 in Trautman's book, *History, Ecology and Management of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota*, he classified populations as high-density (7,000,000 or more birds), medium-density (between 4,000,000 and 7,000,000) and low-density (less than 4,000,000).

All population and harvest data used in the *Data Book* were taken from the "Ring-necked Pheasant Statistics for South Dakota" chart published by the SDGFP. The chart has a preseason population estimate and harvest estimate for each season. In the text, the term "population" was used to express preseason population estimate and the term "harvest" was used to express harvest estimate.

The following acronyms were used in the text: SD (South Dakota), NE (Nebraska), U.S. (United States), SDGF (Department of Game and Fish of South Dakota), SDGFP (South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks), NGPC (Nebraska Game and Parks Commission), and CRP (Conservation Reserve Program).

Special Recognition

Photo F-5. Travis Runia and Cliff with a brace of South Dakota ring-necked pheasant roosters.

Travis Runia is the Senior Upland Game Biologist with the SDGFP in Huron. Travis was the author's first contact and provided historical sources enabling the author to begin research of the past pheasant hunting seasons of South Dakota. He continued to be an aid to the author throughout the compiling of the *Data Book*.

Photo F-6. Chad Switzer and Sammy with a pair of roosters harvested on a snowy South Dakota day.

Chad Switzer is a Wildlife Program Administrator with the SDGFP in Pierre. Chad became the author's personal contact with the SDGFP as work on the *Data Book* progressed. He provided additional data on the pheasant hunting seasons that clarified information making the research easier.

Travis and Chad are commended for their cooperation and advice provided to the author in seeing the *Data Book* to completion. Their suggestions on improving the text were of great value.

Sources

The sources listed on this page were used to gather the pheasant hunting season structures and statistics. Other sources used in the book are listed within the text. The source will be found with the information being presented.

(1) "Ring-Necked Pheasant Statistics for South Dakota" historical chart 1919-2018: SDGFP, Pierre.
(2) Trautman, Carl G. 1982. *History, Ecology and Management of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota*, Table 27. South Dakota pheasant hunting seasons, 1919-76, pages 82-83: SDGFP, Pierre.
(3) *The Daily Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, (October 16, 1925, page 3), Deadwood, SD.
(4) *Lead Daily Call*, (October 7, 1926, page 2), (November 26, 1926, page 1), (September 27, 1927, page 3), (October 18, 1928, page 5), Lead, SD.
(5) *The Evening Huronite*, (December 6, 1926, page 1), Huron, SD.
(6) *The Weekly Pioneer-Times*, (November 24, 1927, page 1), Deadwood, SD.
(7) *The Daily Plainsman*, (October 14, 1929, page 13), Huron, SD.
(8) "South Dakota Hunting Handbook" 2014-2018 editions: SDGFP, Pierre.

Travis Runia (SDGFP, 895 3rd Street Southwest, Huron) provided sources 9-10.
(9) "Pheasant Seasons Binder," SD pheasant hunting seasons 1919-2006: SDGFP, Huron; obtained on February 12, 2013.
(10) SD Hunting Regulations, Guides, and Handbooks 1942-1944, 1946-1967, 1969-2013, and 1945-1946 Season Amendments: SDGFP, Pierre; obtained on September 12, 2013.

Chad Switzer (SDGFP, 523 East Capitol Avenue, Pierre) provided sources 11-15.
(11) "Pheasant Binder," SD pheasant hunting seasons 1919-1969: SDGFP, Pierre; obtained on October 20, 2014.
(12) "Game Management Pierre Binder," SD pheasant hunting seasons 1919-1980: SDGFP, Pierre; obtained on October 20, 2014.
(13) "Summary of Pheasant Seasons," 1919-1957 document: SDGFP, Pierre; obtained on October 20, 2014.
(14) "SD 1945 Upland Game Seasons" map: SDGFP, Pierre; obtained on October 20, 2014.
(15) SD Hunting Regulations and Guides 1947-1970 pheasant hunting season maps and 1968 SD Hunting Guide: SDGFP, Pierre; obtained on March 27, 2015.

South Dakota State Archives (900 Governors Drive, Pierre) provided sources 16-19.
(16) SD Highway Maps, 1922-1966; obtained on April 3, 2015.
(17) SDGF Commission Minutes containing pheasant hunting season regulations for 1919-1924, 1930-1945: and the SDGFP Commission Minutes containing pheasant hunting season regulations for 1950-1954, 1958, 1959, 1964, 1967, 1969, 1971, 1986, and 1987: obtained during research on the dates of April 6, 2015; May 26, 2015; May 30, 2017; and November 1, 2017.
(18) *South Dakota Conservation Digest*, 1937-1945; obtained on April 6, 2015, and May 27, 2015.
(19) SDGF Commission Annual Reports, 1911-1939; obtained on April 6, 2015, and May 27, 2015.

Main Source for each Pheasant Hunting Season
1919-1924, SDGF Commission Minutes: SD State Archives, Pierre.
1925, *The Daily Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, (October 16, 1925, page 3), 1925 pheasant hunting regulations.
1926, *Lead Daily Call*, (October 7, 1926, page 2), (November 26, 1926, page 1), and *The Evening Huronite*, (December 6, 1926, page 1), 1926 pheasant hunting regulations.
1927, *Lead Daily Call*, (September 27, 1927, page 3), and *The Weekly Pioneer-Times*, (November 24, 1927, page 1), 1927 pheasant hunting regulations.
1928, *Lead Daily Call*, (October 18, 1928, page 5), 1928 pheasant hunting regulations.
1929, *The Daily Plainsman*, (October 14, 1929, page 13), 1929 pheasant hunting regulations.
1930-1945, SDGF Commission Minutes: SD State Archives, Pierre.
1946-2018, SDGFP Hunting Regulations (1946-1959), Hunting Guides (1960-1987), and Hunting Handbooks (1988-2018): SDGFP, Pierre.

Notable Dates in South Dakota Pheasant History

1909: First successful release of ring-necked pheasants by sportsmen and pheasant enthusiasts in Spink County
1909: The Department of Game and Fish of South Dakota (SDGF) was created

1911: The first Department of Game and Fish purchase of pheasants. They purchased 200 pairs and distributed them throughout the state
1913: The Department of Game and Fish purchased nearly 1,800 pheasants and distributed them to practically every county in the state. In 1914 approximately 1,400 pheasants were purchased and distributed across the state

1919: First South Dakota pheasant hunting season, a one-day hunt in Spink County on October 30
1921: The Department of Game and Fish purchased approximately 5,500 pheasants between 1911 and 1921 at a cost of less than $20,000.00

1926: The Department of Game and Fish began trapping pheasants in East River counties and transferring them to West River counties
1934: Pheasants had been established across the state and a hunting season was held in every county

1935 and 1936: South Dakota reached its first pheasant population peak with a population of 12,000,000 birds each year
1941 through 1946: South Dakota attained a second pheasant population peak with a population of 11,000,000 birds or more each year

1943: The ring-necked pheasant was adopted as the official state bird of South Dakota
1944: The 25th Anniversary of pheasant hunting in South Dakota

1945: The population of pheasants for South Dakota was 16,000,000, the largest population ever recorded
1956: The Agricultural Act of 1956 was enacted creating the Soil Bank Program. The Soil Bank Program produced vast amounts of idle grass, legumes, or grassland-legume habitat

1958 and 1961 through 1963: South Dakota reached a third pheasant population peak with a population of 10,000,000 or more birds each year
1969: The 50th Anniversary of pheasant hunting in South Dakota

1975: The South Dakota Pheasant Congress was formed with the purpose of restoring pheasant habitat
1976: The population of pheasants for South Dakota was 1,400,000, the lowest recorded since 1924

1982: The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks published *History, Ecology and Management of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota* by Carl G. Trautman. The book provided a collection of information on South Dakota pheasants
1985: The Food Security Act of 1985 authorized the Conservation Reserve Program, creating one of the most successful conservation programs ever implemented to impact South Dakota pheasant populations

1986: Minnehaha Pheasants Forever chapter was formed, South Dakota's first Pheasant Forever chapter
1988: South Dakota launched the Pheasants For Everyone Program to develop wildlife habitat and to increase public hunting opportunities

1994: The 75th Anniversary of pheasant hunting in South Dakota
2007 and 2008: South Dakota attained a fourth pheasant population peak with populations of 11,900,000 and 10,300,000 birds, respectively

2009: The Ring-necked Pheasant Management Plan for South Dakota 2009-2014 was released with the aim to maintain abundant pheasant populations
2009: The James River Watershed Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program was set in motion to improve pheasant habitat and increase public hunting opportunities

2012: The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks published *Ring-necked Pheasants: Thriving in South Dakota* by A.D. Flake, A.E. Gabbert, T.R. Kirschenmann, A.P. Leif, and C.T. Switzer. The book presented an overview of the past, present, and future of the ring-necked pheasant in South Dakota
2013: South Dakota's Walk-In Area Program celebrated 25 years

2013: The Governor's Pheasant Habitat Summit was held to discuss the future of pheasant habitat and hunting in South Dakota. In 2014 the Work Group gave their report to the Governor
2014: Pheasants Forever opened its first regional headquarters office in Brookings to strengthen relationships with federal, state, and private groups in the state

2016: The Ring-necked Pheasant Management Plan for South Dakota 2016-2020 focused on habitat development and management necessary to meet the seasonal and spatial requirements of pheasants
2018: The 100th consecutive South Dakota pheasant hunting season. Pheasants Forever held the National Pheasant Fest and Quail Classic in Sioux Falls to draw attention to this milestone pheasant hunting season

2019: October 30—The 100th Anniversary of pheasant hunting in South Dakota. To commemorate this event the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks published *The South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Seasons Data Book* by Lonnie Shafer. This book documented the history of pheasant hunting in South Dakota and has a calendar with 366 data items pertaining to ring-necked pheasants

Photo F-7. South Dakota: The World's Premier Pheasant Hunting Destination

In order to have a pheasant hunting season in South Dakota, the pheasant first had to be introduced. In doing background research on the stocking of pheasants the author found data that differs from what some writers presented in the past. The results of the author's research are presented in "A Treatise on the Stocking of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota" in Section 13 of this book.

Following is a brief summary of the author's findings. The pheasant hunting enjoyed in South Dakota today is the result of an investment of less than $20,000.00 in the purchase of stock. The pheasant was first introduced into South Dakota in 1909 with private releases in Spink County. In 1911 the sportsmen of Redfield purchased 30 pairs of birds and SDGF purchased 48 pairs of birds with private funds. The first state funds were spent in 1911 when 200 pairs of pheasants were purchased by SDGF. In 1913 about 1,800 birds were purchased, and in 1914 about 1,400 birds were purchased. Smaller purchases were made in 1916-650 pheasants, 1917-360, 1918-360, 1919-300, and 1921-255. In all approximately 5,500 pheasants were purchased by the SDGF.

Foreword

Never before has the history of pheasant hunting in South Dakota been compiled in such a complete and accurate resource. In addition to detailed maps, figures, and narratives that bring you on a journey through a century of pheasant hunting, you will find fun facts and exciting photos along the way. Pheasants and pheasant hunting have been engrained in South Dakota culture since the first successful introduction of this colorful exotic game bird in 1909. The image of our iconic state bird is now common on city welcome signs, billboards, and even the state quarter. The first South Dakota pheasant season was held in Spink County in 1919 and lasted for just one day. A few hundred hunters harvested an estimated 200 birds. By the 15th season in 1933, over 63,000 hunters bagged a whopping two million pheasants during a 30-day season from a population estimated at eight million birds! During a century of pheasant hunting there have been many highs and lows for both the pheasant population and hunters. Read along as we explore how factors such as the Great Depression, World War II, historic droughts, powerful blizzards, and agriculture policy have influenced the dynamic history of pheasants and pheasant hunting in the state.

Lonnie Shafer, retired history teacher and avid pheasant hunter, was a perfect fit as author of this publication. His endless hours of investigative research to find missing pieces or correct minor errors to document our pheasant history are greatly appreciated. "*The South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Seasons Data Book*" will be a complimentary read to Trautman's "*History, Ecology and Management of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota*" and Flake et al. *"Ring-Necked Pheasants: Thriving in South Dakota*." We hope you enjoy reading about the first century of pheasant hunting in the pheasant capital of the world, South Dakota. As the past can tell us a lot about the future, this book will undoubtedly serve as a valuable resource as we face challenges and find opportunities to manage pheasants and their habitats into the next century.

Travis Runia, Senior Upland Game Biologist for the SDGFP, and Chad Switzer, Wildlife Program Administrator with the SDGFP

Photo F-8. The ring-necked pheasant, a magnificent game bird, changed the history of South Dakota. Pheasant hunting would become a cultural tradition in the state with opening day of each season having a holiday atmosphere.

1919-2018

South Dakota
Pheasant Hunting Seasons

One Hundred Years of History

October 30, 2019

The 100th Anniversary

of

Pheasant Hunting

in

South Dakota

Introduction to Section One

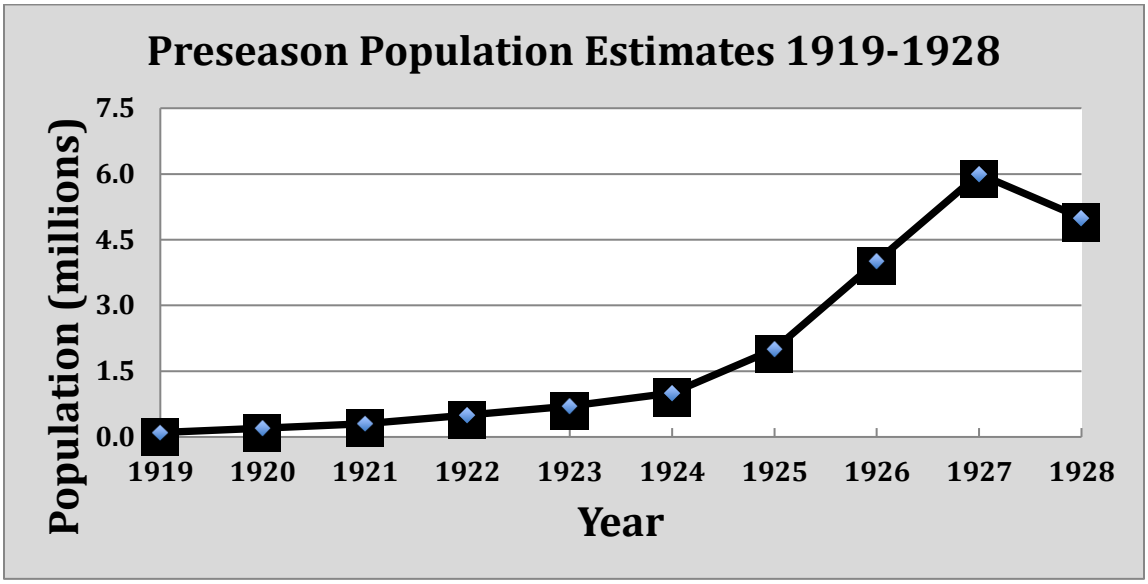


Chart 1-1. The population for the first decade started out with 100,000 pheasants and ended the decade with 5,000,000. The population reached the medium-density level for the first time in 1926 with a population of 4,000,000.

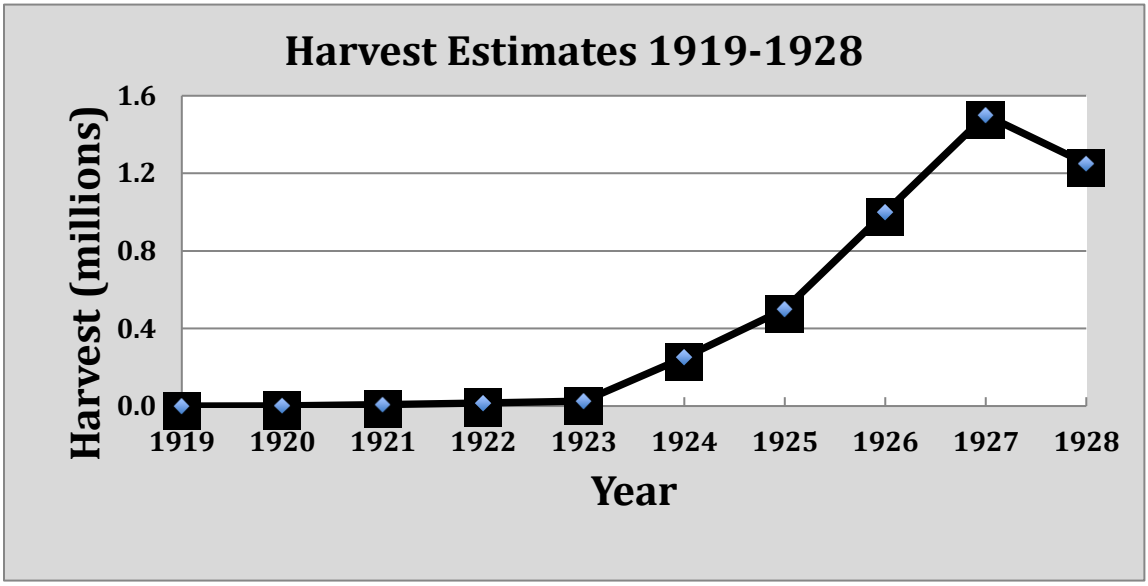


Chart 1-2. The harvest for the first decade was 4,548,200 pheasants and ranked tenth of the ten decades. The best yearly harvest of the decade was 1,500,000 in 1927.

Decade Events

1919 and 1920: Spink County was the only county open for pheasant hunting during South Dakota's first two pheasant hunting seasons. The first successful stocking efforts occurred there in 1909.

1924: The first western county open to pheasant hunting was Butte County. Pheasants were released in Butte County as early as 1913.

1926: Hunting hen pheasants was allowed for the first time in 1926. The 1926 pheasant hunting season was reopened in Beadle County in an attempt to reduce the population. Some farmers blamed pheasants for crop depredation. Other farmers wanted pheasants around to reduce insects in their fields.

1927: The season was amended to reduce the number of hens being harvested.

Section 1

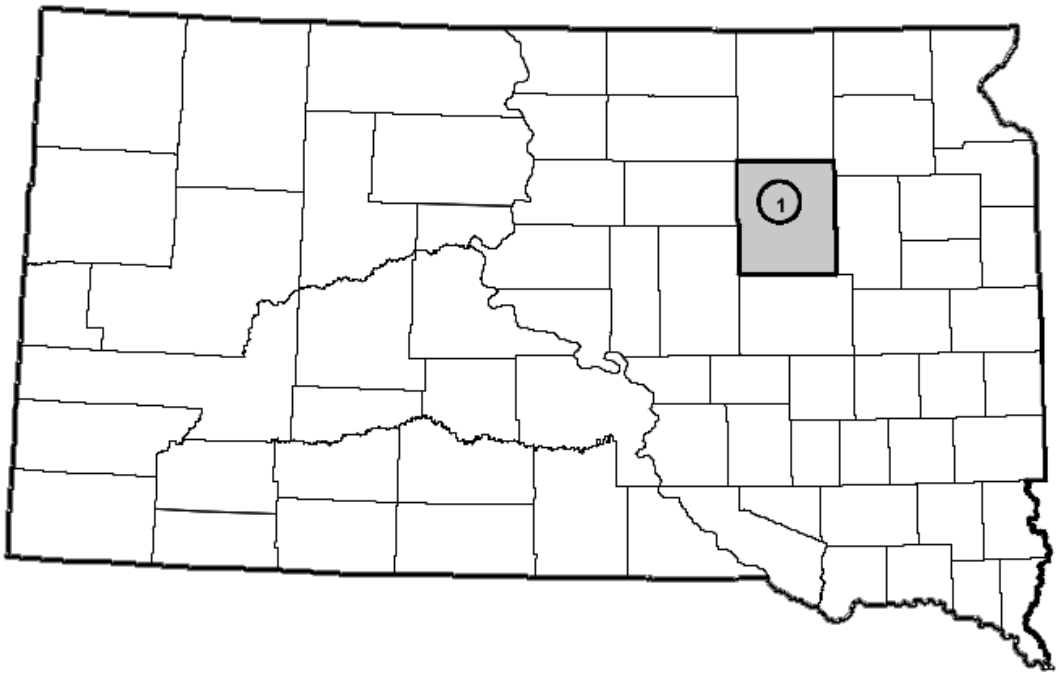
South Dakota Pheasant Seasons

1919-1928

Year	Season Length in Days	Opening Day	Preseason Population Estimate	Daily Limit	Hen Limit	Possession Limit	Harvest Estimate
1919	1	Oct. 30	100,000	2	0	2	200
1920	2	Nov. 4	200,000	2	0	4	1,000
1921	7	Nov. 21	300,000	2	0	6	7,000
1922	20	Nov. 9	500,000	2	0	6	15,000
1923	6	Nov. 19	700,000	3	0	18	25,000
1924	15	Nov. 7	1,000,000	3	0	15	250,000
1925	15	Oct. 30	2,000,000	3	0	15	500,000
1926	77	Oct. 15	4,000,000	7	2	21	1,000,000
1927	90	Oct. 7	6,000,000	7	3	21	1,500,000
1928	40	Oct. 25	5,000,000	5	1	15	1,250,000

The First Decade

Pheasants were introduced into South Dakota in 1909 by private groups and supplemented by the Department of Game and Fish of South Dakota beginning in 1911. Initial stockings in the 1910s and population growth in the 1920s were successful due to the agricultural practices at that time. Ring-necks thrived because of a diverse mix of needed habitat for their survival was available on the small farms of South Dakota. By 1919 the pheasant population had reached 100,000 birds, and the first hunting season was held. In good years a pheasant population can double, and the population statistics show that this occurred three times during this decade. The population doubled from 1919-1920, 1924-1925, and 1925-1926. Beginning in 1926, the Department of Game and Fish trapped pheasants in East River counties and transplanted them to West River counties to expand the pheasant range. The result of this growth and expansion was an explosion of the population from the thousands to the millions.



1919 Season

Dates: Zone 1, October 30 in Spink County

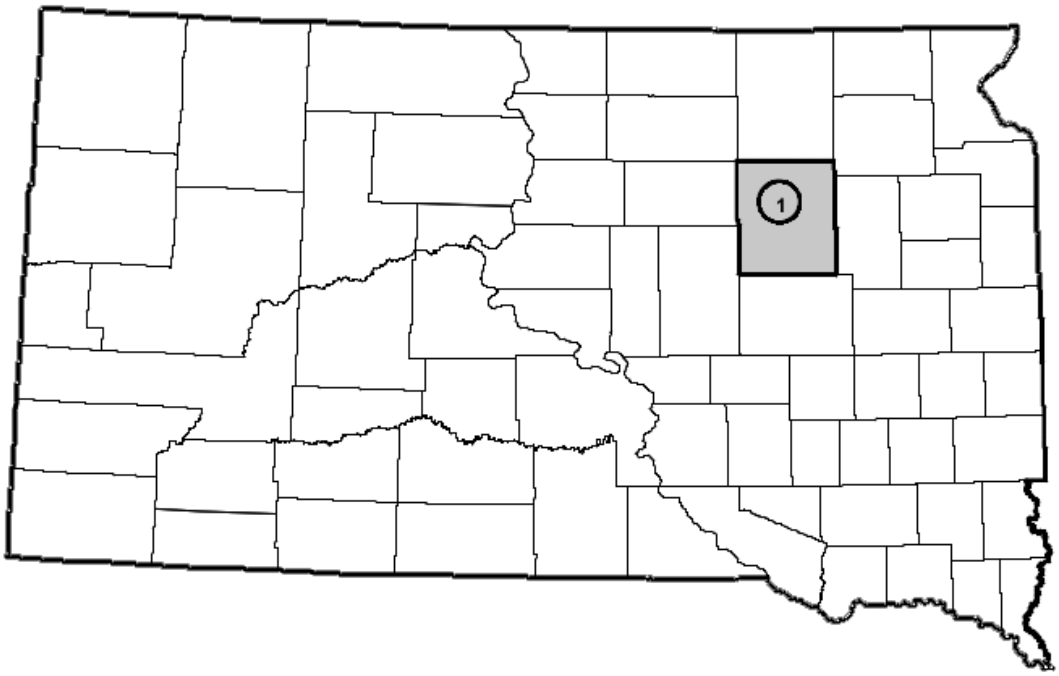
Shooting Hours: Daylight hours

Daily Limit: 2 roosters. It was lawful on October 30th for any person holding a valid small game hunter's license, to hunt, take, kill or have in possession, not to exceed two male Chinese ring-necked or English Pheasants

Possession Limit: 2 roosters

Season Length: 1 day

Harvest Estimate: 200



1920 Season

Dates: Zone 1, November 4-5 in Spink County

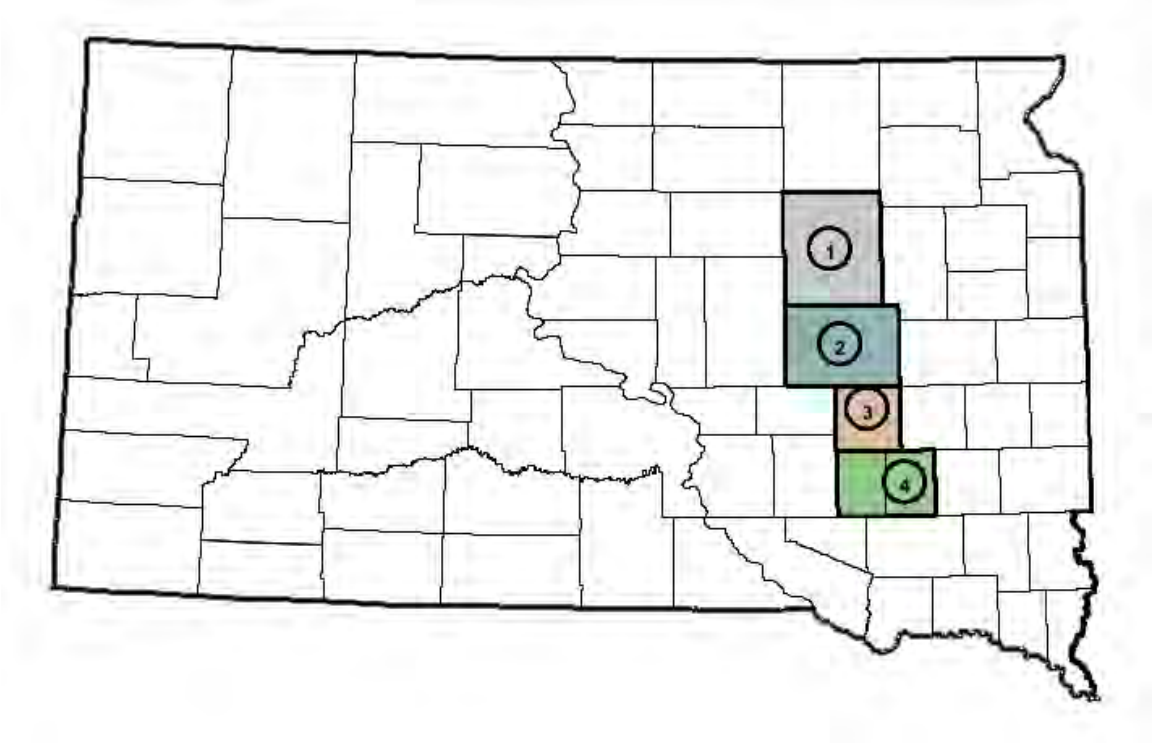
Shooting Hours: Daylight hours

Daily Limit: 2 roosters. It was lawful on November 4th and 5th for any person holding a valid small game hunter's license, to hunt, take, kill or have in possession, not to exceed two male Chinese ring-necked or English Pheasants on each of said days

Possession Limit: 4 roosters

Season Length: 2 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,000



1921 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, November 21-23 in Spink County
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, November 25-26 in Beadle County
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 4 roosters

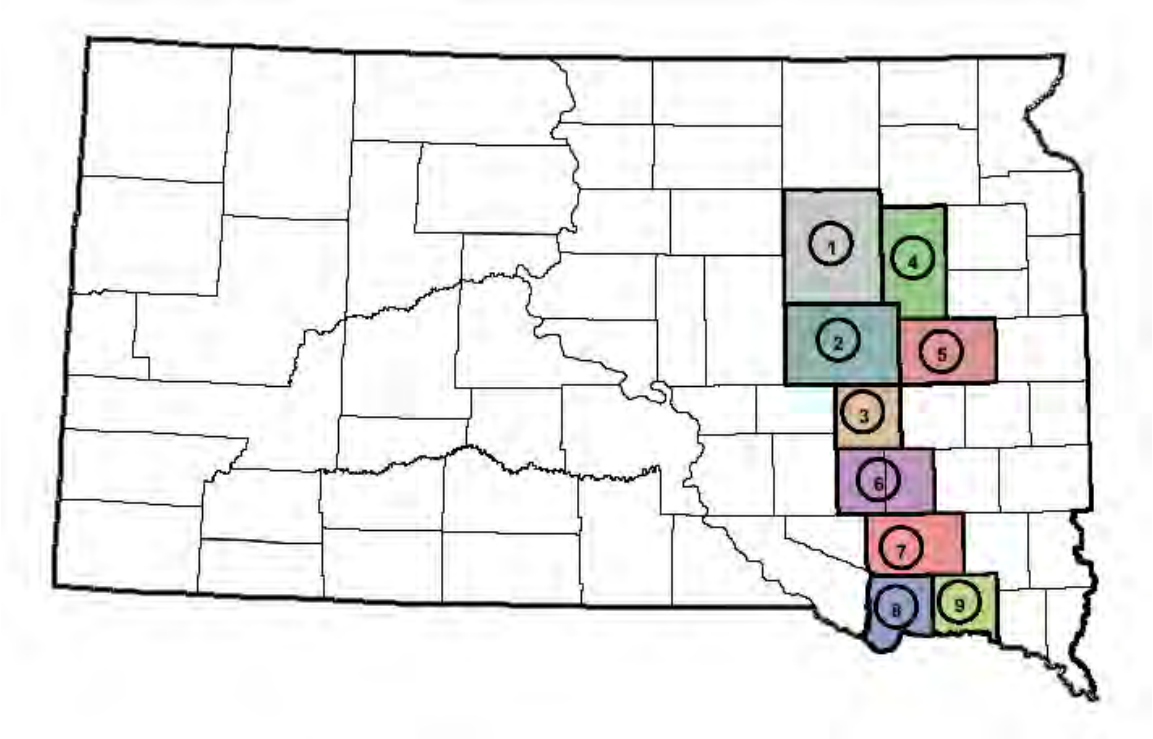
Dates: Zone 3, November 28 in Sanborn County
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 2 roosters

Dates: Zone 4, November 29 in Davison and Hanson counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 2 roosters

Shooting Hours: Daylight hours

Season Length: 7 days

Harvest Estimate: 7,000



1922 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, November 9-11 in Spink County
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, November 13-15 in Beadle County
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, November 16-18 in Sanborn County
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Dates: Zone 4, November 20 in Clark County
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 2 roosters

Dates: Zone 5, November 21 in Kingsbury County
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 2 roosters

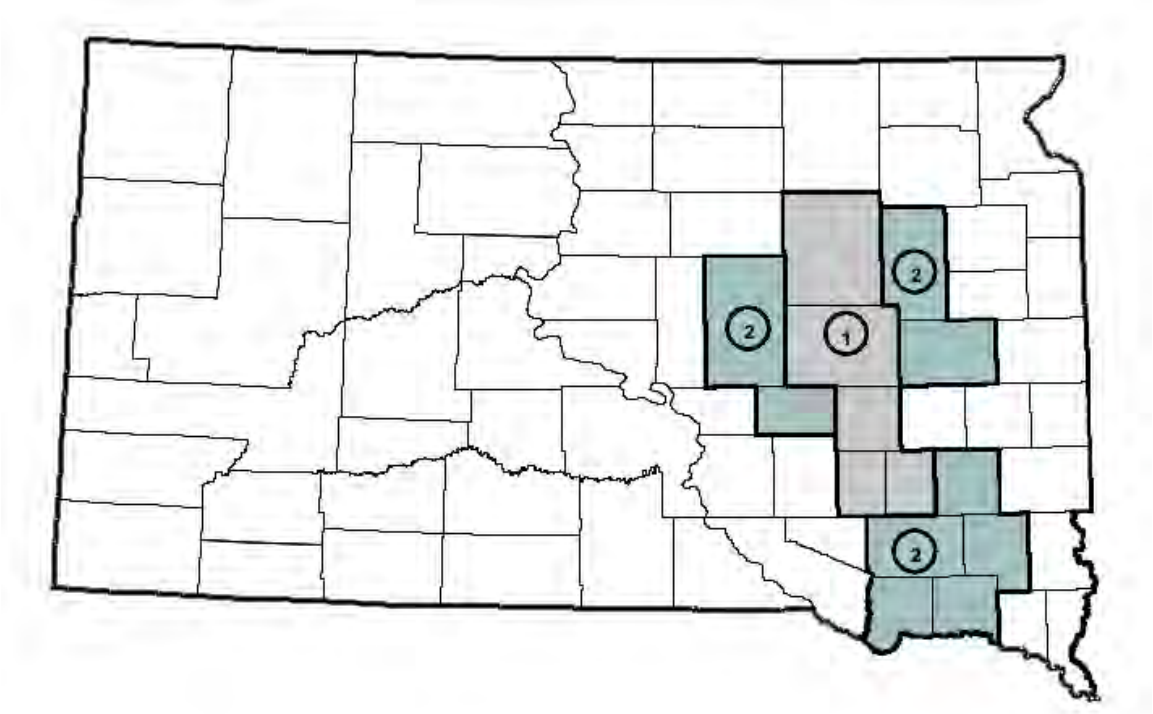
Dates: Zone 6, November 23-25 in Davison and Hanson counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Dates: Zone 7, November 27-28 in Hutchinson County
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 4 roosters

Dates: Zone 8, December 1-2 in Bon Homme County
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 4 roosters

Dates: Zone 9, December 4-5 in Yankton County
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 4 roosters

Shooting Hours: Daylight hours
Season Length: 20 days
Harvest Estimate: 15,000



1923 Seasons

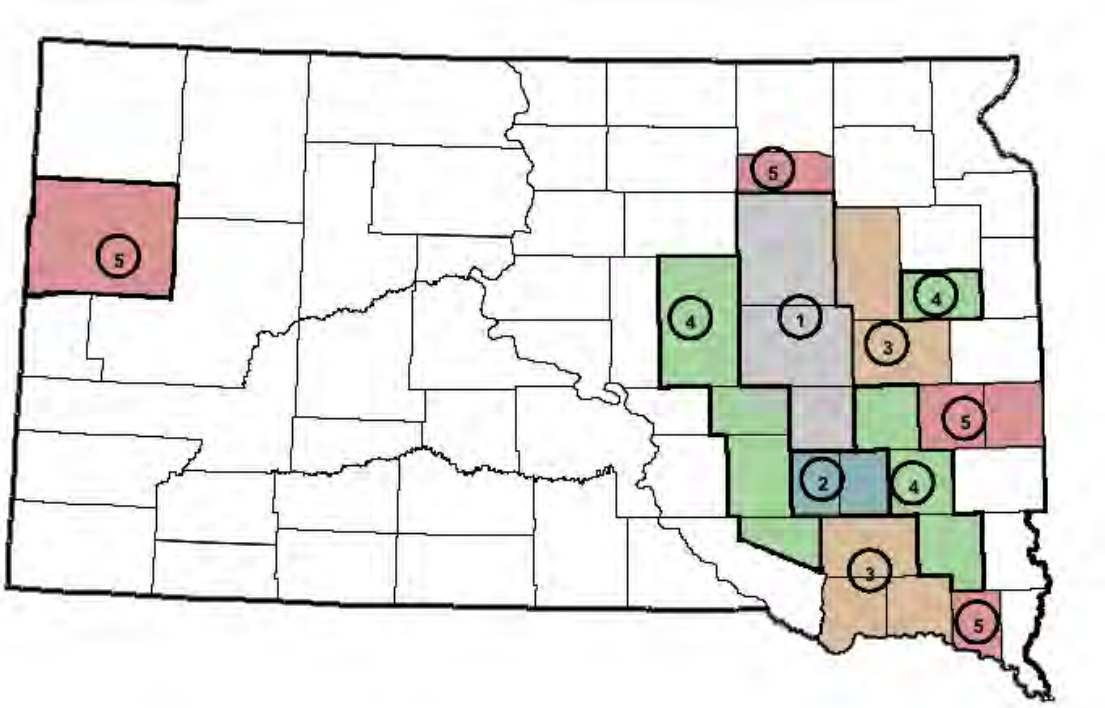
Dates: Zone 1, November 19-24 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 18 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, November 19-20 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 4 roosters

Shooting Hours: Daylight hours

Season Length: 6 days

Harvest Estimate: 25,000



1924 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, November 7-21 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates; Zone 2, November 7-16 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, November 7-12 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

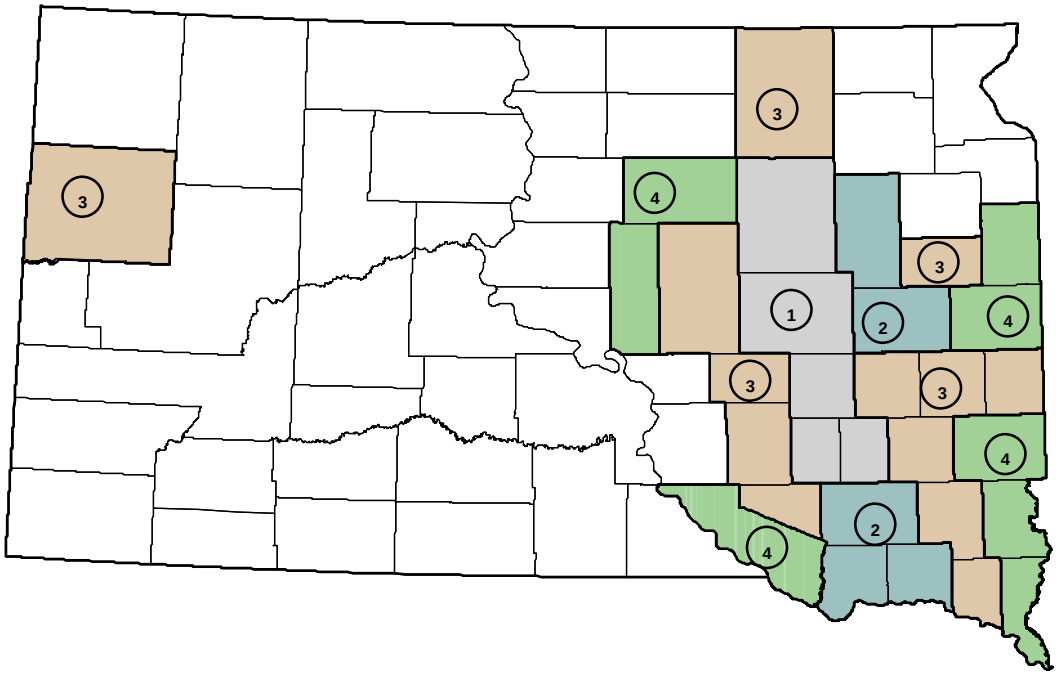
Dates: Zone 4, November 7-10 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

Dates: Zone 5, November 7-8 in designated counties and that portion of Brown County south of the Yellowstone Trail
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Shooting Hours: Daylight hours

Season Length: 15 days

Harvest Estimate: 250,000



1925 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 30 - November 13 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 30 - November 4 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 30 - November 2 in designated counties and that portion of Lawrence County in the Redwater Valley east of the old Spearfish-Belle Fourche Highway
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

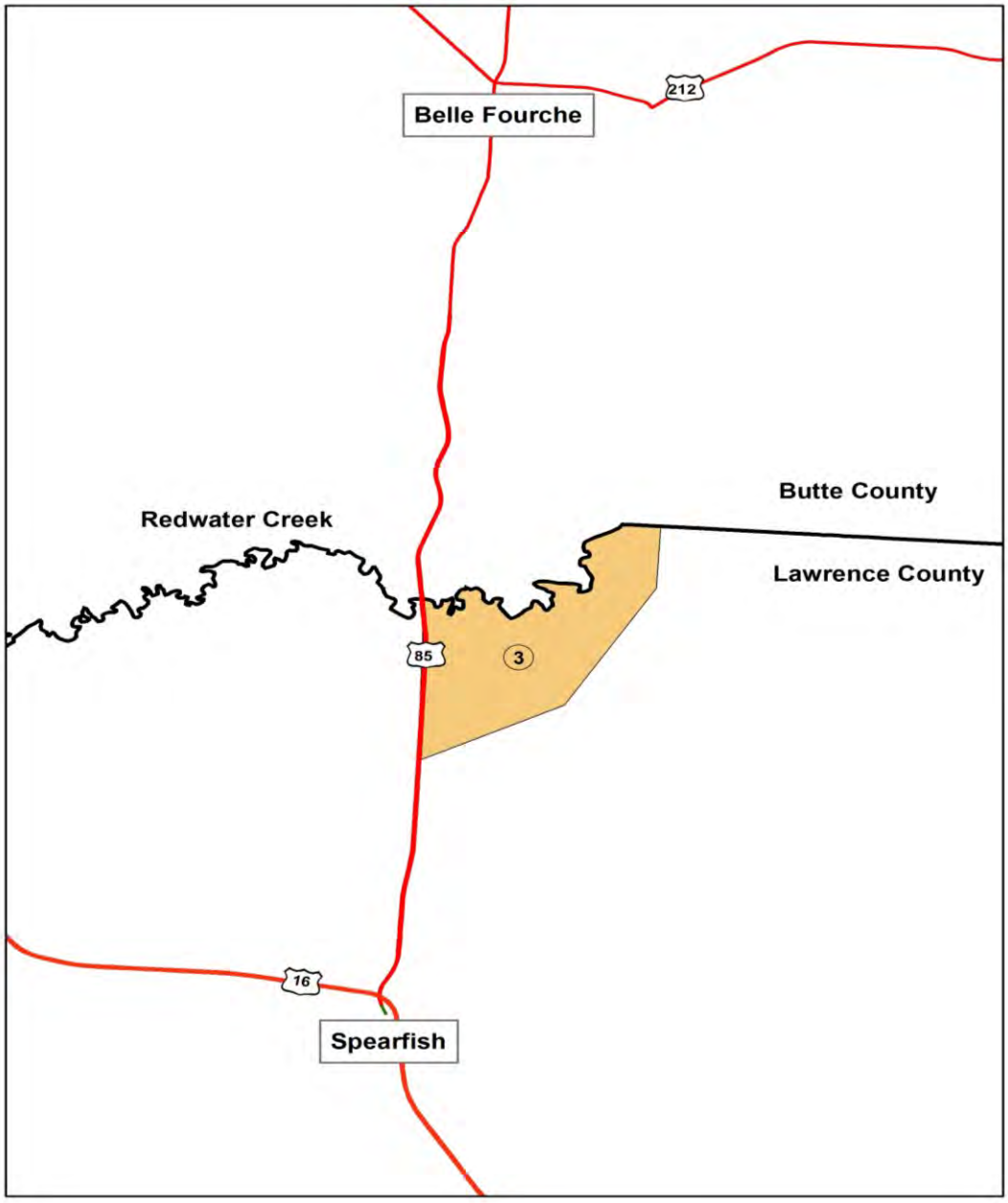
Dates: Zone 4, October 30-31 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Shooting Hours: Daylight hours

Season Length: 15 days

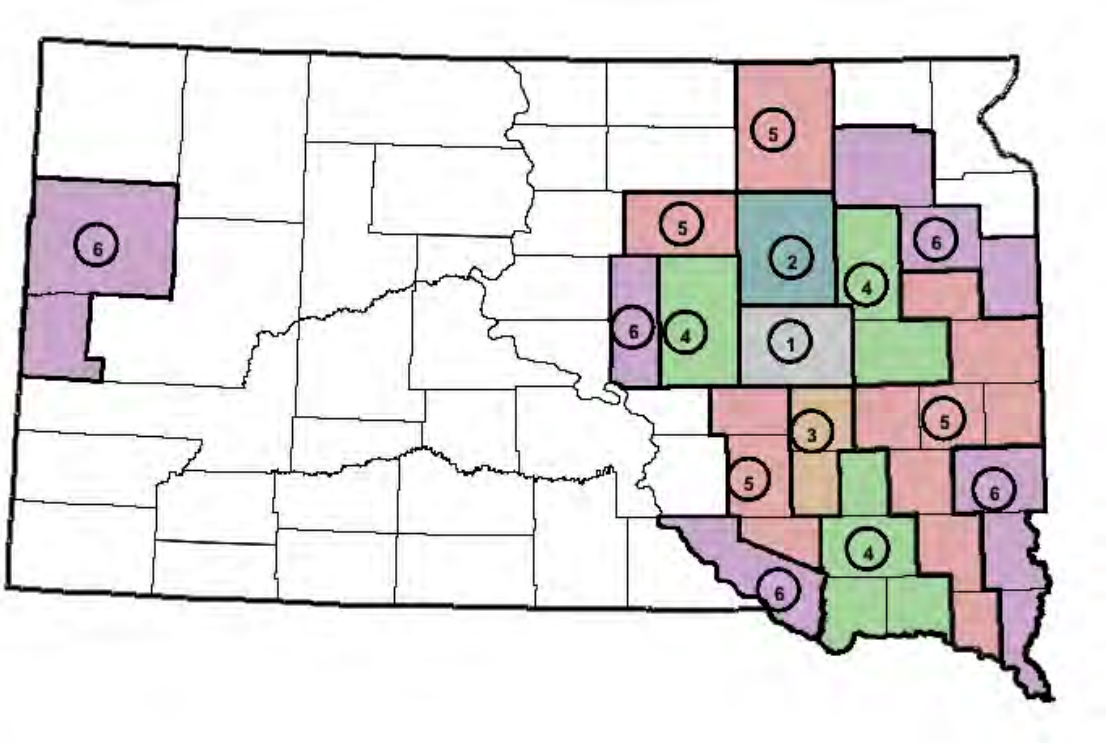
Harvest Estimate: 500,000

[Author's Note: The part of Lawrence County described in Zone 3 is a very small area. Therefore, on the above map it appears as a slight irregularity in the middle of the border between Lawrence and Butte counties. The map on the next page gives greater detail of the small area open in Lawrence County.]



(Map by Travis Runia)

The tan shaded area on the above map was the portion of Lawrence County in the Redwater Valley east of the old Spearfish-Belle Fourche Highway open for pheasant hunting in Zone 3 during the 1925 season.



1926 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 15 - November 3 and December 6 - January 31, 1927, in Beadle County. The December 6 -January 31 season in Beadle County included 22 of the 35 townships. The Beadle County map on the next page shows the closed townships.
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds. From December 6 - January 31 the Daily Limit was reduced to 3 birds irrespective of sex and Possession Limit reduced to 15 birds

Dates: Zone 2, October 15 - November 3 in Spink County
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds

Dates: Zone 3, October 15-29 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds

Dates: Zone 4, October 15-24 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds

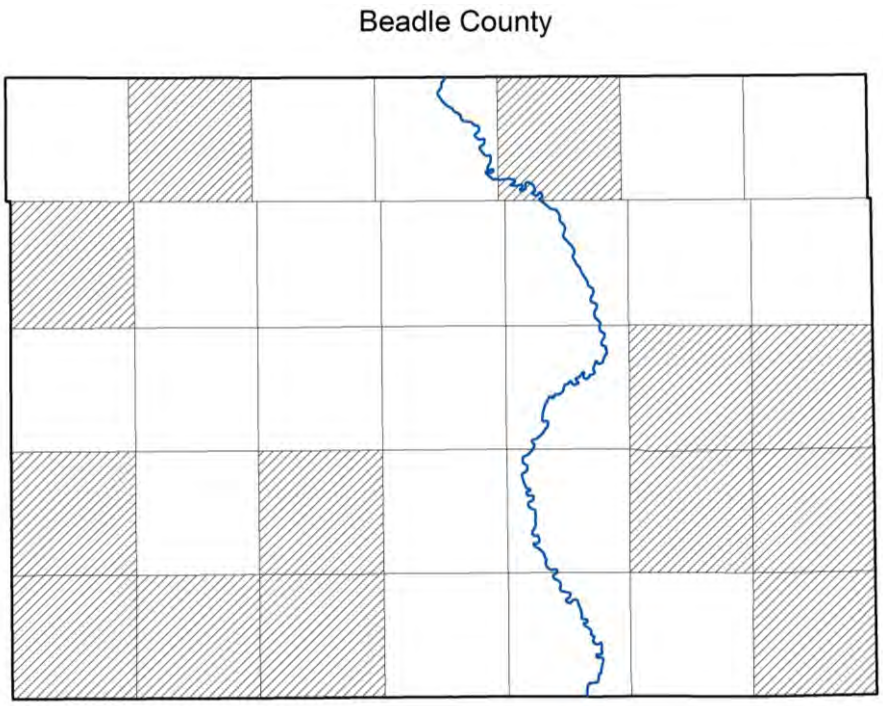
Dates: Zone 5, October 15-18 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds

Dates: Zone 6, October 15-16 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 14 birds

Shooting Hours: Daylight hours

Season Length: 77 days
Harvest Estimate: 1,000,000

[Author's Note: The *Lead Daily Call* (Lead) on page 1 of the October 14, 1926, issue stated the 1926 seasons shooting hours as: "They may be killed during the hours between sunrise and sundown on the days mentioned." The *Daily Capital Journal* (Pierre) on page 3 of the November 26, 1926, issue printed that the shooting hours for December 6 through January 31 would be from "sunrise to sunset."]



(Map by Travis Runia)

The 13 shaded townships on the above map of Beadle County were closed during the December 6, 1926, through January 31, 1927, pheasant hunting season. The closed townships were Bonilla, Lake Byron, Whiteside, Cavour, Banner, Sand Creek, Dearborn, Richland, Logan, Burr Oak, Kellogg, Carlyle, and Belle Prairie.

Pheasant Season Is In Beadle To Open – Committee of 10 Gets Action from Department of Game and Fish on Pheasants

"Nimrods in Beadle County will have another chance at the pheasants this winter, according to an announcement from the department of game and fish issued today extending the open season for the birds irrespective of sex, from December 6 until January 31.

"This action was taken by the department after a meeting of a committee of five from the Beadle county Farm Bureau and five from the Huron Isaak Walton league.

"The statement issued by the department places opening date at December 6 due to regulations governing the publication of notices of this nature.

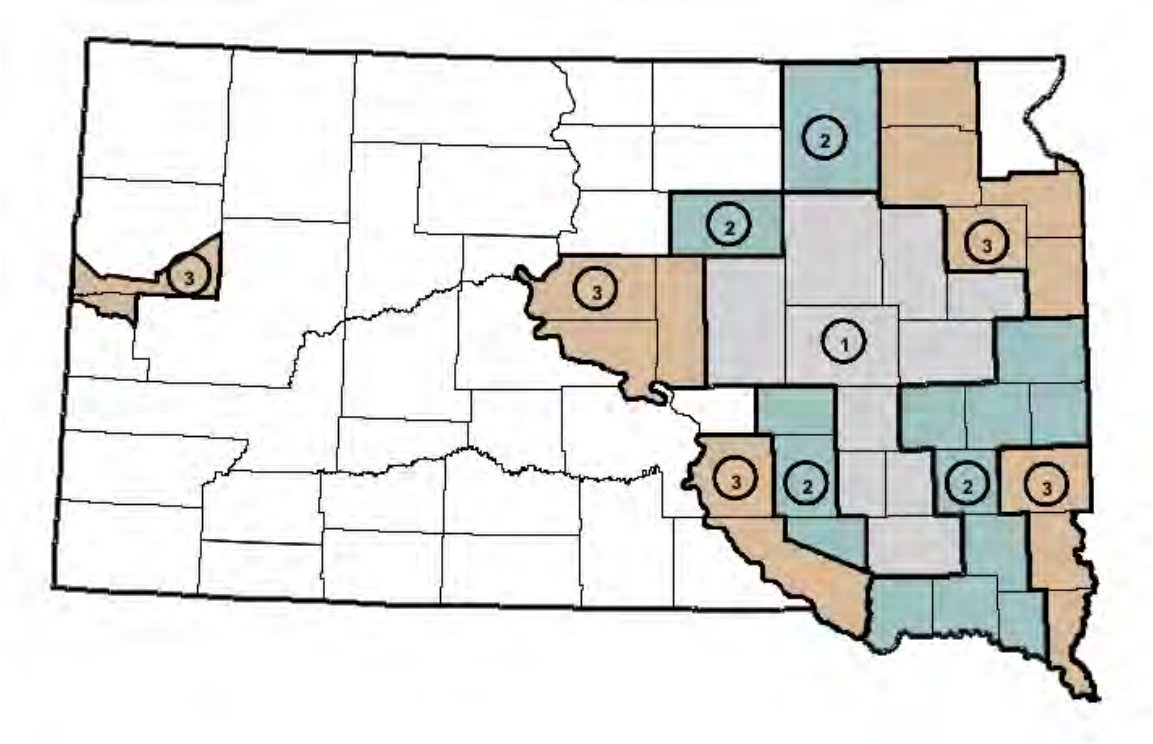
"The bag limit will be three birds with shooting from sunrise to sunset." [*Pierre Daily Capital Journal*, November 26, 1926, page 3]

State Division Gets Protests From Farmers

"Director O. H. Johnson of the state fish and game division today requested that all petitions from Beadle county townships requesting that such townships be posted be accompanied by a sworn statement that the petition contains the required per cent of signatures of the resident farmers of such townships, and that the affidavit be made before a notary public." [*Huron Evening Huronite*, December 2, 1926, page 1]

Pheasant Season Opens In 22 Townships, Hunters Barred On Petition in 13 Territories

"With 13 townships posted out of a total of 35, more than 100 hunters today were taking advantage of the action by the State fish and game division in permitting the shooting of pheasants in open townships in the county until February 1. Whiteside township was the last to file a petition asking that it be posted, according to Director O. H. Johnson of the fish and game division. 'I do not believe that any more townships will ask to be posted,' Director Johnson said today. 'The division sincerely hopes that the open season will accomplish its purpose, and that is the diminishing of the number of pheasants,' the division director added." [*Huron Evening Huronite*, December 6, 1926, page 1]



1927 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 7 - January 4, 1928, in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 3 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds. In November the Game and Fish Commission passed an amended resolution to reduce the Daily Limit to 4 birds, 1 of which may be a hen and the Possession Limit to 12 birds for the dates of November 26 - January 4

Dates: Zone 2, October 7 - November 5 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 3 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds

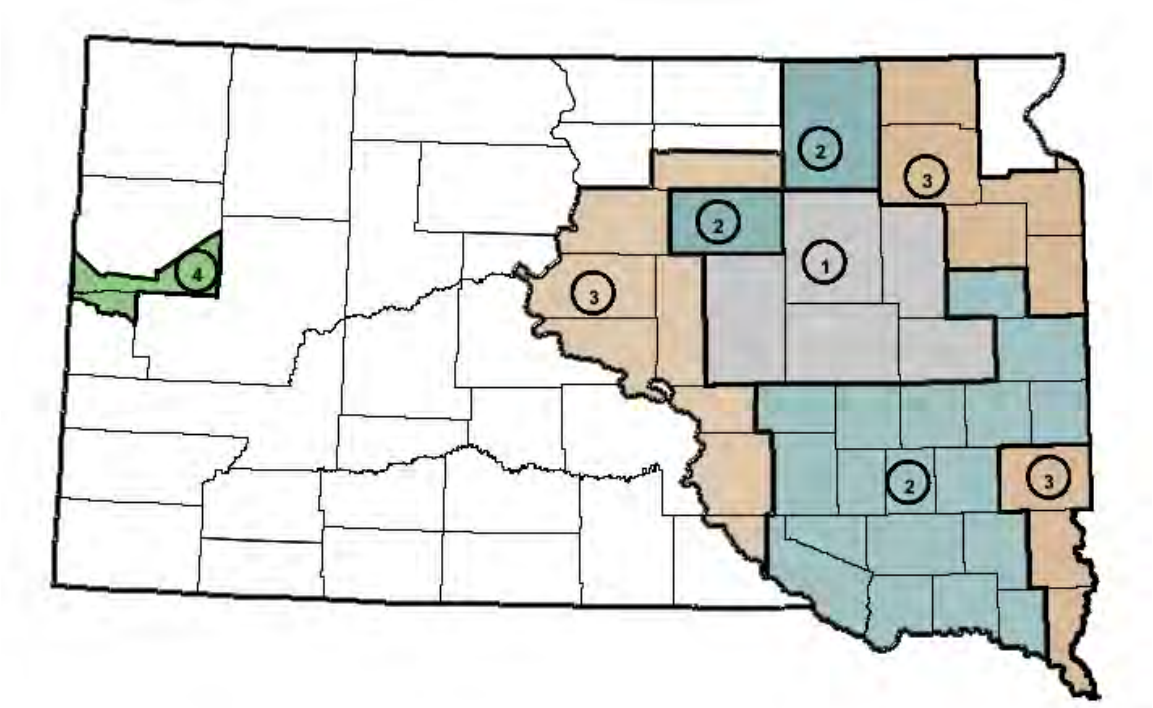
Dates: Zone 3, October 7-13 in designated counties, that portion of Butte County south of Highway 212, that portion of Lawrence County north and east of Highway 16, and in Roberts County all of Lockwood Township and that portion of Geneseo Township east of the county highway extending due north from Milbank to Linden on Big Stone Lake
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 3 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds

Shooting Hours: Daylight hours
Season Length: 90 days
Harvest Estimate: 1,500,000

[Author's Note: *The Daily Plainsman* (Huron) on page 1 of the October 6, 1927, issue printed the following statement referring to shooting hours. "The dawn referred to breaks at 6:33 o'clock tomorrow. Pheasant shooting can begin one-half hour earlier, or at 6:03 a.m."]

Pheasant Limit Has Been Changed to Four

"PIERRE, Nov. 23.--(AP)--The game and fish commission acted to reduce the pheasant limit to four birds, only one of which may be a hen, effective Saturday, November 26. … A canvas of the east central portion of the state in ten counties where the season is open until January 4, has shown, the commission explained, that more hen than male birds were being taken. To afford the hens greater protection, and thus maintain a proper ration of cocks and hens, the commission said, it was decided to alter the original regulations which permitted a daily bag of seven birds of which three might be hens." [*The Weekly Pioneer-Times* (Deadwood), November 24, 1927, page 1.]



1928 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 25 - December 3 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 15 birds

Dates: Zone 2, October 25 - November 23 in designated counties and that portion of Charles Mix County east of a line running through Highway 45 and extending south to the Missouri River
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 15 birds

Dates: Zone 3, October 25 - November 8 in designated counties, that portion of Charles Mix County west of a line running through Highway 45 and extending south to the Missouri River, that portion of Edmunds County south of Highway 12, and in Roberts County all of Lockwood Township and that portion of Geneseo Township east of the county highway extending due north from Milbank to Linden on Big Stone Lake
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 15 birds

Dates: Zone 4, October 25-26 in that portion of Butte County south of Highway 212 and that portion of Lawrence County north and east of Highway 16
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 10 birds

Shooting Hours: Daylight hours

Season Length: 40 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,250,000

Introduction to Section Two

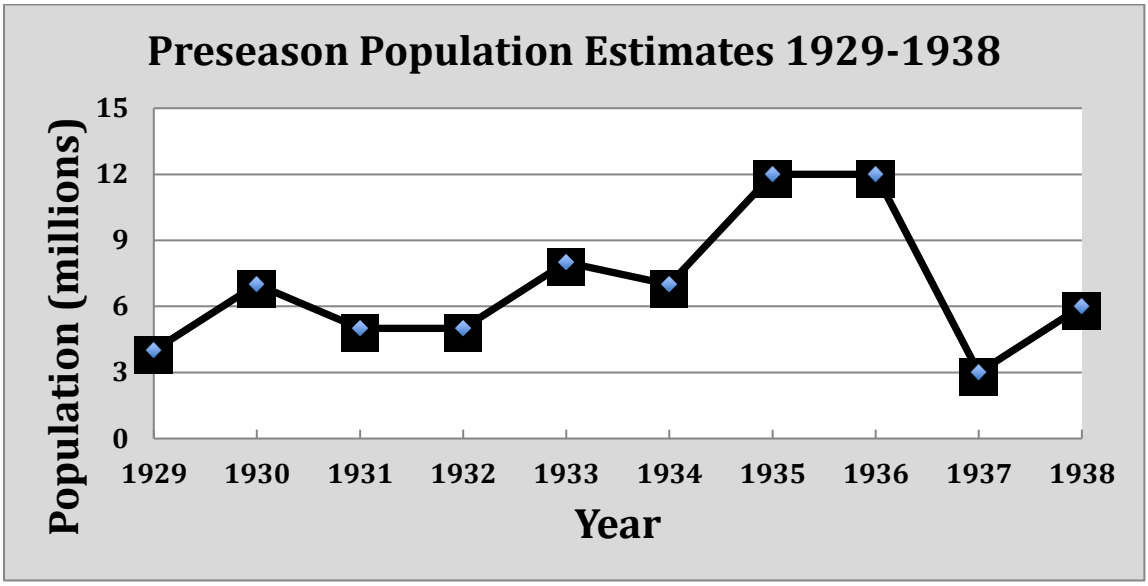


Chart 2-1. The population during the second decade reached the high-density level for the first time in 1930 with a population of 7,000,000 pheasants. Peak years in South Dakota pheasant history are marked with a population of 10,000,000 or more. This mark was first reached in 1935 and 1936 when each year had a population of 12,000,000.

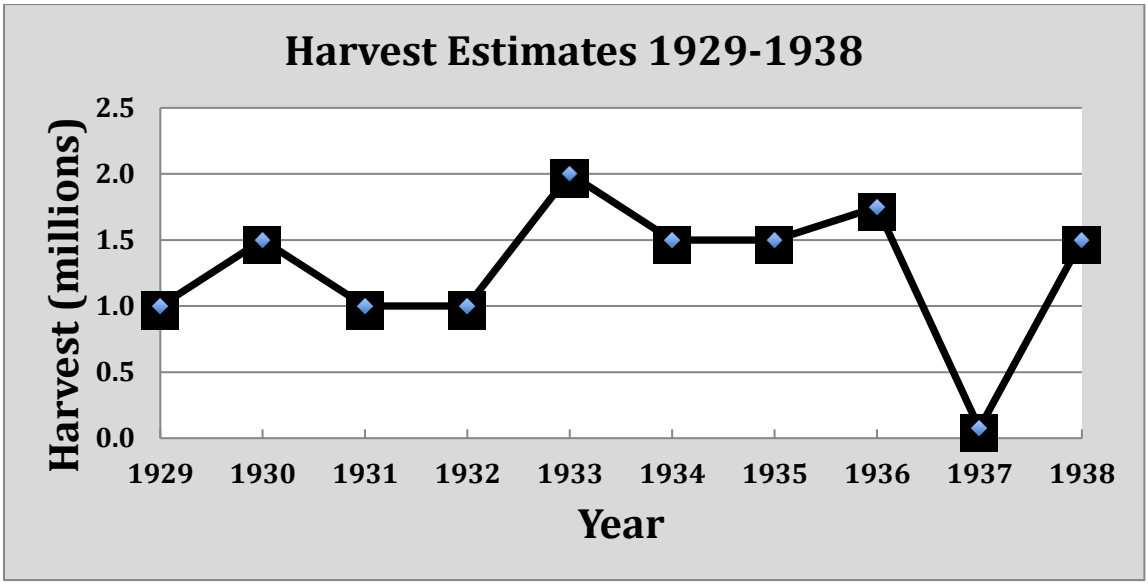


Chart 2-2. The harvest for the second decade was 12,825,000 pheasants and ranked sixth of the ten decades. The best yearly harvest of the decade was 2,000,000 in 1933.

Decade Events

1929: Shooting hours on opening day of the pheasant season began at noon for the first time.
1931: Shooting hours began at noon for the entire season for the first time.
1933: The counties of Washington, Armstrong, and Washabaugh were open for pheasant hunting. Over time, each of these counties joined a neighboring county and was eliminated.
1934: For the first time a portion of every county in the state was open to hunting.
1937: This was one of the shortest pheasant seasons in South Dakota history. The season was shortened in reaction to the devastating loss of pheasants the previous winter.

Section 2

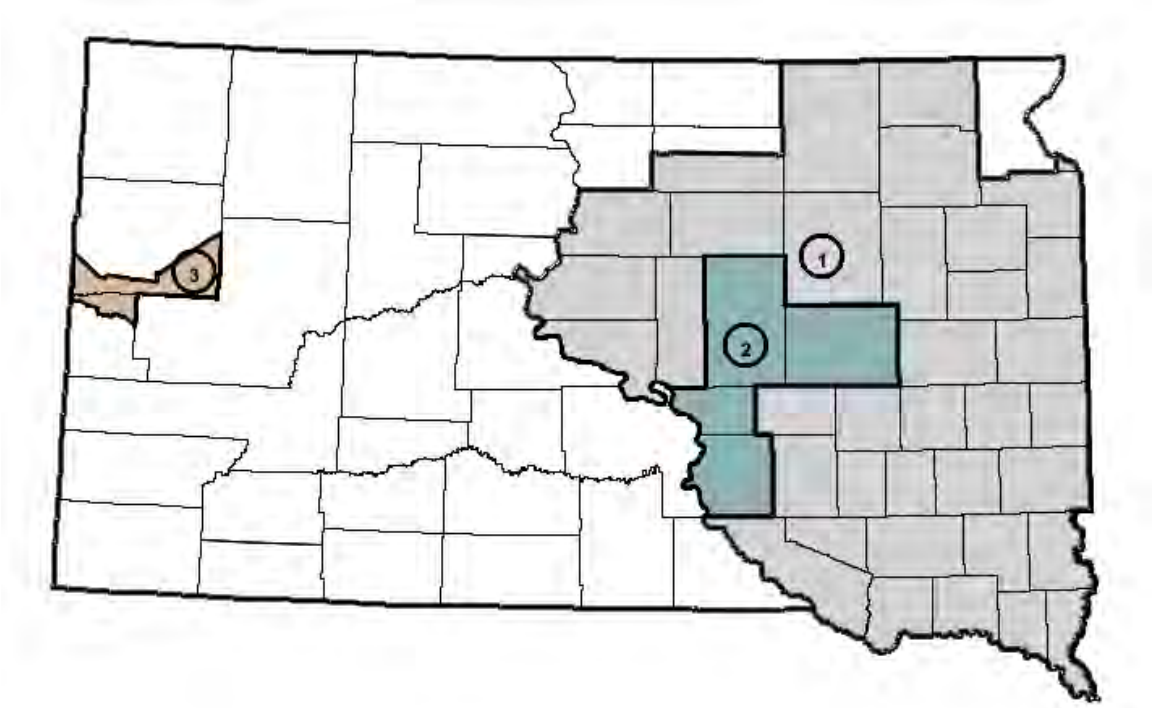
South Dakota Pheasant Seasons

1929-1938

Year	Season Length in Days	Opening Day	Preseason Population Estimate	Daily Limit	Hen Limit	Possession Limit	Harvest Estimate
1929	16	Oct. 29	4,000,000	5	1	15	1,000,000
1930	76	Oct. 16	7,000,000	7	2	21	1,500,000
1931	15	Oct. 15	5,000,000	3	0	6	1,000,000
1932	30	Oct. 20	5,000,000	4	0	8	1,000,000
1933	30	Oct. 10	8,000,000	5	1	10	2,000,000
1934	30	Oct. 21	7,000,000	5	2	10	1,500,000
1935	37	Oct. 21	12,000,000	6	2	12	1,500,000
1936	20	Oct. 10	12,000,000	4	0	8	1,750,000
1937	4	Oct. 9	3,000,000	3	0	6	75,000
1938	14	Oct. 1	6,000,000	4	1	8	1,500,000

The Second Decade

The population for the years of 1930 and 1933-1936 were in the high-density range with a population of 7,000,000 or more pheasants each year. The high populations during this era were the consequence of good habitat resulting from idle acres during the drought and depression of the 1930s. These idle acres of weeds and grass provided pheasants nesting cover, winter cover, and food consisting of insects and weed seeds. The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933, the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1936, and the second Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 were Federal Government farmland retirement programs that also contributed high quality cover for pheasants. The population grew by 5,000,000 between the years of 1934-1935 and doubled from 1937-1938. In between those years the population decreased by 9,000,000 in 1936-1937, the biggest one-year drop in South Dakota history, due to severe winter weather. Some areas of the state received 70 inches of snow during the winter and temperatures reached 30 degrees below zero at times. With food sources covered in deep snow many pheasants perished due to starvation.



1929 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 29 - November 13 in designated counties, that portion of Edmunds County south of Highway 12, and in Roberts County all of Lockwood Township and that portion of Geneseo Township east of the county highway extending due north from Milbank to Linden on Big Stone Lake

Dates: Zone 2, October 29 - November 8 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, October 29-31 in that portion of Butte County south of Highway 212 and that portion north of Highway 212 bounded on the north by the Belle Fourche River and that portion of Lawrence County north and east of Highway 16

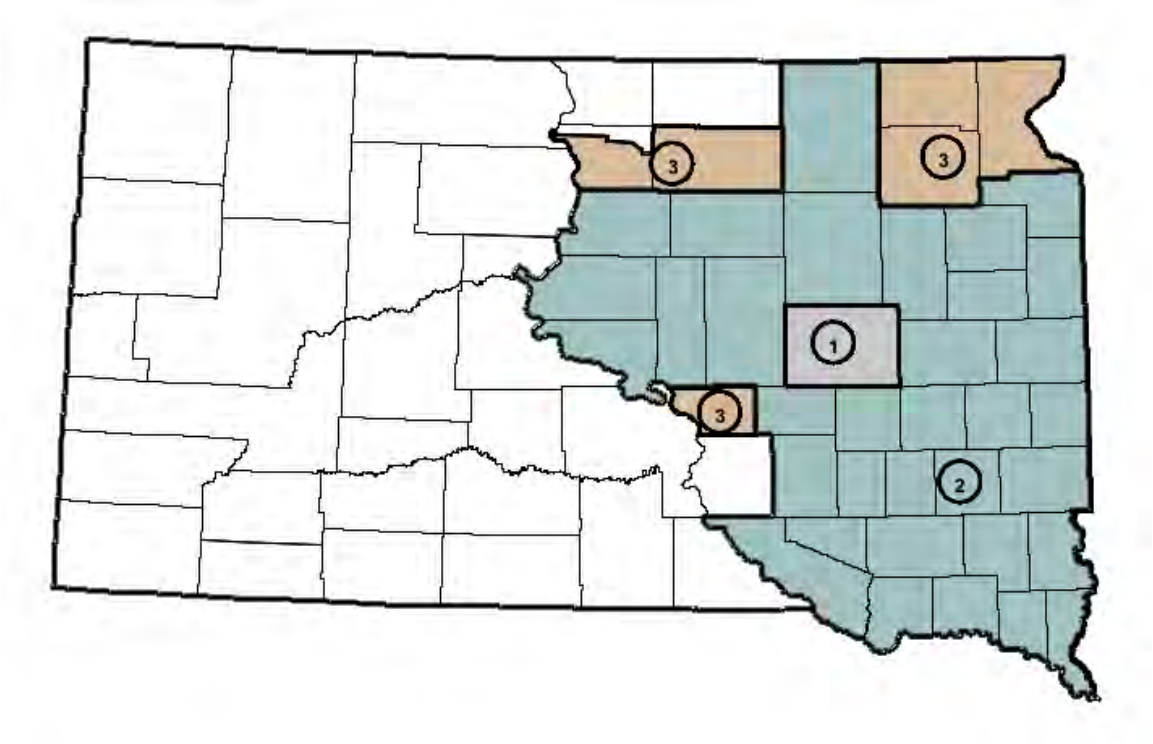
Shooting Hours: Daylight hours. It was lawful to hunt during the daylight hours of the period beginning at noon on the 29th day of October and ending at noon on the last day of each zonal season

Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen

Possession Limit: 15 birds

Season Length: 16 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,000,000



1930 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, December 1 - January 15, 1931, in Beadle County
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 6 of which may be hens

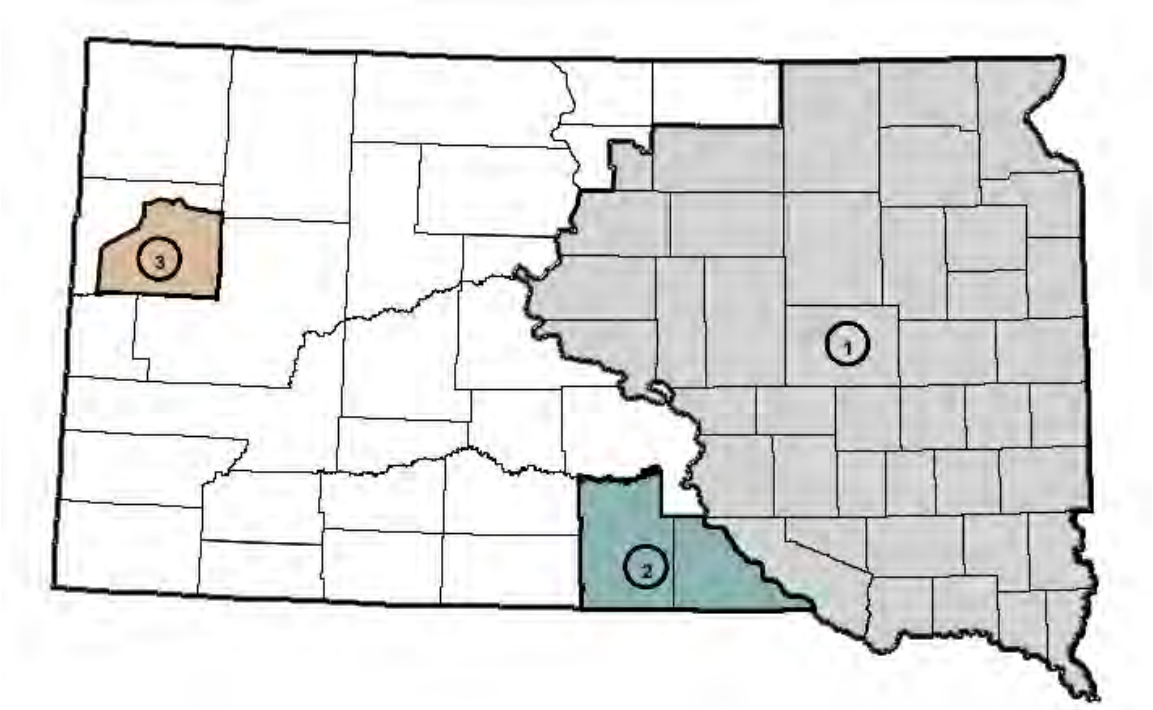
Dates: Zone 2, October 16 - November 14 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 15 birds, 3 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 3, October 16-30 in designated counties and that portion of Walworth County south of Highway 12
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 15 birds, 3 of which may be hens

Shooting Hours: Daylight hours. It was lawful to hunt during the daylight hours of the period beginning at noon on the 16th day of October and ending at sunset on the last day of the Zone 2 and Zone 3 seasons. In Zone 1 it was lawful to hunt during the daylight hours of the period beginning at noon on the 1st day of December and ending at sunset on the 15th day of January 15, 1931.

Season Length: 76 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,500,000



1931 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 15-26 in designated counties and that portion of Walworth County south of Highway 12 and east of Highway 83
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 6 roosters

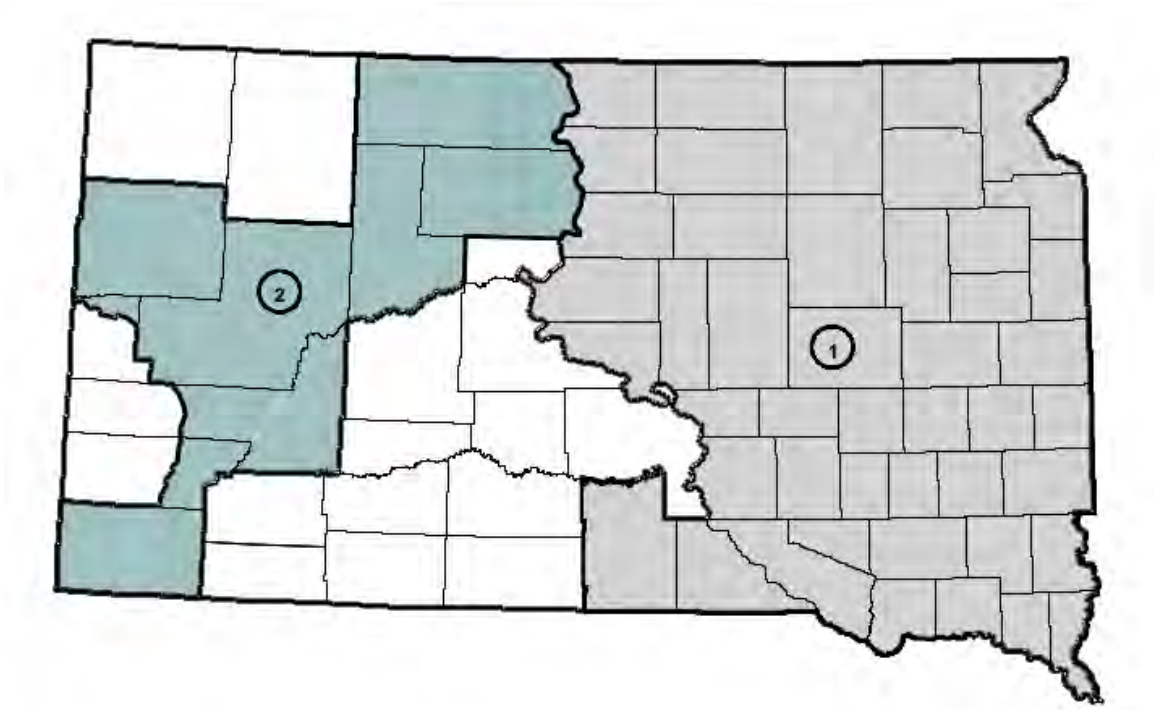
Dates: Zone 2, October 15-17 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, November 8, 10, and 12 in that portion of Butte County east of Highway 85 and south of the South Fork of the Moreau River
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 4 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset in Zone 1 and 2; and Noon, Mountain Time, to sunset in Zone 3

Season Length: 15 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,000,000



1932 Seasons

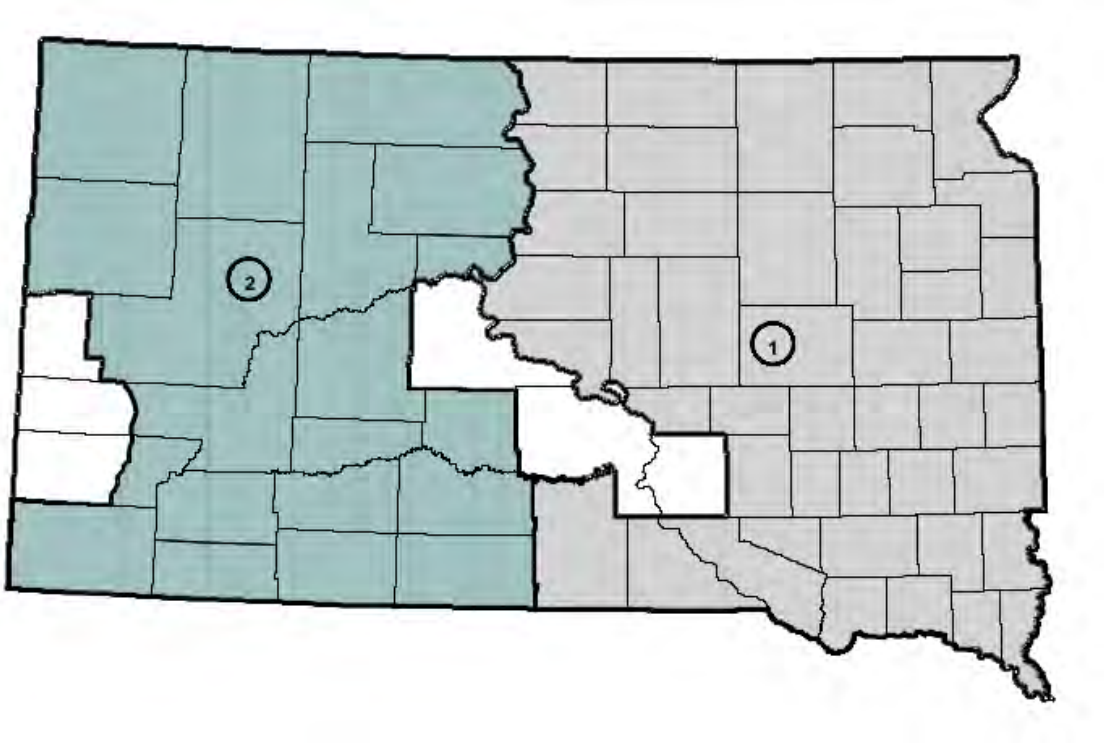
Dates: Zone 1, October 20 - November 18 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 8 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 22-24 in designated counties, that portion of Lawrence County north and east of Highway 16, and those portions of Custer and Pennington counties east of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 4 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset

Season Length: 30 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,000,000



1933 Seasons

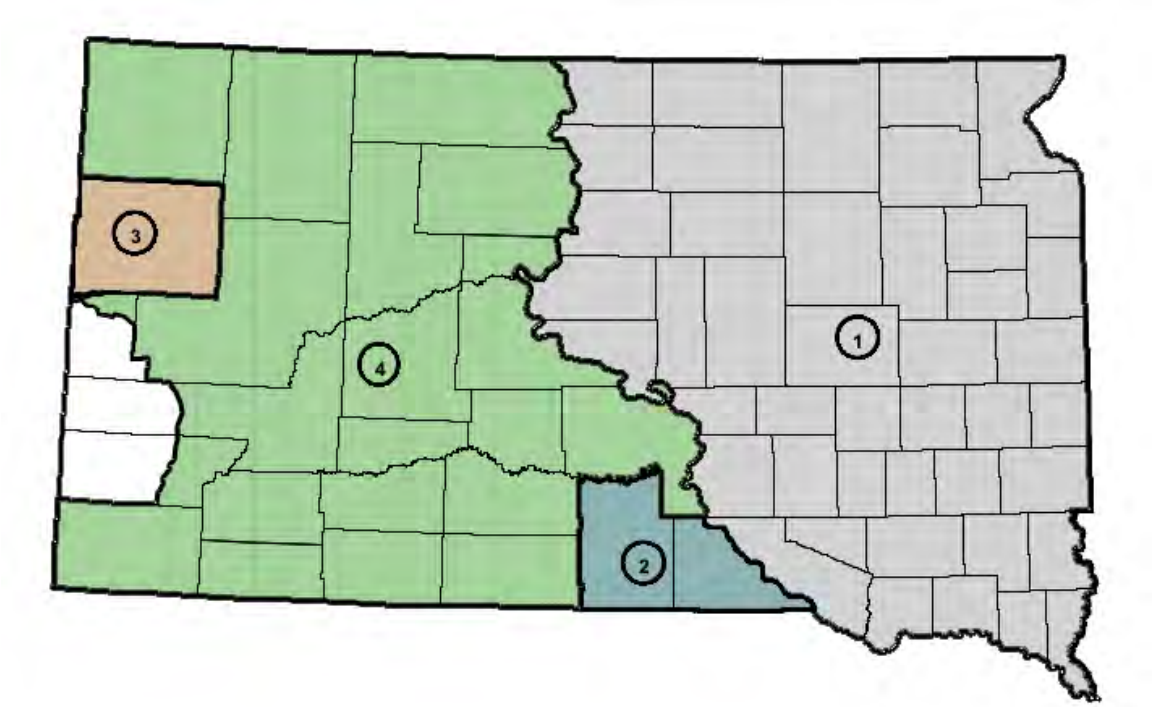
Dates: Zone 1, October 10-24 and November 17 - December 1 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 10 birds, 2 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 2, October 21-22 in designated counties and those portions of Custer and Pennington counties east of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 4 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset

Season Length: 30 days

Harvest Estimate: 2,000,000



1934 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 21 - November 4 and November 21 - December 5 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 10 birds, 4 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 2, October 21 - November 4 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 10 birds, 4 of which may be hens

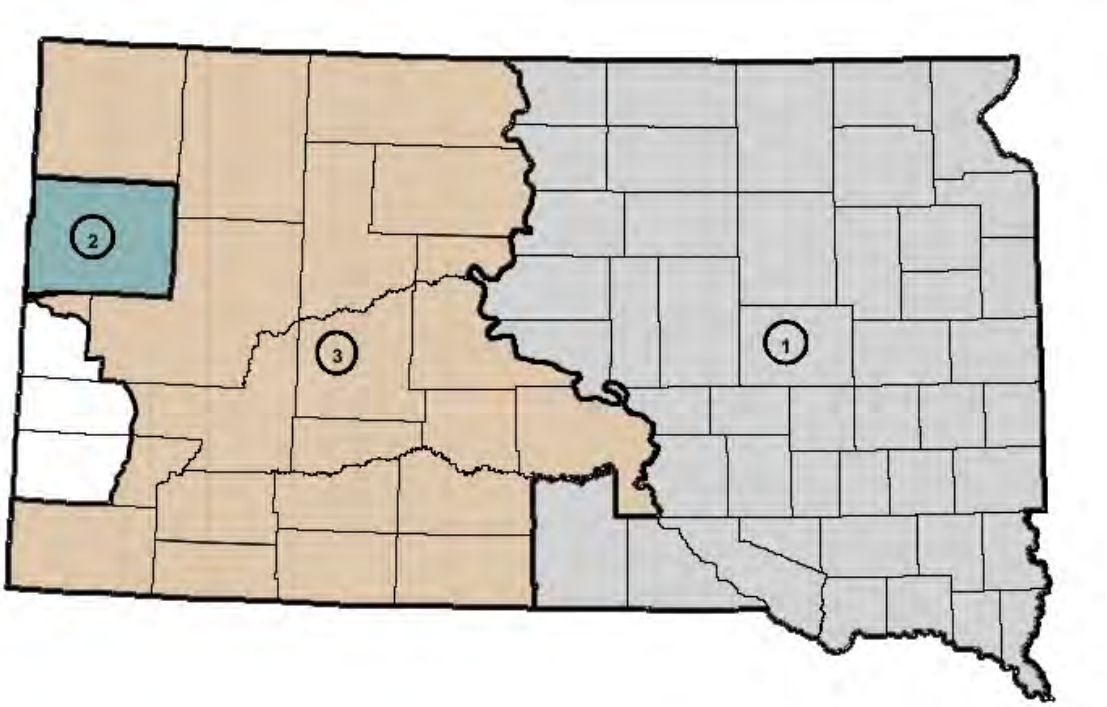
Dates: Zone 3, October 21-25 in Butte County
Daily Limit: 4 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 8 birds, 2 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 4, October 21-22 in designated counties, that portion of Lawrence County north of Highway 16, and those portions of Pennington and Custer counties east of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon until dark

Season Length: 30 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,500,000



1935 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 21 - November 11 and November 28 - December 12 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 6 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 12 birds, 4 of which may be hens

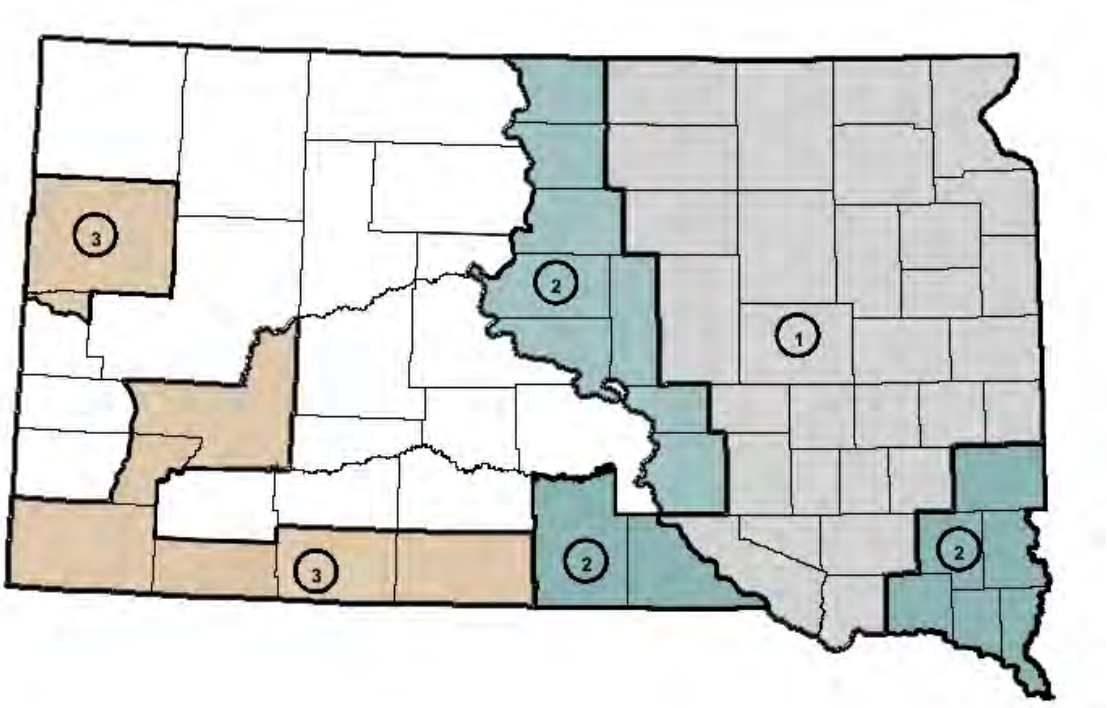
Dates: Zone 2, October 23-27 in Butte County
Daily Limit: 4 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 8 birds, 2 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 3, October 26-27 in designated counties, that portion of Lawrence County north of Highway 16, and those portions of Pennington and Custer counties east of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon until dark

Season Length: 37 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,500,000



1936 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 10-19 and November 2-11 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 8 roosters. For November 2-11 the Daily Limit changed to 4 birds, 1 of which may be a hen and the Possession Limit changed to 8 birds, 2 of which may be hens

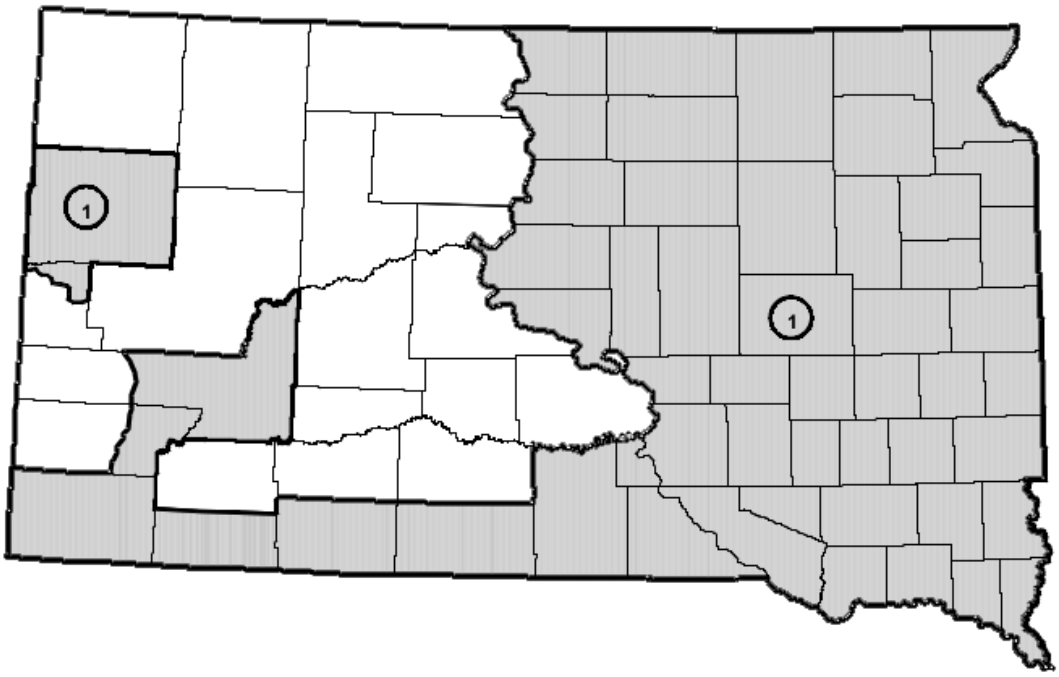
Dates: Zone 2, October 10-19 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 8 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 10-12 in designated counties, that portion of Lawrence County north of Highway 16, and those portions of Pennington and Custer counties east of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 4 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon until dark

Season Length: 20 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,750,000



1937 Season

Dates: Zone 1, October 9-12 in designated counties, that portion of Lawrence County east and north of Highway 14, that portion of Pennington County east of Highway 14 extended north from Rapid City and Highway 79 extended south from Rapid City, that portion of Custer County east and south of Highway 79, and that portion of Lyman County south of the White River

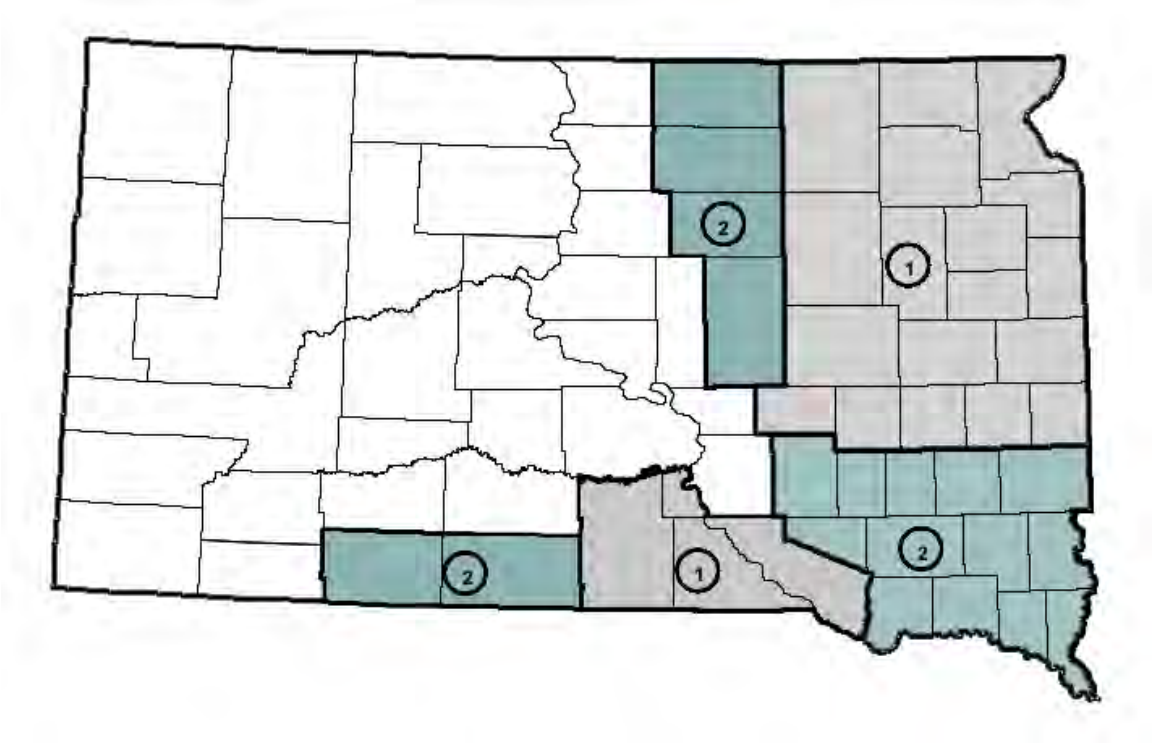
Shooting Hours: Noon until dark

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Season Length: 4 days

Harvest Estimate: 75,000



1938 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 1-7 and October 22-28 in designated counties and that portion of Lyman County south of the White River

Dates: Zone 2, October 1-7 in designated counties

Shooting Hours: Noon until dark

Daily Limit: 4 birds, 1 of which may be a hen

Possession Limit: 8 birds, 2 of which may be hens

Season Length: 14 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,500,000

Introduction to Section Three

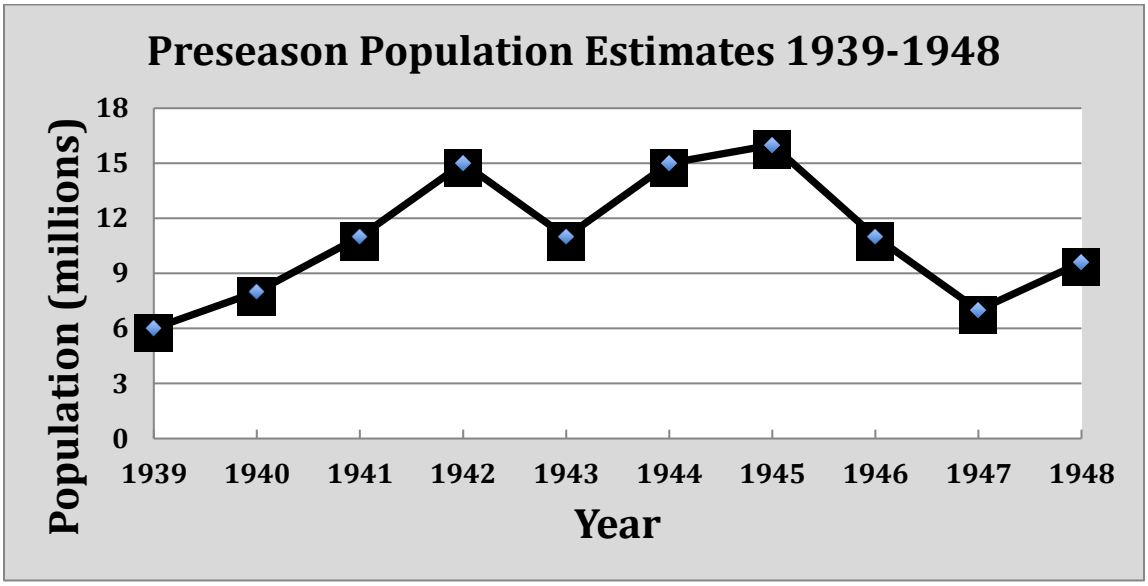


Chart 3-1. The population for the third decade was the largest of any decade with nine of the ten years reaching the high-density level. A second peak population period was also attained: 1941-11,000,000; 1942-15,000,000; 1943-11,000,000; 1944-15,000,000; 1945-16,000,000; and 1946-11,000,000.

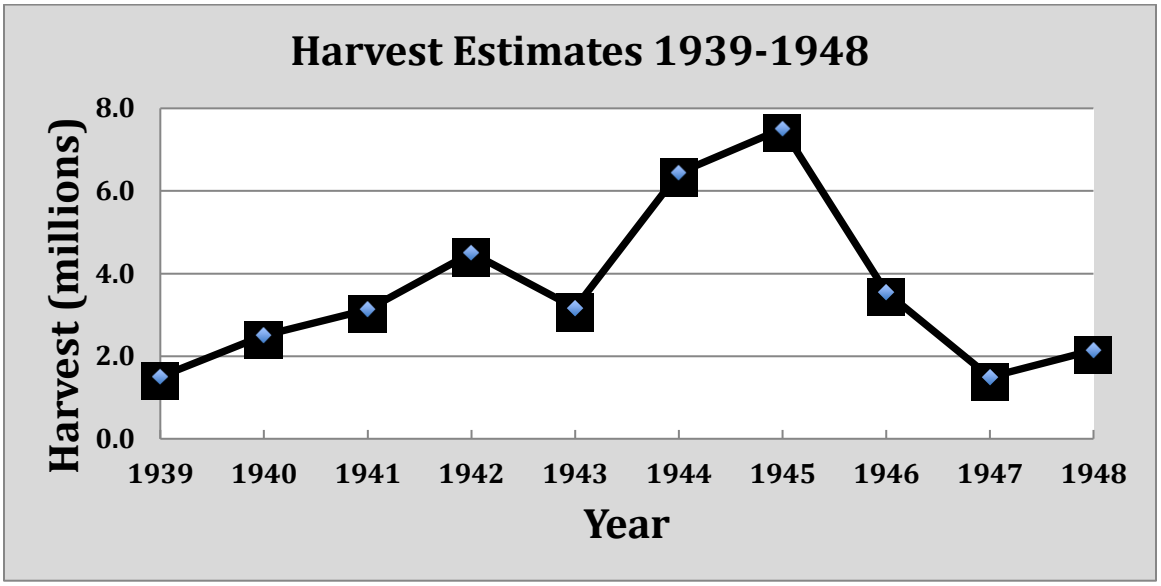


Chart 3-2. The harvest for the third decade was 35,933,341 pheasants and ranked first of the ten decades. The best yearly harvest of the decade was 7,507,000 in 1945.

Decade Events

1942, 1943, and 1944: These pheasant hunting seasons had two parts, a fall season and a winter season.
1944 and 1945: For these two seasons, shooting hours were from 10:00 A.M. until dark.
1945: This season was amended three times extending the hunting season to February 28, 1946, in certain regions of the state. With a population of 16,000,000 this season had the largest population recorded between 1919 and 2018.
1946: During the season, an amendment stopped the harvesting of hens.
1947: Central time was used for the opening of shooting hours in all regional hunting zones.

Section 3

South Dakota Pheasant Seasons

1939-1948

Year	Season Length in Days	Opening Day	Preseason Population Estimate	Daily Limit	Hen Limit	Possession Limit	Harvest Estimate
1939	29	Oct. 14	6,000,000	4	1	8	1,500,000
1940	55	Oct. 1	8,000,000	5	1	10	2,500,000
1941	50	Oct. 1	11,000,000	5	1	10	3,125,000
1942	126	Sept. 26	15,000,000	7	2	21	4,500,000
1943	158	Sept. 25	11,000,000	7	3	21	3,168,000
1944	162	Sept. 20	15,000,000	10	5	30	6,439,000
1945	153	Sept. 29	16,000,000	8	4	24	7,507,000
1946	60	Oct. 15	11,000,000	5	2	15	3,550,000
1947	45	Oct. 11	7,000,000	3	0	9	1,496,000
1948	45	Oct. 9	9,600,000	4	0	12	2,148,341

The Third Decade

The population for the years of 1940-1948 was in the high-density range with a population of 7,000,000 or more pheasants each year. This era was the pinnacle of South Dakota's pheasant population due to the abundance of high quality habitat during World War II and the post-war years. The state received above-normal rainfall and the pattern of land use changed. There was more farming to raise crops for food. Consequently, pheasants were able to extend their range into the western marginal lands. Farmers' efforts were aimed at mass production rather than at clean fencerows. Rainfall, too, made cultivation difficult, and the potholes filled. The 1940s were the Golden Age of pheasant hunting resulting in the largest harvest of any time period. The practice of rooster only hunting seasons began in 1947. Opening day has been on a Saturday since 1947. This was not the case for the earlier seasons. Opening day fell on every day of the week between 1919 and 1946: Sunday—1934; Monday—1921, 1923, and 1935; Tuesday—1929, 1933, 1940, and 1946; Wednesday—1941 and 1944; Thursday—1919, 1920, 1922, 1928, 1930, 1931, and 1932; Friday—1924, 1925, 1926, and 1927; Saturday—1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1942, 1943, and 1945.

Author's Notes relating to the 1940s South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Seasons

1941-1946: The Golden Age of South Dakota Pheasant Hunting

The years of 1941 to 1946 were the apex of South Dakota's pheasant populations and hunting statistics. The pheasant hunting seasons of 1942, 1943, 1944, and 1945 were the four longest in South Dakota history.

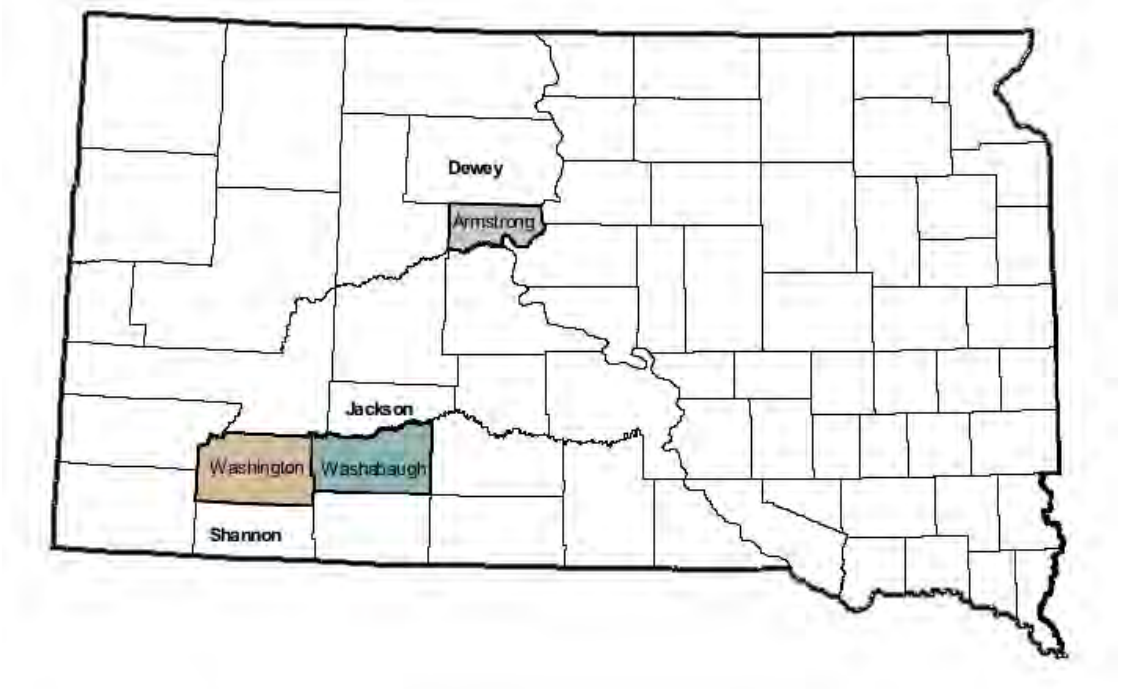
Year	Preseason Population Estimate	Season Length in Days	Daily Limit	Possession Limit	Pheasants Harvested Per Hunter Est.	Harvest Estimate
1941	11,000,000	50	5	10	33.2	3,125,000
1942	15,000,000	126	7	21	46.9	4,500,000
1943	11,000,000	158	7	21	40.6	3,168,000
1944	15,000,000	162	10	30	54.1	6,439,000
1945	16,000,000	153	8	24	42.9	7,507,000
1946	11,000,000	60	5	15	19.0	3,550,000

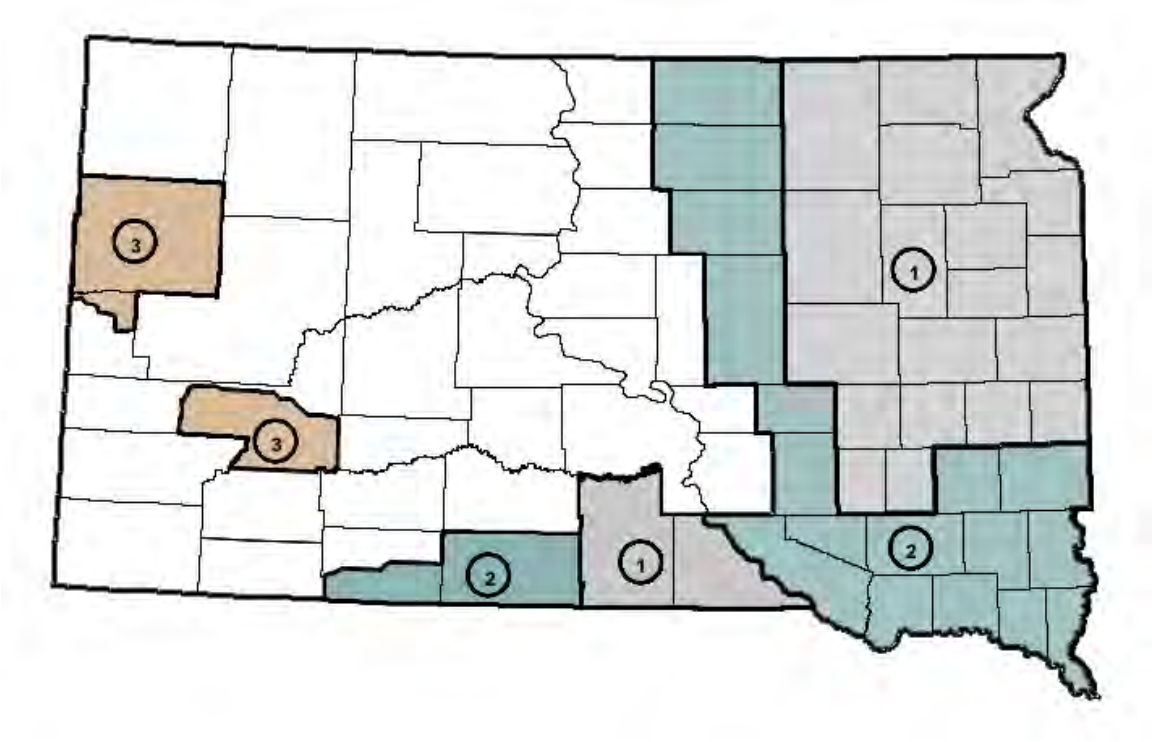
The 1944 Season Length – Was South Dakota's longest season 162 or 163 days long?

Trautman's Table 27 list 163 days for the 1944 season with the dates of "Sept. 20-Feb.29," and footnote (i) with the dates "January 1-February 29, 1945." [February 29, 1945, was not a leap year.] The August 8, 1944, SDGF Commission Meeting Minutes list a fall season from September 20, 1944, to January 17, 1945. The January 4, 1945, SDGF Commission Meeting Minutes list a winter season from January 18, 1945, to February 28, 1945. The 1944 season dates correctly add up to 162 days.

Past South Dakota Counties

Beginning with the 1942 pheasant hunting seasons the sources used for research began listing Armstrong County and Washabaugh County in the regional zones. A contemporary map of South Dakota counties does not contain either county. A search for these counties on the internet revealed why they are not on a current map. Armstrong County was dissolved in 1954 and joined Dewey County. Washabaugh County merged with Jackson County in 1979. Also, while doing research it was discovered that a Washington County existed during the pheasant hunting seasons of 1919 through 1943. Washington County merged with Shannon County in 1944. In 2015 Shannon County was renamed Oglala Lakota County.





1939 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 14 - November 11 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 4 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 8 birds, 2 of which may be hens

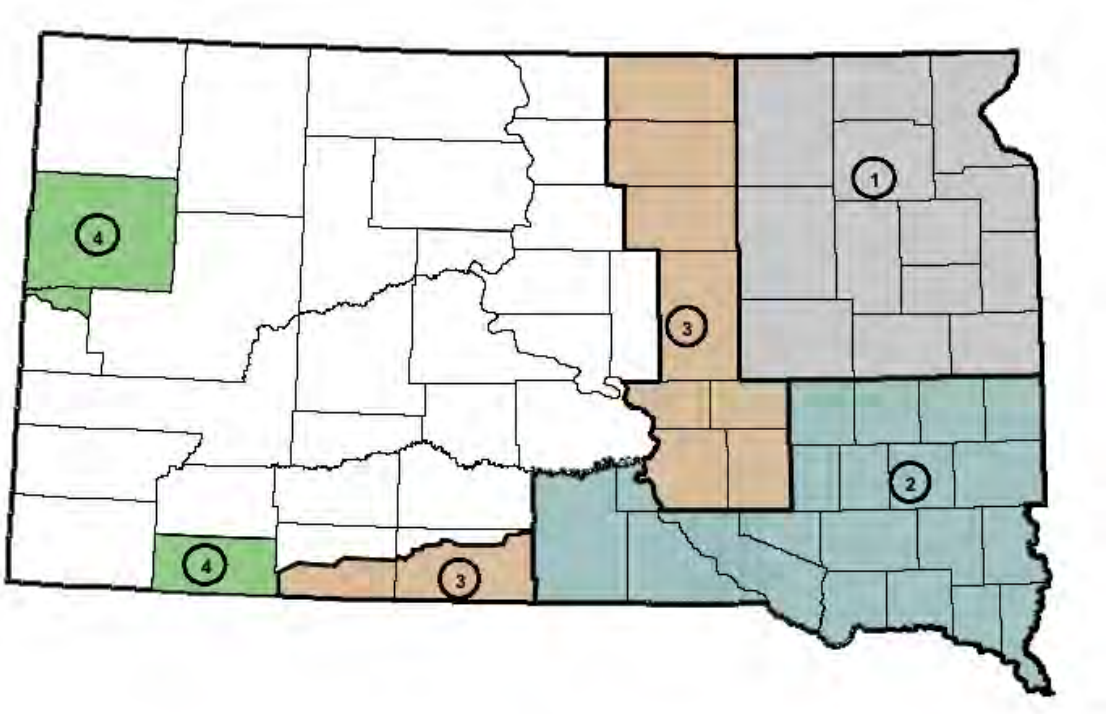
Dates: Zone 2, October 14-31 in designated counties and that portion of Bennett County south of Highway 18
Daily Limit: 4 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 8 birds, 2 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 3, October 14-16 in Butte County, that portion of Lawrence County north and east of Highway 14, and that portion of Pennington County south of Highway 14 and east of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 3 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 6 birds, 2 of which may be hens

Shooting Hours: Noon until dark

Season Length: 29 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,500,000



1940 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 1 - November 9 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 10 birds, 2 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 2, October 1-20 and November 15-29 in designated counties and that portion of Lyman County south of the White and Missouri rivers
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 10 birds, 2 of which may be hens

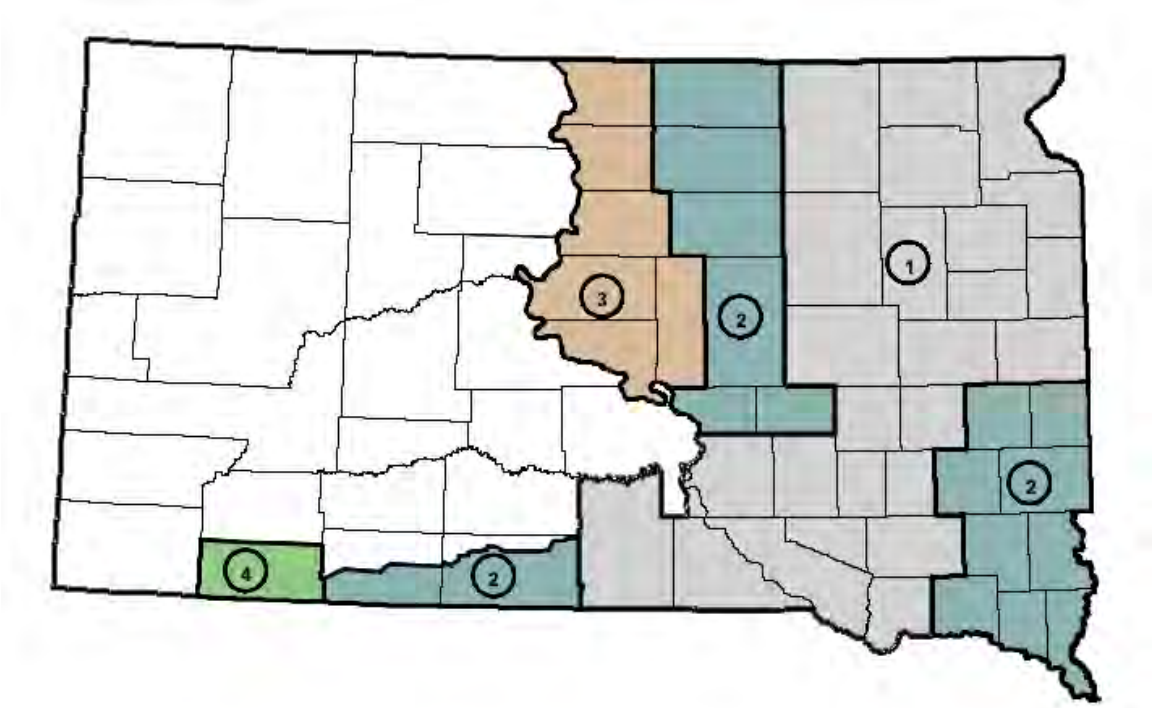
Dates: Zone 3, October 1-20 in designated counties and those portions of Todd and Bennett counties south of Highway 18
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 10 birds, 2 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 4, October 12-14 in designated counties and that portion of Lawrence County that lies north of Highway 24 and thence north of Highway 14 where it forms a junction with Highway 24
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon until dark

Season Length: 55 days

Harvest Estimate: 2,500,000



1941 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 1 - November 19 in designated counties and that portion of Lyman County south of the White and Missouri rivers and east of Highway 47
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 10 birds, 2 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 2, October 1 - November 4 in designated counties and those portions of Bennett and Todd counties south of Highway 18
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 10 birds, 2 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 3, October 1-7 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

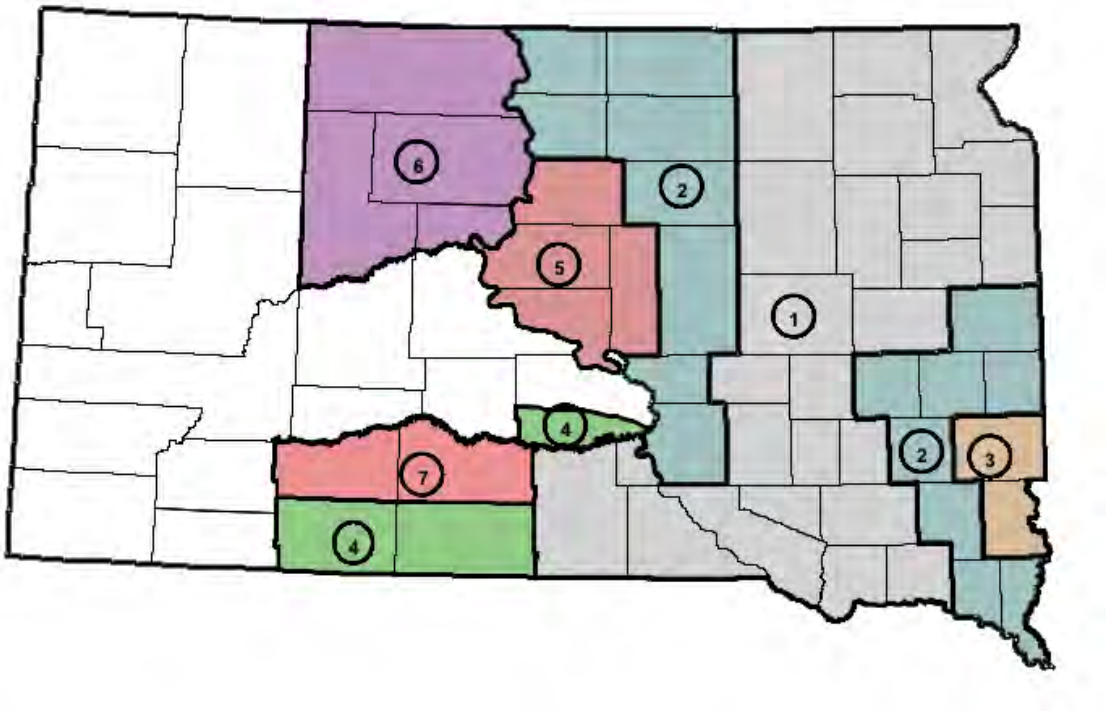
Dates: Zone 4, October 1-3 in Shannon County
Daily Limit: 3 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 6 birds, 2 of which may be hens

Shooting Hours: Noon until dark

Season Length: 50 days

Harvest Estimate: 3,125,000

The 1942 pheasant hunting season consisted of two parts: part one in the fall and part two in the winter. The winter part occurred in the calendar year of 1943, but is counted as a portion of the 1942 season.



1942 Part One, Fall Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, September 26 - December 24 in designated counties and that portion of Lyman County south of the White River and Missouri rivers. In addition Sand Lake Refuge in Brown County was open from December 5-24.
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 6 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 2, September 26 - November 14 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 6 of which may be hens

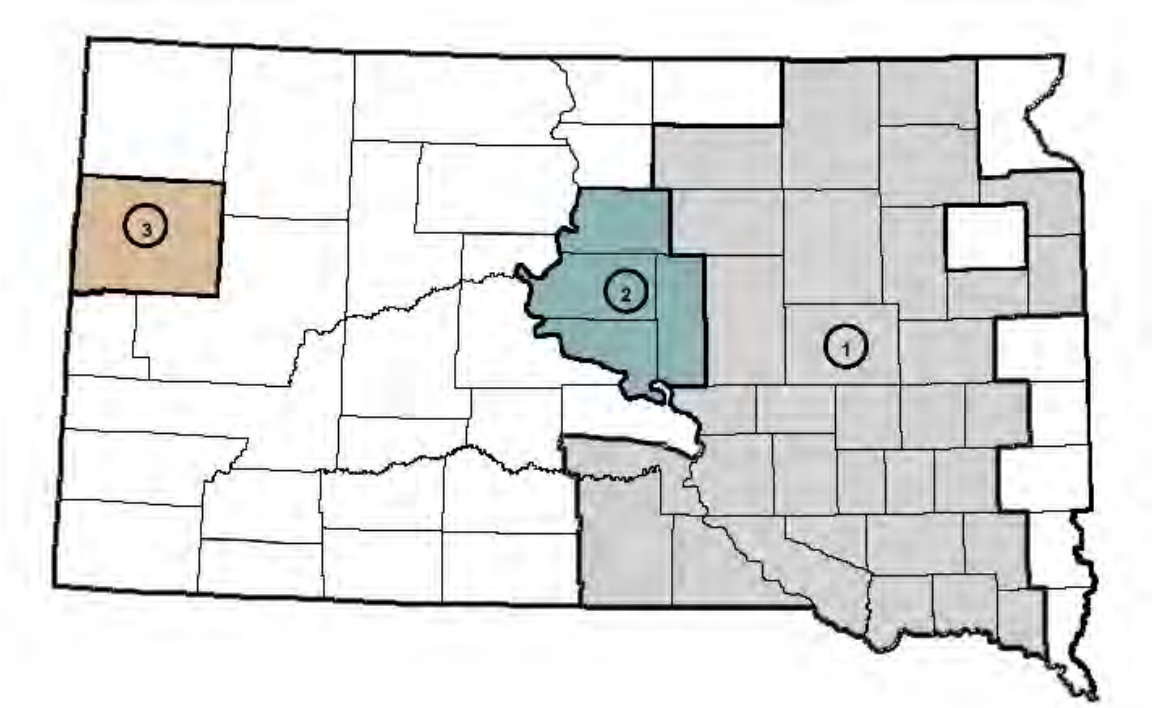
Dates: Zone 3, September 26 - November 14 in designated counties
Daily Limits: 7 roosters—Possession Limit: 21 roosters

Dates: Zone 4, September 26 - October 25 in designated counties and that portion of Lyman County north of the White River and south of Highway 16
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 6 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 5, September 26 - October 15 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 roosters—Possession Limit: 21 roosters

Dates: Zone 6, September 26-30 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Dates: Zone 7, September 26-28 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters



1942 Part Two, Winter Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, January 30 - February 28, 1943, in designated counties and that portion of Lyman County south of Highway 16
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 6 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 2, January 30 - February 28, 1943, in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 roosters—Possession Limit: 21 roosters

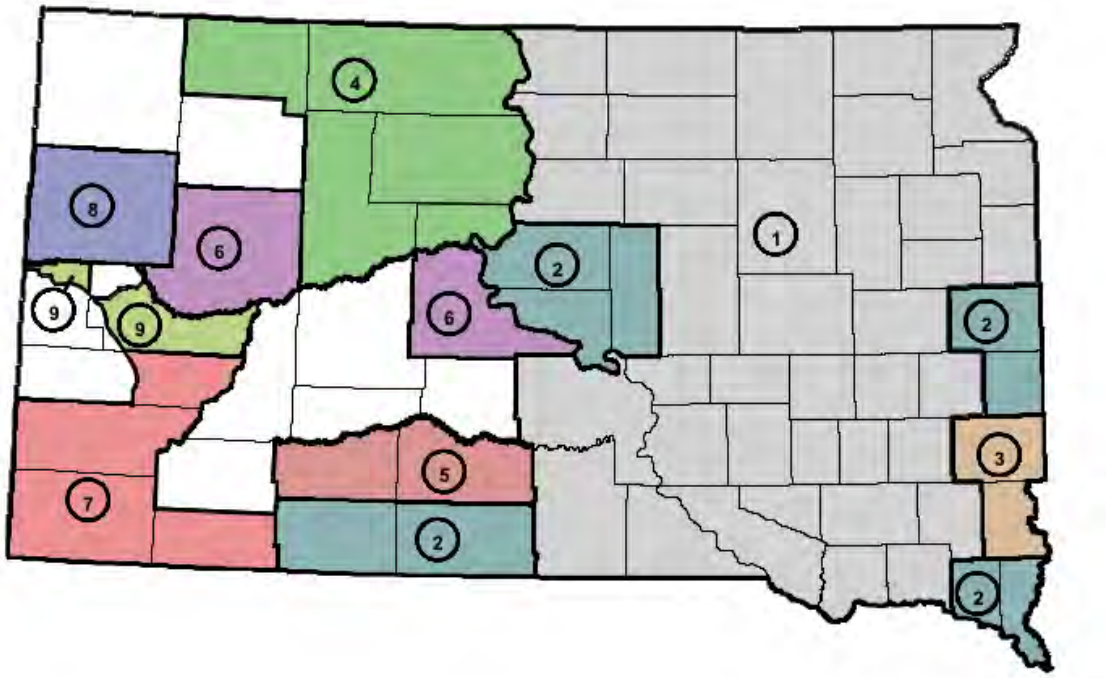
Dates; Zone 3, January 9-14, 1943, in Butte County
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon until dark

Season Length: 126 days

Harvest Estimate: 4,500,000

The 1943 pheasant hunting season consisted of two parts: part one in the fall and part two in the winter. The winter part occurred in the calendar year of 1944, but is counted as a portion of the 1943 season.



1943 Part One, Fall Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, September 25 - January 31, 1944, in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 3 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 9 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 2, September 25 - November 23 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 6 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 3, September 25 - November 23 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 roosters—Possession Limit: 21 roosters

Dates: Zone 4, September 25 - October 24 in designated counties and that portion of Perkins County north of Highway 8
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 15 birds, 3 of which may be hens

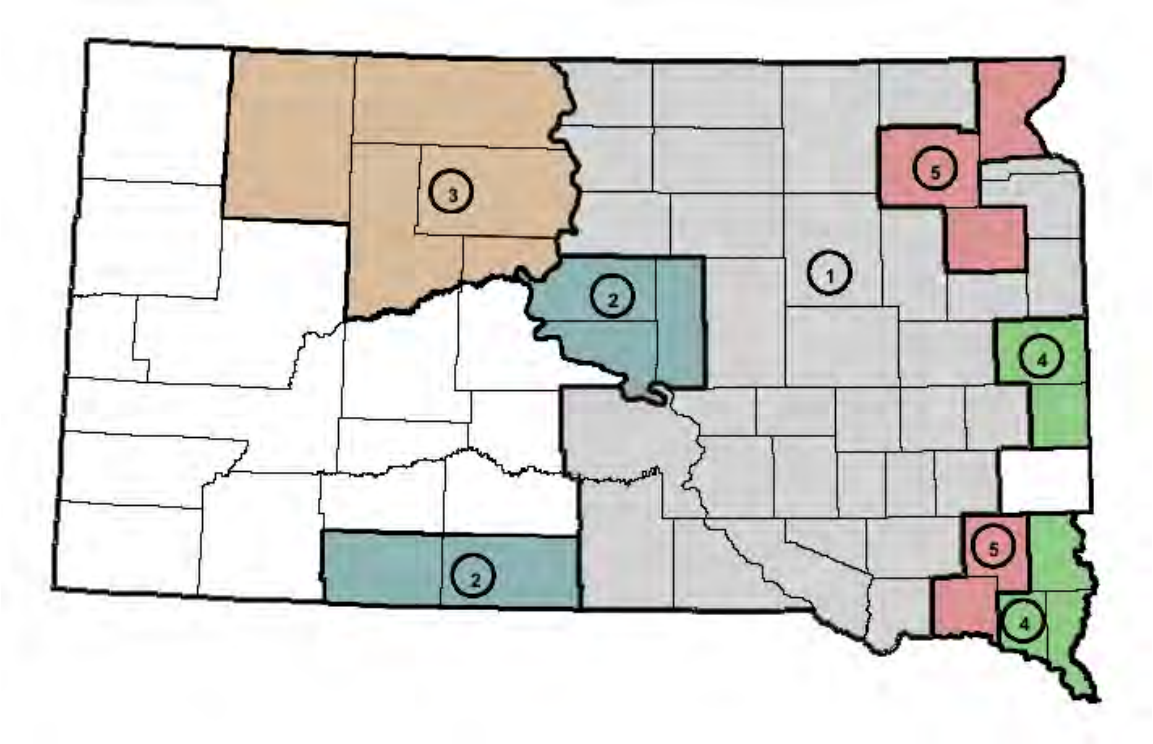
Dates: Zone 5, September 25 - October 14 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Dates: Zone 6, September 25-29 in Stanley County and that portion of Meade County north of the Belle Fourche River
Daily Limit: 5 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 7, October 15-20 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County between the Cheyenne River and Highway 79
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Dates: Zone 8, November 25 - December 24 in Butte County
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 15 birds, 3 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 9, November 25-29 in that portion of Lawrence County north and east of Highways 24 and 14, and that portion of Meade County between the Belle Fourche River and Highways 14 and 24
Daily Limit: 5 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters



1943 Part Two, Winter Seasons Amendment (Amends Previous Regulation for 1943)

Dates: Zone 1, January 1 - February 29, 1944, in designated counties and that portion of Roberts County south of the east and west highway through Wilmot
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 3 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 9 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 2, January 1 - February 29, 1944, in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 6 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 3, February 1-29, 1944, in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 4, February 1-29, 1944, in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 6 of which may be hens

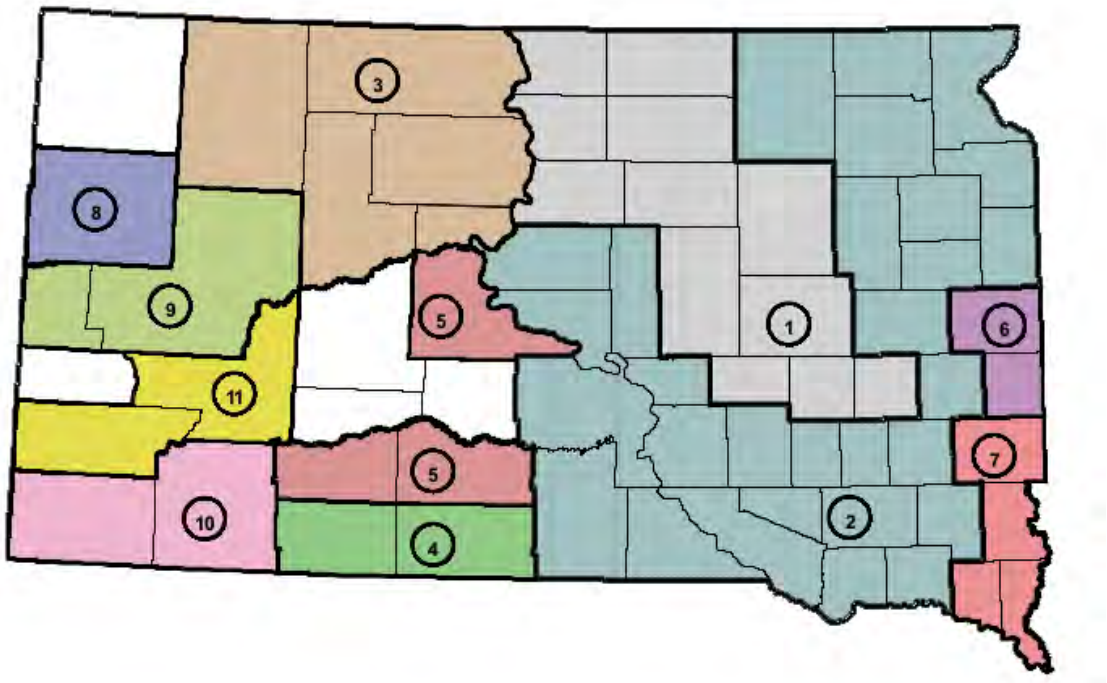
Dates: Zone 5, January 1-31, 1944, in designated counties and that portion of Roberts County north of the east and west highway through Wilmot
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 3 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 9 of which may be hens

Shooting Hours: Noon until dark

Season Length: 158 days

Harvest Estimate: 3,168,000

The 1944 pheasant hunting season consisted of two parts: part one in the fall and part two in the winter. The winter part occurred in the calendar year of 1945, but is counted as a portion of the 1944 season.



1944 Part One, Fall Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, September 20 - January 17, 1945, in designated counties
Daily Limit: 10 birds, 5 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 30 birds, 15 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 2, September 20 - January 17, 1945, in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 3 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 9 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 3, September 20 - December 18 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 6 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 4, September 20 - December 18 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 3 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 9 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 5, September 20 - October 19 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 15 birds, 3 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 6, September 20 - November 18 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 6 of which may be hens

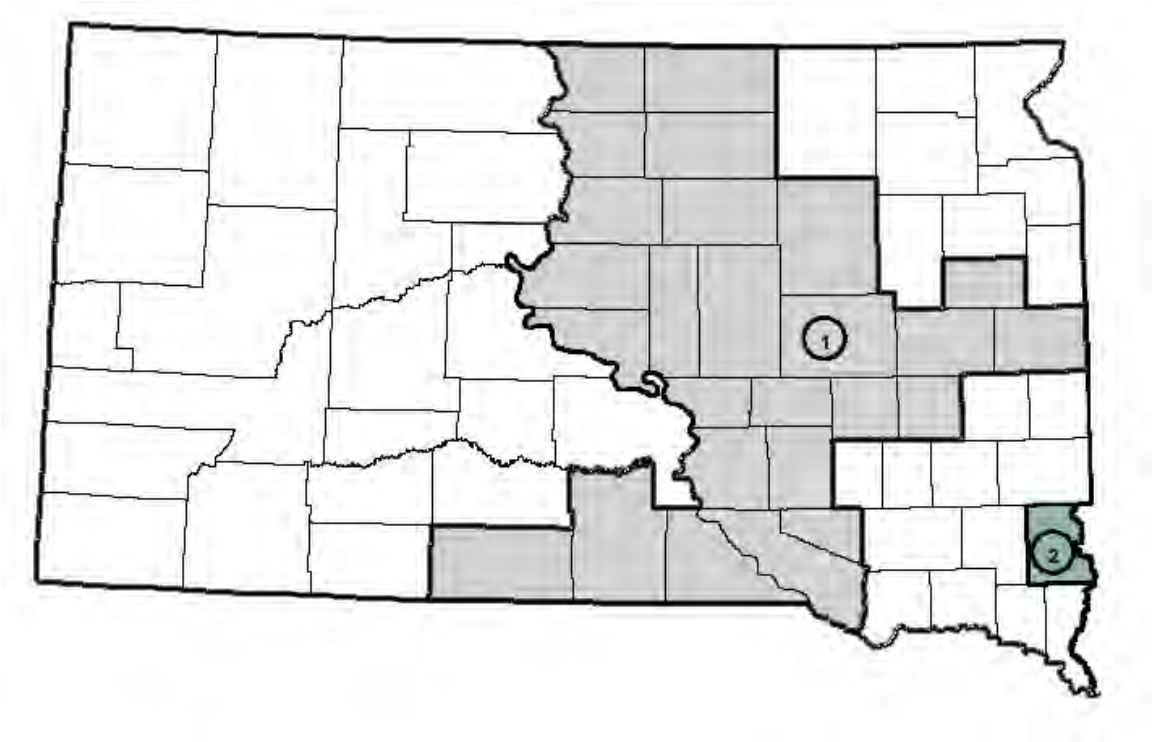
Dates: Zone 7, September 20 - November 18 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 3 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 8, October 7 - November 5 in Butte County
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 15 birds, 3 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 9, October 7-16 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

Dates: Zone 10, October 7-22 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

Dates: Zone 11, October 7-16 in Custer County and that portion of Pennington County east of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters



1944 Part Two, Winter Seasons

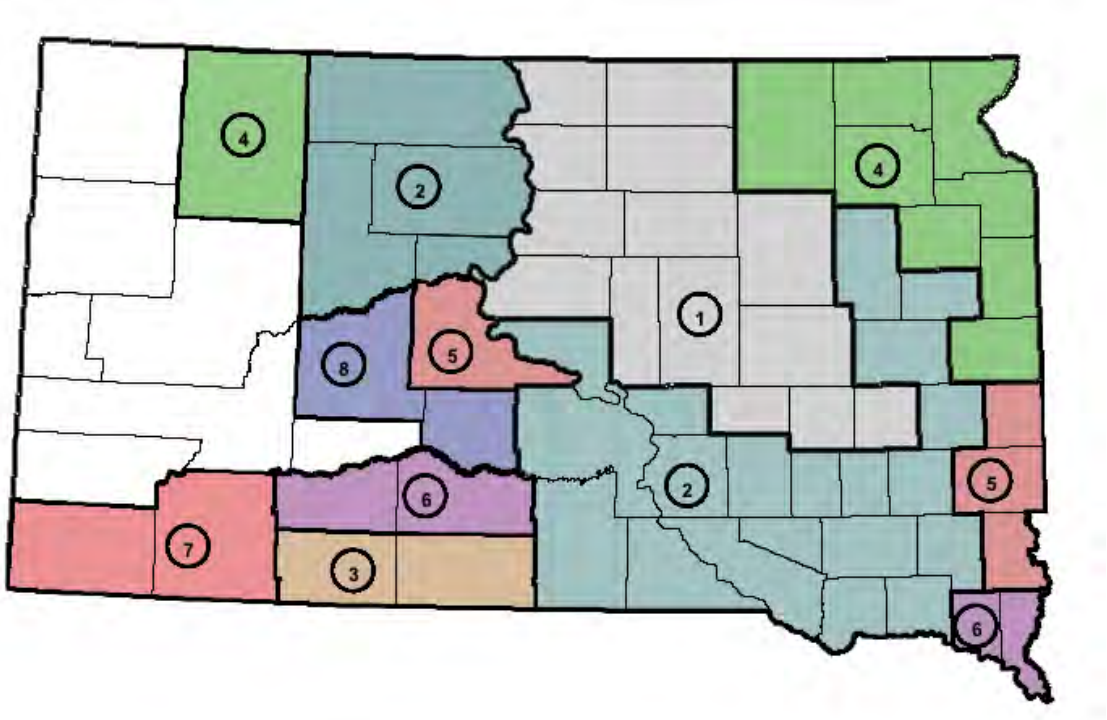
Dates: Zone 1, January 18 - February 28, 1945, in designated counties
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 3 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 9 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 2, January 18 - February 28, 1945, in Lincoln County
Daily Limit: 7 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 21 birds, 3 of which may be hens

Shooting Hours: 10 A.M. until dark

Season Length: 162 days

Harvest Estimate: 6,439,000



1945 Seasons**

Dates: Zone 1, September 29 - January 26 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 8 birds, 4 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 24 birds, 12 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 2, September 29 - January 26 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 8 birds, 3 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 24 birds, 9 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 3, September 29 - December 27 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 8 birds, 3 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 24 birds, 9 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 4, September 29 - December 27 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 8 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 24 birds, 6 of which may be hens

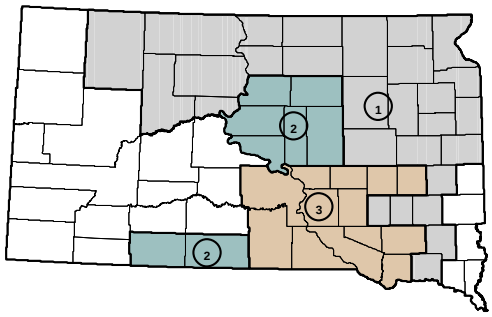
Dates: Zone 5, September 29 - November 27 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 8 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 24 birds, 3 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 6, September 29 - October 28 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 15 birds, 3 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 7, September 29 - October 16 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Dates: Zone 8, September 29 - October 8 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

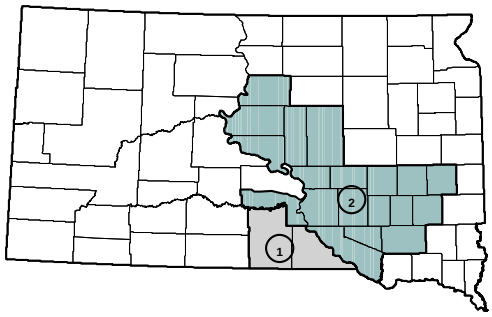
**The SDGFP Commission passed three amendments restructuring the 1945 season. The first amendment was passed at the November 1945 meeting, the second at the December 1945 meeting, and the third at the January 1946 meeting. The changes made by those amendments are recorded on the following page.



1945 Seasons November Amendment effective December 1 (Amends Previous Regulation for 1945)
Dates: Zone 1, December 1-30 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

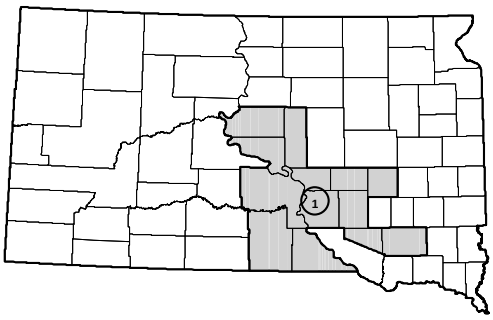
Dates: Zone 2, December 1-30 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 15 birds, 3 of which may be hens

Dates: Zone 3, December 1-30 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 15 birds, 6 of which may be hens



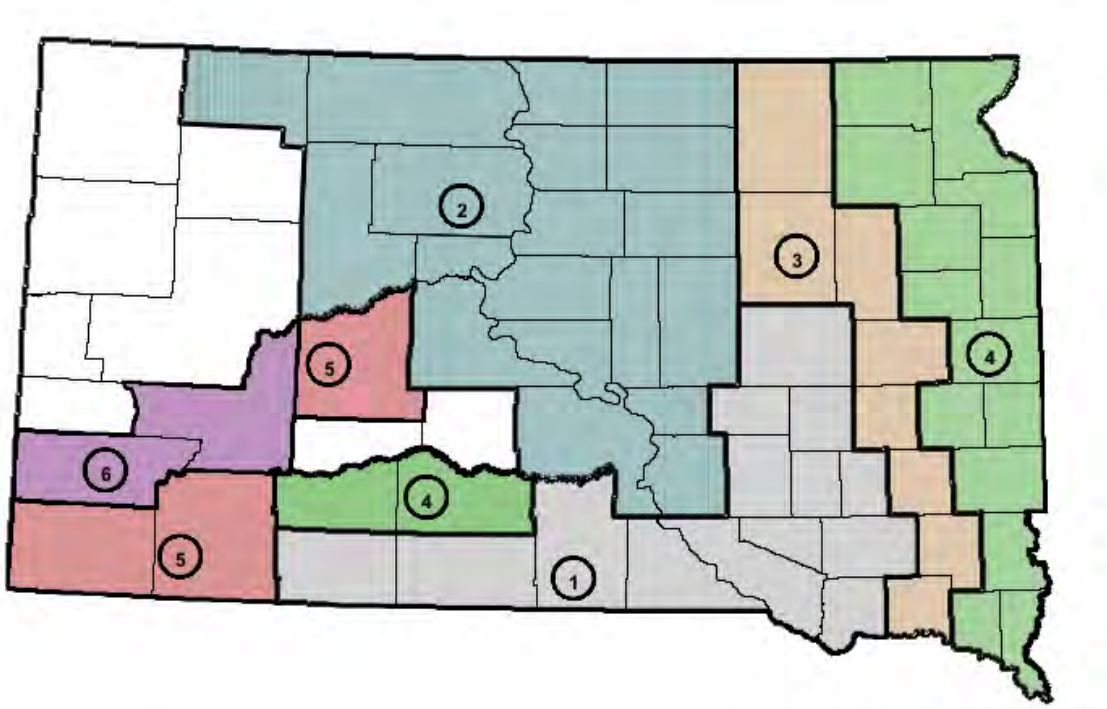
1945 Seasons December Amendment effective December 31
Dates: Zone 1, December 31 - February 28, 1946, in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, December 31 - January 31, 1946, in designated counties and that portion of Lyman County south of Highway 16
Daily Limit: 5 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters



1945 Season January Amendment effective February 1
Dates: Zone 1, February 1-28, 1946, in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Shooting Hours: 10 A.M. until dark
Season Length: 153 days
Harvest Estimate: 7,507,000



1946 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 15 - December 13 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 2 of which may be hens—Possession Limit: 15 birds, 6 of which may be hens. An amendment covering the dates of November 18 - December 13 changed the Daily Limit to 5 roosters and the Possession Limit to 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 15 - December 13 in designated counties and that portion of Perkins County north of Highway 8
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 15 birds, 3 of which may be hen. An amendment covering the dates of November 18 - December 13 changed the Daily Limit to 5 roosters and the Possession Limit to 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 15 - November 28 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 5 birds, 1 of which may be a hen—Possession Limit: 15 birds, 3 of which may be hens. An amendment covering the dates of November 18-28 changed the Daily Limit to 5 roosters and the Possession Limit to 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 4, October 15 - November 13 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

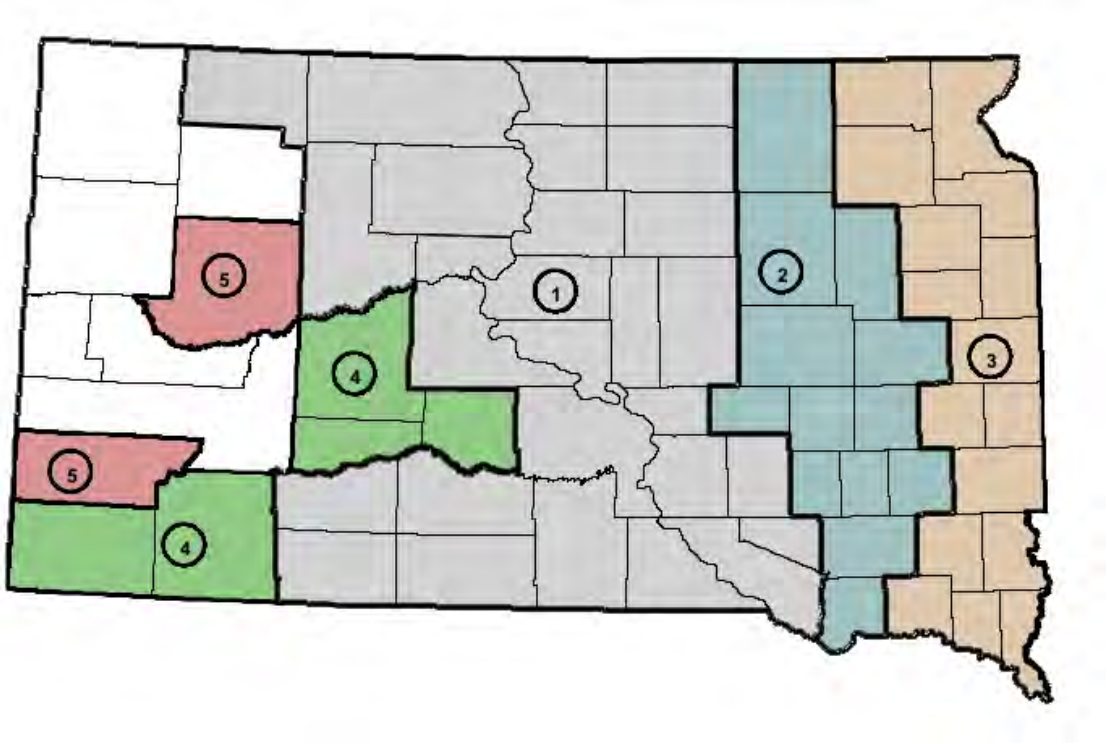
Dates: Zone 5, October 15-24 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Dates: Zone 6, October 15-19 in Custer County and that portion of Pennington County east of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon until dark

Season Length: 60 days

Harvest Estimate: 3,550,000



1947 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 11 - November 24 in designated counties and that portion of Perkins County north of Highway 8

Dates: Zone 2, October 11 - November 9 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, October 11-25 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 4, October 11-20 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 5, October 11-15 in Custer County and that portion of Meade County north and east of the Belle Fourche River

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, until dark

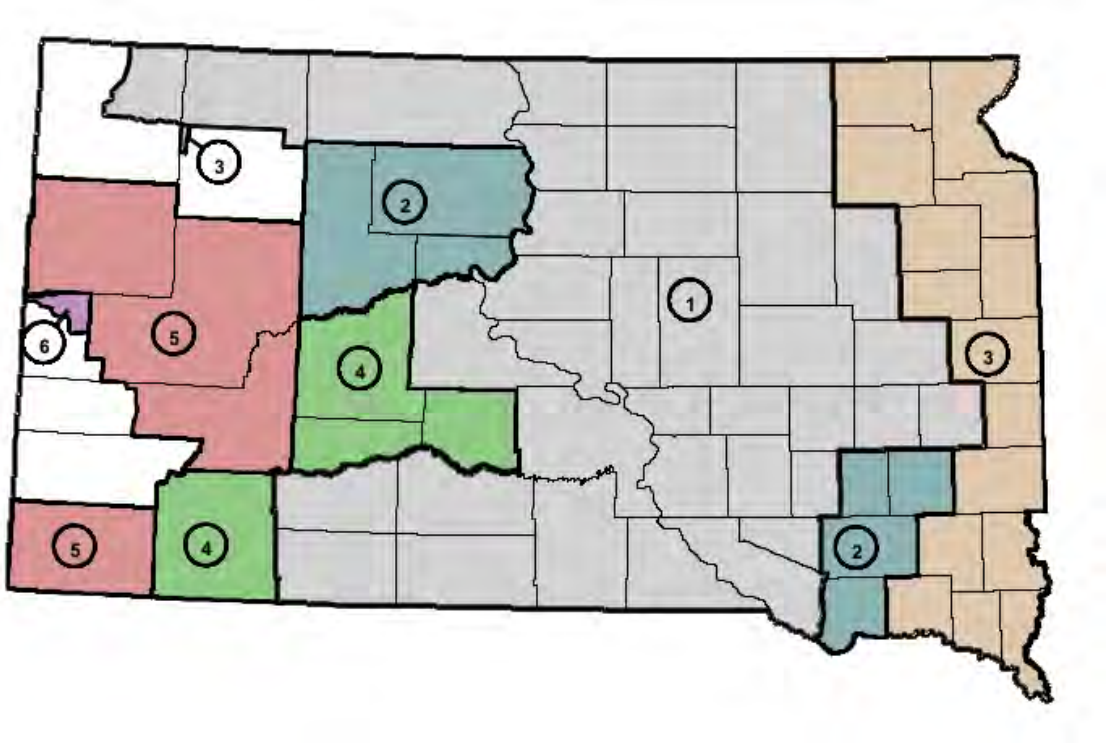
Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Season Length: 45 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,496,000

(Non-Resident License not valid for pheasant hunting until October 21, 1947.)



1948 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 9 - November 22 in designated counties, that portion of Perkins County north of Highway 8, and that portion of Harding County north of Highway 8 and east of Highway 85
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 9 - November 7 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 9-28 in designated counties and that portion of Perkins County south of Highway 8 and west and north of the following boundaries: beginning at the Strool-Zeona road on Highway 8, thence south 10 miles, thence west to the Perkins-Harding County line
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Dates: Zone 4, October 9-23 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Dates: Zone 5, October 9-13 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Dates: Zone 6, October 9-11 in that portion of Lawrence County north of Highway 14
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, until dark

Season Length: 45 days

Harvest Estimate: 2,148,341

(Non-Resident License not valid for pheasant hunting until October 19, 1948.)

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF PHEASANTS

How much do you know about South Dakota's No. 1 game bird? Keep track of your correct answers. If you get 14-15 correct, you get an A; 12-13, a B; 10-11, a C; 0-9, a D.

___ 1. The peak of the pheasant hatch is approximately: (a) May 7, (b) June 15, (c) July 21, (d) August 15.

___ 2. Pheasant hens produce how many broods of chicks per year: (a) 1, (b) 2, (c) 3, (d) 4.

___ 3. The diet of pheasant chicks consists primarily of: (a) corn, (b) weed seeds, (c) insects, (d) hay.

___ 4. Wild pheasants have an average life span of approximately how long: (a) 1 year, (b) 10 months, (c) 2 years, (d) 5 years.

___ 5. Hen pheasants nest primarily in: (a) cornfields, (b) bushes and trees, (c) sloughs, (d) grassy areas.

___ 6. The percent of pen-raised pheasants that generally survive to the opening of pheasant season following their summer release: (a) 100%, (b) less than 10%, (c) 50%, (d) 20%.

___ 7. Pheasants were first successfully released in South Dakota in: (a) 1909, (b) 1934, (c) 1951, (d) 1893.

___ 8. With some exceptions, a pheasant will usually spend its entire life within a radius of: (a) 10 miles, (b) 5 miles, (c) 1.5 miles, (d) 50 miles.

___ 9. The incubation period for pheasant eggs is: (a) 23 days, (b) 10 days, (c) 63 days, (d) 2 weeks.

___ 10. The largest number of pheasant deaths each year are usually caused by: (a) hunting, (b) highway accidents, (c) predators, (d) inclement weather.

___ 11. Which of the following can be considered pheasant habitat: (a) wetlands, (b) shelterbelts, (c) road ditches, (d) alfalfa.

___ 12. We harvest only male pheasants but harvest both sexes of prairie grouse because: (a) pheasants produce fewer chicks than grouse, (b) it is easy to tell the sexes of pheasant apart, (c) grouse are a nuisance, (d) hunting hurts pheasant populations more than it does grouse.

___ 13. Pheasants typically die in inclement winter weather due to: (a) starvation, (b) suffocation, (c) distemper, (d) pneumonia.

___ 14. The number of pheasants a given piece of land can support is determined by: (a) soil salinity, (b) habitat quality, (c) random chance, (d) the Game, Fish and Parks Department.

___ 15. Pheasant nests contain an average of: (a) 3-5 eggs, (b) 20-30 eggs, (c) 50-60 eggs, (d) 12-15 eggs.

SD 1990 Hunting Handbook

Answers 1-b; 2-a; 3-c; 4-b; 5-d; 6-b; 7-a; 8-c; 9-a; 10-d; 11-all; 12-b; 13-b; 14-b; 15-d. [Author's Note: The original test had 1908 for choice (a) in question seven. The author's research revealed that the actual year was 1909. Therefore, he inserted 1909 for choice (a) in the test.]

Introduction to Section Four

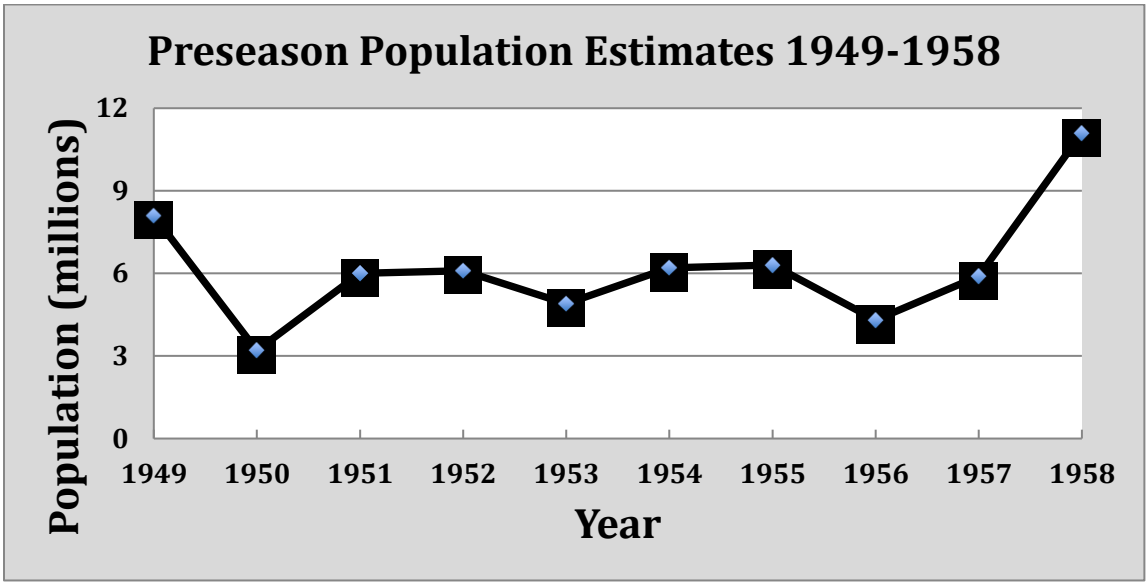


Chart 4-1. The population for the fourth decade began in the high-density level and ended it in the high-density level. Most years between were in the medium-density level. The year 1958 was the beginning of a third peak population era with a population of 11,100,000 pheasants.

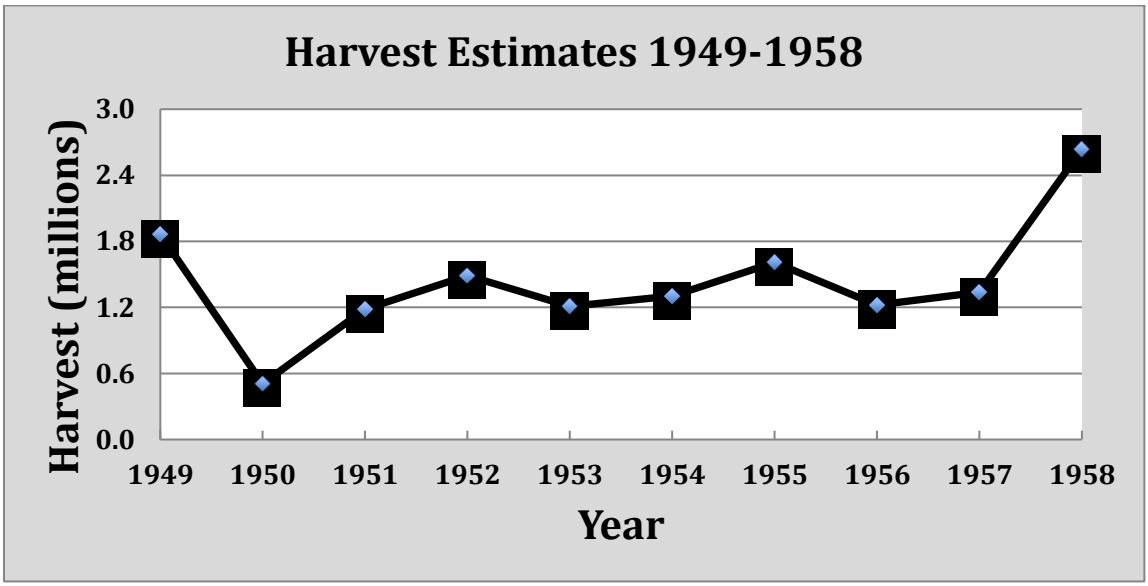


Chart 4-2. The harvest for the fourth decade was 14,361,142 pheasants and ranked fourth of the ten decades. The best yearly harvest of the decade was 2,635,000 in 1958.

Decade Events

1950: This was the only season between 1938 and 1964 to have a harvest of less than 1,000,000 pheasants. The daily limit was only two roosters during the short 13-day season.

1956: For the first time the entire state, including the complete area of every county, was included in a regional zone and open to pheasant hunting.

1958: With a population of 11,100,000 pheasants this season ranked as the seventh largest population between 1919 and 2018.

Section 4

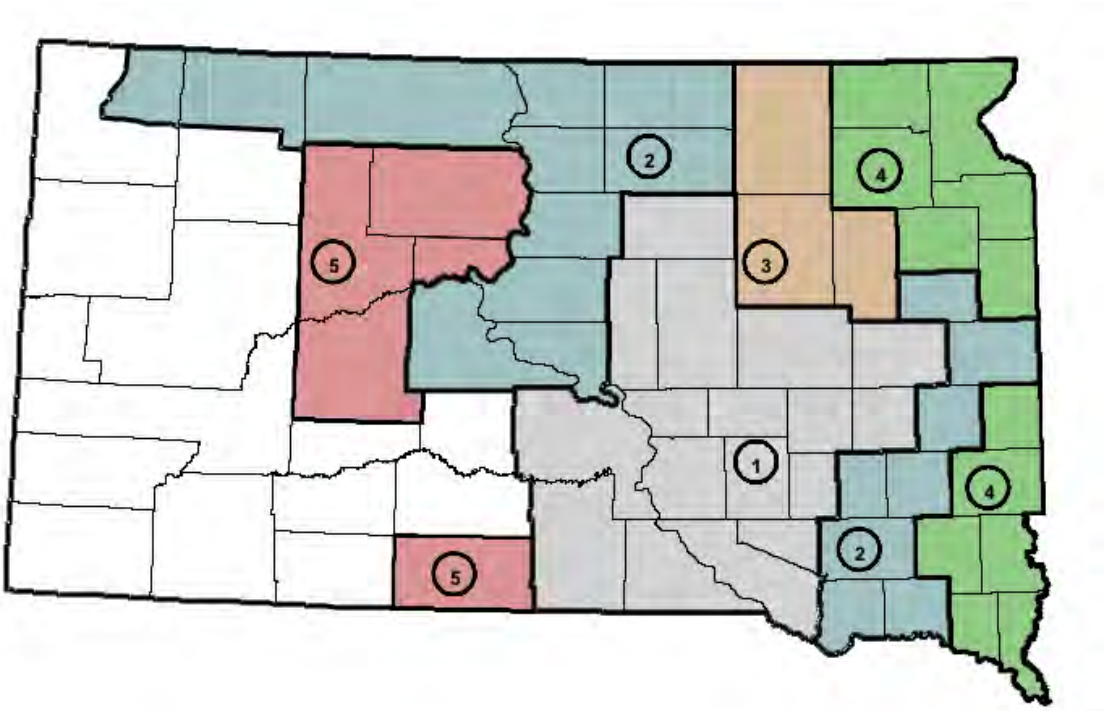
South Dakota Pheasant Seasons

1949-1958

Year	Season Length in Days	Opening Day	Preseason Population Estimate	Daily Limit	Possession Limit	Harvest Estimate
1949	45	Oct. 15	8,100,000	4	12	1,864,523
1950	13	Nov. 4	3,200,000	2	6	507,000
1951	25	Oct. 20	6,000,000	3	9	1,184,048
1952	30	Oct. 18	6,100,000	3	12	1,490,318
1953	30	Oct. 17	4,900,000	3	12	1,210,253
1954	30	Oct. 23	6,200,000	3	15	1,302,000
1955	40	Oct. 22	6,300,000	3	15	1,608,000
1956	35	Oct. 27	4,300,000	3	15	1,221,000
1957	37	Oct. 26	5,900,000	3	15	1,339,000
1958	51	Oct. 18	11,100,000	4	20	2,635,000

The Fourth Decade

The population for the year of 1949 was in the high-density range with a population of 8,100,000 pheasants. The beginning of the decade was characterized by a dramatic decrease of 4,900,000 in the population between 1949-1950 due to harsh winter weather and poor reproduction in the spring. At the end of this decade an equally dramatic increase of 5,200,000 in the population occurred between 1957-1958. The increase was due to the Federal Government's enactment of the Agricultural Act of 1956 creating the Soil Bank Program. The Soil Bank Program paid farmers to take land out of crop production for periods of 3, 5, or 10 years. These idle acres provided abundant habitat for pheasants. The population for the year of 1958 was back in the high-density range with a population of 11,100,000 pheasants.



1949 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 15 - November 28 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 15 - November 13 in designated counties, that portion of Perkins County north of Highway 8, and that portion of Harding County north of Highway 8 and east of Highway 85
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 15 - November 13 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

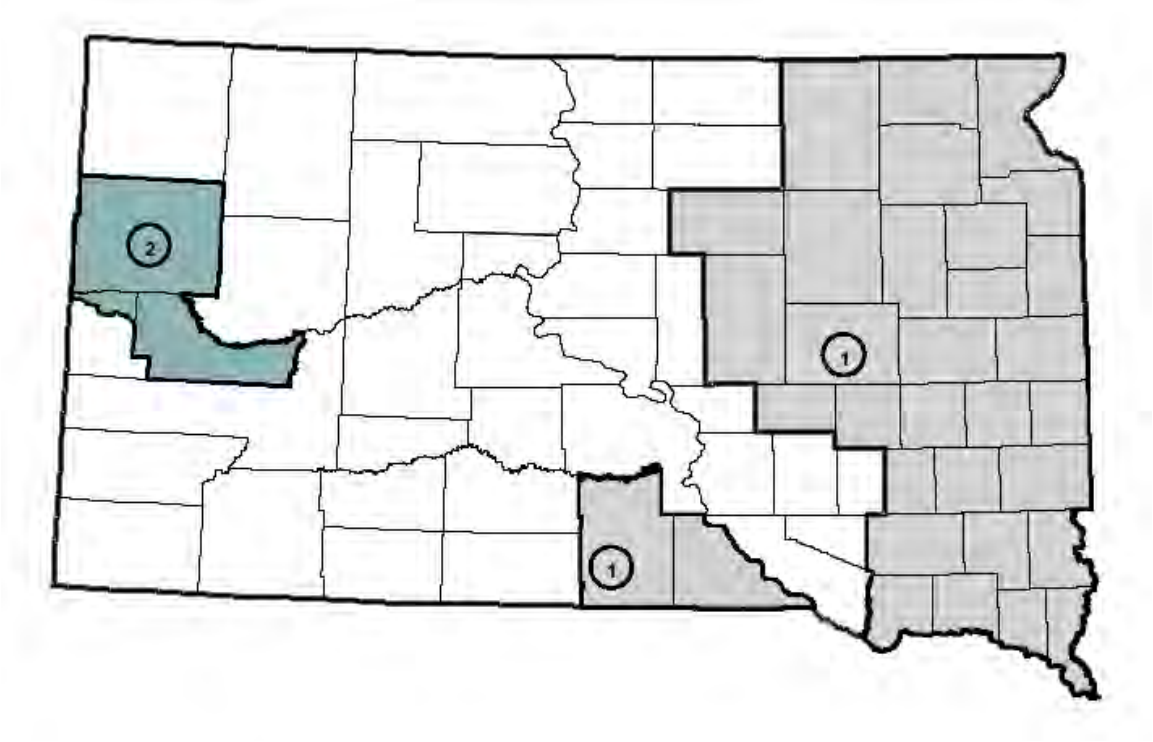
Dates: Zone 4, October 15 - November 3 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Dates: Zone 5, October 15-24 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, until dark

Season Length: 45 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,864,523



1950 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, November 4-13 in designated counties

[On October 17, 1950, the Game, Fish and Parks Commission passed a special order closing the pheasant season in Douglas County and removing it from Zone 1, effective November 4, 1950.]

Dates: Zone 2, November 25-27 in Butte County, that portion of Lawrence County north of the following boundary; beginning on Highway 14 at the South Dakota-Wyoming State line, thence along Highway 14 to its junction with Highway 14A, thence along Highway 14A to its junction with Highway 24, thence along Highway 24 to the Lawrence-Meade County line, and that portion of Meade County south and west of the Belle Fourche River and west of the Cheyenne River

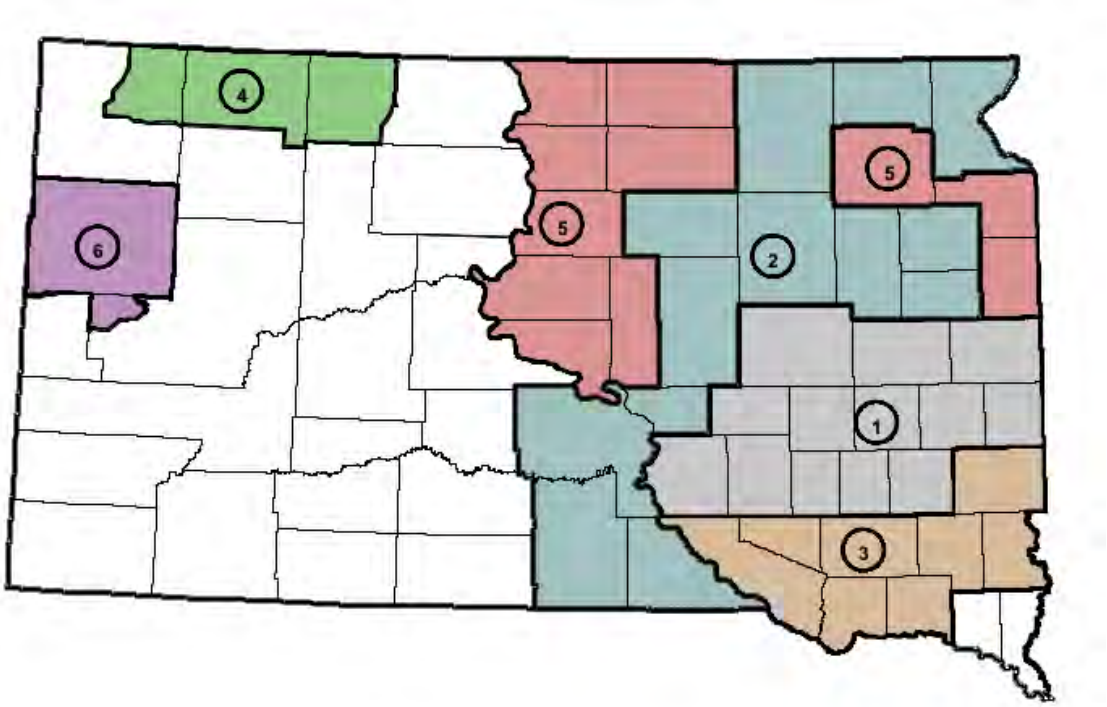
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, until dark

Daily Limit: 2 roosters

Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Season Length: 13 days

Harvest Estimate: 507,000



1951 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 20 - November 13 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 20 - November 8 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 9 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 20 - November 8 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Dates: Zone 4, October 20 - November 3 in that portion of Harding County east of Highway 85 and north of Highway 8, that portion of Perkins County north of Highway 8, and that portion of Corson County west of Highway 65
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 3 roosters

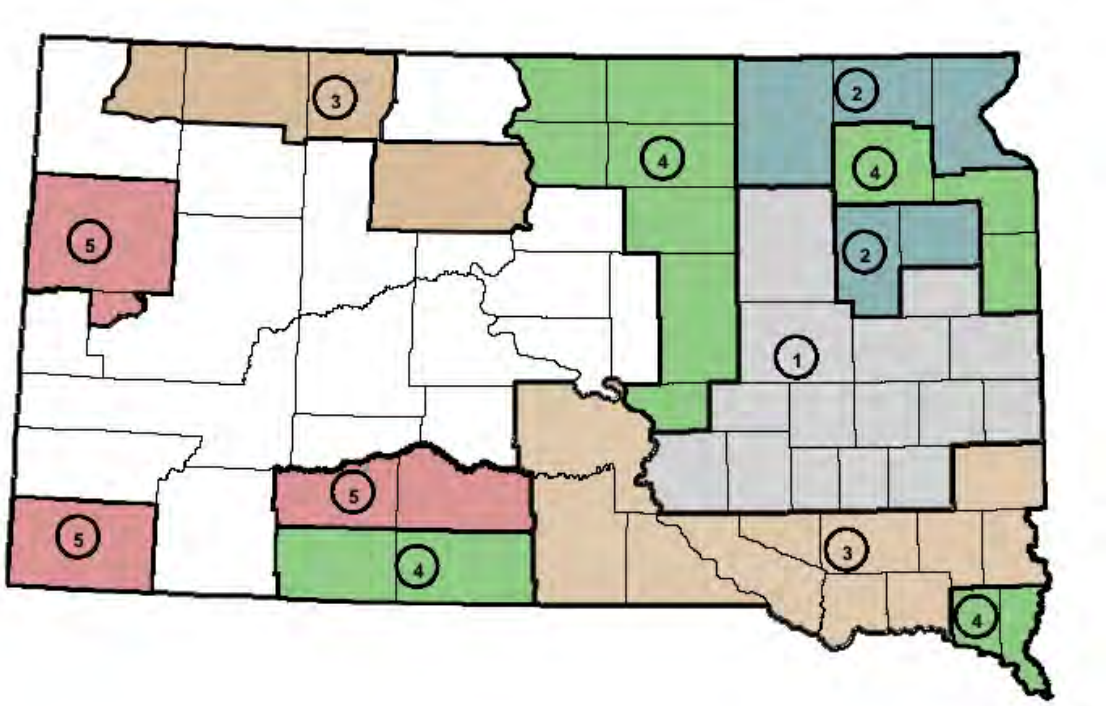
Dates: Zone 5, October 20-29 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 6 roosters

Dates: Zone 6, October 20-22 in Butte County and that portion of Meade County north of Highway 24 and west of the Belle Fourche River
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 3 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, until dark

Season Length: 25 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,184,048



1952 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 18 - November 16 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 18 - November 6 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 18 - November 1 in designated counties, that portion of Harding County east of Highway 85 and north of Highway 8, that portion of Perkins County north of Highway 8, and that portion of Corson County west of Highway 65
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

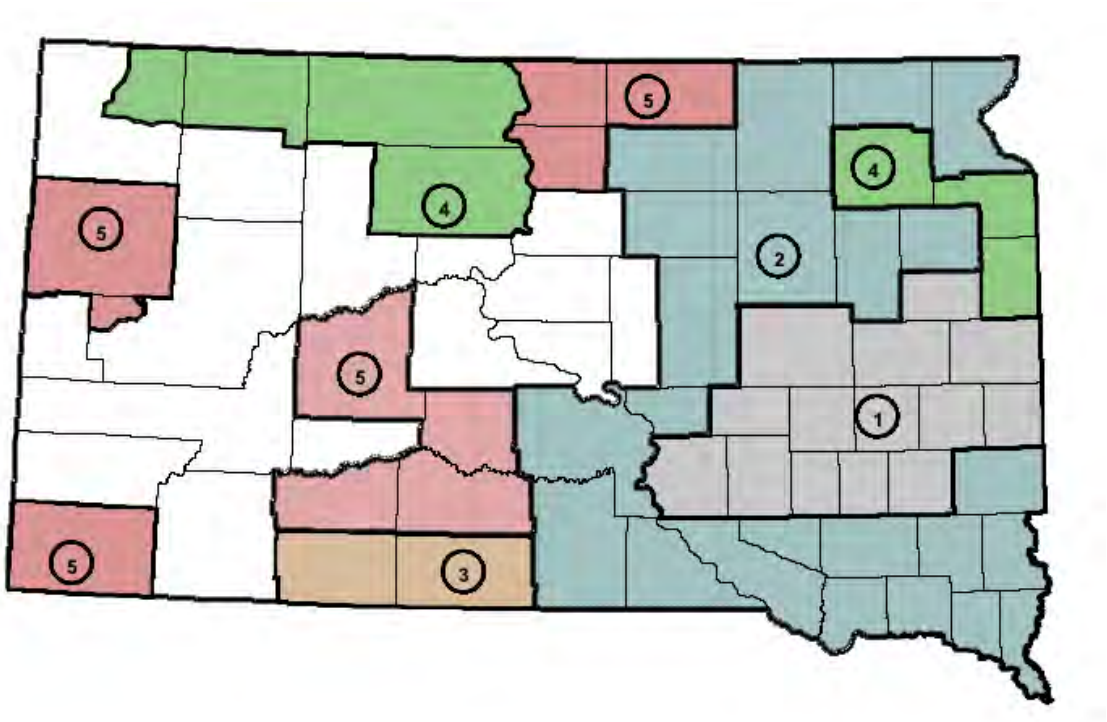
Dates: Zone 4, October 18 - November 1 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 8 roosters

Dates: Zone 5, October 18-22 in designated counties and that portion of Meade County north of Highway 24 and west of the Belle Fourche River
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 8 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, until dark

Season Length: 30 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,490,318



1953 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 17 - November 15 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 17-31 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 17-31 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 8 roosters

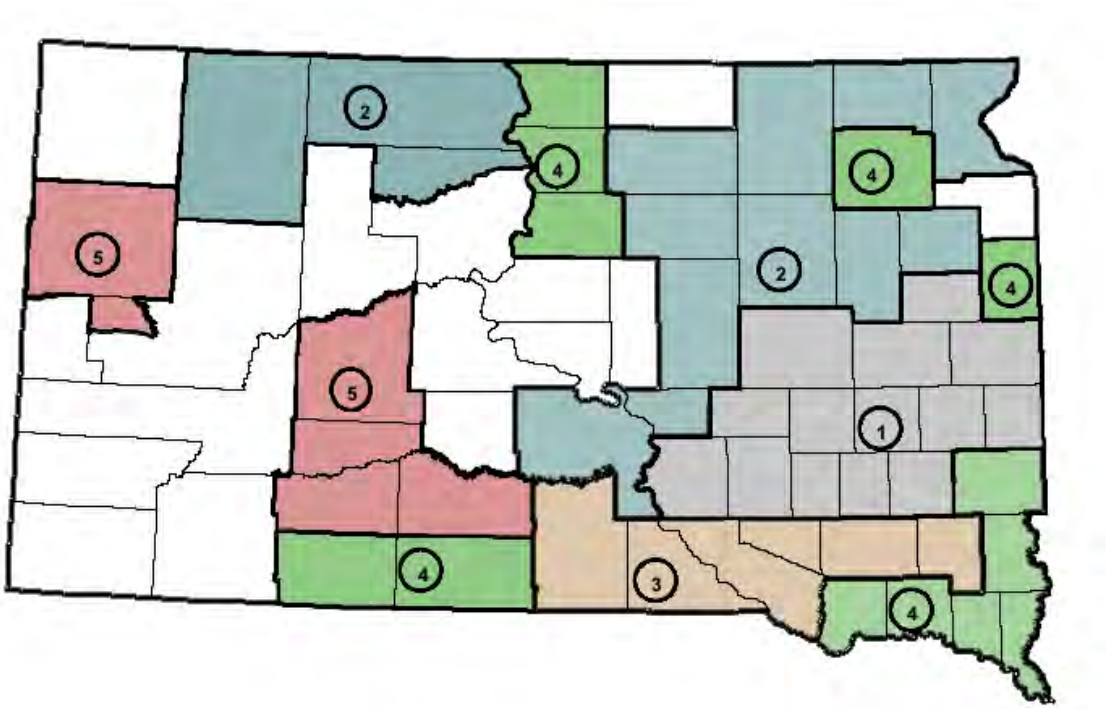
Dates: Zone 4, October 17-26 in designated counties, that portion of Harding County east of Highway 85 and north of Highway 8, and that portion of Perkins County north of Highway 8
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 8 roosters, except in the counties of Corson, Harding, and Perkins the Possession Limit was 4 roosters

Dates: Zone 5, October 17-21 in designated counties and that portion of Meade County north of Highway 24 and west of the Belle Fourche River
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 8 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, until dark

Season Length: 30 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,210,253



1954 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 23 - November 21 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 23 - November 11 in designated counties and that portion of Dewey County north of the Moreau River
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 23 - November 11 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

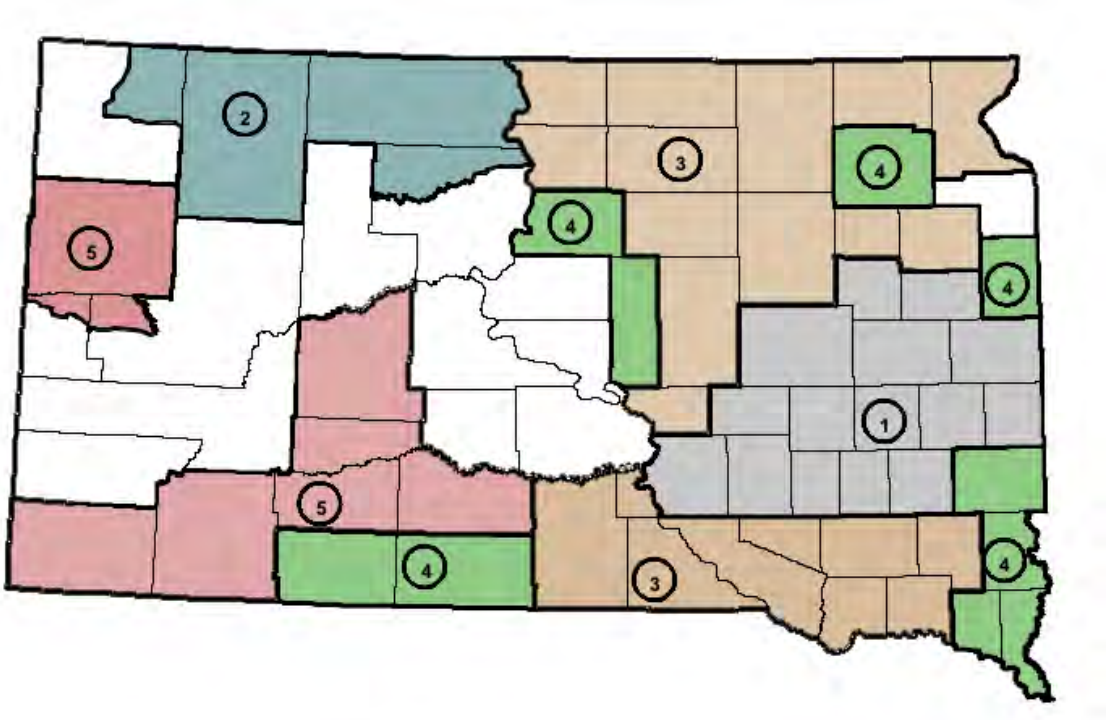
Dates: Zone 4, October 23 - November 1 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 5, October 23-27 in designated counties and that portion of Meade County north of Highway 24 from the west Meade County line to Fort Meade, north of the Fort Meade-Hereford road and west of the Belle Fourche River
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, until dark

Season Length: 30 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,302,000



1955 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 22 - November 30 in designated counties and Clark County south of Highway 212

Dates: Zone 2, October 22 - November 20 in designated counties, that portion of Dewey County north of the Moreau River, and that portion of Harding County east of Highway 85 and north of Highway 8

Dates: Zone 3, October 22 - November 13 in designated counties, that portion of Clark County north of Highway 212, and that portion of Lyman County south of the White River

Dates: Zone 4, October 22-30 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 5, October 22-24 in designated counties, that portion of Lawrence County north of Highway 14, and that portion of Meade County north of Highway 24 from the west Meade County line to Fort Meade and north of the Fort Meade-Hereford road and west of the Belle Fourche River

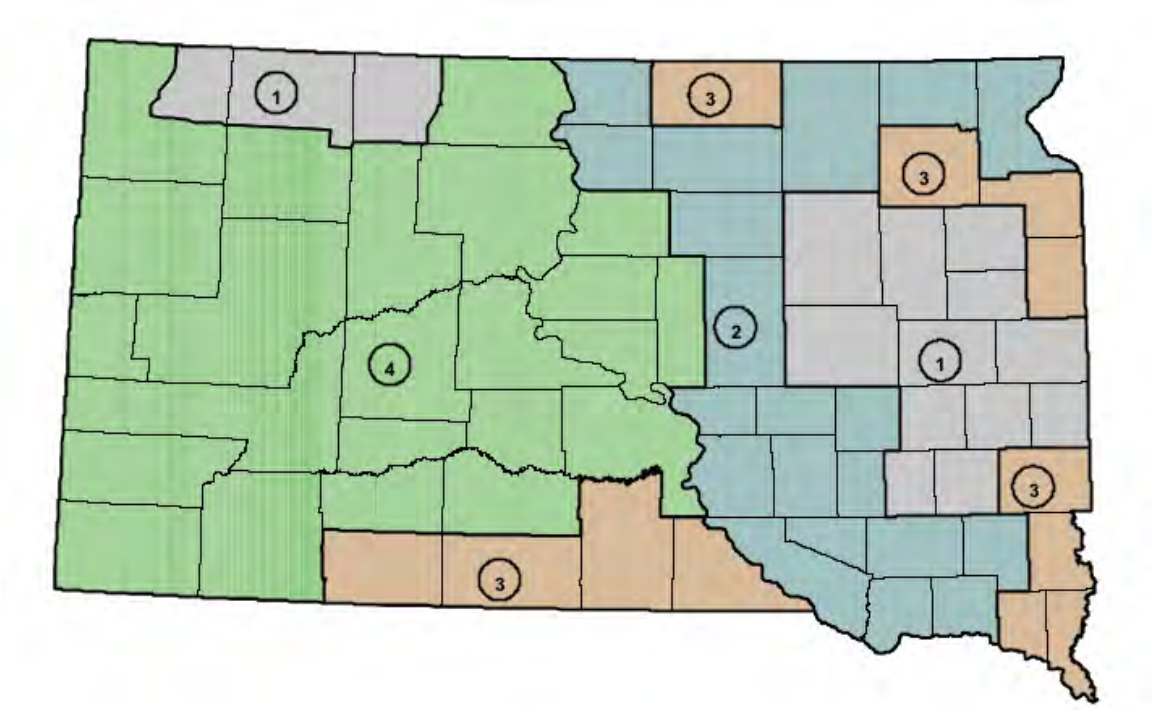
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, until dark

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 40 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,608,000



1956 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 27 - November 30 in designated counties, that portion of Harding County east of Highway 85 and north of Highway 8, that portion of Perkins County north of Highway 8, and that portion of Corson County west of Highway 65

Dates: Zone 2, October 27 - November 18 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, October 27 - November 5 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 4, October 27-29 in designated counties, that portion of Harding County west of Highway 85 and south of Highway 8, that portion of Perkins County south of Highway 8, and that portion of Corson County east of Highway 65

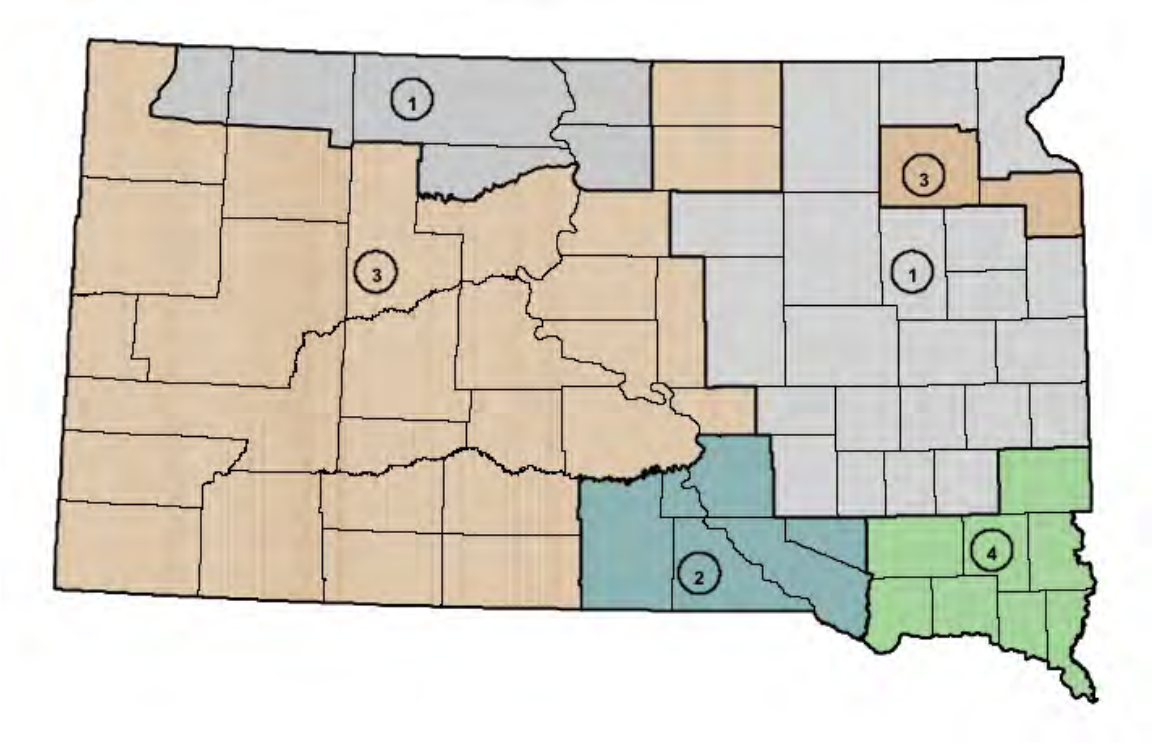
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, until 6 P.M. for counties in Central Time Zone and noon, Mountain Time, until 6 P.M. for counties in Mountain Time Zone

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 35 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,221,000



1957 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 26 - December 1 in designated counties, that portion of Perkins County north of Highway 8, that portion of Dewey County north of the Moreau River, and that portion of Harding County north of Highway 8 and east of Highway 85

Dates: Zone 2, October 26 - November 17 in designated counties and that portion of Lyman County south of the White River

Dates: Zone 3, October 26 - November 3 in designated counties, that portion of Lyman County north of the White River, that portion of Dewey County south of the Moreau River, that portion of Perkins County south of Highway 8, and that portion of Harding County south of Highway 8 and west of Highway 85

Dates: Zone 4, October 26-28 in designated counties

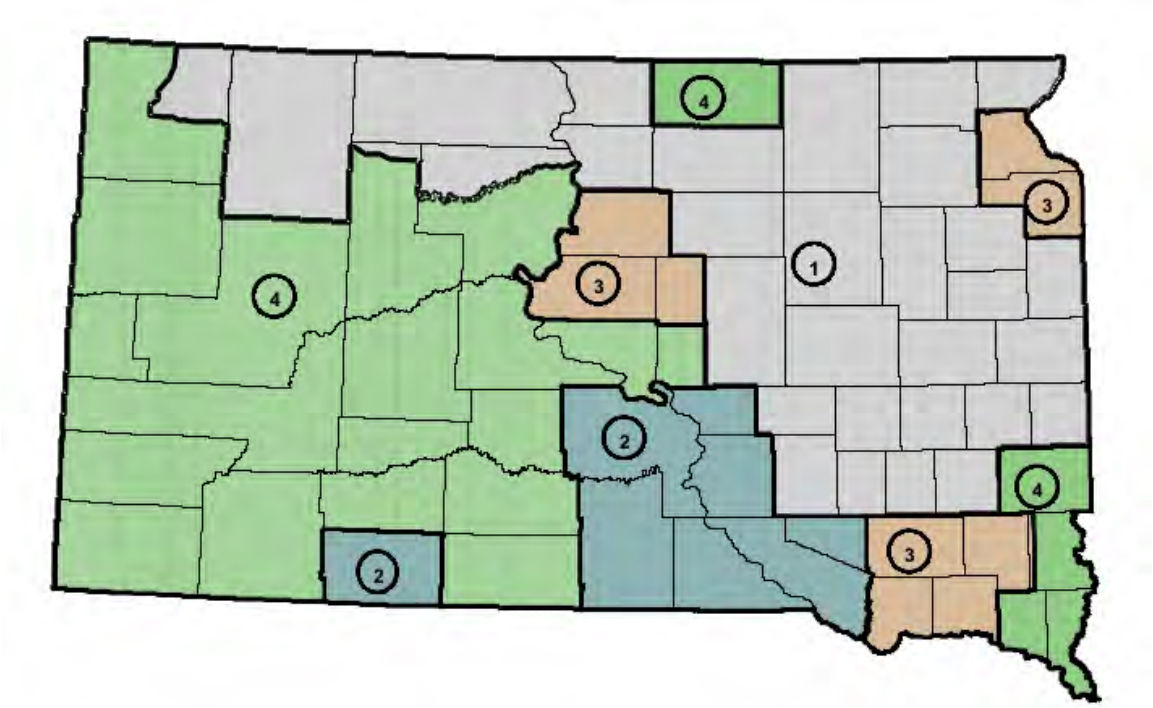
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, until 6 P.M.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 37 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,339,000



1958 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 18 - December 7 in designated counties, that portion of Dewey County north of the Moreau River, that portion of Harding County east of Highway 85 and north of Highway 8, that portion of Roberts County north of Highway 10, and that portion of Ziebach County north of Highway 8

Dates: Zone 2, October 18 - November 23 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, October 18 - November 9 in designated counties, that portion of Hyde County north of Highway 14, that portion of Lincoln County west of Highway 17, and that portion of Roberts County south of Highway 10

Dates: Zone 4, October 18-26 in designated counties, that portion of Dewey County south of the Moreau River, that portion of Harding County west of Highway 85 and south of Highway 8, that portion of Hyde County south of Highway 14, that portion of Lincoln County east of Highway 17, and that portion of Ziebach County south of Highway 8

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset

Daily Limit: 4 roosters

Possession Limit: 20 roosters

Season Length: 51 days

Harvest Estimate: 2,635,000

Introduction to Section Five

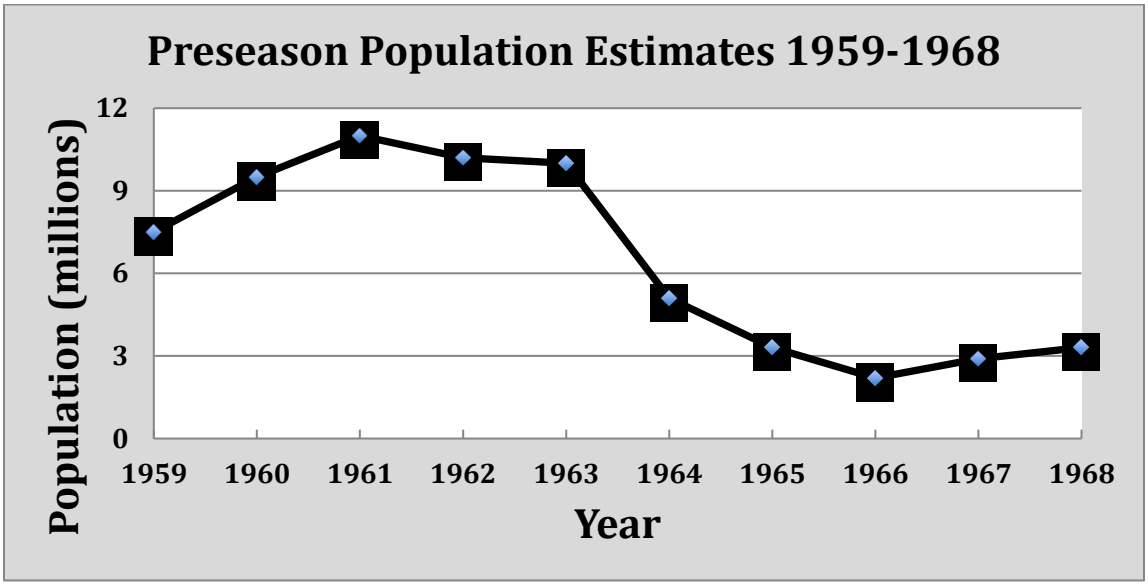


Chart 5-1. The population of the fifth decade was divided with the first five years at an elevated level and the last five years at a much lower level. Along with 1958, the years of 1961 through 1963 made up the third peak population era. The population in 1961 was 11,000,000; 1962-10,200,000; and 1963-10,000,000.

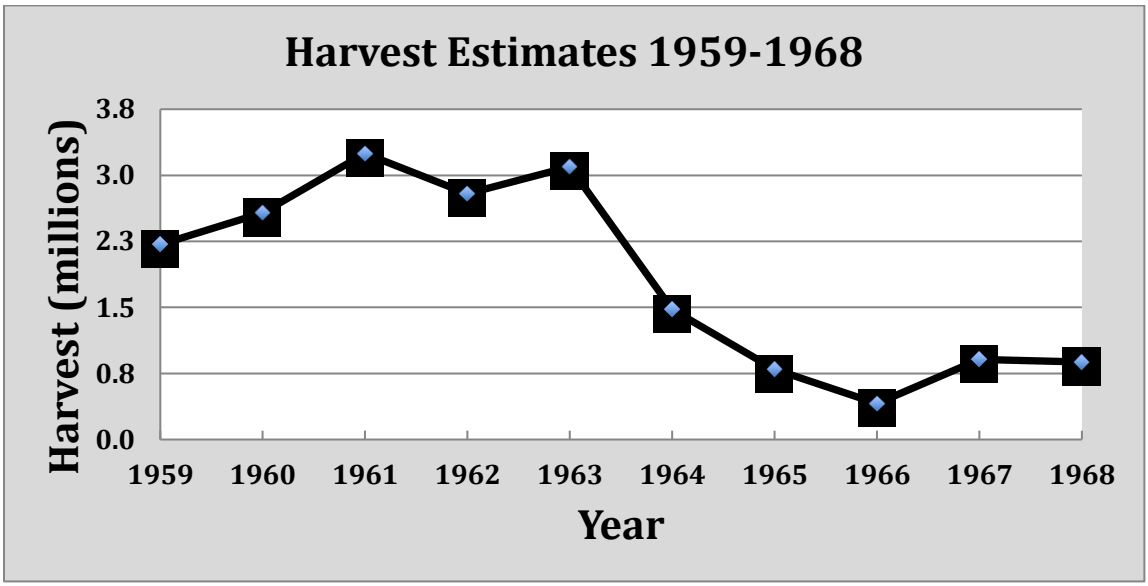


Chart 5-2. The harvest for the fifth decade was 18,384,750 pheasants and ranked second of the ten decades. The best yearly harvest of the decade was 3,247,000 in 1961.

Decade Events

1959: This season had eight regional zones covering the entire state. The season length of the regional zones ranged from 58 days to nine days. The statewide possession limit was 25 roosters.

1961 and 1963: Each of these seasons had harvests exceeding three million rooster pheasants. Eighty-two of South Dakota's 100 pheasant hunting seasons were rooster-only hunting. The seasons of 1961 and 1963 rank first and second in harvest for the rooster-only hunting seasons.

1964: This season was amended because of an error in the printed regulations presented to the public.

1967: A proposed holiday season between Christmas and New Years was challenged in court and blocked by a Circuit Judge.

Section 5

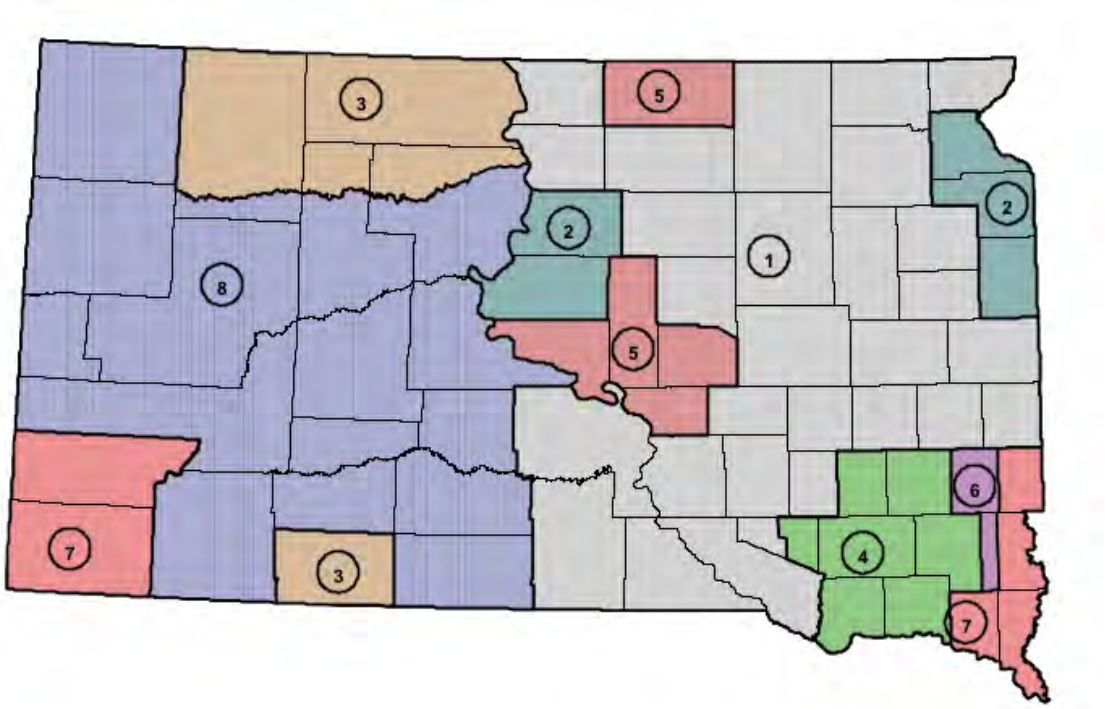
South Dakota Pheasant Seasons

1959-1968

Year	Season Length in Days	Opening Day	Preseason Population Estimate	Daily Limit	Possession Limit	Harvest Estimate
1959	58	Oct. 17	7,500,000	5	25	2,212,000
1960	42	Oct. 22	9,500,000	4	16	2,572,000
1961	58	Oct. 21	11,000,000	4	25	3,247,000
1962	61	Oct. 20	10,200,000	4	20	2,790,300
1963	74	Oct. 19	10,000,000	4	24	3,095,000
1964	60	Oct. 17	5,100,000	3	15	1,473,700
1965	44	Oct. 16	3,300,000	3	15	796,850
1966	16	Oct. 15	2,200,000	2	10	408,700
1967	37	Oct. 21	2,900,000	3	15	908,300
1968	37	Oct. 19	3,300,000	3	15	880,900

The Fifth Decade

The population for the years of 1959-1963 was in the high-density range with a population of 7,000,000 or more pheasants each year. This high-density population resulted from the continued benefits of the Soil Bank Program. Between the years of 1963-1964 the population suffered a tremendous decline of 4,900,000, due to drought and emergency harvesting of vegetation from the idle Soil Bank acres. Weather continued to affect the population. The winter of 1964-1965 had deep snow, the spring of 1965 had cold temperatures, and a severe blizzard hit eastern South Dakota in 1966. A low-density population of less than 4,000,000 pheasants per year characterized the remainder of the decade. The tradition of opening the pheasant season on the third Saturday of October began in 1961.



1959 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 17 - December 13 in designated counties, that portion of Douglas County west of Highway 281, that portion of Roberts County north of Highway 10, and that portion of Hand County north of Highway 14
Daily Limit: 5 roosters—Possession Limit: 25 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 17 - November 22 in designated counties and that portion of Roberts County south of Highway 10
Daily Limit: 5 roosters—Possession Limit: 25 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 17 - December 13 in designated counties, those portions of Dewey and Ziebach counties north of the Moreau River, and that portion of Perkins County north of the Moreau River and its north fork
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 25 roosters

Dates: Zone 4, October 17 - November 30 in designated counties and that portion of Douglas County east of Highway 281
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 25 roosters

Dates: Zone 5, October 17 - November 22 in designated counties and that portion of Hand County south of Highway 14
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 25 roosters

Dates: Zone 6, October 17 - November 15 in those portions of Lincoln and Minnehaha Counties west of Highway 77
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 25 roosters

Dates: Zone 7, October 17-31 in designated counties and those portions of Lincoln and Minnehaha counties east of Highway 77
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 25 roosters

Dates: Zone 8, October 17-25 in designated counties, those portions of Dewey and Ziebach counties south of the Moreau River, and that portion of Perkins County south of the Moreau River and its north fork
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 25 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset

Season Length: 58 days

Harvest Estimate: 2,212,000

Financial Side of South Dakota Pheasant Hunting

The following information indicates the influence pheasant hunting has had on the economy of South Dakota over the past century. The two articles printed below state the fact that pheasant hunting has resulted in a multi-million dollar industry for the state, past and present. The Soil Bank Era of the late 1950s and 1960s resulted in a boom in the economy with a large influx of nonresident hunters. The number of nonresident hunters for the six years spanning 1958 through 1963 totaled 285,877 and averaged 47,646 per year. The season of 1959 was near the average with 44,927 nonresident hunters.

$20,000 Investment Started Pheasants in South Dakota

"Hunting parties report putting as many as 3,000 pheasant in the air during the late season when the birds tend to flock together.

"South Dakota's bird bonanza, which is worth, according to one enthusiastic estimate, a cool $20,000,000 or more annually, mushroomed from an original $20,000 expenditure by the state, according to Elmer Peterson, thoughtful director of the State Department of Game, Fish, and Parks.

"God and the farmers did the rest to help the South Dakota pheasant multiply. The farmers set a nice table for the pheasants with the corn, wheat, milo, and other grains they grow. Nature caters to the feathered rainbow with wild sunflower and pigeon grass. Prairie grasses and other seed-producing wild plants grow rankly to the edges of cultivated fields." [*Lead Daily Call*, September 18, 1946, page 2.]

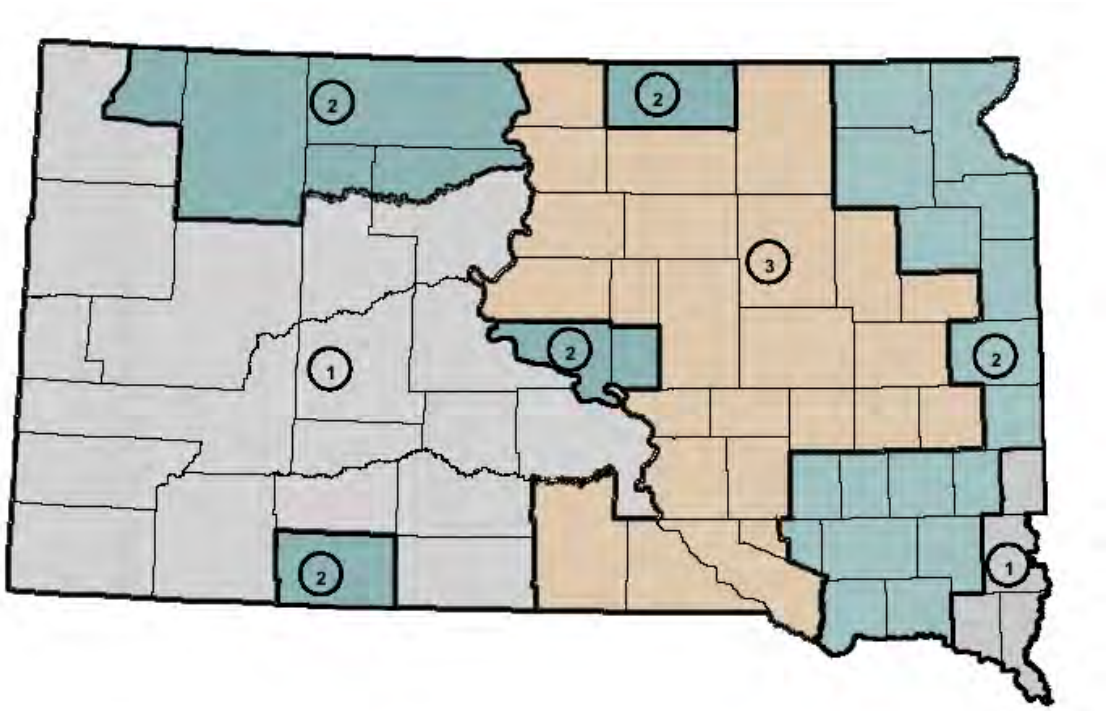
Pheasant Economics

According to a 2004 survey of resident and non-resident hunters, hunters reported that "time spent with friends and family, and the overall outdoor experience," were the top reasons why they enjoyed pheasant hunting in South Dakota. Whatever their reasons, the activities and expenditures associated with pheasant hunting have a significant impact on local economies across the state.

For motels, restaurants, convenience stores and other businesses, the annual pheasant season has a profound impact on local communities. Using survey statistics from a 2017 study prepared for the SDGFP, the direct spending of pheasant hunters in South Dakota for the 2015 season was $287.3 million. The survey reported the number of jobs in South Dakota related to pheasant hunting was 4,130.

Resident license sales have remained relatively steady, while non-resident license sales have increased significantly in recent years. The revenue generated through license sales provides income for SDGFP to develop and manage wildlife habit and to provide public access opportunities for hunters. The relationship between pheasant populations and license sales is obvious; therefore, high pheasant populations generally indicate strong license sales, thus a budget that allows SDGFP to invest in habitat and public access for pheasant hunters and to meet the goals of other conservation efforts.

The annual Governor's Pheasant Hunt markets the quality of life and economic opportunities available in South Dakota to business leaders from across the nation. Habitat development for pheasants has other indirect economic benefits, such as expanded opportunities for bird watching and the reduction in flooding and soil erosion. In addition, revenue generated from the sales of small game licenses is used to work with private landowners in developing and managing wildlife habitat and to provide and improve upon lands available for public hunting opportunities. [This article was adapted from page 25 of the following document: SDGFP. 2016. *Ring-necked Pheasant Management Plan for SD 2016-2020*. Wildlife Division Report 5-02. SDGFP, Pierre.]



1960 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 22-31 in designated counties, that portion of Minnehaha County east of Highway 77, that portion of Dewey County south of the Moreau River, that portion of Ziebach County south of the Moreau River, and that portion of Harding County west of Highway 85 and south of Highway 8
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

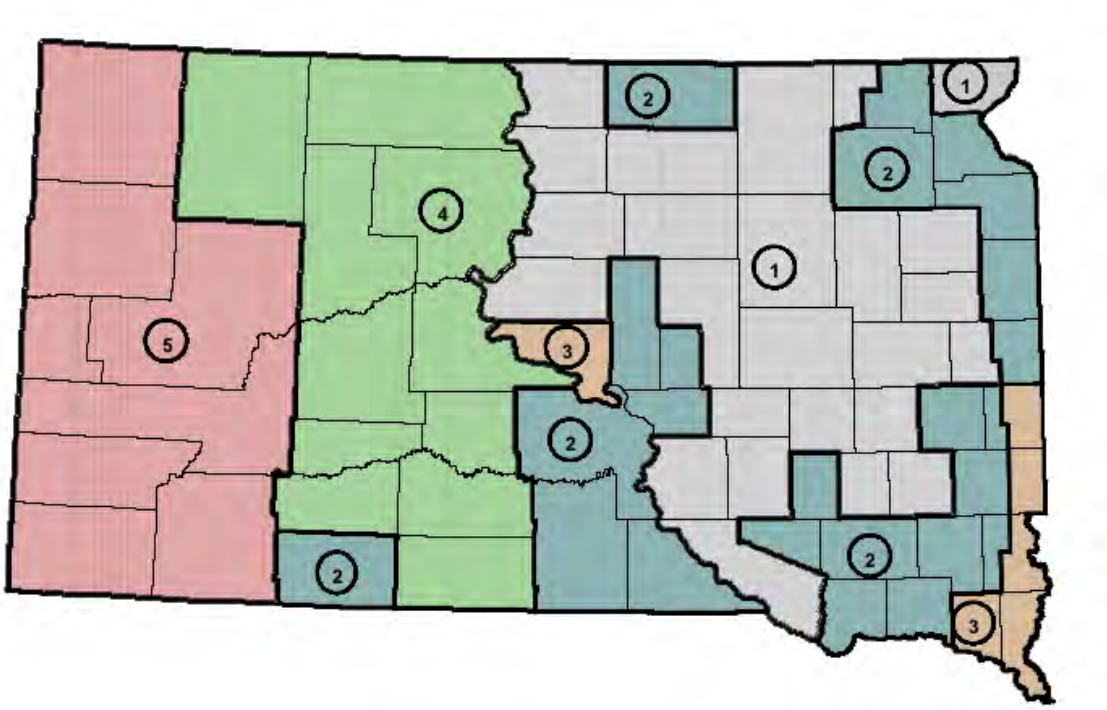
Dates: Zone 2, October 22 - November 20 in designated counties, that portion of Minnehaha County west of Highway 77, that portion of Hyde county south of Highway 14, that portion of Dewey County north of the Moreau River, that portion of Ziebach County north of the Moreau River, that portion of Harding County east of Highway 85 and north of Highway 8, and that portion of Douglas County east of Highway 281
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 12 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 22 - December 2 in designated counties, that portion of Hyde County north of Highway 14, and that portion of Douglas County west of Highway 281
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 16 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset; 10:00 A.M., Central Time, to sunset November 1 - December 2 in the counties of Campbell, Walworth, Potter, Faulk and Edmunds only

Season Length: 42 days

Harvest Estimate: 2,572,000



1961 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 21 - December 17 in designated counties, that portion of Roberts County north of Highway 10, that portion of Brookings County west of Highway 77, that portion of Marshall County west of Highway 25, and that portion of Hand County north of Highway 14 and east of Highway 45
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 20 roosters. From November 1 - December 17 the Daily Limit increased to 5 roosters and Possession Limit to 25 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 21 - December 3 in designated counties, that portion of Roberts County south of Highway 10, that portion of Brookings County east of Highway 77, those portions of Minnehaha, Moody, and Lincoln counties west of Highway 77, that portion of Hand County south of Highway 14 and west of Highway 45, and that portion of Marshall County east of Highway 25
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 20 roosters. From November 1 - December 3 the Daily Limit increased to 5 roosters and Possession Limit to 25 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 21 - November 12 in designated counties and those portions of Minnehaha, Moody, and Lincoln counties east of Highway 77
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 20 roosters. From November 1-12 the Daily Limit increased to 5 roosters and Possession Limit to 25 roosters

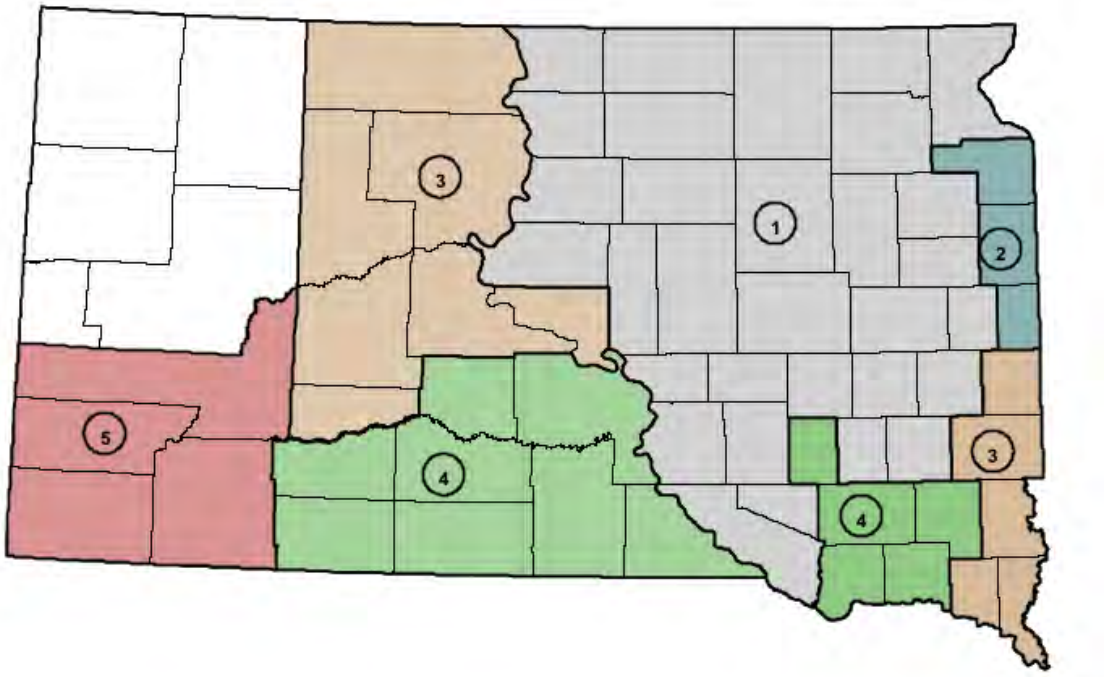
Dates: Zone 4, October 21 - November 19 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Dates: Zone 5, October 21-22 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 4 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset; 10: A.M., Central Time, to sunset beginning November 1 to the close of the season in Zones 1, 2, and 3 only

Season Length: 58 days

Harvest Estimate: 3,247,000



1962 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 20 - December 19 in designated counties and that portion of Brookings County west of Highway 77
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 20 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 20 - November 18 in designated counties and that portion of Brookings County east of Highway 77
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 20 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 20 - November 18 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

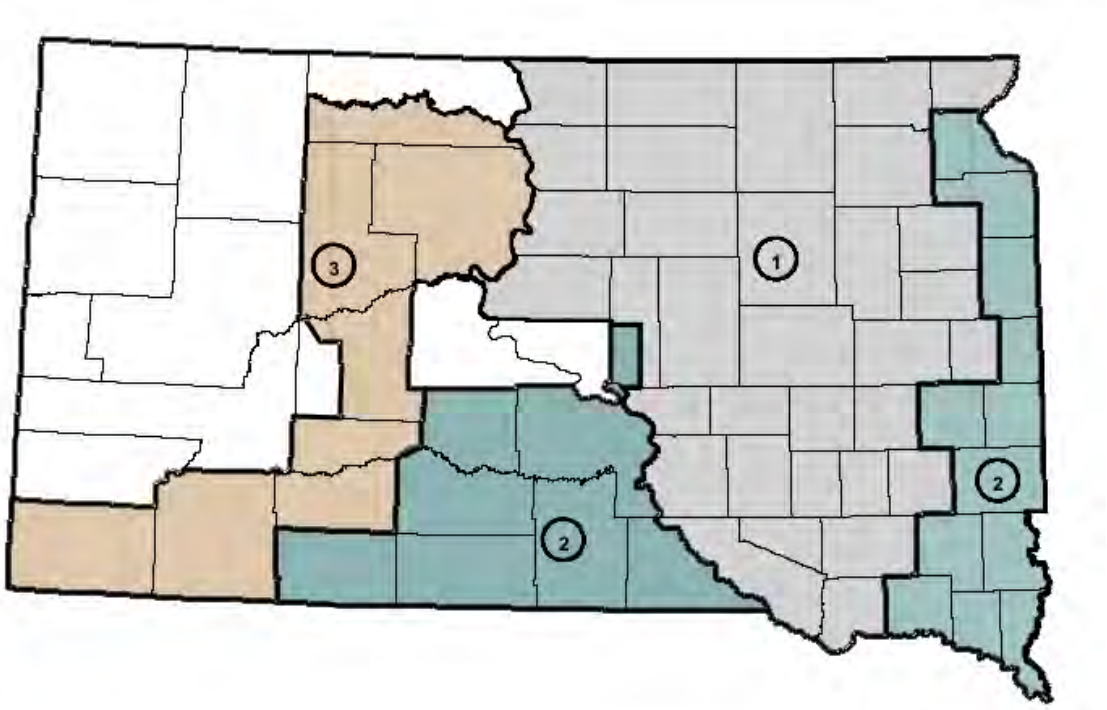
Dates: Zone 4, October 20 - December 2 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 5, October 20-24 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 4 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 20-31; 10:00 A.M., Central Time, to sunset November 1-30; 9:00 A. M. to sunset December 1-19

Season Length: 61 days

Harvest Estimate: 2,790,300



1963 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 19 - December 31 in designated counties, that portion of Hyde County east of Highway 47 and north of Highway 14, that portion of Roberts County north of Highway 10, and that portion of Brookings County west of Highway 77
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 20 roosters. From November 6 - December 31 the Possession Limit was increased to 24 roosters

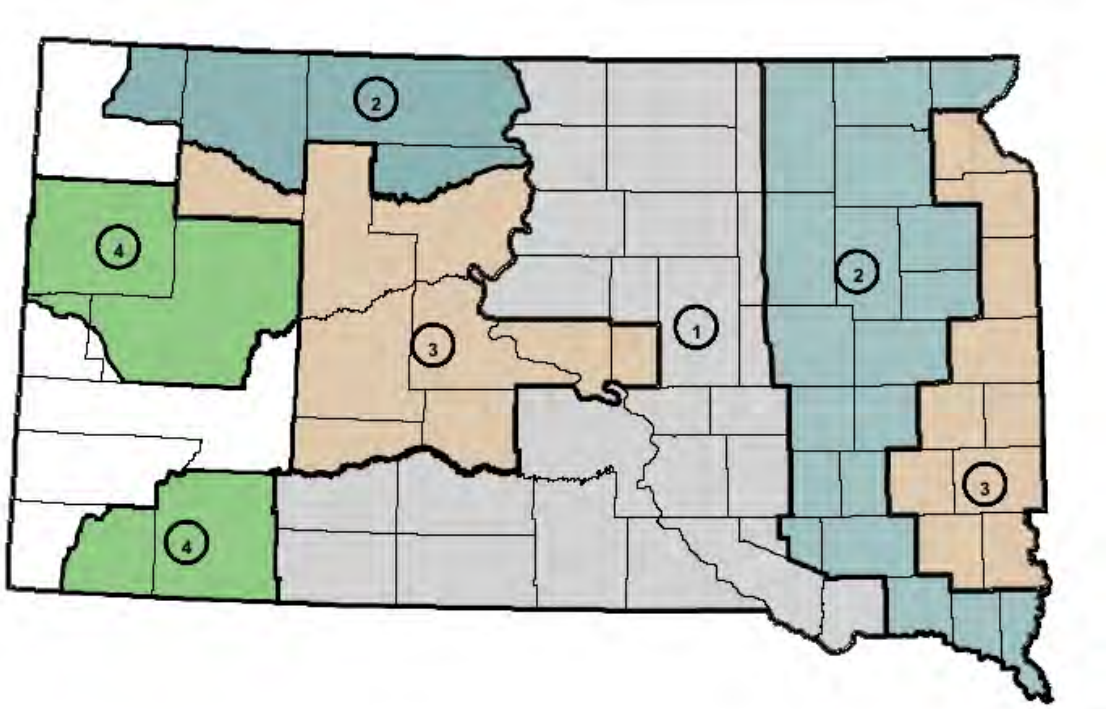
Dates: Zone 2, October 19 - November 30 in designated counties, that portion of Hyde County west of Highway 47 and south of Highway 14, that portion of Roberts County south of Highway 10, and that portion of Brookings County east of Highway 77
Daily Limit: 4 roosters—Possession Limit: 20 roosters. From November 6-30 the Possession Limit was increased to 24 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 19-27 in designated counties, that portion of Haakon County east of Highway 73, and that portion of Corson County south of the Grand River
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 19-31; 9 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season

Season Length: 74 days

Harvest Estimate: 3,095,000



1964 Seasons, as amended on September 21, 1964

Dates: Zone 1, October 17 - December 15 in designated counties, those portions of Douglas, Beadle, Spink, and Brown counties west of Highway 281, and that portion of Hyde County north of Highway 14
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 17 - November 30 in designated counties, those portions of Douglas, Beadle, Spink, and Brown counties east of Highway 281, that portion of Roberts County north of Highway 10, that portion of Dewey County north of the Moreau River, that portion of Perkins County north of the Moreau River to its junction with Rabbit Creek and north of Rabbit Creek to its junction with the Harding County line, and that portion of Harding County north of Highway 8 and east of Highway 85
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 17 - November 1 in designated counties, that portion of Roberts County south of Highway 10, that portion of Perkins County south of the Moreau River from the Ziebach County line to its junction with Rabbit Creek and south of Rabbit Creek to the Harding County line, that portion of Dewey County south of the Moreau River, and that portion of Hyde County south of Highway 14
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 4, October 17-21 in designated counties, those portions of Meade and Lawrence Counties north and east of Highway 14, and that portion of Fall River County south and east of a line commencing at the junction of Highway 79 and the Custer County line to Maverick Junction, west along Highway 18 and south along Highway 71 to the Nebraska state line
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset

Season Length: 60 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,473,700

Errors in the Printed 1964 Seasons Map Resulted in an Emergency Order Amendment

The 1964 pheasant seasons was amended at the September 21, 1964, Game, Fish and Parks Commission meeting. A change became necessary because the printed pheasant seasons map released to the public for 1964 did not match the zone numbering regulations that the Commissioners had adopted on August 10, 1964. Therefore, an Emergency Order was passed by the Commissioners at the September meeting to make the numbers on the printed map conform with regulations. The Emergency Order simply made the following changes.

No change was necessary in Zone 1.
Zone 2 in August was changed to Zone 4 in September.
Zone 3 in August was changed to Zone 2 in September.
Zone 4 in August was changed to Zone 3 in September.

GFP Commissioners Bewildered Over Unit's Pheasant Season Hike

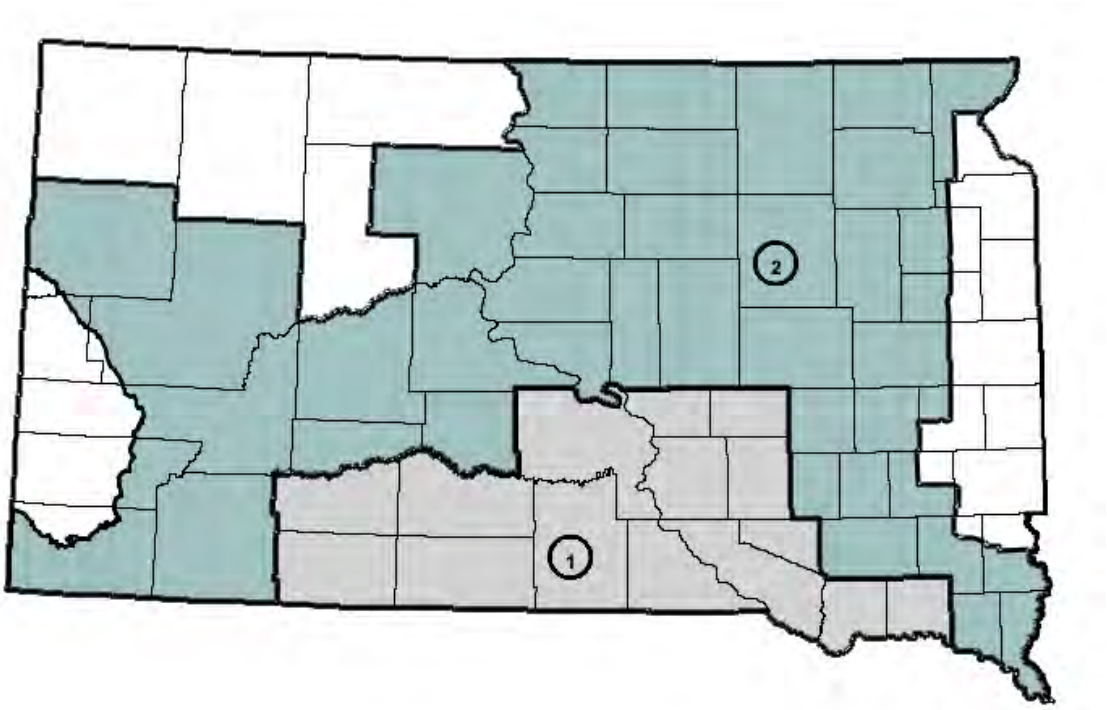
"PIERRE (AP) – The State Game, Fish and Parks commissioners Monday expressed considerable bewilderment on how the pheasant season length in one unit was hiked from 30 to 45 days, but they decided to keep the longer season.

"The 'working map' presented to the commission at its August meeting slated a 30-day season for a belt of east central counties and for some north central counties. However, the printed regulation indicated a 45-day season for those counties. 'I'd like to know how the change came about,' said commissioner Dwight Owen of Lemon. 'Personally, I voted for the season length as contained on the map. Commissioners Mel Jensen of Pierre and Odeen (Skee) Rasmussen of Belvidere also said they had voted for the pheasant season as shown on the map. 'Either I misunderstood or we all did,' Owen said.

"Commissioner Dell Dawson of Aberdeen also expressed dissatisfaction with the bag limits for this year saying: 'I'd like the commission to back up and take another look at the 60-day season and three-bird limit. We don't have that many birds and I'd rather be criticized for being on the conservative side than lose our pheasants. I truly believe we have less pheasants than we think we have,' he added.

"Chief Game Warden Virgil Johnson said, 'If we didn't agree on that 45-day season then I'm all for going back to the season lengths as shown on the map.' Gordon Charles, publicity director for the department, said the printed regulations have already been sent out nationally and any change would cause poor public relations and confusion among the hunters. Commission Chairman Frank Yaggie of Yankton added that there would be 'utter chaos' if the commission changed the regulation at this time.

"The only apparent explanation for the change in season length from the map to the regulations was that when the presentation was made, the change to a 45-day season was indicated orally and not put on the map. The commission decided not to change the regulations, except for a minor change in unit numbers." [*The Daily Plainsman* (Huron), September 22, 1964, pages 1-2.]



1965 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 16 - November 28 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

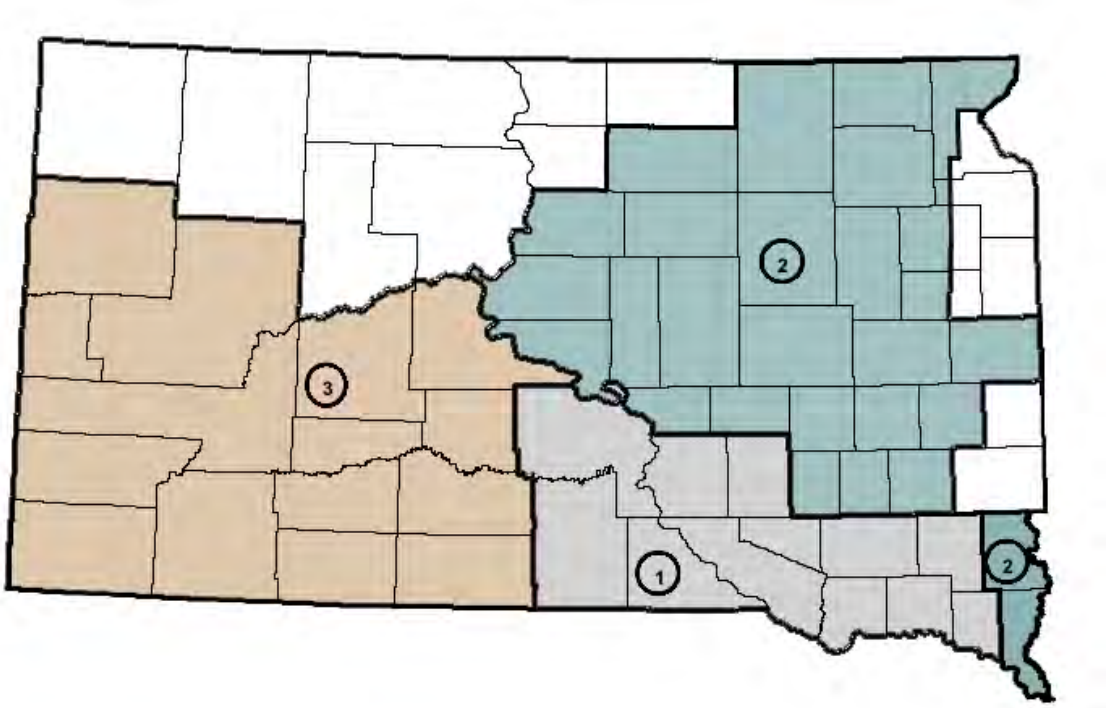
Dates: Zone 2, October 16-25 in designated counties, that portion of Roberts County north of Highway 10 and west of Highway 81, those portions of Grant, Codington and Hamlin counties west of Highway 81, that portion of Lake County west and north of Highway 81, that portion of Miner County west and north of Highway 81, that portion of McCook County west of Highway 81 and south of Highway 16, that portion of Minnehaha County south of Highway 16 and west of Highway 19, that portion of Turner County west of Highway 19 and south of Highway 44, that portion of Lincoln County south of Highway 44 to its junction with Highway 77, that portion of Lincoln County west of Highway 77 to its junction with Highway 18, that portion of Lincoln County south of Highway 18 to the Iowa State Line, and those portions of Butte, Lawrence, Meade, Pennington, Custer and Fall River counties outside of the area known as the Black Hills Fire Protection District
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

The Black Hills Fire Protection District consists of the area described by the following metes and bounds: Commencing at a point on the Wyoming-South Dakota state line at the junction of the Belle Fourche River and said state line; thence southeast along the Belle Fourche River to the City of Belle Fourche; thence southeast along the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad right-of-way through St. Onge, Whitewood, Sturgis, Tilford, Piedmont and Black Hawk to Rapid City; thence south along the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad right-of-way through Hermosa, Fairburn and Buffalo Gap to the Cheyenne River; thence west and northwest along the Cheyenne River to the Wyoming-South Dakota state line; thence north along said state line to the place of beginning.

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset

Season Length: 44 days

Harvest Estimate: 796,850



1966 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 15-30 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 2, October 15-19 in designated counties, those portions of Hamlin, Codington, and Grant counties west of Highway 81, and that portion of Roberts County west of Highway 81 and north of Highway 10

Dates: Zone 3, October 15-17 in designated counties

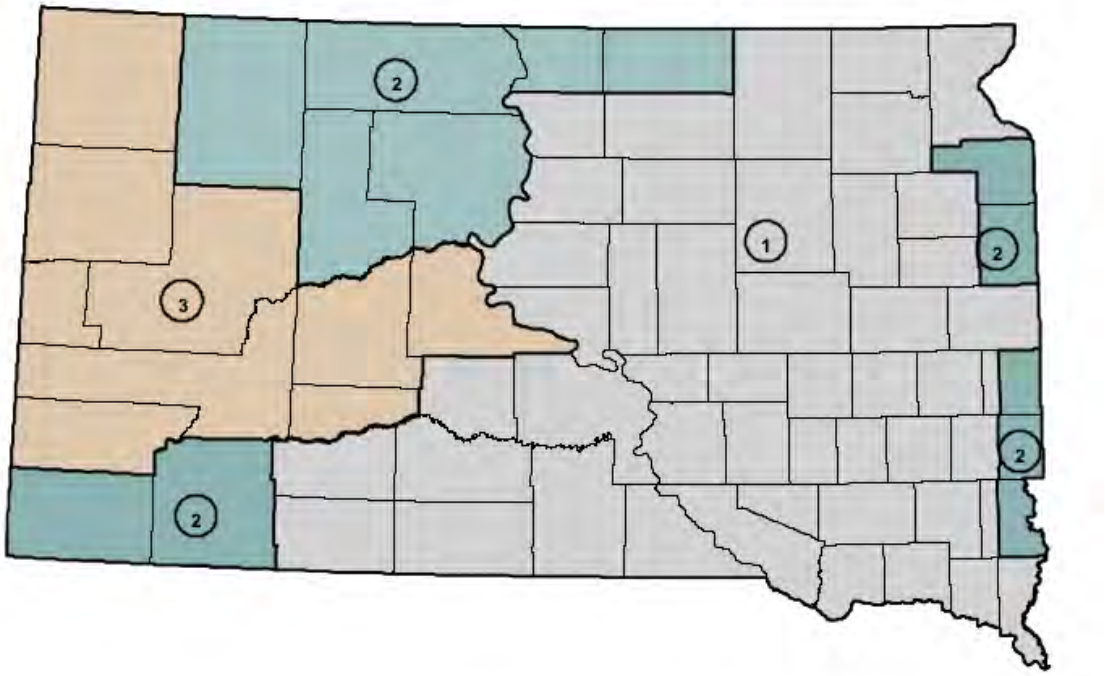
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset

Daily Limit: 2 roosters

Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Season Length: 16 days

Harvest Estimate: 408,700



1967 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 21 - November 26 in designated counties and those portions of Moody, Minnehaha, and Lincoln counties west of Interstate 29

Dates: Zone 2, October 21 - November 5 in designated counties and those portions of Moody, Minnehaha, and Lincoln counties east of Interstate 29

Dates: Zone 3, October 21-25 in designated counties

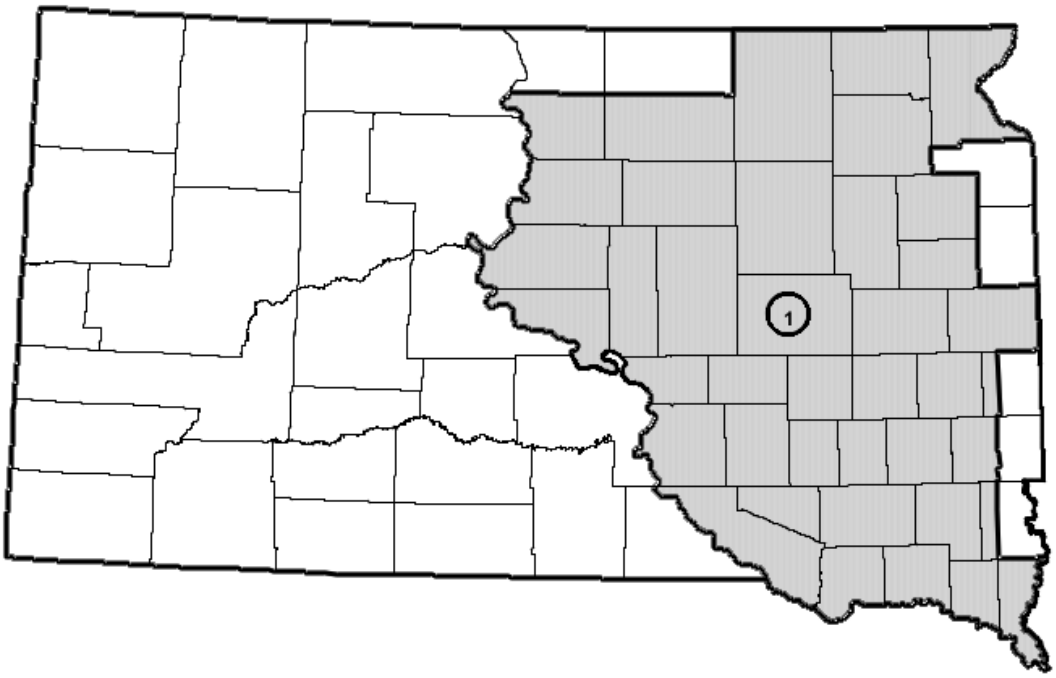
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 37 days

Harvest Estimate: 908,300



1967 Proposed Special Christmas Pheasant Season

Dates: Zone 1, December 26-31 in designated counties and those portions of Moody, Minnehaha, and Lincoln counties west of Interstate 29
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

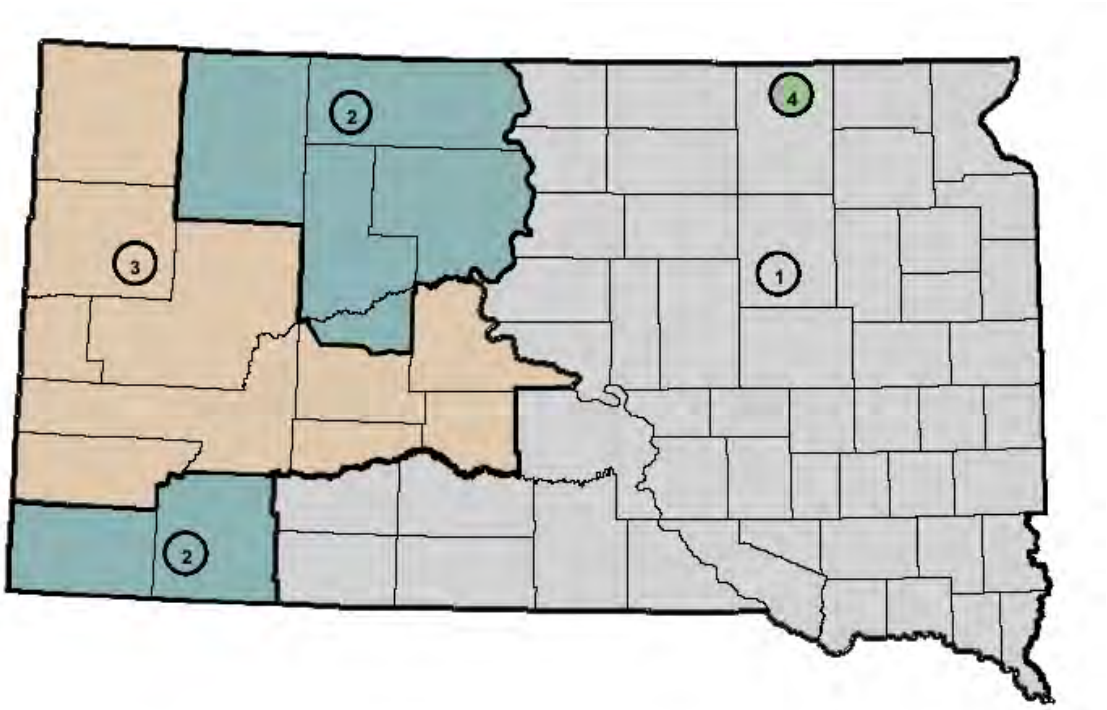
Judge Cancels Home-For-Holidays Pheasant Hunt

"WEBSTER (AP) – The special Christmas pheasant season was wiped out by Circuit Judge Sigrud Anderson's ruling the Game, Fish and Parks Commission exceeded its powers in calling the hunting period an emergency. … Judge Anderson's restraint was issued on request of a group of sportsmen from Aberdeen.

"The economic effect was deplored by game department spokesmen. An estimate was made by a department spokesman that Judge Anderson's ruling would cost the state $3 million dollars loss in revenue that would have derived from the hunting. Both the department and the Aberdeen sportsmen group which brought the action made use of the term 'irreparable damage,' but with opposite approaches. The sportsmen said the damage would occur to the pheasant population from hunting while the birds were in winter cover. The game department used the 'irreparable damage' claim in speaking of the revenue loss.

"The department had said the season was primarily for servicemen and collegians home for the holidays. The department had also said it had a finding from the game chief that the season would not hurt the bird population. Judge Anderson noted the season was granted under the emergency clause of the administrative procedures act. This act allows the season to be set without a hearing or a 20-day notice. The Brown Count Sportsmen's Club, which brought the action contended that there wasn't imminent peril – one of the requirements of the emergency clause. The sportsmen's club also contended that the Game, Fish and Parks Commission failed to state its reason in writing why the emergency existed.

"The circuit judge said he interpreted 'imminent peril' as 'something special' and added that this situation is 'not that special.' … 'The Court understands the problems of state agencies and sportsmen in dealing with a situation of this nature. I regret that the court has to say to servicemen that the season is not a properly promulgated season and they will not be able to hunt during the period,' Anderson said. He added that it 'is not part of the hearing to answer the question of whether or not the pheasants should be hunted.' He said the question the court had to answer is whether the 'resolution which sets this season complies with the South Dakota law.'" [*The Daily Plainsman* (Huron), December 24, 1964, pages 1 and 5.]



1968 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 19 - November 24 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 2, October 19 - November 3 in designated counties and that portion of Haakon County north of Highway 34

Dates: Zone 3, October 19-25 in designated counties and that portion of Haakon County south of Highway 34

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 9-15

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 37 day

Harvest Estimate: 880,900

PHEASANTS, HABITAT AND WEATHER

A lot of folks have their own "theories" about what makes the pheasant populations go up and down again. One guy will tell you it's the predators. Another might point at hunting. Some might suggest that the use of agricultural chemicals has something to do with it. These factors can have some effect on the pheasant population, but they certainly take a back seat to the impacts of habitat and weather.

The first thing you need if you are going to have a pheasant population is a place for them to live—that is, a place to nest, a place to roost, a place to loaf, adequate food supplies, and shelter from harsh weather. These combined ingredients are known as pheasant habitat. But remember, a chain is only as good as its weakest link. Each ingredient is a link in our "habitat chain." For example, if you have ample loafing, roosting and winter cover, and food is available, but have almost no nesting cover, the result will still be few pheasants.

The point is, if you don't have habitat that will support good numbers of pheasants, all those "theories" don't matter much. You have to have a pheasant population before you can damage it or help it to grow.

This business about habitat is a lot more than biological theory. As you can see from the graph*, during the Soil Bank years and now during the peak of the Conservation Reserve Program, good habitat conditions are followed by increases in the pheasant population and pheasant harvest.

South Dakotans are always talking about the weather. And most of us are all fairly well convinced that there is very little we can do about it. When heavy hails come in the spring, we lose pheasants. Drought reduces the value of various cover components and often exposes chicks to extreme temperatures when moisture is scarce, and we lose pheasants. Flooding can wipe out a local pheasant population. But the single most devastating weather-related factor of concern to pheasants is—this should come as no surprise—that South Dakota blizzard.

When temperatures drop below zero and stay there for a couple of weeks accompanied by deep snow, we can lose up to 90% of the pheasants in that area. Pheasants are not originally from this part of the world, and they are not very well adapted to the South Dakota blizzard. Native birds like the sharp-tailed grouse fare much better. When a real blizzard occurs, a lot of pheasants die, and we can't do much about it. We can plant dense shelterbelts and protect heavy wetland cover like cattails to help, but a lot of pheasants will still die. This "blizzard effect" is again made obvious by our graph.

Someday we may discover another reason that causes pheasant populations to go up and down. But until that unlikely day, let's stick with what we do know. Pheasants need a place to live and breed and raise their broods, and pheasants need heavy cover to protect them from winter storms.

SD 1992 Hunting Handbook [*The original graph in this article was replaced with an updated version.]

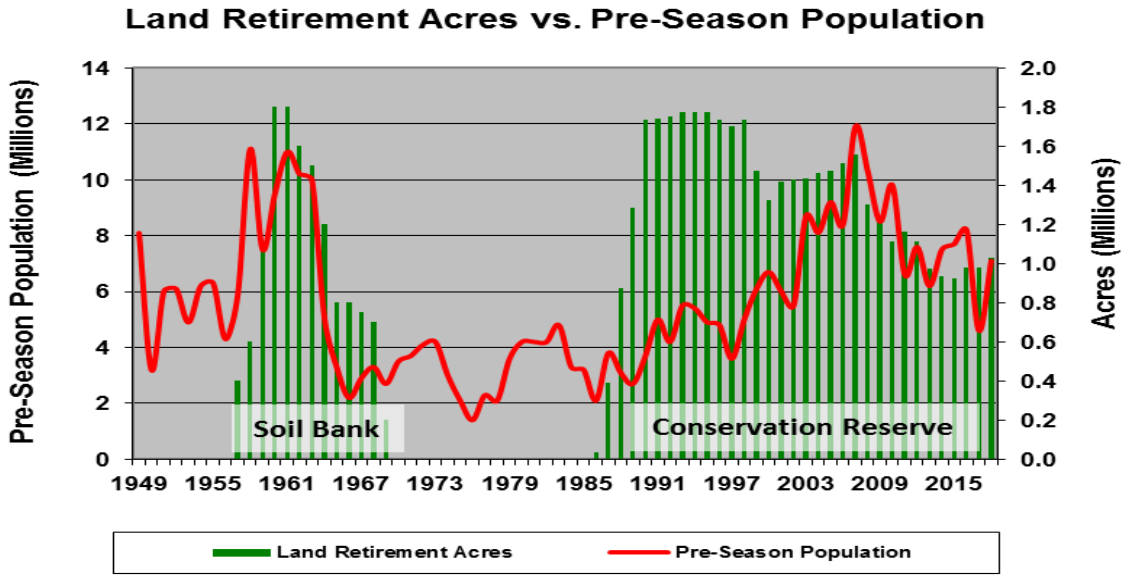


Chart 5-3. (Graph provided by Travis Runia)

Introduction to Section Six

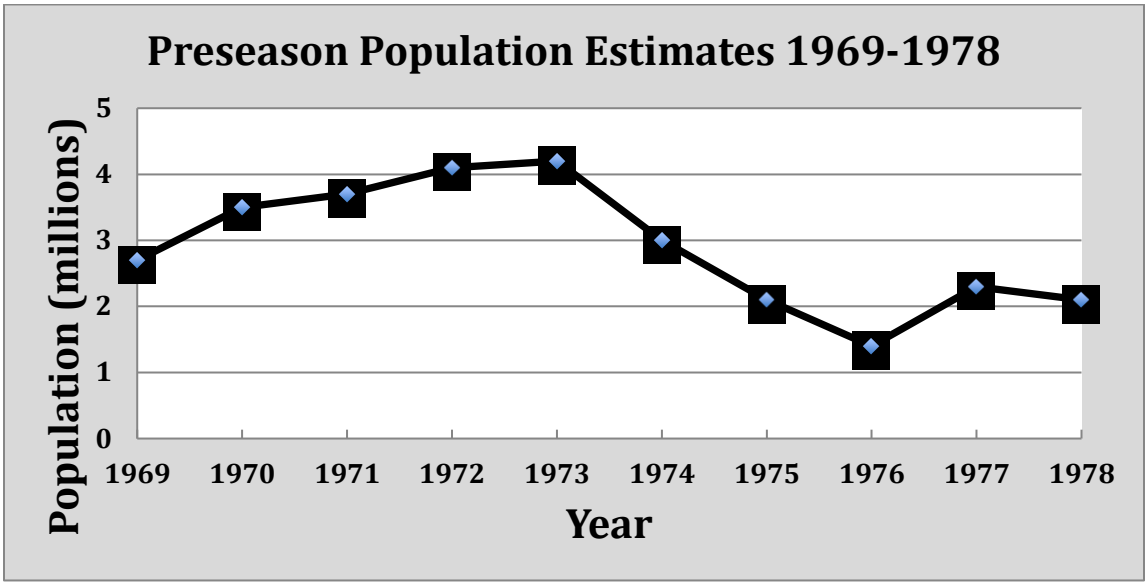


Chart 6-1. The population for the sixth decade had some of the lowest populations since the first decade. Half of this decade saw population figures of less than 3,000,000 pheasants. Due to these low populations the daily bag limit was only two roosters for the years of 1975 through 1978.

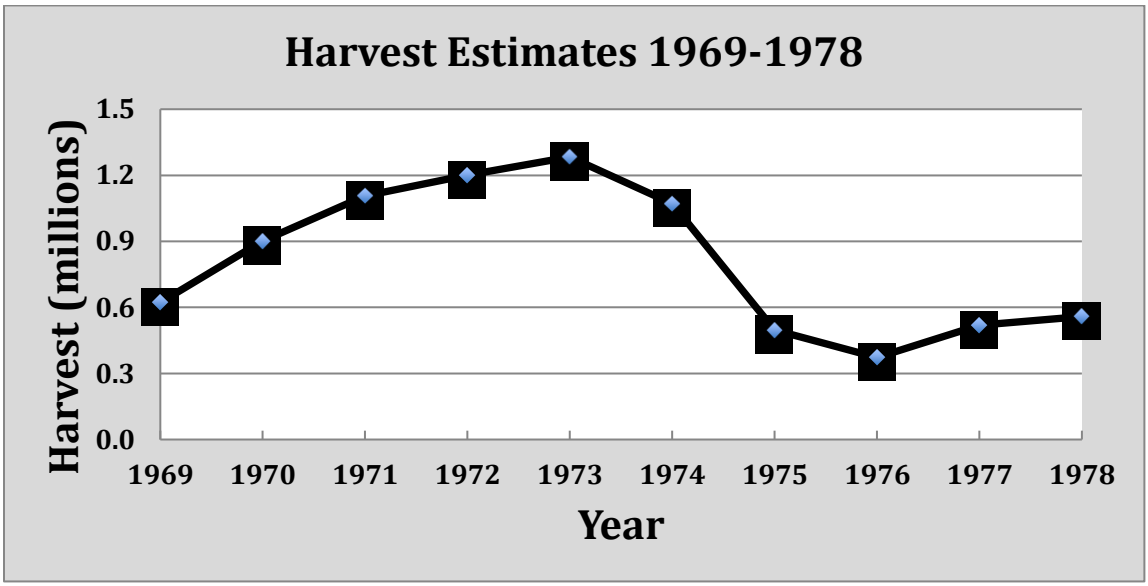


Chart 6-2. The harvest for the sixth decade was 8,131,550 pheasants and ranked ninth of the ten decades. The best yearly harvest of the decade was 1,283,100 in 1973.

Decade Events

1971: The season was amended resulting in a week of hunting added to Zone 1 in December.
1976: The year of 1976 had the lowest population and lowest harvest in the second half-century (1969-2018) of pheasant hunting in South Dakota.
1977: From 1977 through 2018 every county was open to hunt pheasants during each set season.
1978: Opening day shooting hours began at 10:00 A.M. instead of noon for the first time since 1945.

Section 6

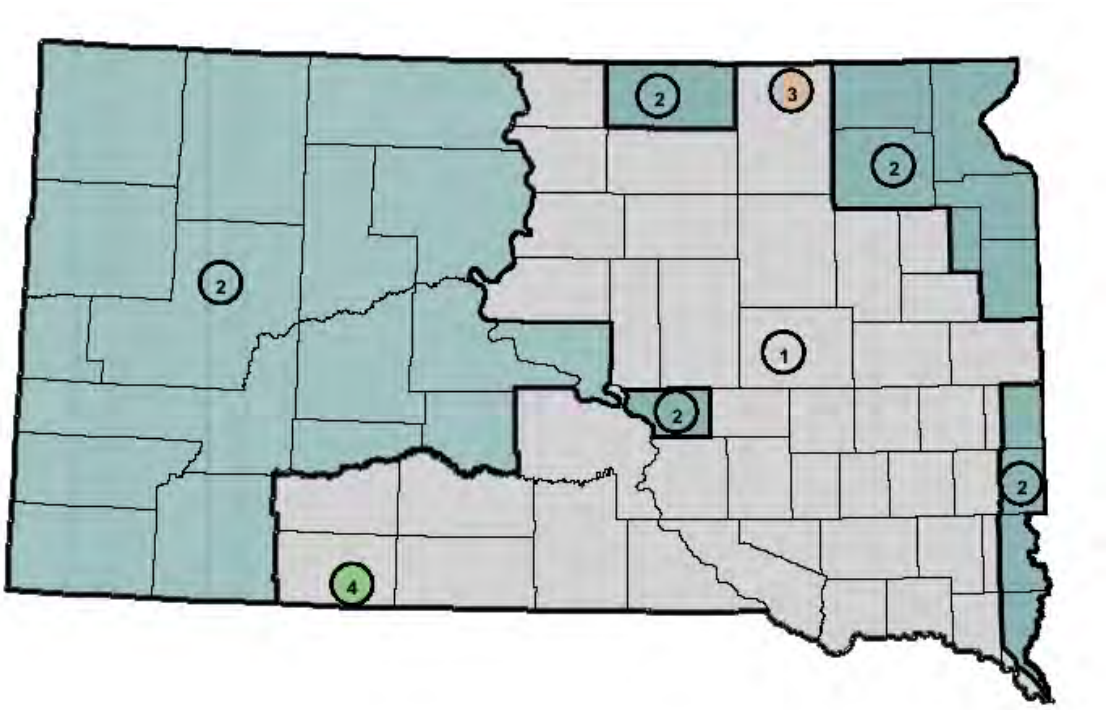
South Dakota Pheasant Seasons

1969-1978

Year	Season Length in Days	Opening Day	Preseason Population Estimate	Daily Limit	Possession Limit	Harvest Estimate
1969	30	Oct. 18	2,700,000	3	15	622,900
1970	37	Oct. 17	3,500,000	3	15	900,900
1971	49	Oct. 16	3,700,000	3	15	1,105,800
1972	49	Oct. 21	4,100,000	3	15	1,200,600
1973	64	Oct. 20	4,200,000	3	15	1,283,100
1974	49	Oct. 19	3,000,000	3	15	1,071,300
1975	23	Oct. 18	2,100,000	2	10	497,500
1976	30	Oct. 16	1,400,000	2	10	372,550
1977	44	Oct. 15	2,300,000	2	10	518,600
1978	44	Oct. 21	2,100,000	2	10	558,300

The Sixth Decade

The years of 1972 and 1973 had pheasant populations in the medium-density range of 4,100,000 and 4,200,000, respectively. The rest of the decade was in the low-density level, a population of less than 4,000,000, and resulted in the second lowest harvest of any 10-year period. The reasons for the low pheasant populations were the end of the Soil Bank Program and increased intensive farming practices. These two actions reduced the quantity and quality of pheasant habitat. Agricultural lands that had been in the Soil Bank grasslands were put back into production. At the urging of the U.S. Department of Agriculture farmers were encouraged to plant more row crops, such as corn and soybeans, for foreign trade purposes. Farmers responded by converting idle acres and pastureland into row crops. This monoculture row cropping resulted in less small grain crops beneficial to pheasants. A devastating blizzard in 1975 contributed to the population being only 1,400,000 in 1976. This was the lowest population level since 1924.



1969 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 18 - November 16 in designated counties, that portion of Codington County west of Highway 81, and those portions of Moody, Minnehaha, Lincoln, and Union counties west of Interstate 29

Dates: Zone 2, October 18-20 in designated counties, that portion of Codington County east of Highway 81, and those portions of Moody, Minnehaha, Lincoln, and Union counties east of Interstate 29

Dates: Zone 3, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 8-14.

Dates: Zone 4, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 29 - November 9.

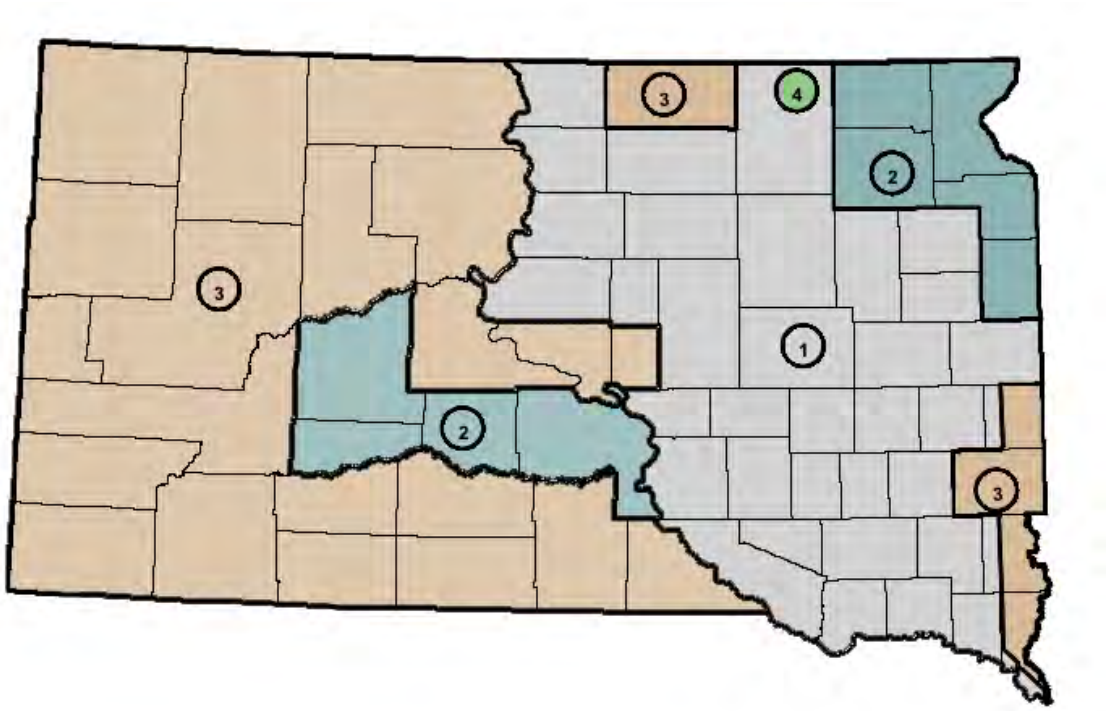
Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 30 days

Harvest Estimate: 622,900



1970 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 17 - November 22 in designated counties, those portions of Moody, Lincoln, and Union counties west of Interstate 29, and that portion of Hyde County north of Highway 14

Dates: Zone 2, October 17 - November 1 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, October 17-25 in designated counties, that portion of Hyde County south of Highway 14, those portions of Moody, Lincoln, and Union counties east of Interstate 29, and a portion of Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 7-13.

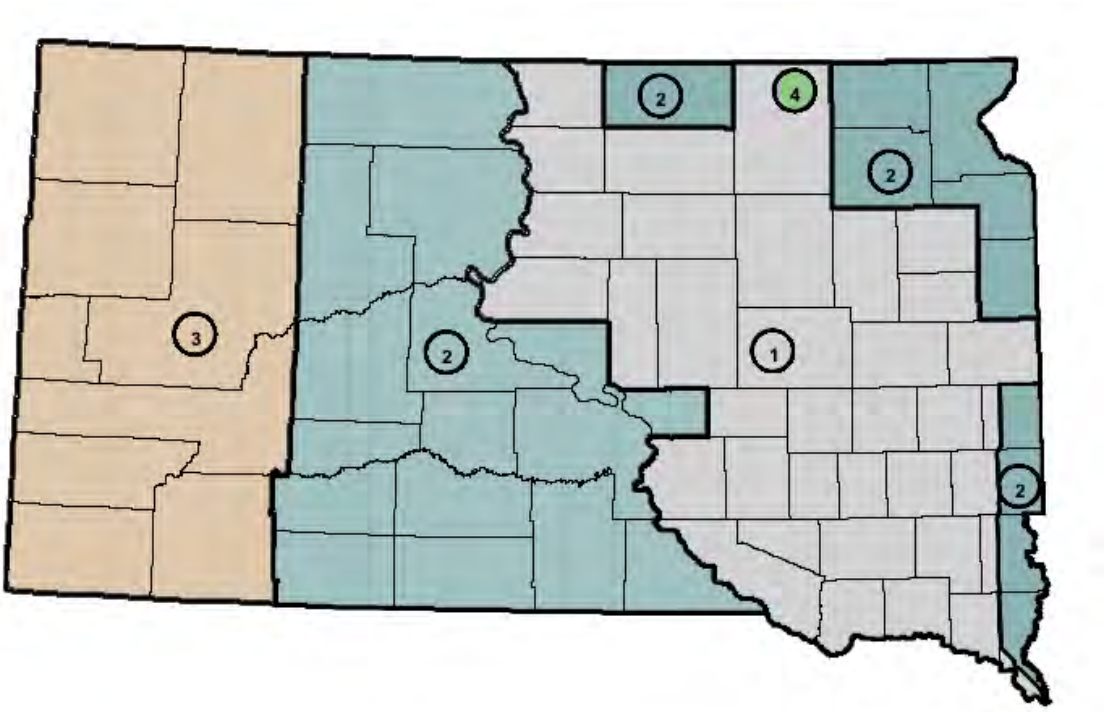
Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 37 days

Harvest Estimate: 900,900



1971 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 16 - November 26 and the amended dates of December 6-12 in designated counties and those portions of Moody, Minnehaha, Lincoln, and Union counties west of Interstate 29

Dates: Zone 2, October 16-31 in designated counties, those portions of Moody, Minnehaha, Lincoln, and Union counties east of Interstate 29, and a portion of Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County

Dates: Zone 3, October 16-22 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 6-12

The Controlled Goose Hunting Area in Lyman and Brule counties were open to pheasant hunting, from October 16-21. The Hecla Controlled Goose Hunting Area in Brown County was closed to pheasant hunting until the day after the close of controlled goose hunting operations.

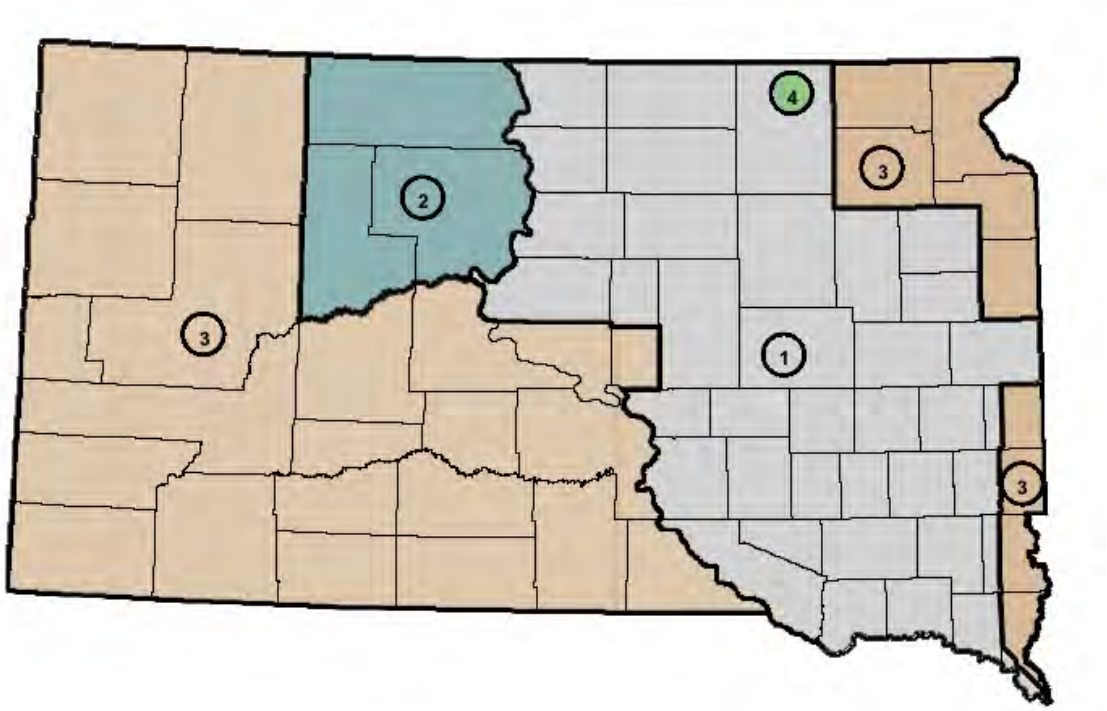
Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset October 16-23; 11 A.M. to sunset the rest of the season

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 49 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,105,800



1972 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 21 - November 24 and December 4-17 in designated counties, those portions of Moody, Minnehaha, Lincoln, and Union counties west of Interstate 29, and that portion of Hyde County north of Highway 14

Dates: Zone 2, October 21 - November 24 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, October 21 - November 5 in designated counties, those portions of Moody, Minnehaha, Lincoln, and Union counties east of Interstate 29, that portion of Hyde County south of Highway 14, and that portion of Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge designated by the refuge manager in Bennett County

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 4-17

The Controlled Goose Hunting areas in Lyman and Brule counties were open to pheasant hunting from October 21-25. The Controlled Goose Hunting Area in Brule County reopened after the close of the controlled goose hunting operations. The Hecla Controlled Goose Hunting Area in Brown County was closed to pheasant hunting until the day after the close of controlled goose hunting operations.

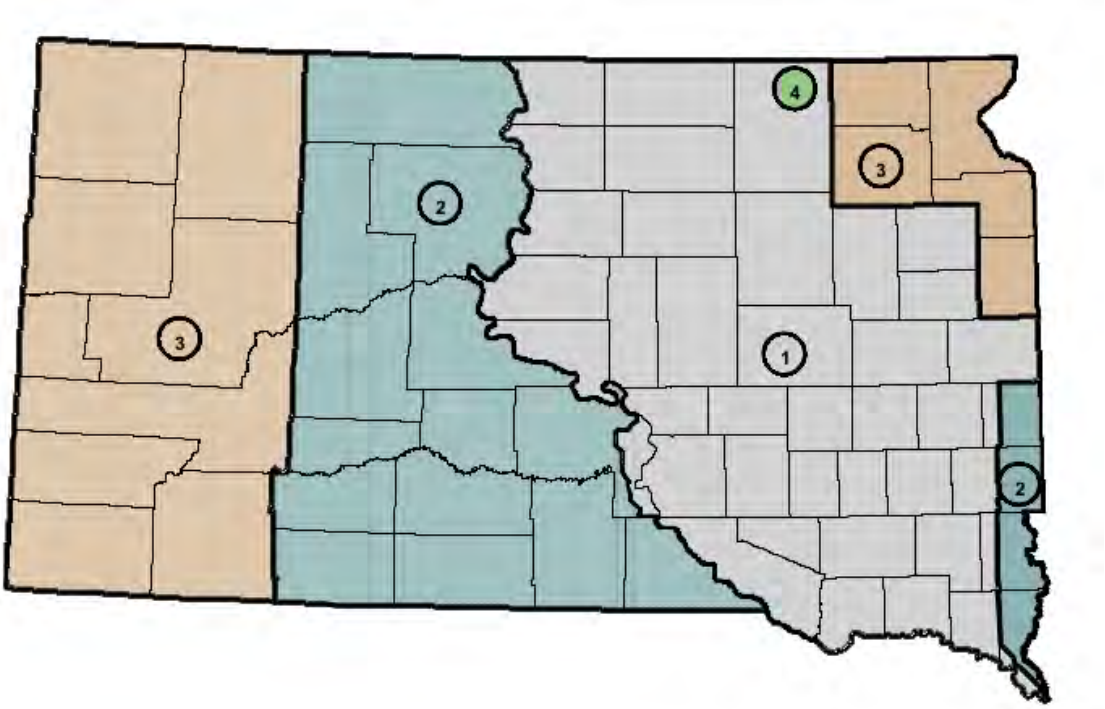
Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset October 21 - November 24; 11 A.M. to sunset the rest of the season

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 49 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,200,600



1973 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 20 - November 23 and December 3-31 in designated counties, that portion of Lyman County east of Highway 47W and 47, and those portions of Moody, Minnehaha, Lincoln, and Union counties west of Interstate 29

Dates: Zone 2, October 20 - November 23 in designated counties, that portion of Lyman County west of Highway 47W and 47, and those portions of Moody, Minnehaha, Lincoln, and Union counties east of Interstate 29

Dates: Zone 3, October 20 - November 4 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 3-31

The Controlled Goose Hunting areas in Lyman County was open to pheasant hunting from October 20-27 and December 3-31. The Controlled Goose Hunting Area in Brule County was open to pheasant hunting October 20-24 and December 3-31. The Hecla Controlled Goose Hunting Area in Brown County was closed to pheasant hunting until the day after the close of controlled goose hunting operations.

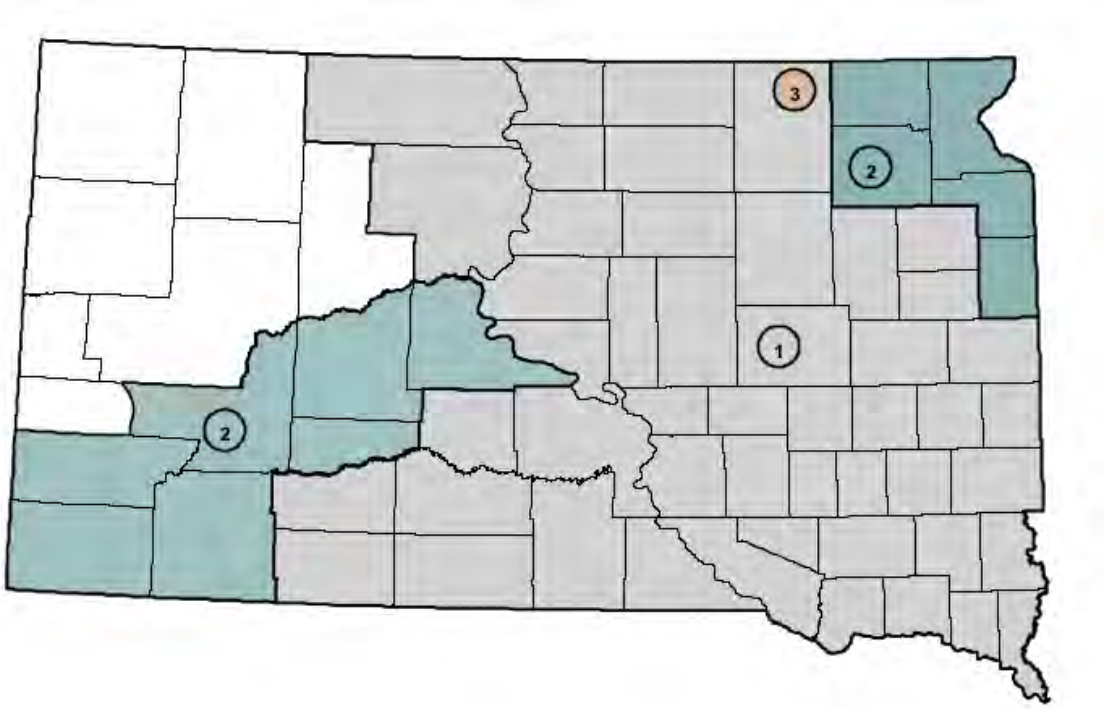
Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset October 20-27; 11 A.M. to sunset the rest of the season

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 64 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,283,100



1974 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 19 - November 22 and December 2-15 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 2, October 19 - November 3 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of Highway 79

Dates: Zone 3, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 2-31.

The Controlled Goose Hunting areas in Lyman and Brule counties were open to pheasant hunting from October 19-31 and December 2-15. The Controlled Goose Hunting Area in Brown County was open to pheasant hunting from November 4-22 and December 2-15.

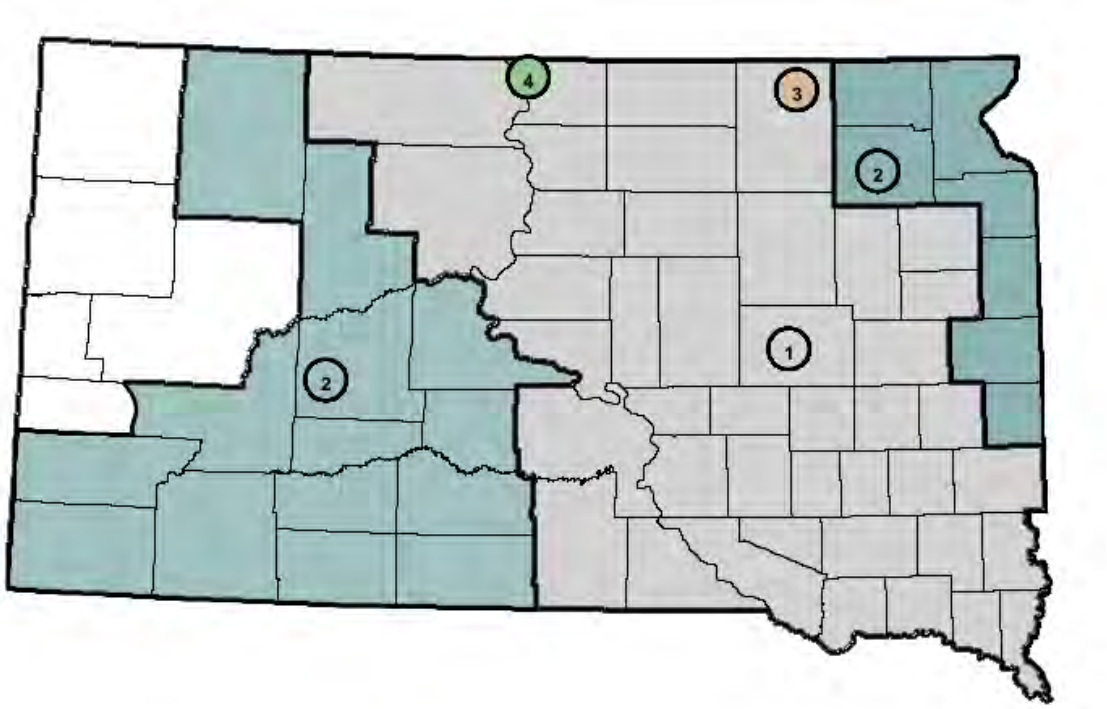
Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset; 10 A.M. to sunset from December 2-31

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 49 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,071,300



1975 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 18 - November 9 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 18-26 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 8-31.
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

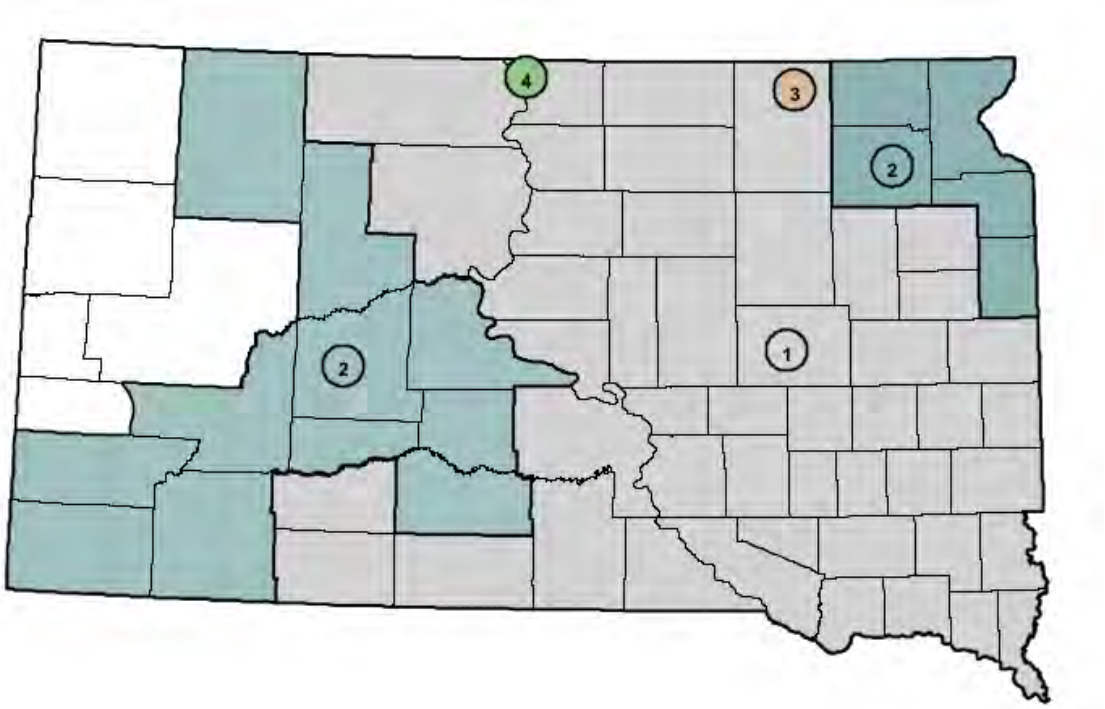
Dates: Zone 4, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 15-21.
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

The Controlled Goose Hunting areas in Lyman and Brule counties were open to pheasant hunting from October 18-31. The Controlled Goose Hunting Area in Brown County was open to pheasant hunting from November 3-9.

Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset; 10 A.M. to sunset from December 13-31

Season Length: 23 days

Harvest Estimate: 497,500



1976 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 16 - November 14 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 16-25 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 13-31
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

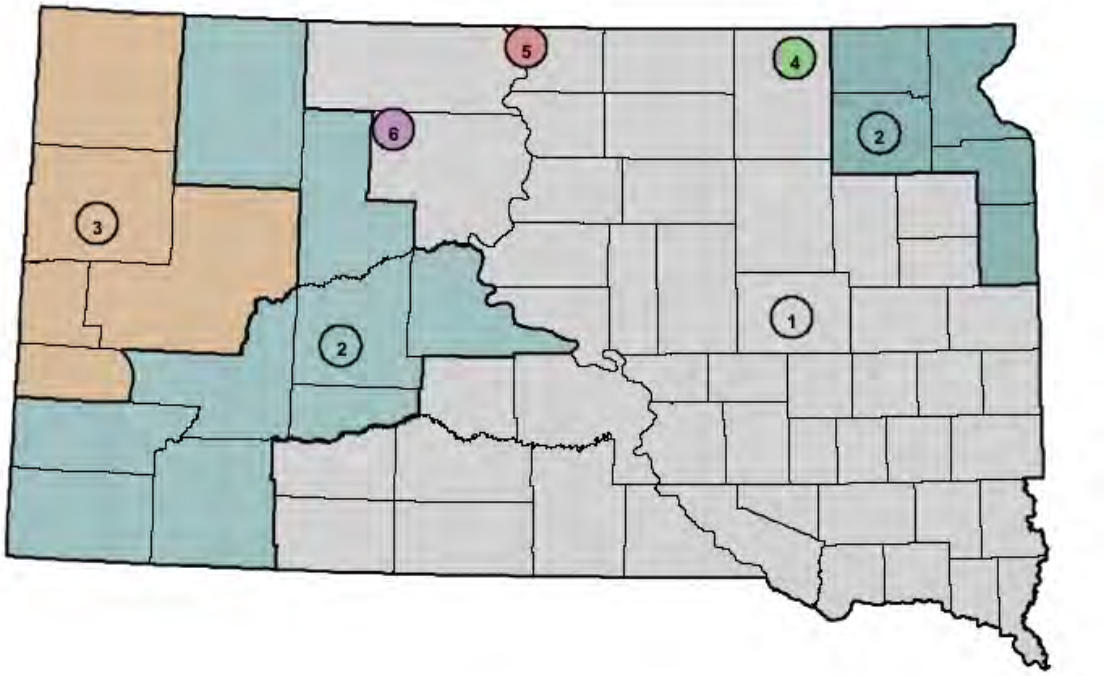
Dates: Zone 4, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 20-26
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

The Controlled Goose Hunting areas in Lyman and Brule counties were open to pheasant hunting from October 16-21. The Controlled Goose Hunting Area in Brown County was open from November 1-14.

Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset; 10 A.M. to sunset from December 13-31

Season Length: 30 days

Harvest Estimate: 372,550



1977 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 15 - November 27 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 15-30 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 15-17 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 12-31
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

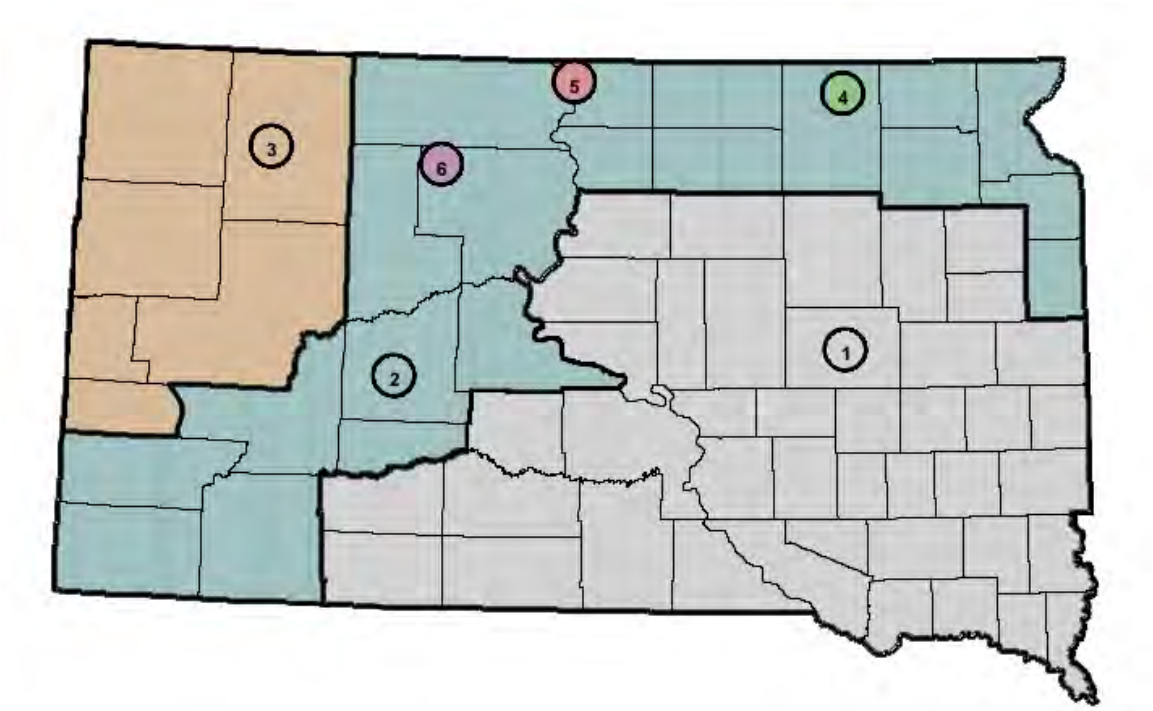
Dates: Zone 5, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 19-27
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 6, Little Moreau Game Refuge in Dewey County, October 15-28
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset; 10 A.M. to sunset from December 12-31

Season Length: 44 days

Harvest Estimate: 518,600



1978 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 21 - December 3 in designated counties
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Dates: Zone 2, October 21 - November 19 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Dates: Zone 3, October 21-23 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of Highway 79
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 11-31.
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 5, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 18-26.
Daily Limit: 3 roosters—Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Dates: Zone 6, Little Moreau Game Refuge in Dewey County, October 21 - November 5.
Daily Limit: 2 roosters—Possession Limit: 10 roosters

Shooting Hours: 10 A.M. to sunset

Season Length: 44 days

Harvest Estimate: 558,300

Introduction to Section Seven

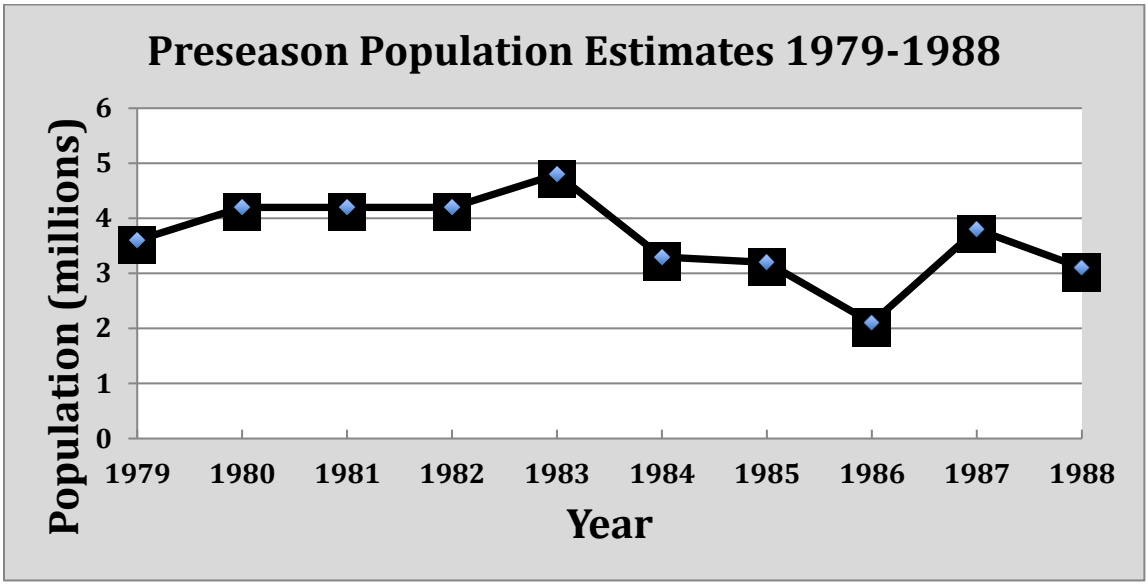


Chart 7-1. The population for the seventh decade began to rebound from the previous decade. The year of 1986 was the only one with a population of less than 3,000,000. This upswing in the population would continue into the next two decades.

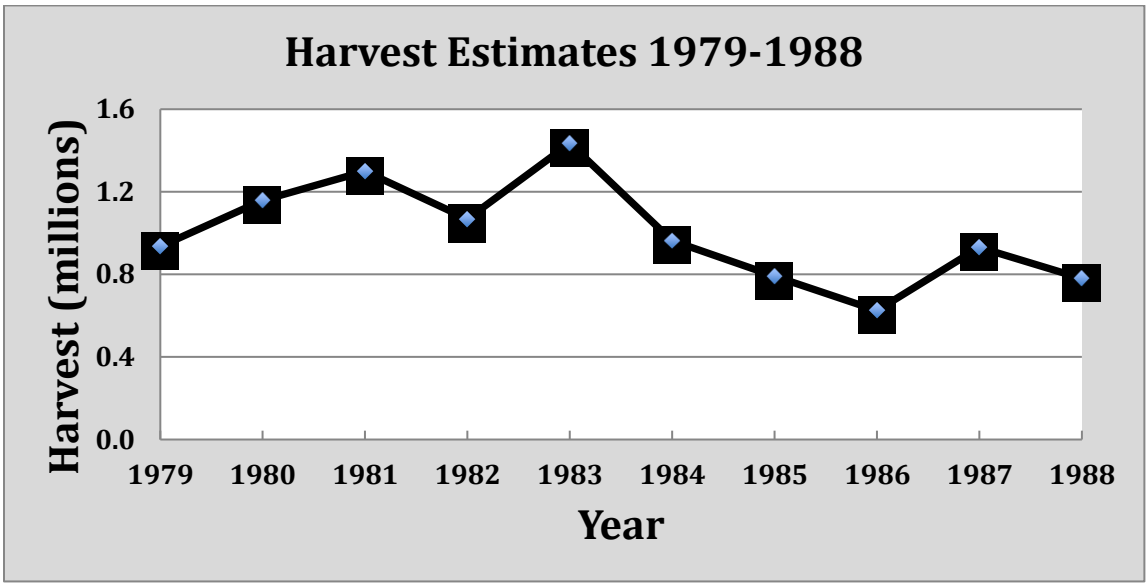


Chart 7-2. The harvest for the seventh decade was 9,994,132 pheasants and ranked eighth of the ten decades. The best yearly harvest of the decade was 1,434,430 in 1983.

Decade Events

1979: South Dakota was reduced to 66 counties when Washabaugh County merged with Jackson County. Jackson County was in regional pheasant hunting Zone 2 during the 1979 season.

1981: Shooting hours for opening day returned to beginning at noon after a three-year span of opening at 10:00 A.M. From 1981 through 2018 the practice of opening at noon was retained.

1985: The state was divided into two main regional zones. One zone covered a majority of the state. A smaller zone was located in the western section of the state. This two-zone pattern was used for 22 consecutive seasons through 2006.

Section 7

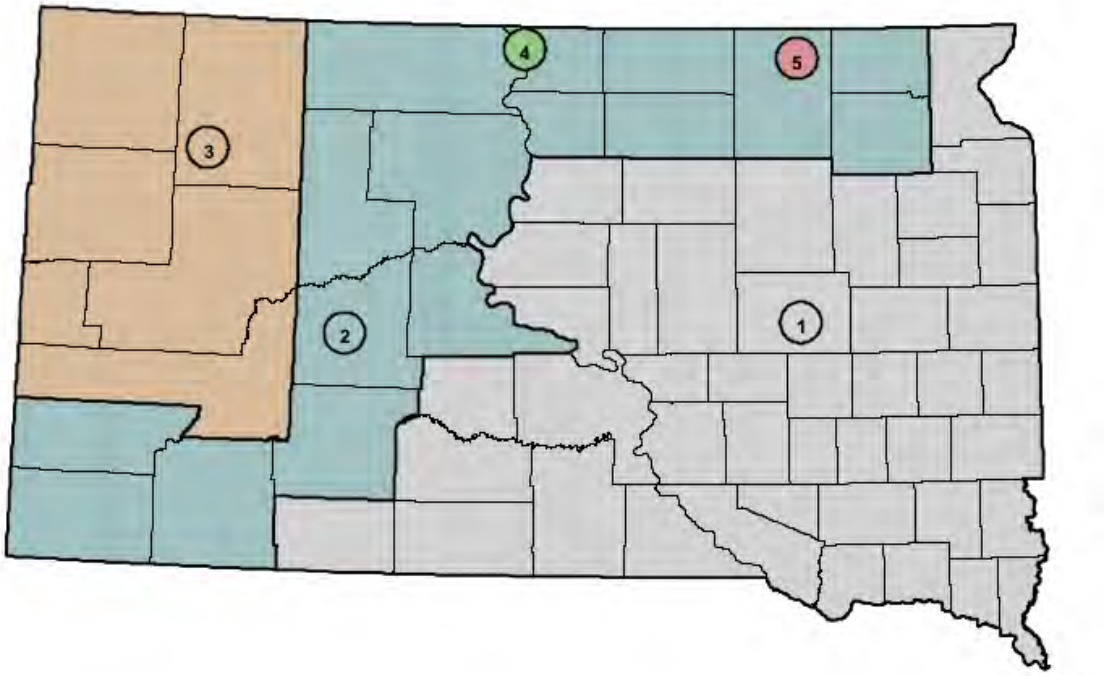
South Dakota Pheasant Seasons

1979-1988

Year	Season Length in Days	Opening Day	Preseason Population Estimate	Daily Limit	Possession Limit	Harvest Estimate
1979	51	Oct. 20	3,600,000	3	15	943,800
1980	63	Oct. 18	4,200,000	3	15	1,158,725
1981	51	Oct. 17	4,200,000	3	15	1,299,125
1982	51	Oct. 16	4,200,000	3	15	1,068,252
1983	51	Oct. 15	4,800,000	3	15	1,434,430
1984	51	Oct. 20	3,300,000	3	15	962,680
1985	51	Oct. 19	3,200,000	3	15	791,350
1986	51	Oct. 18	2,100,000	3	15	624,760
1987	51	Oct. 17	3,800,000	3	15	931,250
1988	51	Oct. 15	3,100,000	3	15	779,760

The Seventh Decade

This decade had population levels in the low-density and low side of medium-density range. The era did have an improved harvest over the previous 10-year period. In 1982, Pheasants Forever was incorporated in Minnesota. The purpose of Pheasants Forever, a conservation organization, was to restore and preserve wildlife habitat and ensure the future of ring-necked pheasants and other wildlife. Pheasants Forever spread to other states including South Dakota. In 1985, the National Government passed the Food Security Act authorizing the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). CRP established a land set-aside program that paid landowners to keep their most environmentally sensitive lands out of production. South Dakota pheasants began to use the habitat created by CRP fields for their life cycle needs. The norm of a daily limit of three and a possession limit of 15 has been continuous since 1979.



1979 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 20 - December 9 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 2, October 20 - November 25 in designated counties and Little Moreau Game Refuge in Dewey County

Dates: Zone 3, October 20-24 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 4, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 17 - December 19

Dates: Zone 5, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 10-31

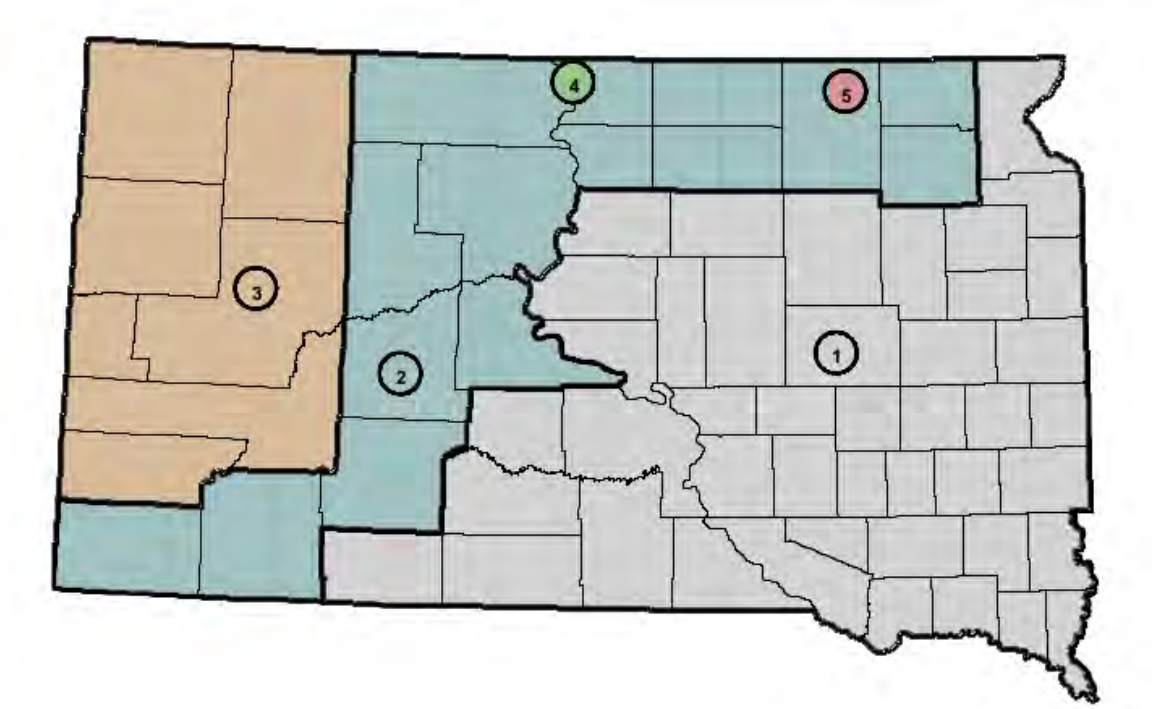
Shooting Hours: 10:00 A.M. to sunset

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 51 days

Harvest Estimate: 943,800



1980 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 18 - December 14 and December 27-31 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 2, October 18 - November 23 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, October 18-22 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 4, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 15 - December 14

Dates: Zone 5, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 8-31

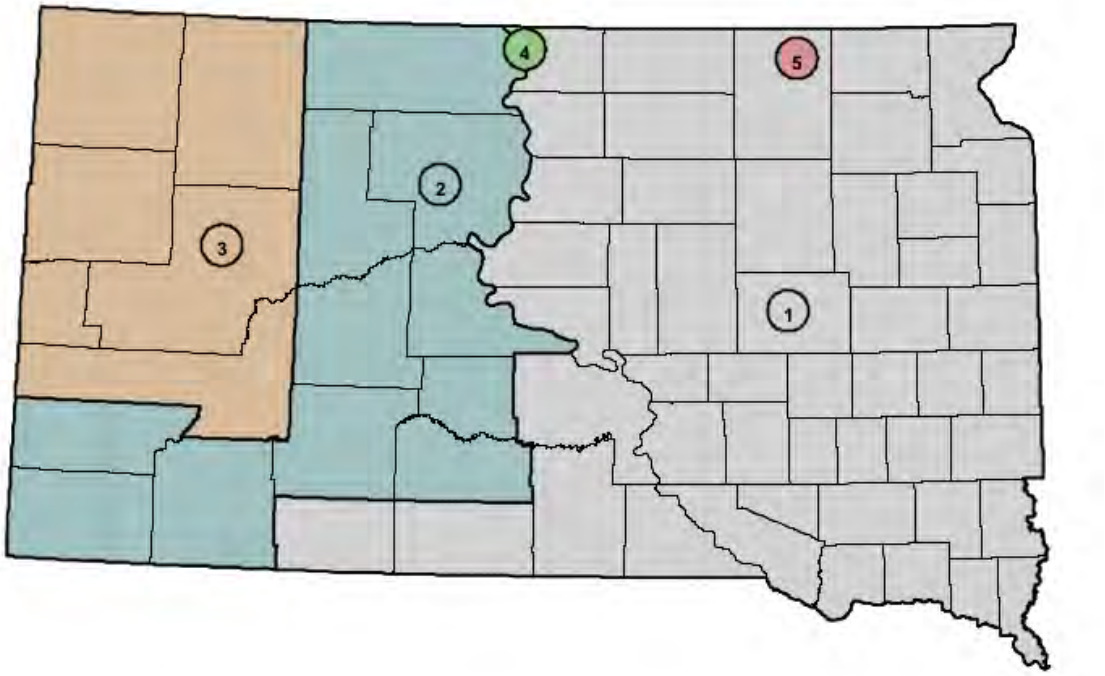
Shooting Hours: 10:00 A.M. to sunset

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 63 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,158,725



1981 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 17 - December 6 in designated counties and Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County

Dates: Zone 2, October 17 - November 15 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, October 17-25 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 4, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 16 - December 6

Dates: Zone 5, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 7-31

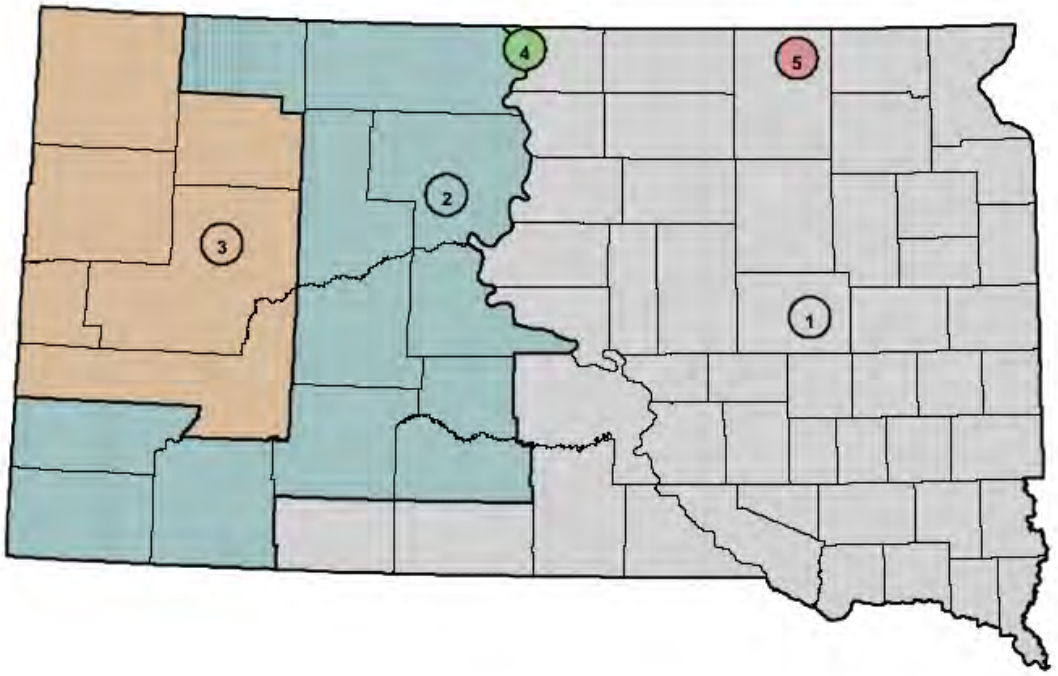
Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset from October 17-31; 10 A.M. to sunset the rest of the season

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 51 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,299,125



1982 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 16 - December 5 in designated counties and Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County

Dates: Zone 2, October 16 - November 14 in designated counties and that portion of Perkins County north of Highway 20

Dates: Zone 3, October 16-24 in designated counties and that portion of Perkins County south of Highway 20

Dates: Zone 4, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 15 - December 5

Dates: Zone 5, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 13-31

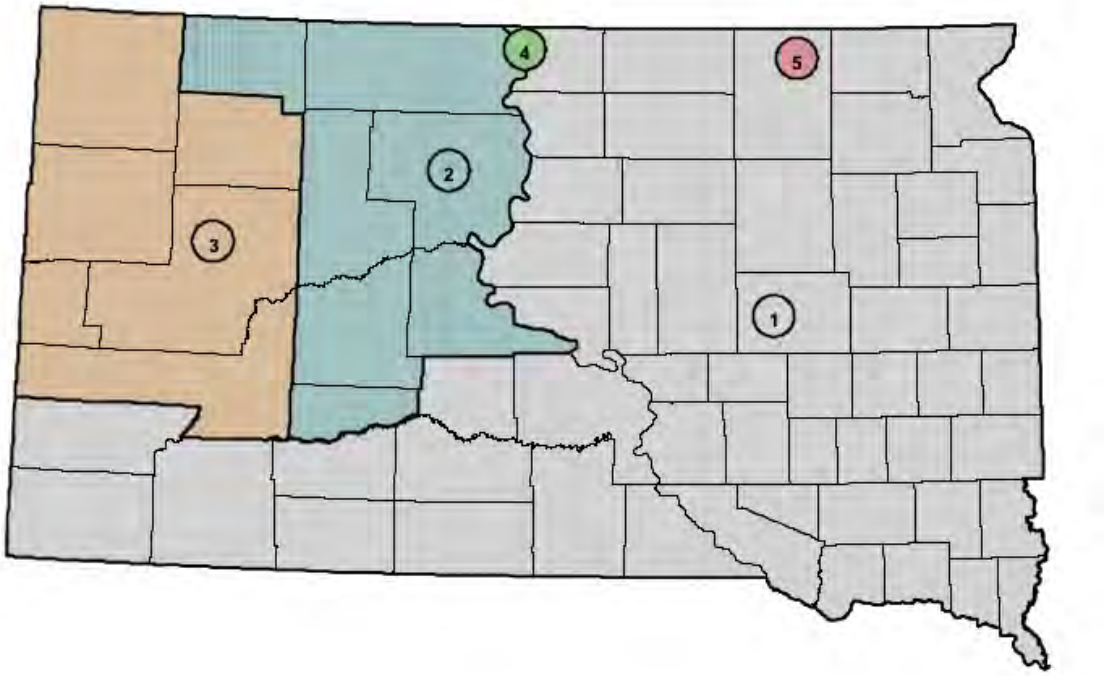
Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset from October 16-31; 10 A.M. to sunset the rest of the season

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 51 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,068,252



1983 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 15 - December 4 in designated counties, that portion of Jackson County south of the White River, and portions of Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County

Dates: Zone 2, October 15 - November 20 in designated counties, that portion of Perkins County north of Highway 20, and that portion of Jackson County north of the White River

Dates: Zone 3, October 15-23 in designated counties and that portion of Perkins County south of Highway 20

Dates: Zone 4, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 15 - December 4

Dates: Zone 5, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 12-31

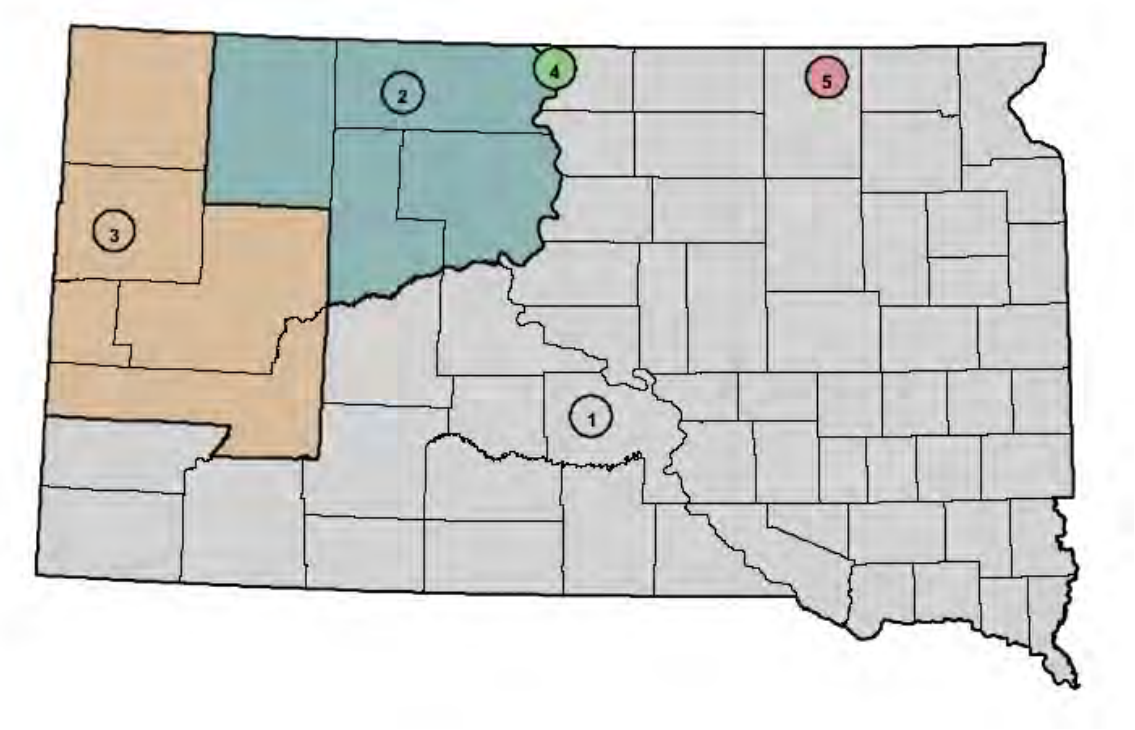
Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset from October 15-31; 10 A.M. to sunset the rest of the season

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 51 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,434,430



1984 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 20 - December 9 in designated counties and portions of Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County

Dates: Zone 2, October 20 - November 25 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, October 20 - November 4 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 4, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 20 - December 9

Dates: Zone 5, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 10-31

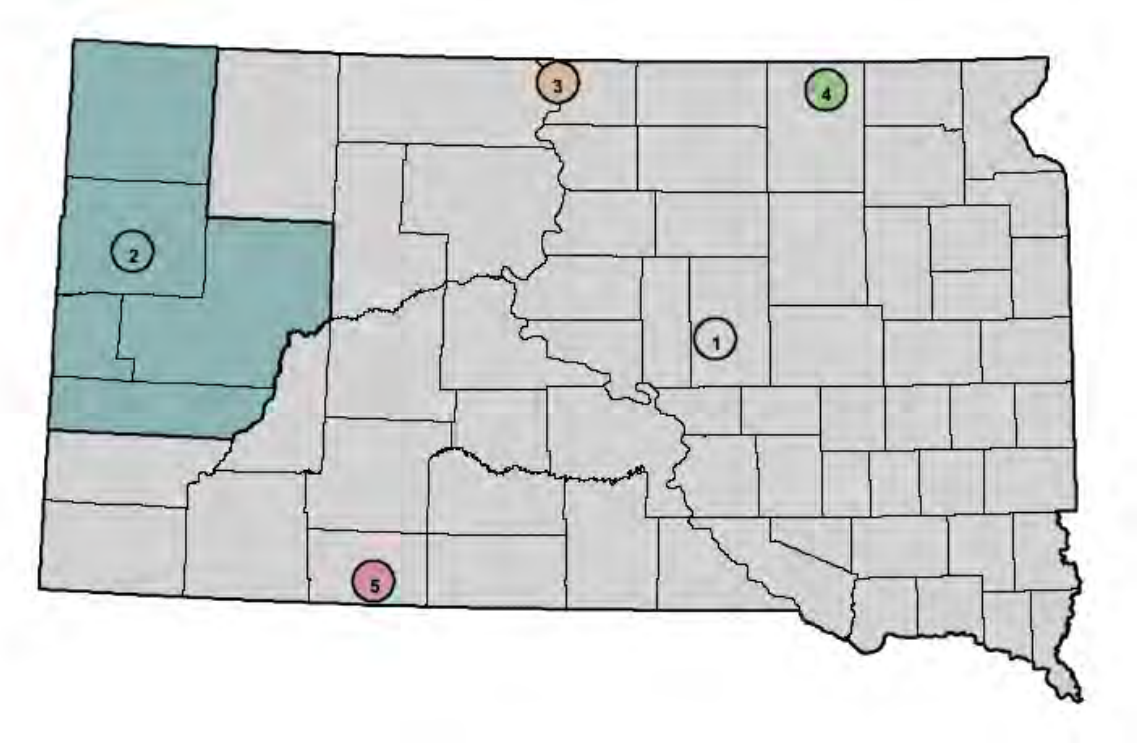
Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset from October 20-31; 10 A.M. to sunset the rest of the season

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 51 days

Harvest Estimate: 962,680



1985 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 19 - December 8 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 2, October 19 - November 3 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 19 - December 8

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 9-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 19 - December 8

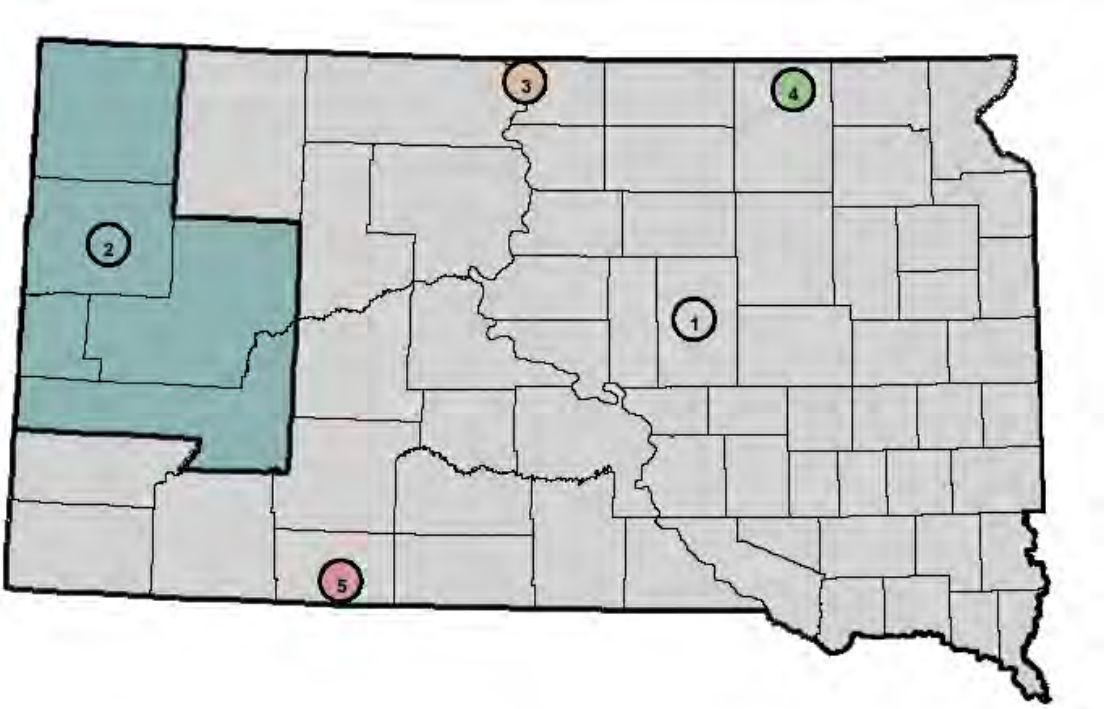
Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset from October 19-31; 10 A.M. to sunset the rest of the season

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 51 days

Harvest Estimate: 791,350



1986 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 18 - December 7 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 2, October 18 - November 2 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 15 - December 7

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 8-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 18 - December 7

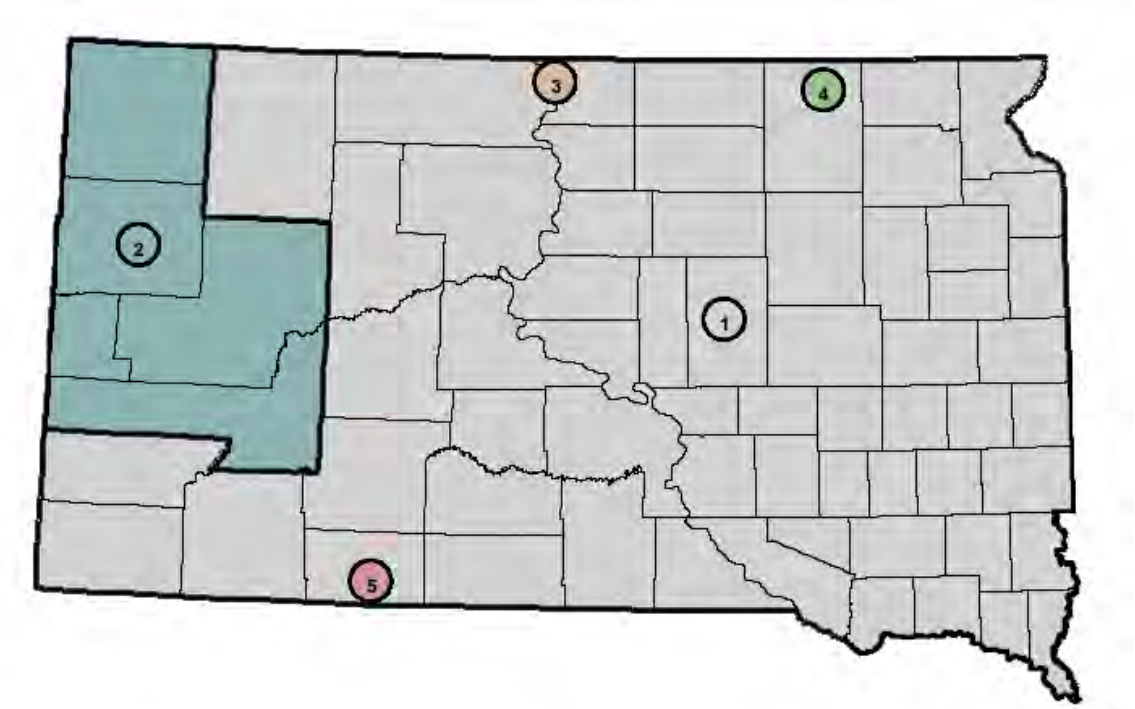
Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset from October 18-31; 10 A.M. to sunset the rest of the season

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 51 days

Harvest Estimate: 624,760



1987 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 17 - December 6 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 2, October 17-25 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 21 - December 6

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 7-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 17 - December 6

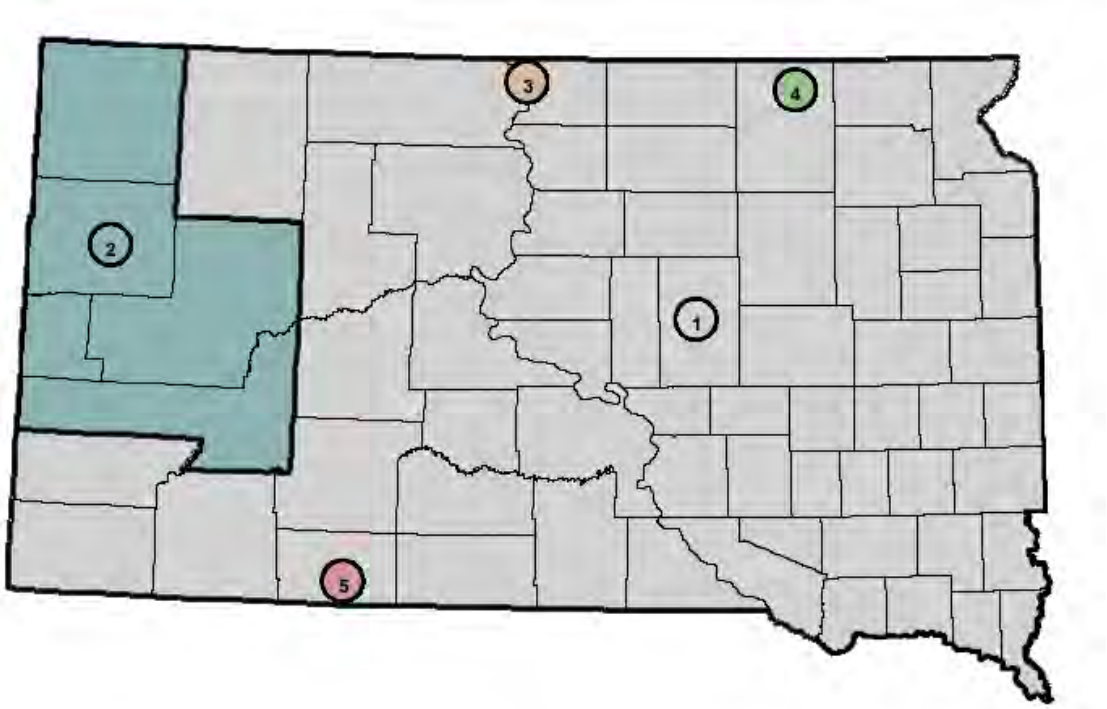
Shooting Hours: Noon to sunset from October 17-31; 10 A.M. to sunset the rest of the season

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 51 days

Harvest Estimate: 931,250



1988 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 15 - December 4 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 2, October 15-23 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 19 - December 4.

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 5-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 15 - December 4

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset from October 15-31; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 51 days

Harvest Estimate: 779,760

Introduction to Section Eight

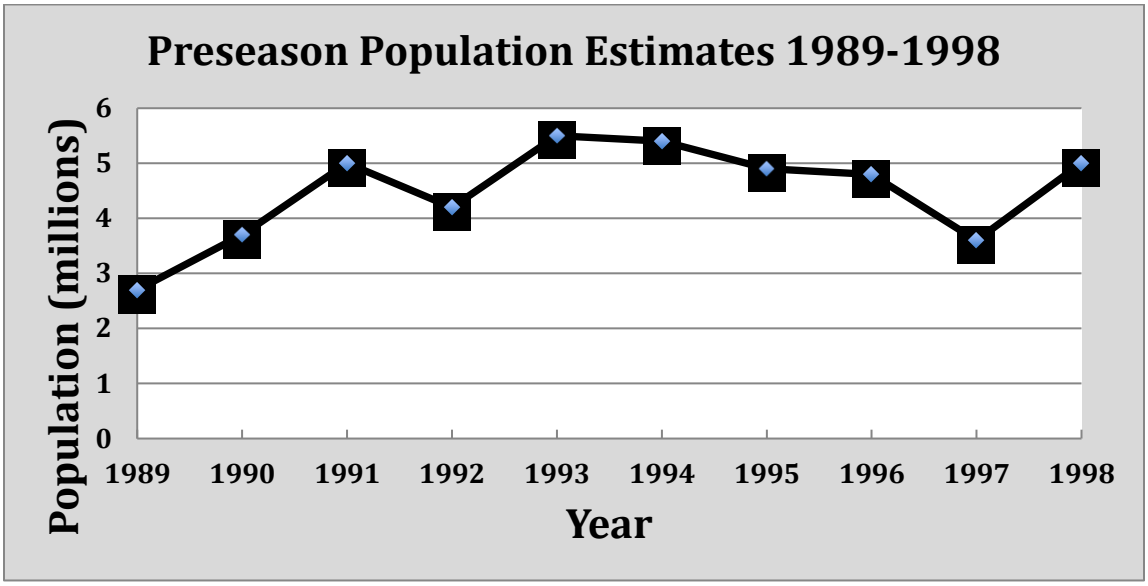


Chart 8-1. The eighth decade had annual pheasant populations reaching 5,000,000 for the first time since 1964. The years of 1991, 1993, 1994, and 1998 all had populations of 5,000,000 or more.

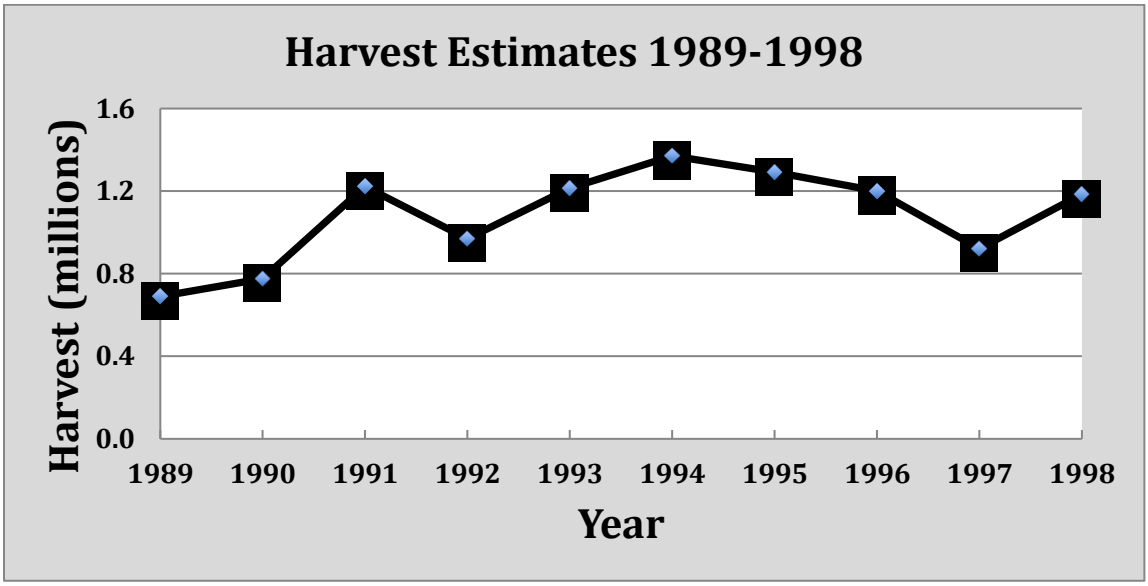


Chart 8-2. The harvest for the eighth decade was 10,840,290 pheasants and ranked seventh of the ten decades. The best yearly harvest of the decade was 1,370,600 in 1994.

Decade Events

1989: This season had the lowest population and the lowest harvest for the 30-year span covering 1989 through 2018.

1991: This season began a series of nine years that the length of the season was 65 days long.

1998: From 1998 through 2018 the pheasant population was in the medium-density or high-density range. Over the course of 100 years this was the longest time period without the population dropping into the low-density level.

Section 8

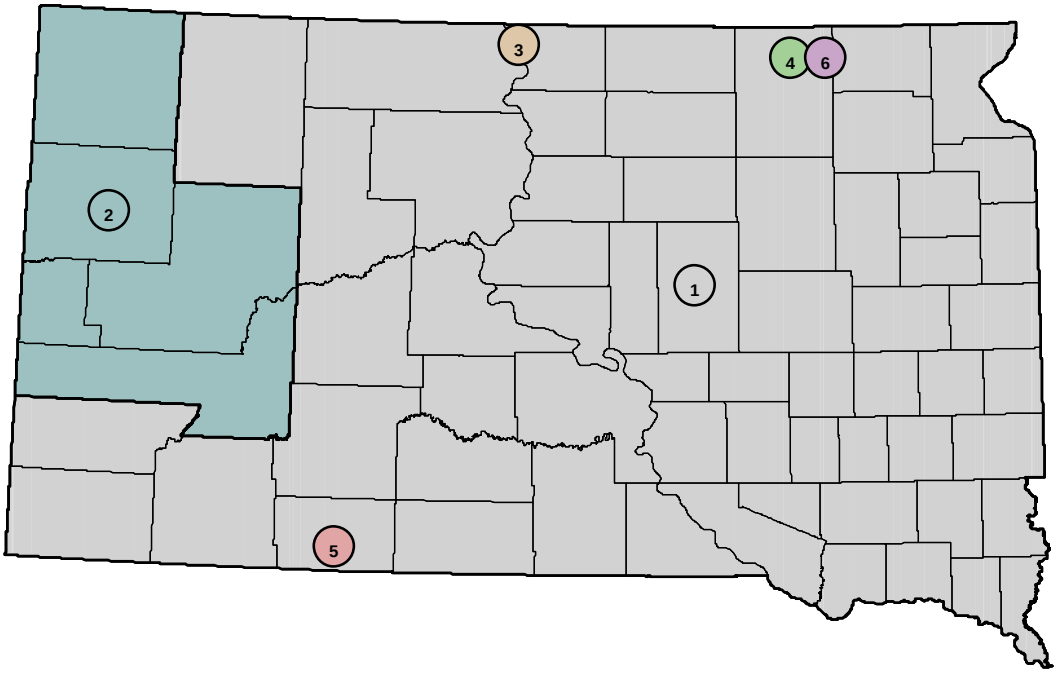
South Dakota Pheasant Seasons

1989-1998

Year	Season Length in Days	Opening Day	Preseason Population Estimate	Daily Limit	Possession Limit	Harvest Estimate
1989	51	Oct. 21	2,700,000	3	15	690,000
1990	51	Oct. 20	3,700,000	3	15	775,025
1991	65	Oct. 19	5,000,000	3	15	1,222,600
1992	65	Oct. 17	4,200,000	3	15	969,000
1993	65	Oct. 16	5,500,000	3	15	1,213,800
1994	65	Oct. 15	5,400,000	3	15	1,370,600
1995	65	Oct. 21	4,900,000	3	15	1,292,400
1996	65	Oct. 19	4,800,000	3	15	1,200,826
1997	65	Oct. 18	3,600,000	3	15	920,717
1998	65	Oct. 17	5,000,000	3	15	1,185,322

The Eighth Decade

The benefits of CRP, plus the efforts of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks and Pheasants Forever, began to kick-in and pheasant populations, along with pheasant harvests, increased over the preceding decade. The CRP contracts (10 to 15 years in duration) converted marginal and environmental-sensitive cropland into idled grassland. Most years of the decade were in the medium-density population range of 4,000,000 to 7,000,000, the exceptions being 1989, 1990, and 1997, which fell into the low-density population category of less than 4,000,000. Some wet springs in the 1990s and the severe winter of 1996-1997 hampered the population growth of the decade. But, because of the availability of quality habitat acres the population was able to rebound from these adverse weather events.



1989 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 21 - December 10 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 2, October 21-29 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 18 - December 10

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 11-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 21 - December 10

Dates: Zone 6, Renzienhausen Game Production Area in Brown and Marshall counties, December 11-31

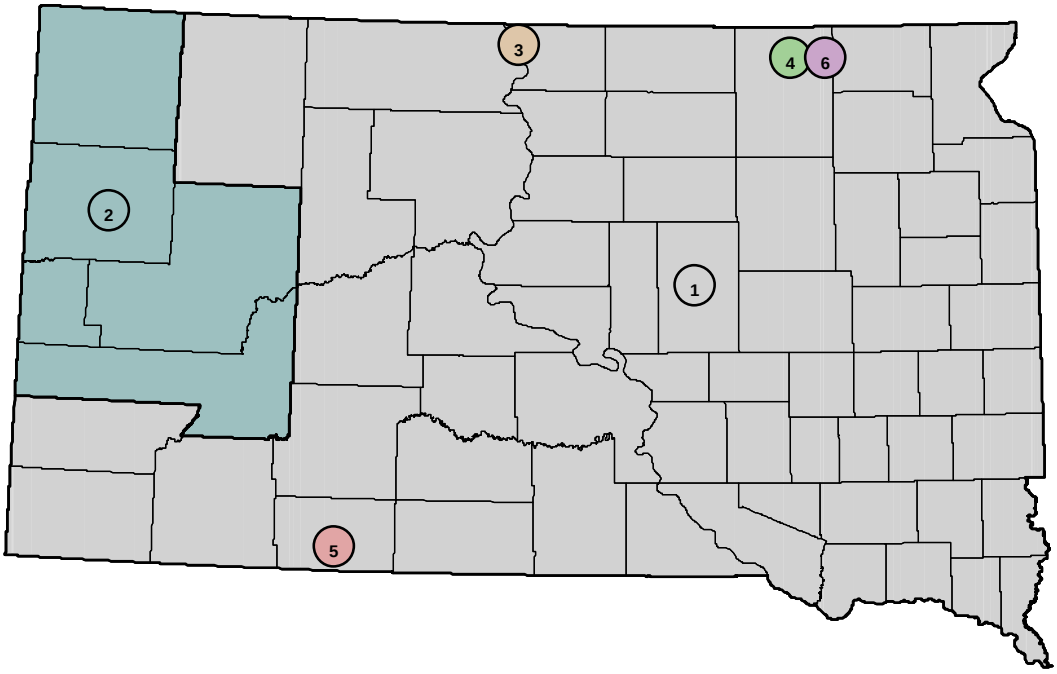
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 21-28; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 51 days

Harvest Estimate: 690,000



1990 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 20 - December 9 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 2, October 20-28 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 17 - December 9

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 10-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 20 - December 9

Dates: Zone 6, Renzienhausen Game Production Area in Brown and Marshall counties, December 10-31

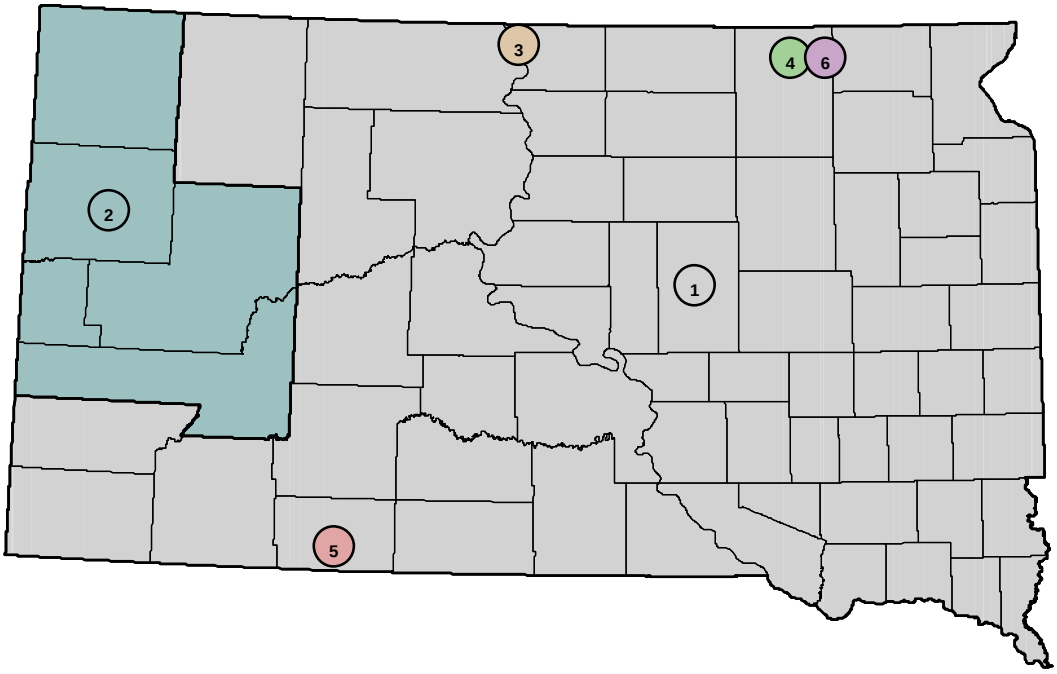
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 20-27; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 51 days

Harvest Estimate: 775,025



1991 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 19 - December 22 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 2, October 19-27 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 16 - December 22

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 9-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 19 - December 22

Dates: Zone 6, Renzienhausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 9-31

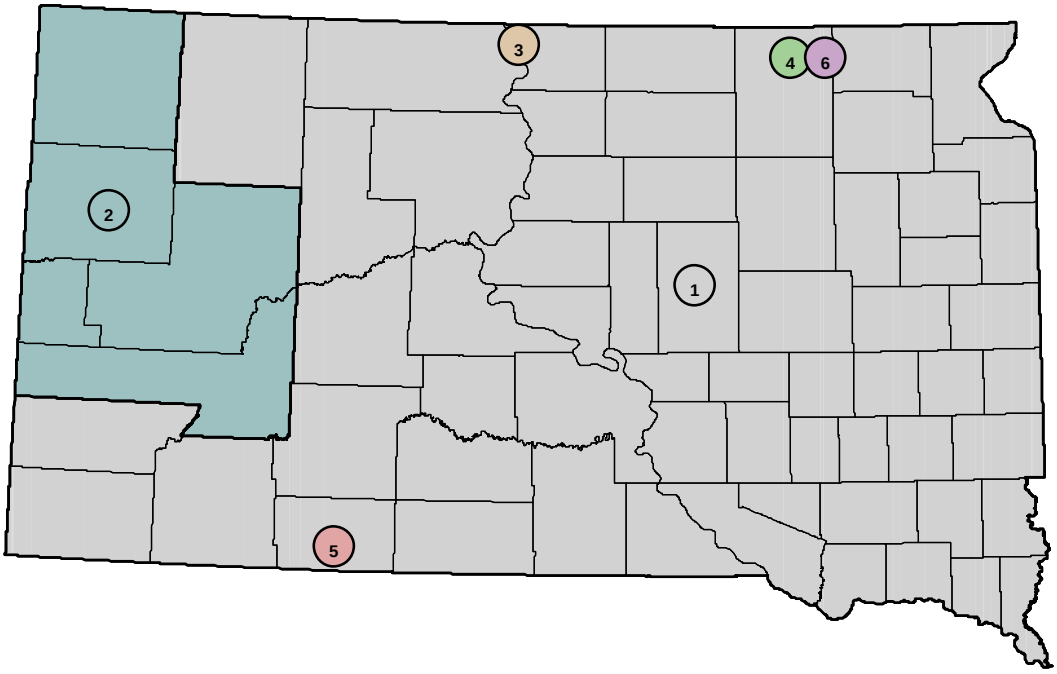
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 19-26; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 65 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,222,600



1992 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 17 - December 20 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 2, October 17-25 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 14 - December 20

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 14-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 17 - December 20

Dates: Zone 6, Renzienhausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 14-31

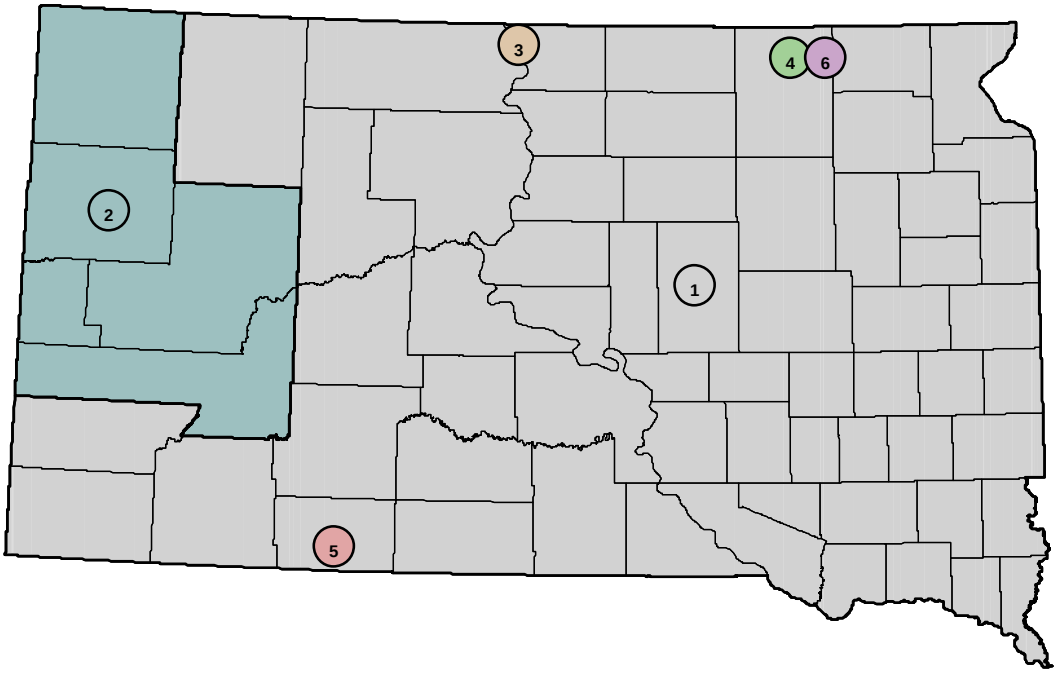
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 17-24; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 65 days

Harvest Estimate: 969,000



1993 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 16 - December 19 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 2, October 16-24 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 13 - December 19

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 13-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 16 -December 19

Dates: Zone 6, Renzienhausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 13-31

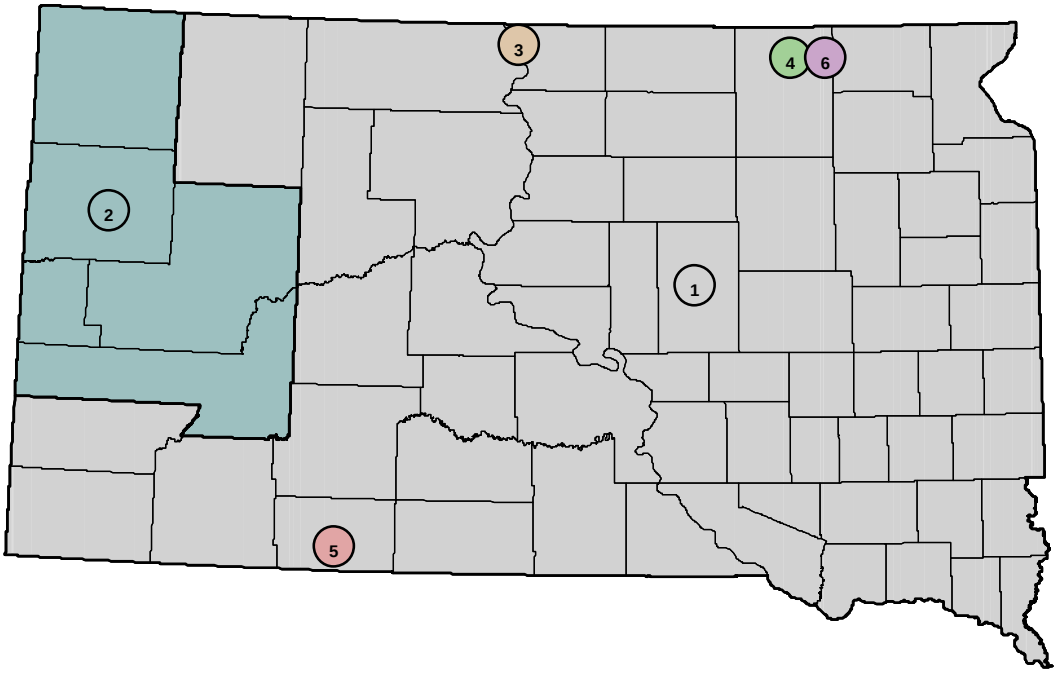
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 16-23; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 65 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,213,800



1994 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 15 - December 18 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 2, October 15-23 in designated counties

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 19 - December 18

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 12-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 15 - December 18

Dates: Zone 6, Renzienhausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 12-31

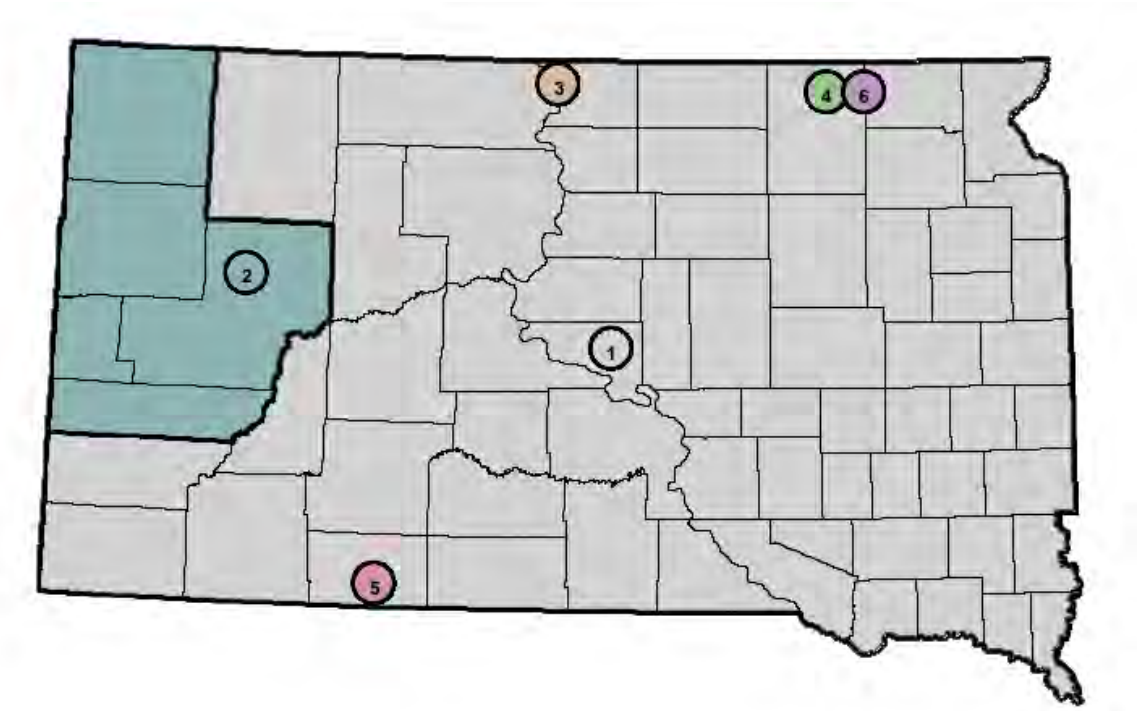
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 15-29; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 65 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,370,600



1995 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 21 - December 24 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 2, October 21-29 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 18 - December 24

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 11-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 21 - December 24

Dates: Zone 6, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 11-31

State-managed Game Production Areas, federally owned Waterfowl Production Areas, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land along the Missouri River were open December 25-31

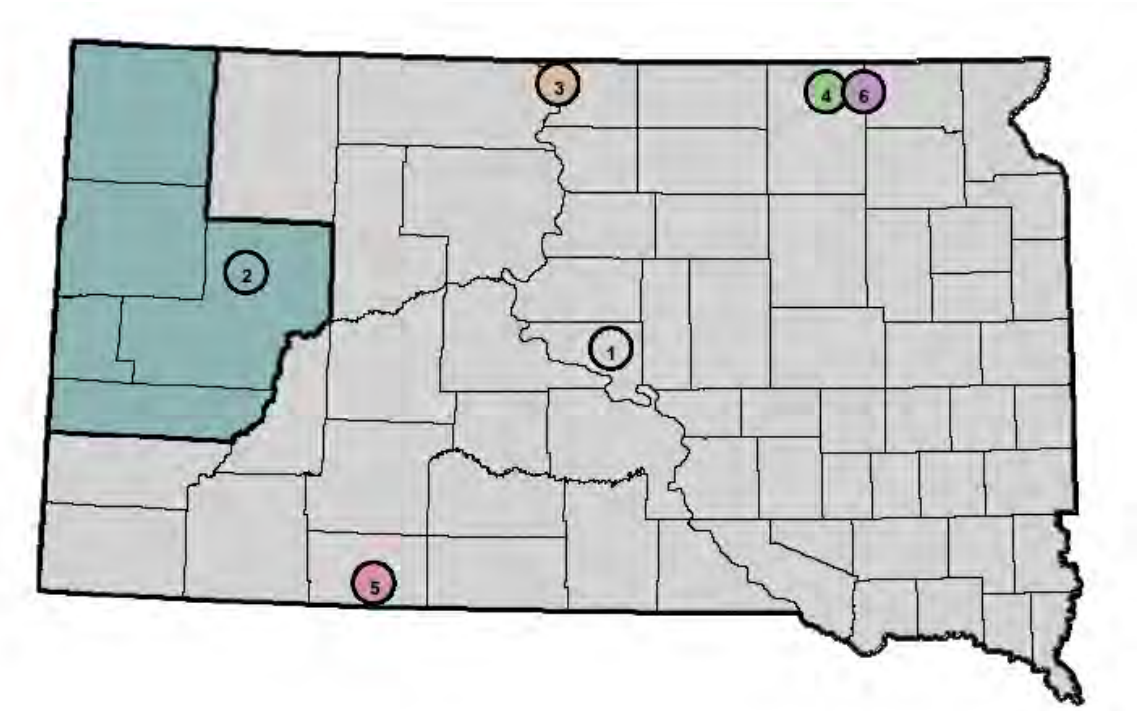
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 21-28; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 65 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,292,400



1996 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 19 - December 22 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 2, October 19-27 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 16 - December 22

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 9-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 19 - December 22

Dates: Zone 6, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 9-31

State-managed Game Production Areas, federally owned Waterfowl Production Areas, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land along the Missouri River were open December 23-31. Walk-In areas, state park lands, and state Water Access Areas were not open.

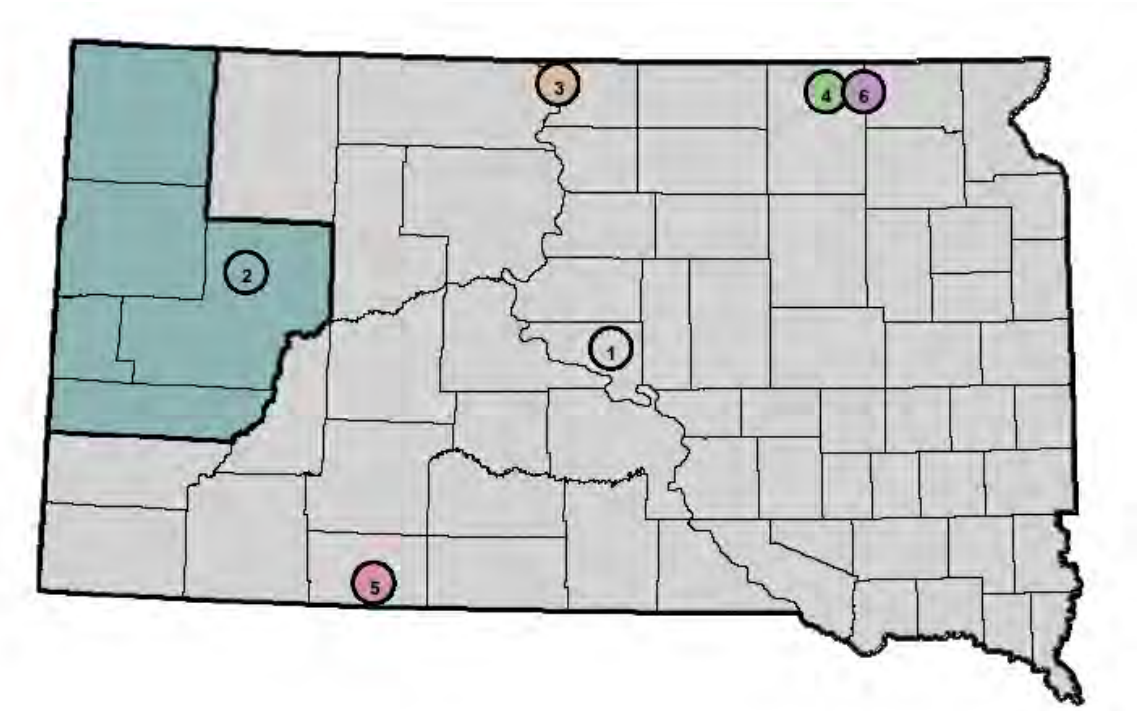
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 19-26; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 65 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,200,826



1997 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 18 - December 21 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 2, October 18-26 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 15 - December 21

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 15-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 18 - December 21

Dates: Zone 6, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 15-31

State-managed Game Production Areas, federally owned Waterfowl Production Areas, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land along the Missouri River were open December 22-31. Walk-In areas, state park lands, and state Water Access Areas were not open.

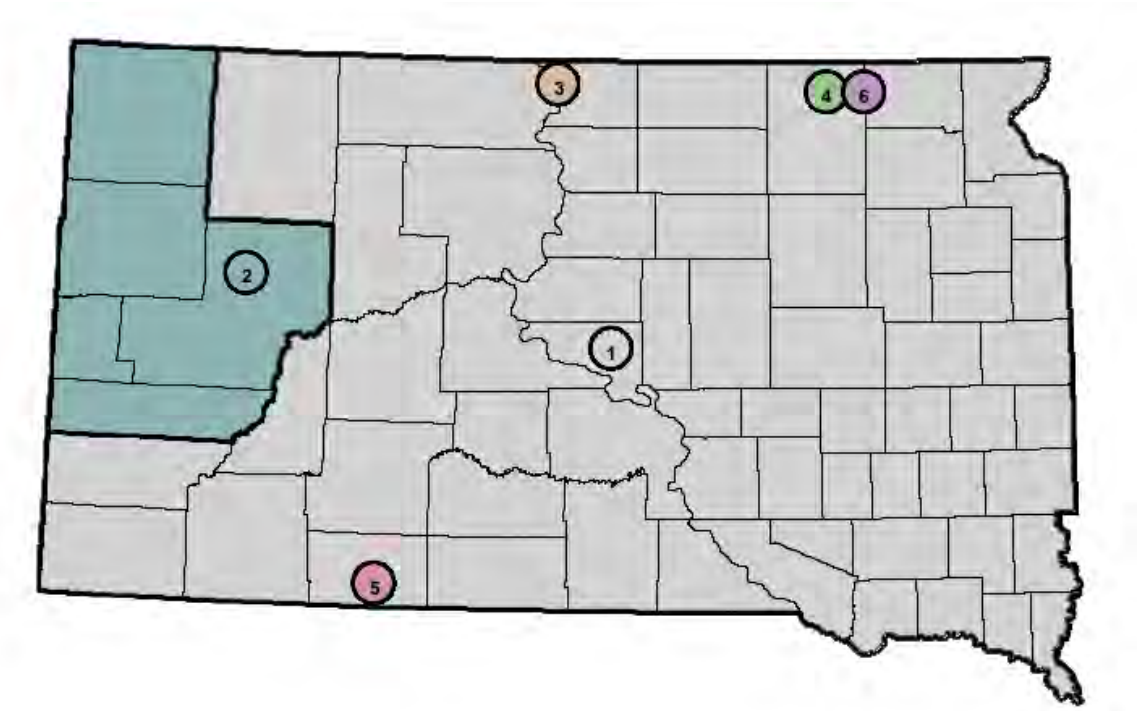
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 18-25; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 65 days

Harvest Estimate: 920,717



1998 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 17 - December 20 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 2, October 17-25 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 14 - December 20

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 14-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 17 - December 20

Dates: Zone 6, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 14-31

State-managed Game Production Areas, federally owned Waterfowl Production Areas, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land along the Missouri River were open December 21-31. Walk-In areas, state park lands, and state Water Access Areas were not open.

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 17-24; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters
Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 65 days
Harvest Estimate: 1,185,322

Introduction to Section Nine

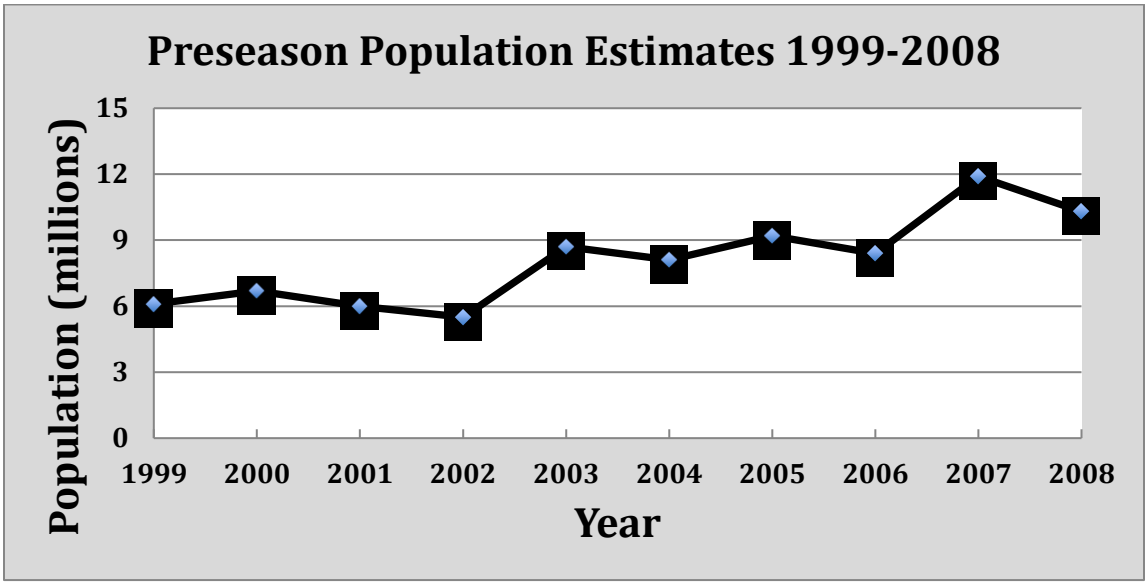


Chart 9-1. The ninth decade had pheasant populations back in the high-density level for the first time in 40 years. The years of 2003 through 2008 all had populations exceeding 8,000,000 pheasants. This decade also attained the fourth peak population period. The year 2007 had a population of 11,900,000 and 2008 had a population of 10,300,000.

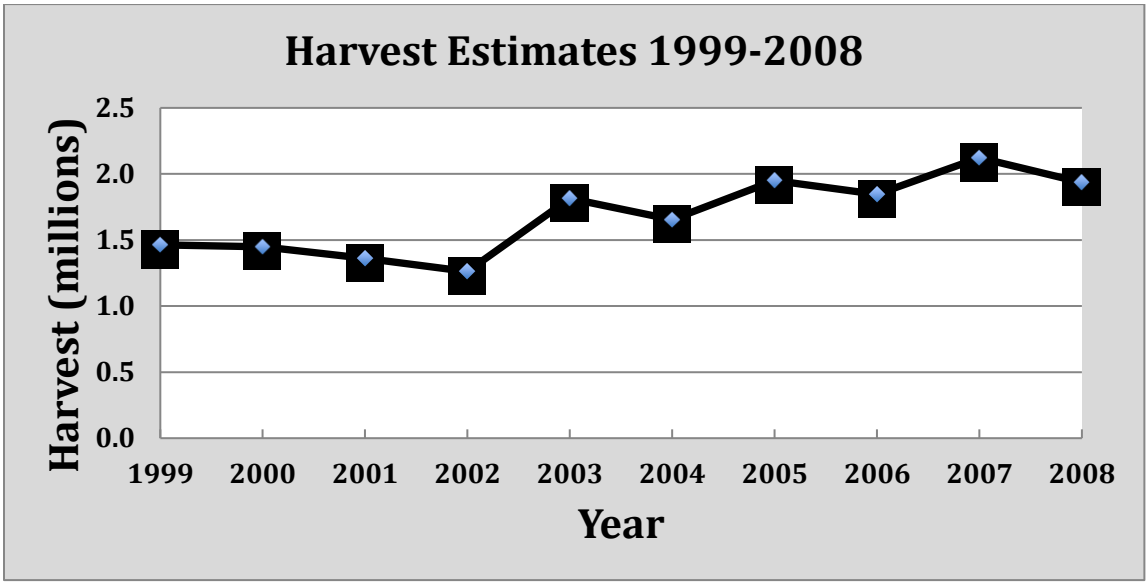


Chart 9-2. The harvest for the ninth decade was 16,856,861 pheasants and ranked third of the ten decades. The best yearly harvest of the decade was 2,122,345 in 2007.

Decade Events

2003: In order to pheasant hunt on Lacreek National Refuge hunters were required to obtain a free permit before hunting.

2007: A new season structure was adopted. All of South Dakota was open for the entire 79-day season. Some exceptions applied to refuges and game production areas.

2007: With a population of 11,900,000 this season ranked as the sixth largest population between 1919 and 2018.

Section 9

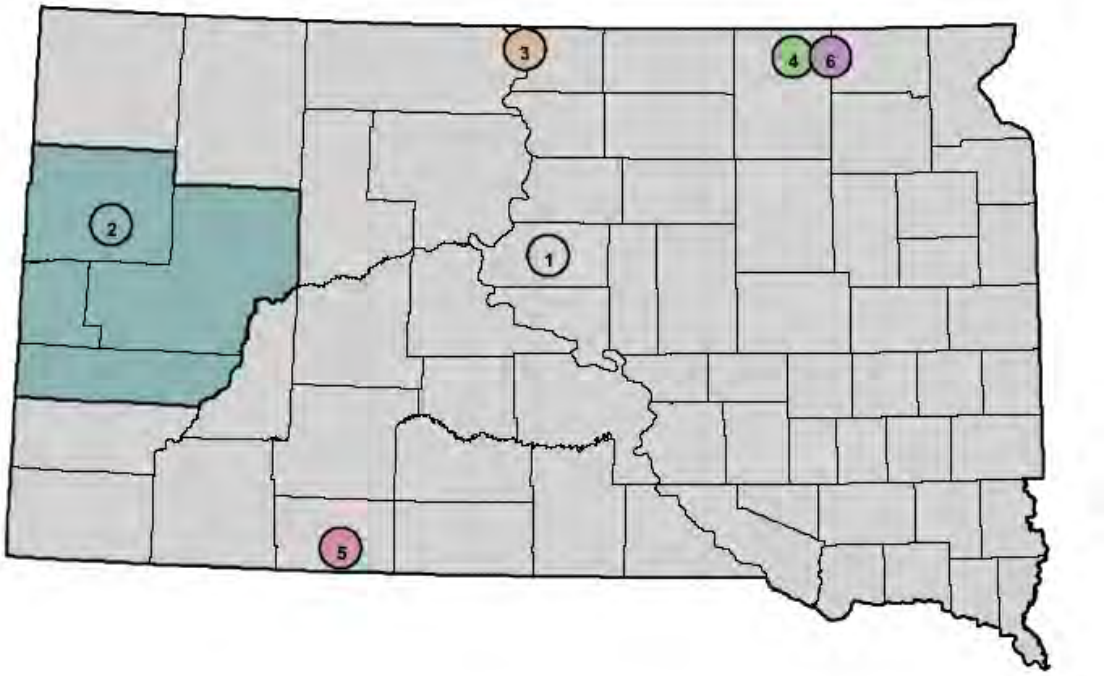
South Dakota Pheasant Seasons

1999-2008

Year	Season Length in Days	Opening Day	Preseason Population Estimate	Daily Limit	Possession Limit	Harvest Estimate
1999	65	Oct. 16	6,100,000	3	15	1,464,171
2000	72	Oct. 21	6,700,000	3	15	1,447,734
2001	73	Oct. 20	6,000,000	3	15	1,361,250
2002	74	Oct. 19	5,500,000	3	15	1,261,689
2003	75	Oct. 18	8,700,000	3	15	1,814,739
2004	79	Oct. 16	8,100,000	3	15	1,653,286
2005	79	Oct. 15	9,200,000	3	15	1,949,063
2006	79	Oct. 21	8,400,000	3	15	1,846,356
2007	79	Oct. 20	11,900,000	3	15	2,122,345
2008	79	Oct. 18	10,300,000	3	15	1,936,228

The Ninth Decade

The population for the years of 2003-2008 was in the high-density range with a population of 7,000,000 or more pheasants each year. Favorable weather for spring reproduction and a shift of the CRP enrollments to East River counties resulted in a harvest of over 1,200,000 pheasants every year throughout the decade. The CRP enrollments were also over 1,200,000 acres each year. The harvest of pheasants during this era ranks third highest among all decades. The season of 2007 was the peak of the decade with 180,836 resident and nonresident hunters harvesting 2,122,345 pheasants. The number of nonresident hunters was 103,048, the most of any single season. This was the first time the harvest exceeded two million since 1963. It was estimated that the pheasant hunting season pumped an estimated $219 million into the economy that year. The standard of having a hunting season length of 79 days commenced with the 2004 season.



1999 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 16 - December 19 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 2, October 16-24 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 20 - December 19

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 13-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 16 - December 19

Dates: Zone 6, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 13-31

State-managed Game Production Areas, federally owned Waterfowl Production Areas, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land along the Missouri River were open December 20-31. Walk-In areas, state park lands, and state Water Access Areas were not open.

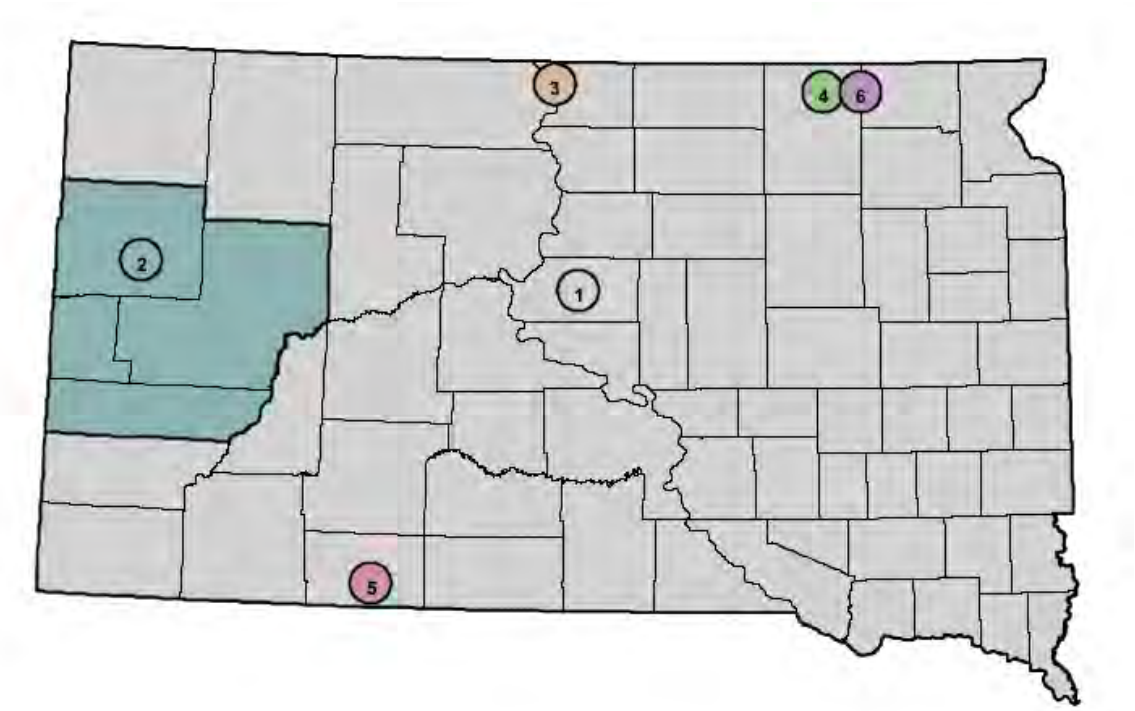
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 16-31; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 65 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,464,171



2000 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 21 - December 31 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 2, October 21-29 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 3, Pocasse National Wildlife Refuge in Campbell County, November 18 - December 31

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 11-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 21 - December 31

Dates: Zone 6, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 4-31

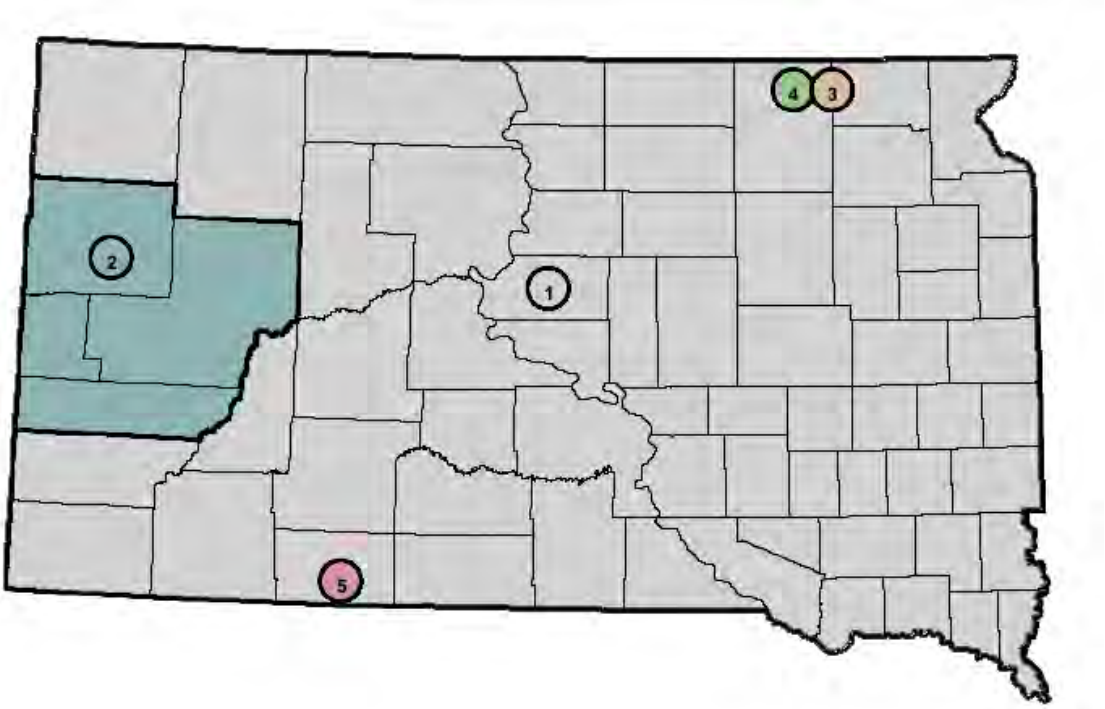
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 21-28; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 72 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,447,734



2001 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 20 - December 31 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 2, October 20-28 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 3, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 3-31

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 10-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 20 - December 31

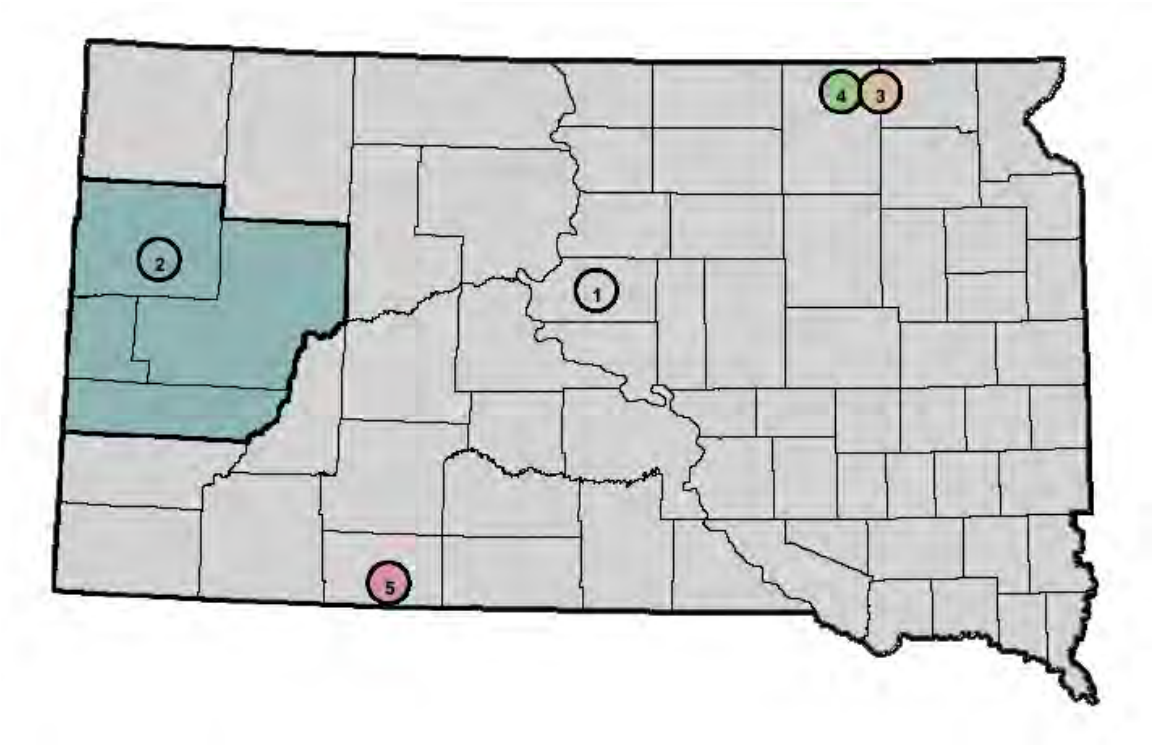
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 20-27; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 73 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,361,250



2002 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 19 - December 31 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 2, October 19-27 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 3, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 9-31

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 9-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 19 - December 31

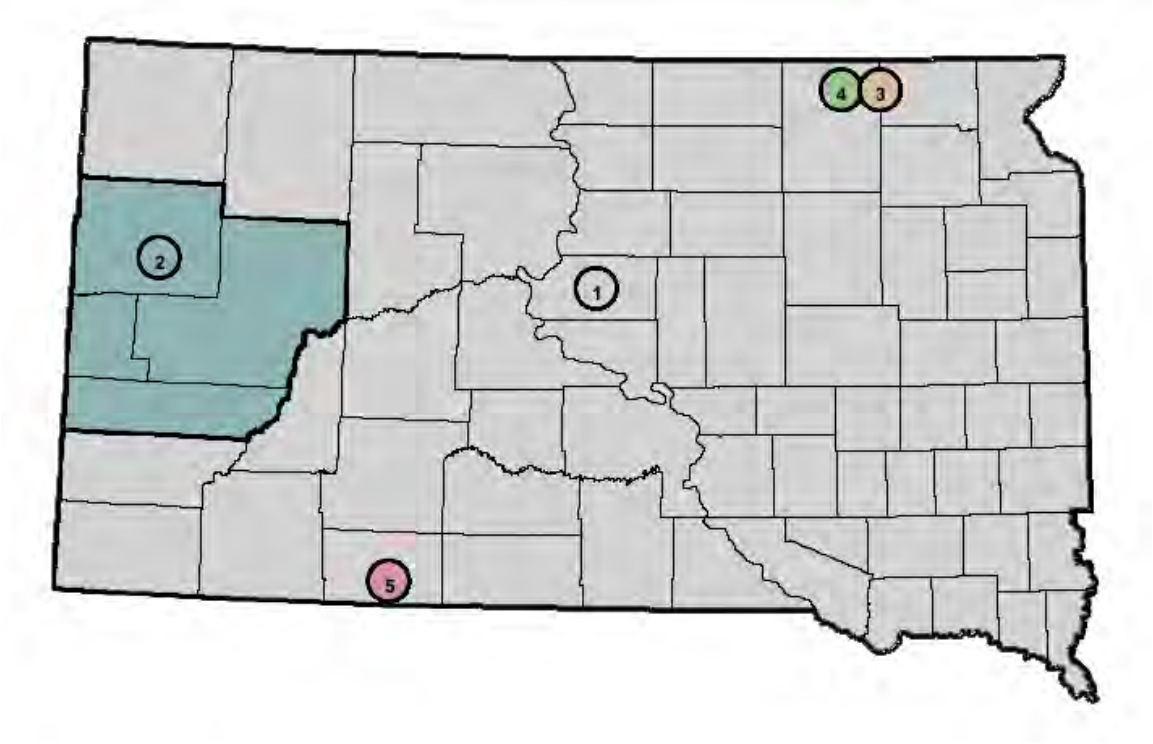
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 19-26; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 74 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,261,689



2003 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 18 - December 31 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 2, October 18-26 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 3, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 8-31

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 8-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 18 -December 31. Hunters were required to check in at the Refuge Headquarters and obtain a free permit before hunting.

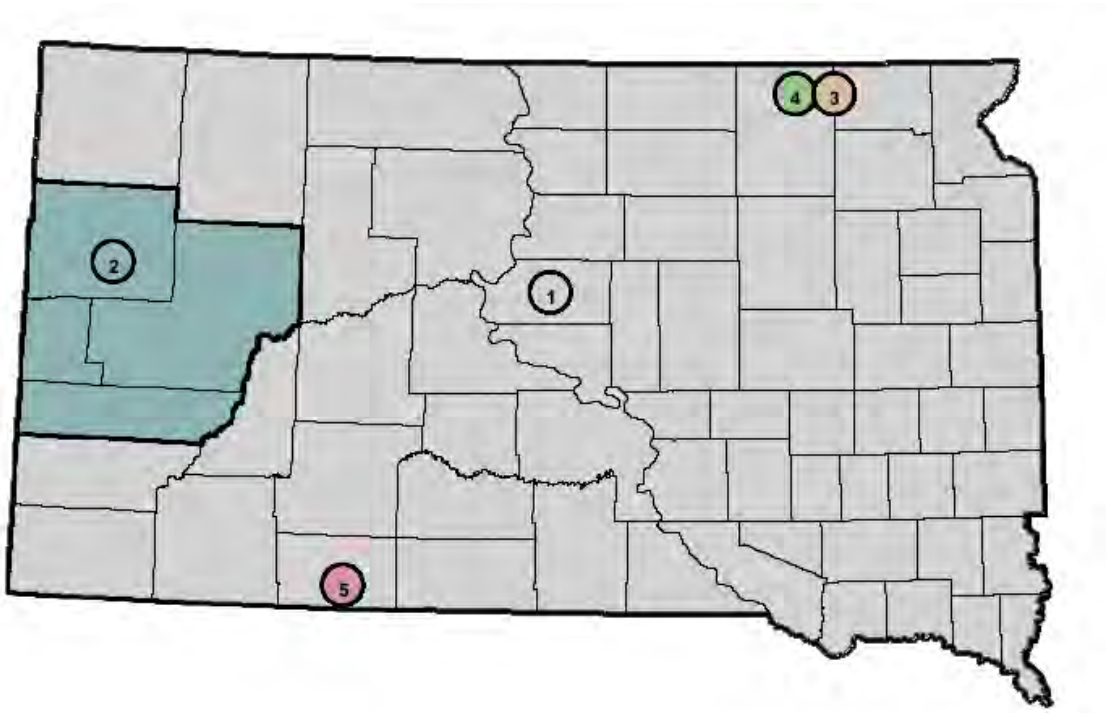
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 18-25; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 75 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,814,739



2004 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 16 - January 2, 2005, in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 2, October 16-24 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 3, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 13 - January 2

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 13 - January 2

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 16 - January 2. Hunters were required to check in at the Refuge Headquarters and obtain a free permit before hunting.

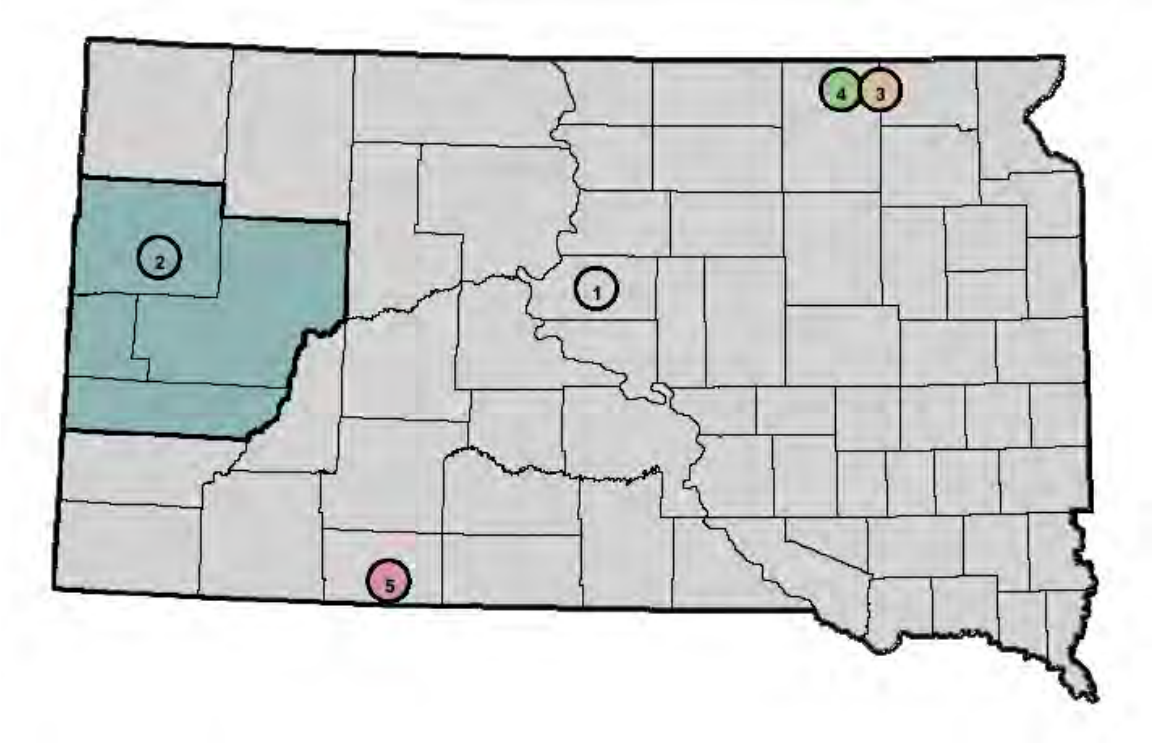
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 16-30; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,653,286



2005 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 15 - January 1, 2006, in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 2, October 15-30 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 3, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 12-31

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 12-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 15 - January 1. Hunters were required to check in at the Refuge Headquarters and obtain a free permit before hunting.

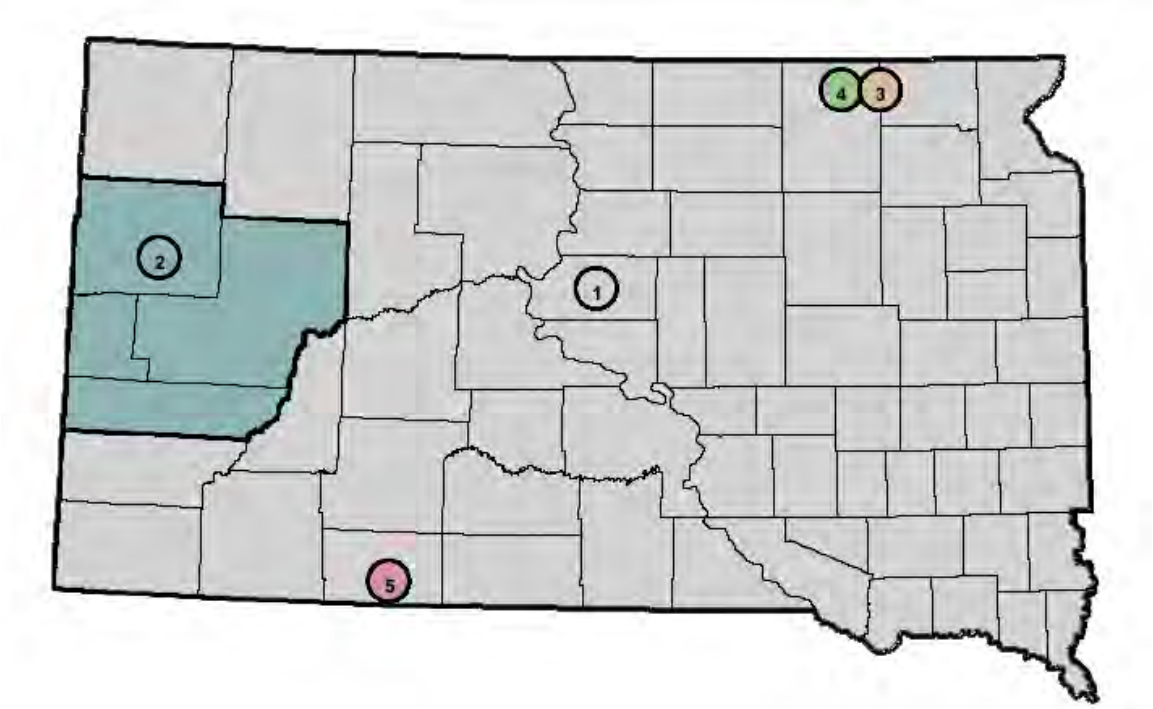
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 15-29; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,949,063



2006 Seasons

Dates: Zone 1, October 21 - January 7, 2007, in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County east of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 2, October 21 - November 5 in designated counties and that portion of Pennington County west of the Cheyenne River

Dates: Zone 3, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 11-31

Dates: Zone 4, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 11-31

Dates: Zone 5, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 21 - January 7. Hunters were required to check in at the Refuge Headquarters and obtain a free permit before hunting.

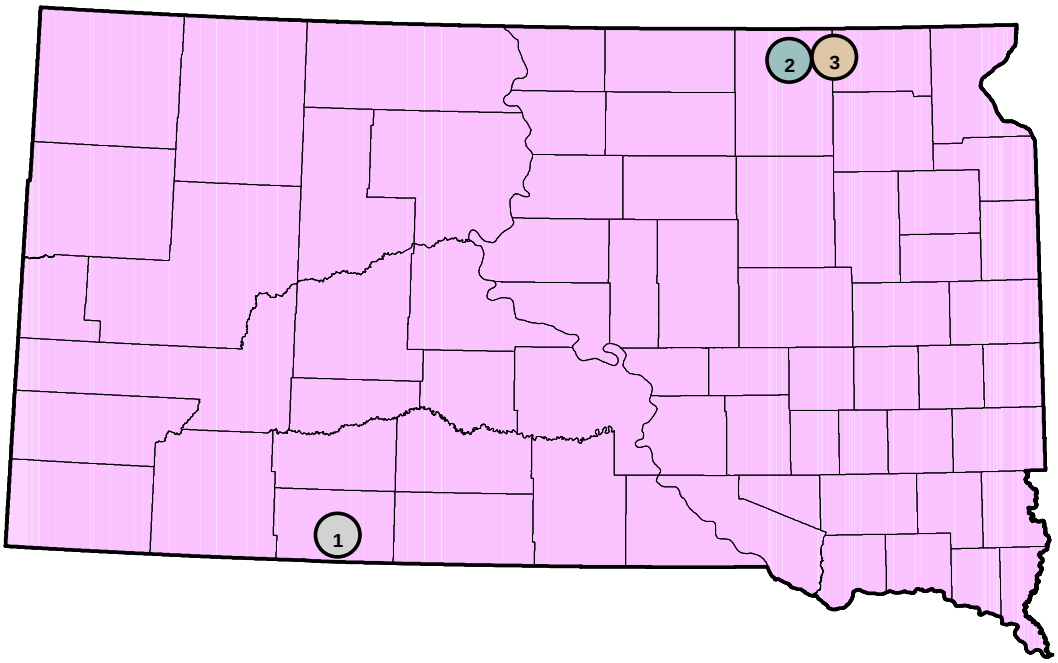
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 21-28; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,846,356



2007 Seasons

Dates: October 20 - January 6, 2008

Open Area: All of South Dakota with the following exceptions:

Zone 1, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 20 - January 6. Hunters were required to obtain, read, sign, and carry a free refuge entry permit before hunting. Permits were available at refuge headquarters or online.

Zone 2, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 10-31

Zone 3, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 10-31

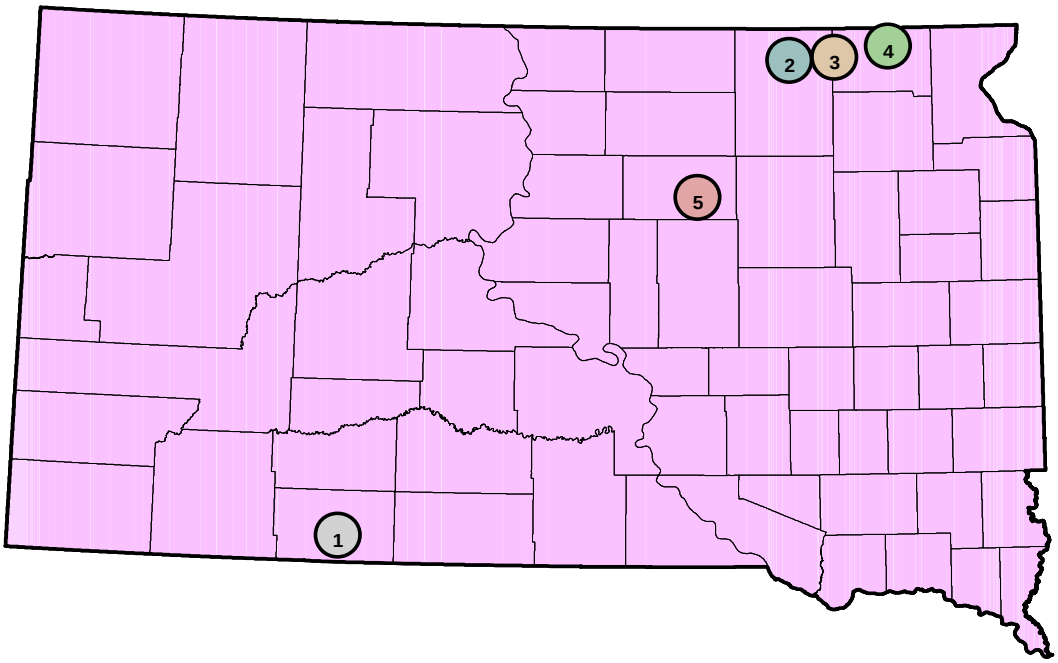
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 20-26; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 2,122,345



2008 Seasons

Dates: October 18 - January 4, 2009

Open Area: All of South Dakota with the following exceptions:

Zone 1, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 18 - January 4. Hunters were required to check in at the refuge headquarters to obtain a free permit before hunting. Permits were available at either entrance kiosk, or online.

Zone 2, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 8-31

Zone 3, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 8 - January 4

Zone 4, White Lake Game Bird Refuge in Marshall County, December 8 - January 4

Zone 5, Gerken Game Bird Refuge in Faulk County, December 8 - January 4

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 18-24; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,936,228

Introduction to Section Ten

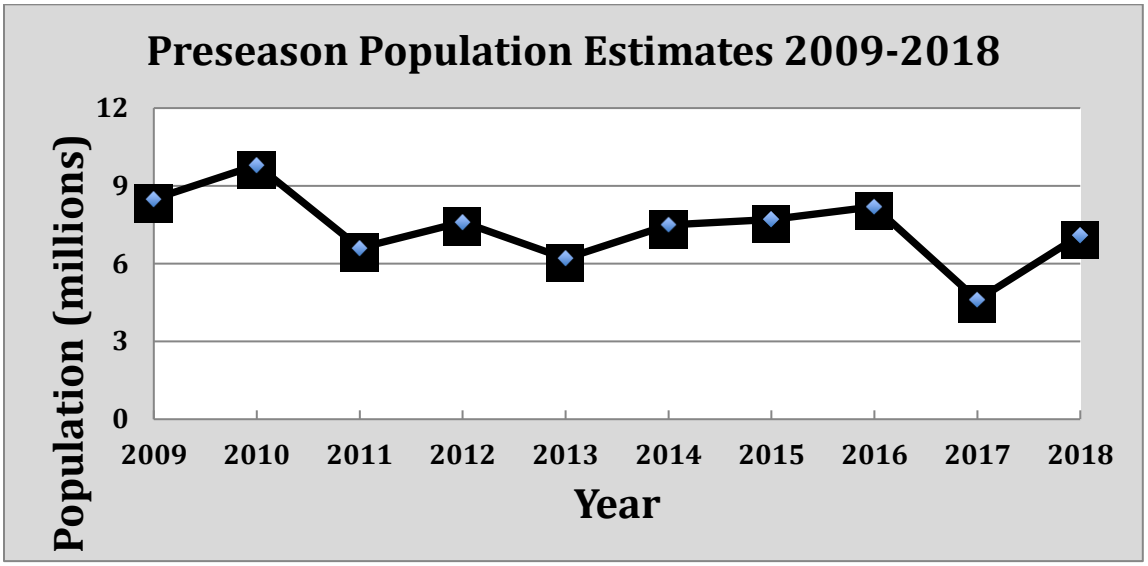


Chart 10-1. In comparing the total population of each decade, the tenth decade ranked in the top three. The ninth decade was second in ranking and the third decade was first. The population for the tenth decade was above 6,000,000 every year, except for 2017.

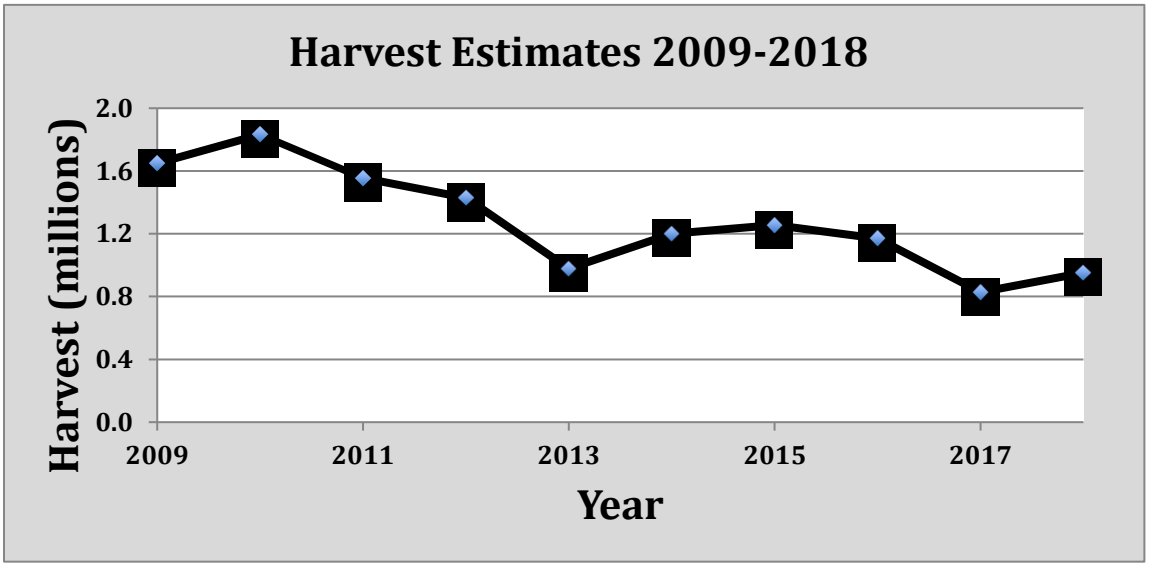


Chart 10-2. The harvest for the tenth decade was 12,848,268 pheasants and ranked fifth of the ten decades. The best yearly harvest of the decade was 1,831,576 in 2010.

Decade Events

2012: The season structure for 2012 was used for the remainder of the tenth decade.

2018: This was the 100th consecutive pheasant hunting season in South Dakota. Spink County was open for all 100 seasons.

2018: Some comparisons of the 1st season (1919), 26th season (1944), and 100th season (2018).

Season Length:	1919-one day	1944-162 days	2018-79 days
Area Open:	1919-one county	1944-64 counties	2018-entire state
Daily Limit:	1919-two roosters	1944-10 birds	2018-three roosters
Possession Limit:	1919-two roosters	1944-30 birds	2018-15 roosters

Section 10

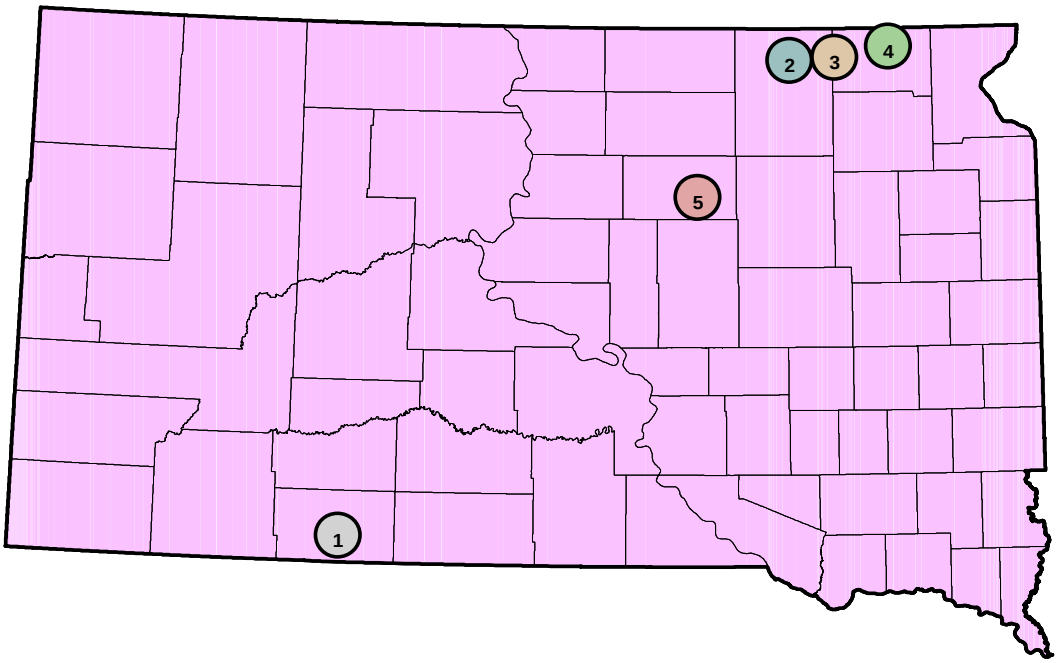
South Dakota Pheasant Seasons

2009-2018

Year	Season Length in Days	Opening Day	Preseason Population Estimate	Daily Limit	Possession Limit	Harvest Estimate
2009	79	Oct. 17	8,500,000	3	15	1,648,191
2010	79	Oct. 16	9,800,000	3	15	1,831,576
2011	79	Oct. 15	6,600,000	3	15	1,555,307
2012	79	Oct. 20	7,600,000	3	15	1,428,874
2013	79	Oct. 19	6,200,000	3	15	979,081
2014	79	Oct. 18	7,500,000	3	15	1,199,803
2015	79	Oct. 17	7,700,000	3	15	1,255,878
2016	79	Oct. 15	8,200,000	3	15	1,170,596
2017	79	Oct. 21	4,600,000	3	15	828,079
2018	79	Oct. 20	7,100,000	3	15	950,883

The Tenth Decade

The population for a majority of this decade was in the high-density range. The drop of the population into the medium-density range for the years of 2011, 2013, and 2017 was due to weather related events and a decrease in CRP habitat acres. Severe winter weather contributed to the big dip in the 2011 population. The combination of a summer drought in 2012 and a cold, wet spring in 2013 led to another dip in the population in 2013. In 2017 unfavorable winter weather conditions and drought conditions in various parts of the state reduced the population by 3,600,000. The reduction of quality CRP habitat acres, accompanied with emergency haying and grazing of existing CRP fields in drought stricken years, made it difficult for the pheasant population to retain a high-density level. Favorable weather conditions and the recovery of CRP fields from drought in 2018 resulted in an increase of the population over the previous year. This decade clearly demonstrated the relationship of pheasant populations with the amount of habitat available and the effect of weather from year to year. At the close of the first century of pheasant hunting, upland habitat remained a concern for the future of pheasants in South Dakota.



2009 Seasons

Dates: October 17 - January 3, 2010

Open Area: All of South Dakota with the following exceptions:

Zone 1, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 17 - January 3. Hunters were required to check in at the refuge headquarters to obtain a free permit before hunting. Permits were available at either entrance kiosk, or online.

Zone 2, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 14-31

Zone 3, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 14 - January 3

Zone 4, White Lake Game Bird Refuge in Marshall County, December 14 - January 3

Zone 5, Gerken Game Bird Refuge in Faulk County, December 14 - January 3

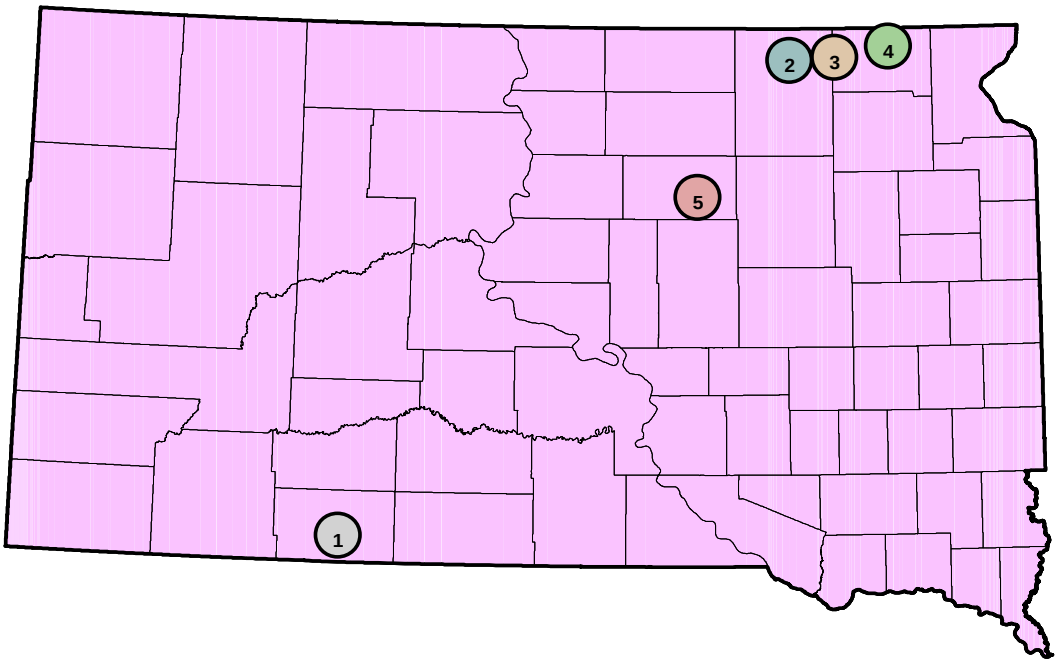
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 17-23; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,648,191



2010 Seasons

Dates: October 16 - January 2, 2011

Open Area: All of South Dakota with the following exceptions:

Zone 1, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 16 - January 2. Hunters were required to check in at the refuge headquarters to obtain a free permit before hunting. Permits were available at either entrance kiosk, or online.

Zone 2, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 13 - January 2

Zone 3, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 13 - January 2

Zone 4, White Lake Game Bird Refuge in Marshall County, December 13 - January 2

Zone 5, Gerken Game Bird Refuge in Faulk County, December 13 - January 2

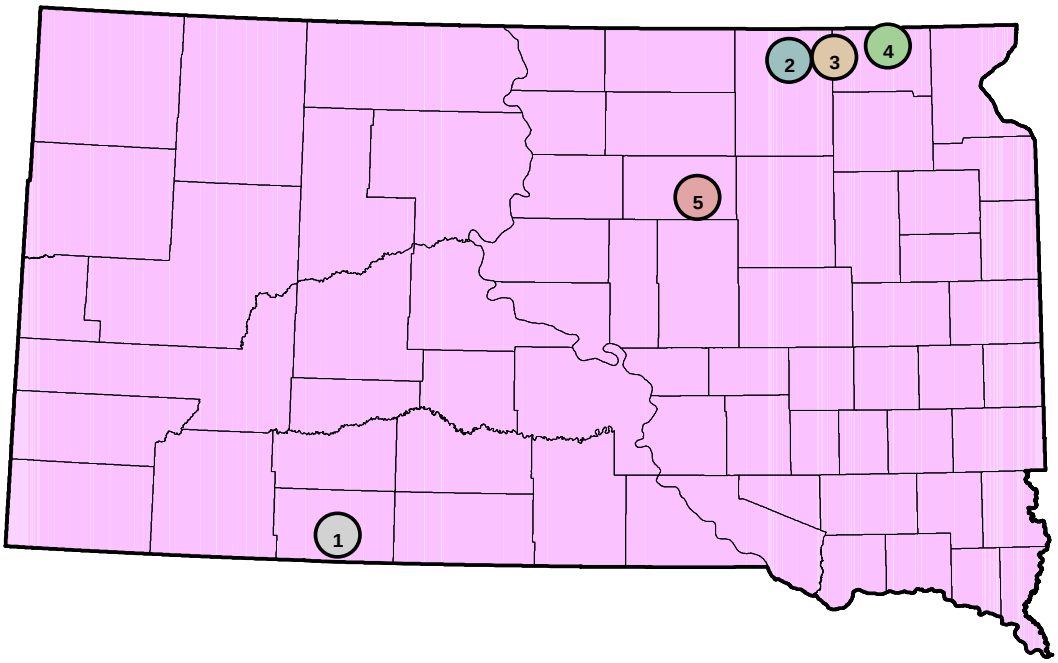
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 16-22; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,831,576



2011 Seasons

Dates: October 15 - January 1, 2012

Open Area: All of South Dakota with the following exceptions:

Zone 1, Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County, October 15 - January 1. Hunters were required to check in at the refuge headquarters to obtain a free permit before hunting. Permits were available at either entrance kiosk, or online.

Zone 2, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 12 - January 1

Zone 3, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 12 - January 1

Zone 4, White Lake Game Bird Refuge in Marshall County, December 12 - January 1

Zone 5, Gerken Game Bird Refuge in Faulk County, December 12 - January 1

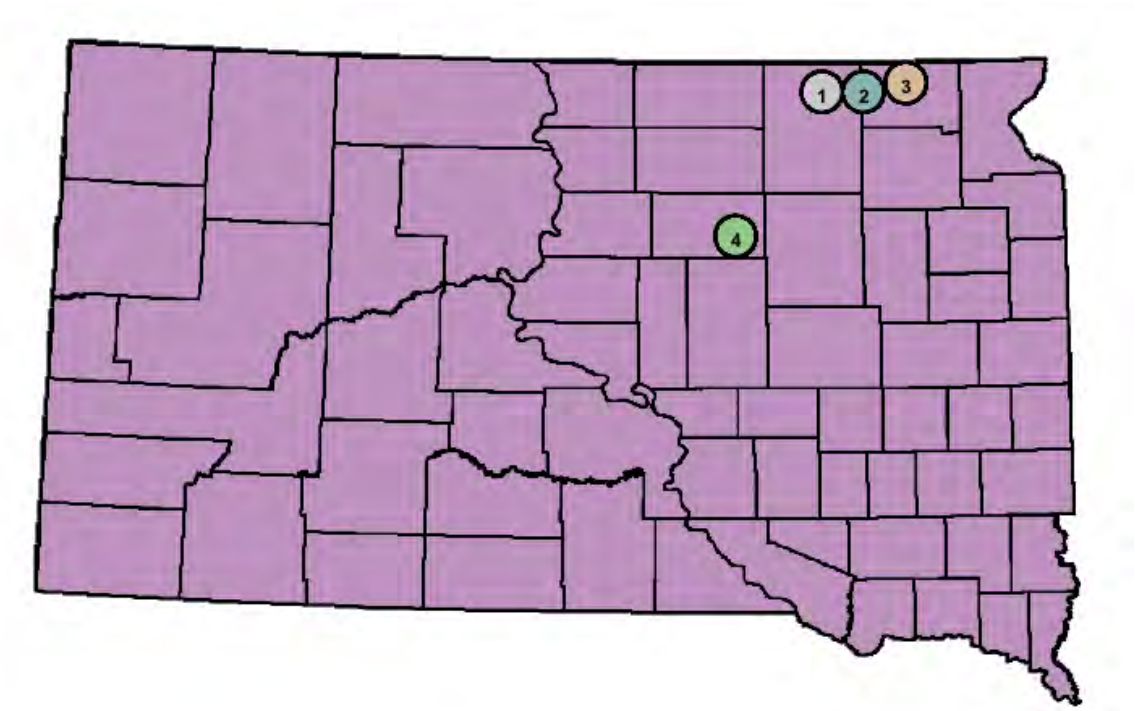
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 15-21; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,555,307



2012 Seasons

Dates: October 20 - January 6, 2013

Open Area: All of South Dakota with the following exceptions:

Zone 1, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 10 - January 6

Zone 2, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 10 - January 6

Zone 3, White Lake Game Bird Refuge in Marshall County, December 10 - January 6

Zone 4, Gerken Game Bird Refuge in Faulk County, December 10 - January 6

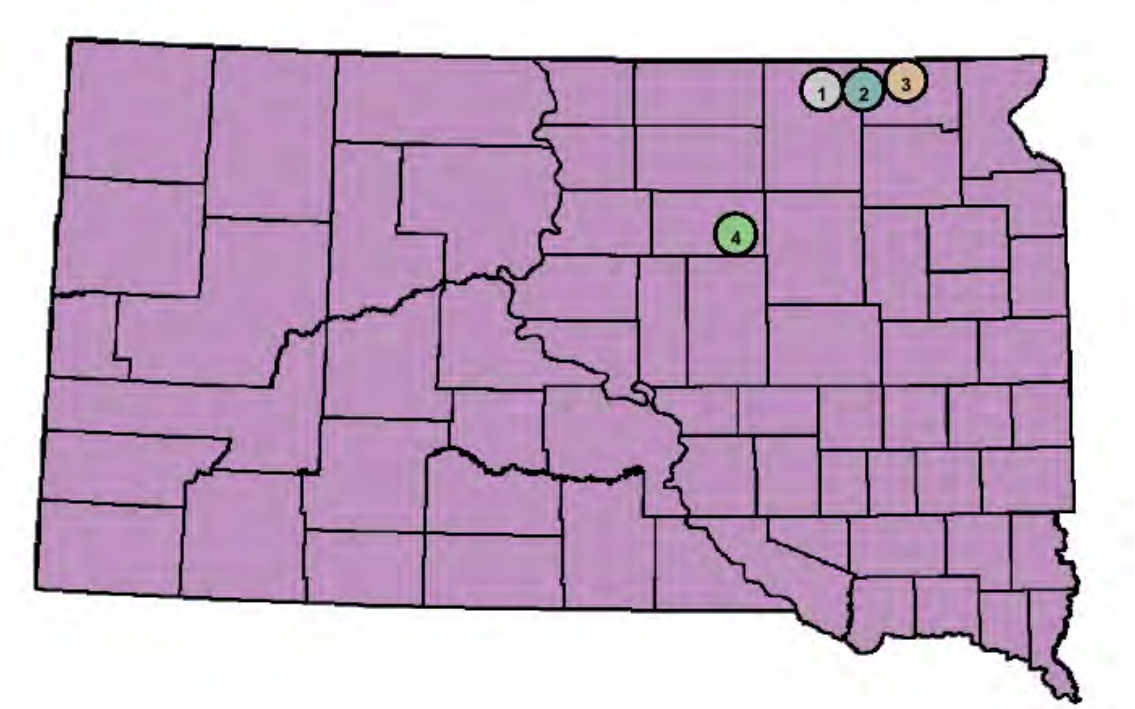
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 20-26; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,428,874



2013 Seasons

Dates: October 19 - January 5, 2014

Open Area: All of South Dakota with the following exceptions:

Zone 1, Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County, December 9 - January 5

Zone 2, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 9 - January 5

Zone 3, White Lake Game Bird Refuge in Marshall County, December 9 - January 5

Zone 4, Gerken Game Bird Refuge in Faulk County, December 9 - January 5

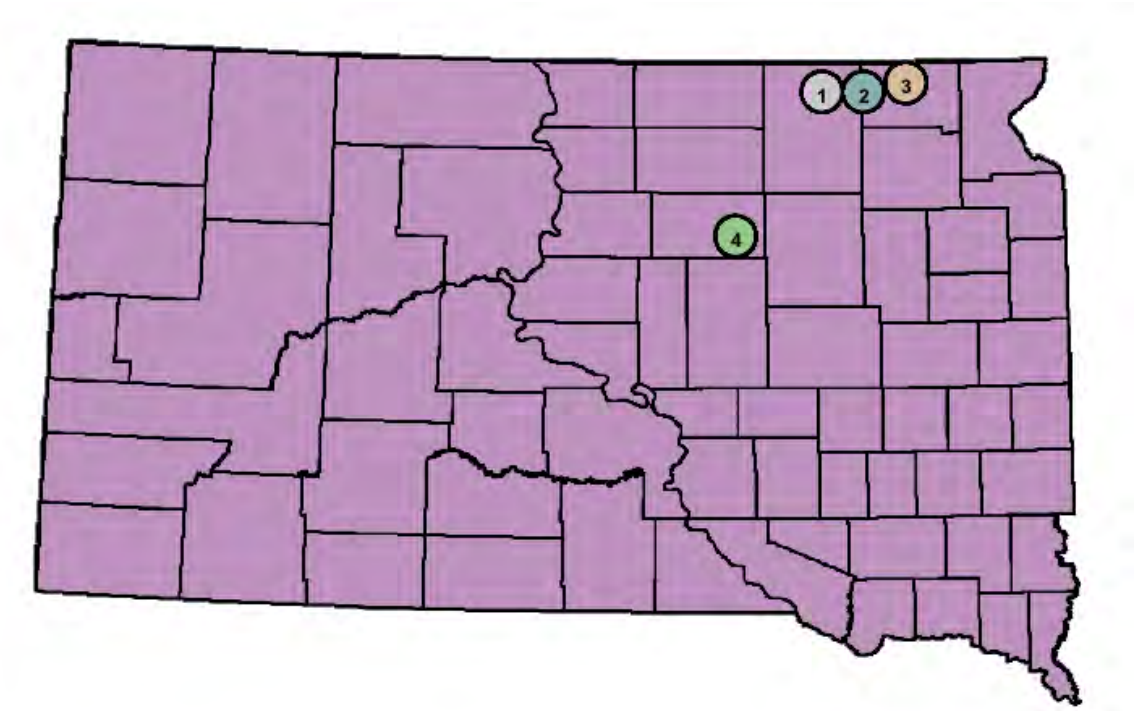
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 19-25; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 979,081



2014 Seasons

Dates: October 18 - January 4, 2015

Open Area: All of South Dakota with the following exceptions:

Zone 1, Sand Lake National Refuge in Brown County, December 8 - January 4

Zone 2, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 8 - January 4

Zone 3, White Lake Game Bird Refuge in Marshall County, December 8 - January 4

Zone 4, Gerken Game Bird Refuge in Faulk County, December 8 - January 4

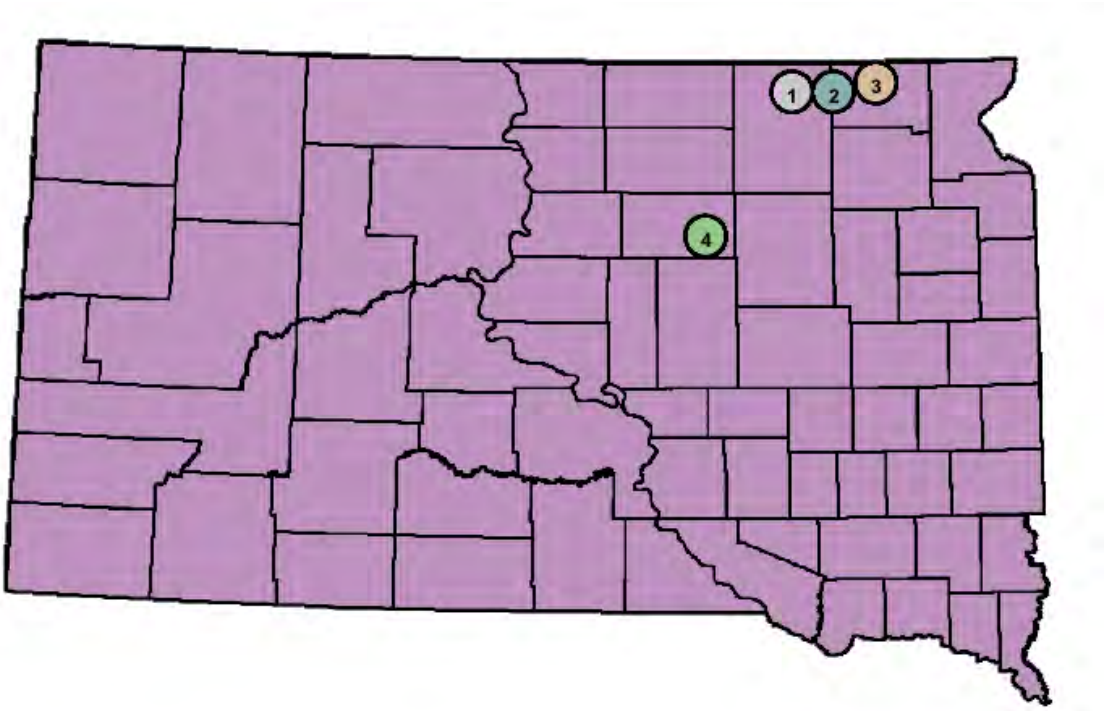
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 18-24; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,199,803



2015 Seasons

Dates: October 17 - January 3, 2016

Open Area: All of South Dakota with the following exceptions:

Zone 1, Sand Lake National Refuge in Brown County, December 14 - January 3

Zone 2, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 14 - January 3

Zone 3, White Lake Game Bird Refuge in Marshall County, December 14 - January 3

Zone 4, Gerken Game Bird Refuge in Faulk County, December 14 - January 3

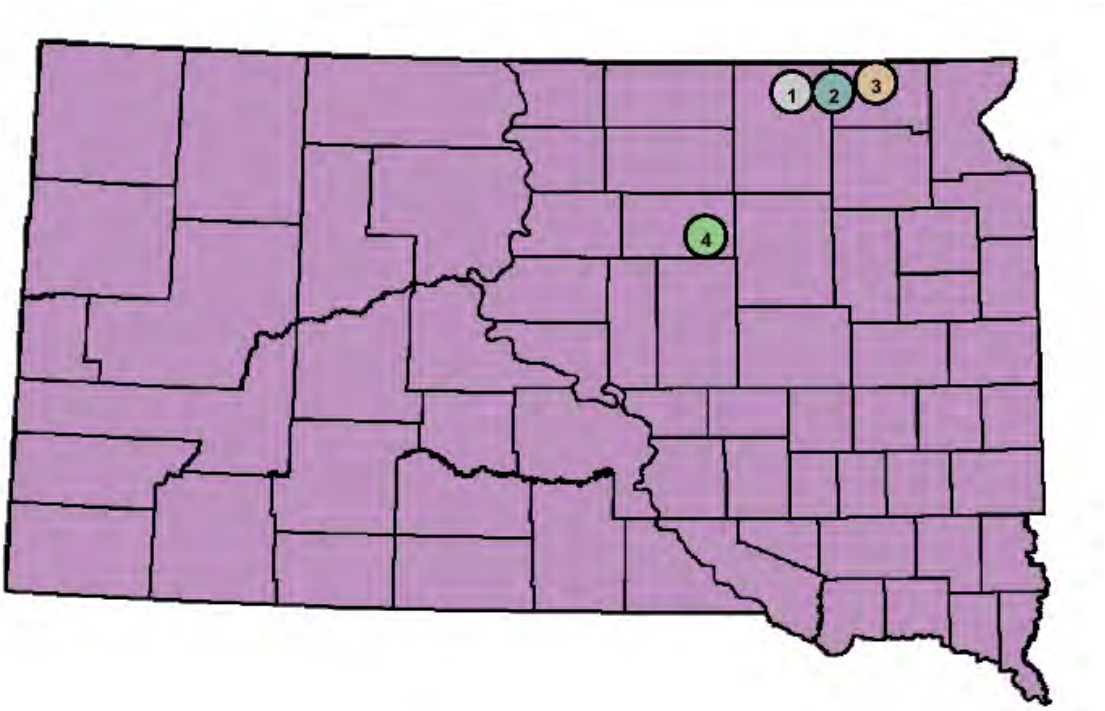
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 17-23; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,255,878



2016 Seasons

Dates: October 15 - January 1, 2017

Open Area: All of South Dakota with the following exceptions:

Zone 1, Sand Lake National Refuge in Brown County, December 12 - January 1

Zone 2, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 12 - January 1

Zone 3, White Lake Game Bird Refuge in Marshall County, December 12 - January 1

Zone 4, Gerken Game Bird Refuge in Faulk County, December 12 - January 1

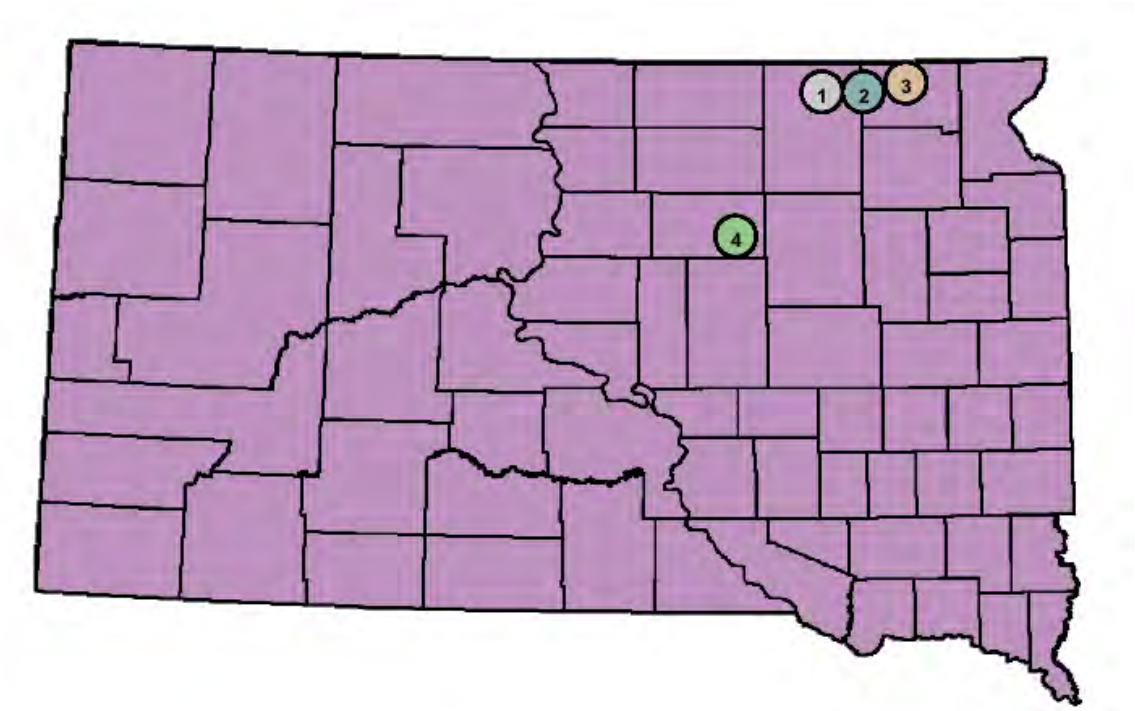
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 15-21; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 1,170,596



2017 Seasons

Dates: October 21 - January 7, 2018

Open Area: All of South Dakota with the following exceptions:

Zone 1, Sand Lake National Refuge in Brown County, December 11 - January 7

Zone 2, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 11 - January 7

Zone 3, White Lake Game Bird Refuge in Marshall County, December 11 - January 7

Zone 4, Gerken Game Bird Refuge in Faulk County, December 11 - January 7

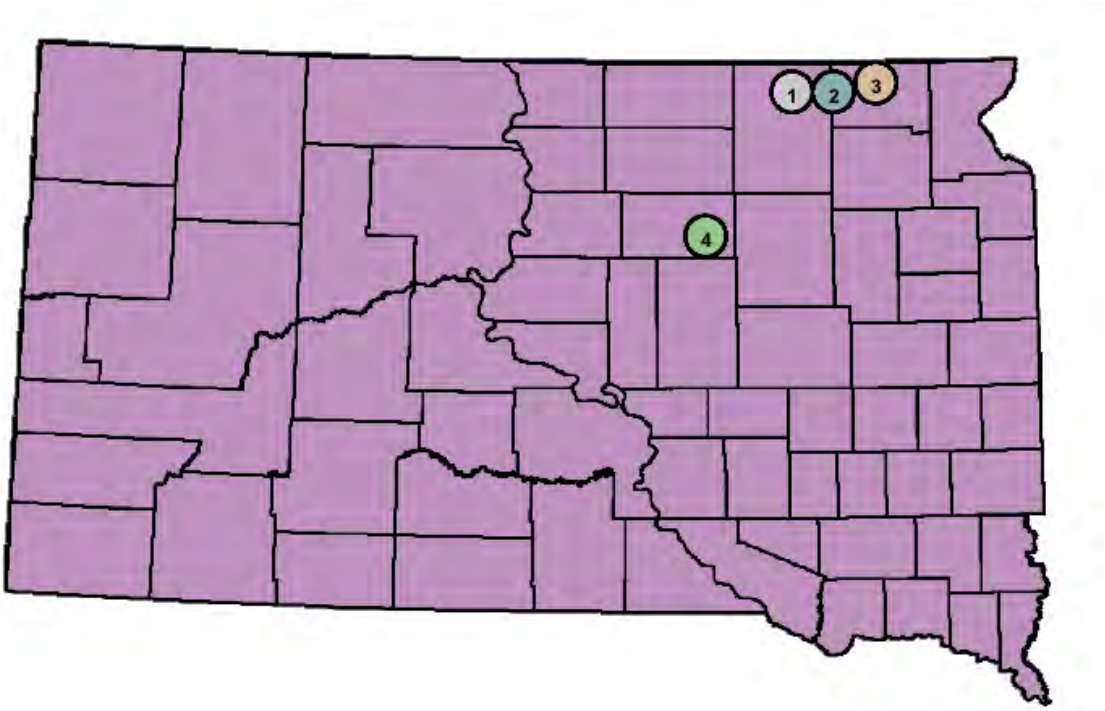
Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 21-27; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 828,079



2018 Seasons

Dates: October 20 - January 6, 2019

Open Area: All of South Dakota with the following exceptions:

Zone 1, Sand Lake National Refuge in Brown County, December 10 - January 6

Zone 2, Renziehausen Game Production Area and Game Bird Refuge in Brown and Marshall counties, December 1 - January 6

Zone 3, White Lake Game Bird Refuge in Marshall County, December 1 - January 6

Zone 4, Gerken Game Bird Refuge in Faulk County, December 1 - January 6

Shooting Hours: Noon, Central Time, to sunset October 20-26; 10 A.M., Central Time, to sunset the rest of the season. Central Time was used for opening shooting hours statewide.

Daily Limit: 3 roosters

Possession Limit: 15 roosters

Season Length: 79 days

Harvest Estimate: 950,883

Introduction to Section Eleven

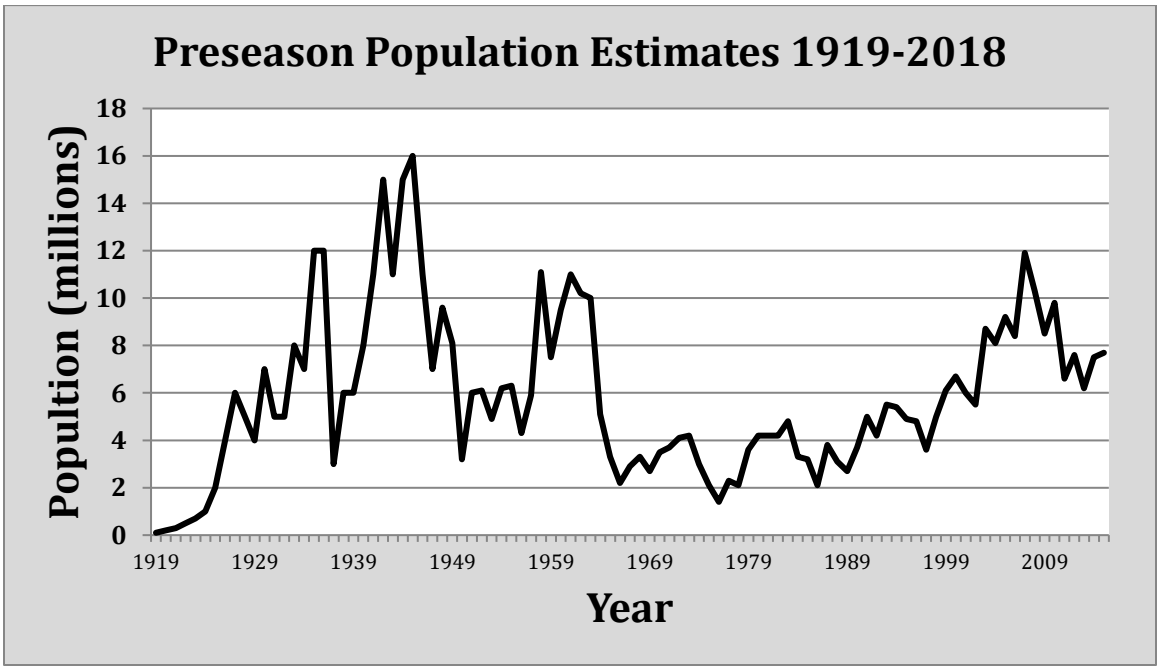


Chart 11-1. This population graph for the century covering 1919-2018 reveals peaks and valleys in the pheasant history of South Dakota. The peaks were obtained when habitat was abundant and pheasants thrived. The valleys were times when good habitat was less plentiful and pheasants struggled. The weather conditions from year to year accounted for the short term fluctuations of the population.

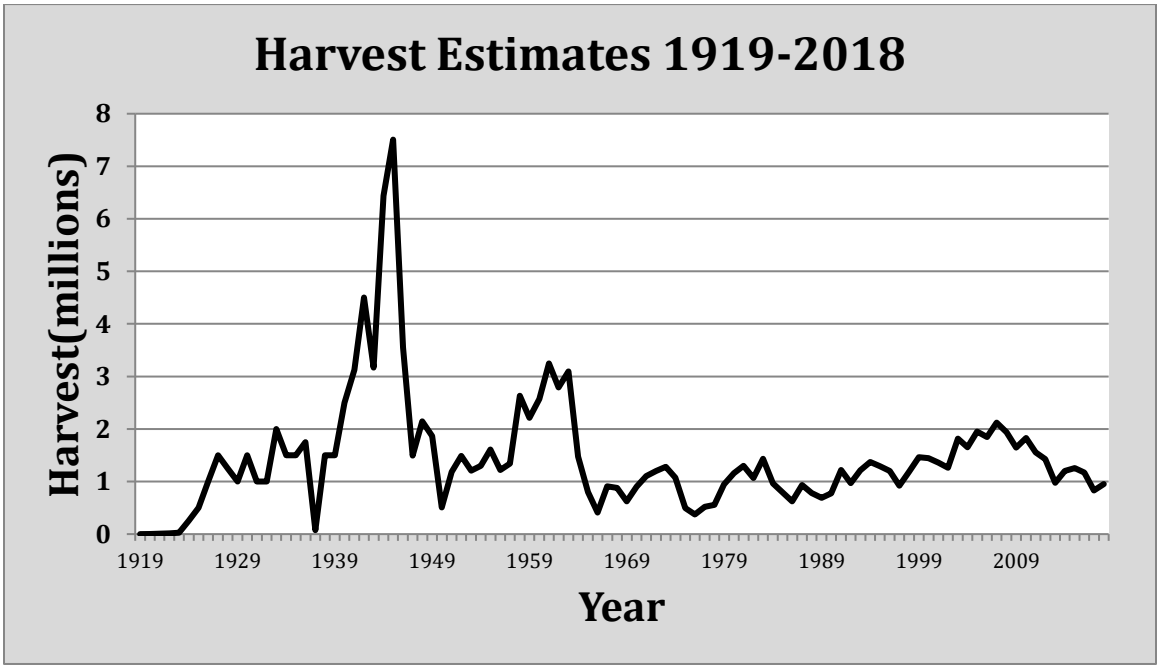


Chart 11-2. The harvest of pheasants in South Dakota over the century of 1919-2018 was the best in the nation. Sixty-eight of the 100 pheasant hunting seasons had a harvest of 1,000,000 or more. The total harvest for the century was 144,723,534 pheasants. Thus, South Dakota attained the reputation as the world's premier pheasant hunting destination.

Section 11

South Dakota Pheasant Seasons

Facts and Figures

South Dakota Pheasant Harvest by Decade

South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Statistics

New Game Bird for South Dakota

South Dakota Hunting Handbook Excerpts

Photo 11-1. The ringed-necked pheasant was named the State Bird of South Dakota in 1943.

On February 13, 1943, South Dakota adopted the ring-necked pheasant as the official state bird. The pheasant is a native of Asia. It was successfully introduced into the United States in 1881 in Oregon. The first successfully stockings in South Dakota occurred in Spink County in 1909.

State Representative Paul Kretschmar of Eureka made the following statement to the South Dakota Legislature in promoting the ring-necked pheasant as South Dakota's state bird in 1943. "To reward a bird of fine table delicacy, sporting blood, vigorous and hardy, found throughout the state, responsible for a substantial part of our state income, and one that has given us national recognition, it is my recommendation that the Ring Neck Pheasant be officially named as the bird of our state." ["Kretschmar Supports Pheasant for State Bird of South Dakota," *South Dakota Conservation Digest*, April, 1943, page 16.]

South Dakota Pheasant Harvest by Decade

Decade	Years	Decade Harvest	Running Total of Harvest	Average Harvest Per Year For the Decade	Decade Rank
First	1919-1928	4,548,200	4,548,200	454,820	#10
Second	1929-1938	12,825,000	17,373,200	1,282,500	#6
Third	1939-1948	35,933,341	53,306,541	3,593,334	#1
Fourth	1949-1958	14,361,142	67,667,683	1,436,114	#4
Fifth	1959-1968	18,384,750	86,052,433	1,838,475	#2
Sixth	1969-1978	8,131,550	94,183,983	813,155	#9
Seventh	1979-1988	9,994,132	104,178,115	999,413	#8
Eighth	1989-1998	10,840,290	115,018,405	1,084,029	#7
Ninth	1999-2008	16,856,861	131,875,266	1,685,686	#3
Tenth	2009-2018	12,848,268	144,723,534	1,284,826	#5

The figures used in this table were derived from the "Ring-necked Pheasant Statistics for South Dakota" historical chart 1919-2018 published by the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks.

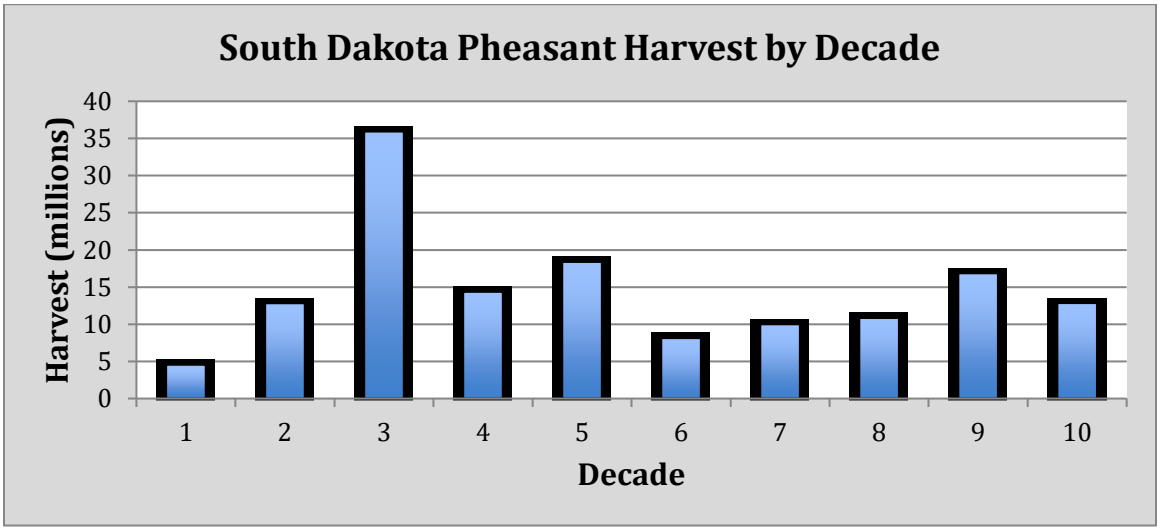


Chart 11-3.

The following information indicates how Federal Government agricultural programs increased pheasant populations and harvests in South Dakota.

1. The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933, the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1936, and the second Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 helped propel pheasant populations in the years following their enactment.
2. The Agricultural Act of 1956 created the Soil Bank Program. The Soil Bank Program boosted the fifth decade harvest, 1959-1968, to the second highest total of any ten-year period.
3. The Food Security Act of 1985 initiated the Conservation Reserve Program. One outcome of the Conservation Reserve Program was increased pheasant harvests in the succeeding decades.

Each of these programs provided income to landowners to take certain lands out of production. The set-aside acres placed in these programs created undisturbed idle vegetation that greatly benefited pheasants and other wildlife.

South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Statistics (1919-2018)

20 Longest Pheasant Hunting Seasons

1. 162 days - 1944	6. 79 days - 2004	11. 79 days - 2009	16. 79 days - 2014
2. 158 days - 1943	7. 79 days - 2005	12. 79 days - 2010	17. 79 days - 2015
3. 153 days - 1945	8. 79 days - 2006	13. 79 days - 2011	18. 79 days - 2016
4. 126 days - 1942	9. 79 days - 2007	14. 79 days - 2012	19. 79 days - 2017
5. 90 days - 1927	10. 79 days - 2008	15. 79 days - 2013	20. 79 days - 2018

17 Shortest Pheasant Hunting Seasons

1. 1 day - 1919	6. 13 days - 1950	11. 16 days - 1929	16. 25 days - 1951
2. 2 days - 1920	7. 14 days - 1938	12. 16 days - 1966	17. 29 days - 1939
3. 4 days - 1937	8. 15 days - 1924	13. 20 days - 1922	
4. 6 days - 1923	9. 15 days - 1925	14. 20 days - 1936	
5. 7 days - 1921	10. 15 days - 1931	15. 23 days - 1975	

16 Seasons with a Harvest of Two Million or more Pheasants

1. 7,507,000 - 1945	5. 3,247,000 - 1961	9. 2,790,300 - 1962	13. 2,212,000 - 1959
2. 6,439,000 - 1944	6. 3,168,000 - 1943	10. 2,635,000 - 1958	14. 2,148,341 - 1948
3. 4,500,000 - 1942	7. 3,125,000 - 1941	11. 2,572,000 - 1960	15. 2,122,345 - 2007
4. 3,550,000 - 1946	8. 3,095,000 - 1963	12. 2,500,000 - 1940	16. 2,000,000 - 1933

16 Seasons with the Smallest Harvest of Pheasants

1. 200 - 1919	5. 25,000 - 1923	9. 408,700 - 1966	13. 518,600 - 1977
2. 1,000 - 1920	6. 75,000 - 1937	10. 497,500 - 1975	14. 558,300 - 1978
3. 7,000 - 1921	7. 250,000 - 1924	11. 500,000 - 1925	15. 622,900 - 1969
4. 15,000 - 1922	8. 372,550 - 1976	12. 507,000 - 1950	16. 624,760 - 1986

15 Largest Possession Limits in certain zones that season

1. 30 birds - 1944	5. 24 males - 1963	9. 21 birds - 1942	13. 21 birds - 1944
2. 25 males - 1959	6. 21 birds - 1926	10. 21 males - 1942	14. 20 males - 1958
3. 25 males - 1961	7. 21 birds - 1927	11. 21 birds - 1943	15. 20 males - 1962
4. 24 birds - 1945	8. 21 birds - 1930	12. 21 males - 1943	

15 Smallest Possession Limits in certain zones that season

1. 2 males - 1919	5. 4 males - 1920	9. 4 males - 1931	13. 4 males - 1953
2. 2 males - 1921	6. 4 males - 1921	10. 4 males - 1932	14. 4 males - 1961
3. 2 males - 1922	7. 4 males - 1922	11. 4 males - 1933	15. 4 males - 1962
4. 3 males - 1951	8. 4 males - 1923	12. 4 males - 1936	

14 Years with a Fall Population of Ten Million or more Pheasants

1. 16,000,000 - 1945	5. 12,000,000 - 1936	9. 11,000,000 - 1943	13. 10,200,000 - 1962
2. 15,000,000 - 1942	6. 11,900,000 - 2007	10. 11,000,000 - 1946	14. 10,000,000 - 1963
3. 15,000,000 - 1944	7. 11,100,000 - 1958	11. 11,000,000 - 1961	
4. 12,000,000 - 1935	8. 11,000,000 - 1941	12. 10,300,000 - 2008	

Photo 11-2. A limit of three roosters has been the most common daily limit. This limit was used 63 times during the past 100 pheasant hunting seasons in South Dakota.

Opening Day Daily Limit—based on the largest limit in any regional zone

2 pheasants…….1919-1922, 1950, 1966, 1975-1978……...……....10 seasons
3 pheasants…...1923-1925, 1931, 1937, 1947, 1951-1957, 1964-1965, 1967-1974, 1979-2018…63 seasons
4 pheasants…….1932, 1936, 1938-1939, 1948-1949, 1958, 1960-1963……..11 seasons
5 pheasants…….1928-1929, 1933-1934, 1940-1941, 1946, 1959……..8 seasons
6 pheasants…….1935……...1 season
7 pheasants…….1926-1927, 1930, 1942-1943……...5 seasons
8 pheasants…….1945……...1 season
10 pheasants……...1944……...1 season

Opening Day Daily Limit that allowed Hens—based on the largest hen limit in any regional zone
[Author's Note: The 1936 Zone 1 regional season allowed one hen in the daily bag limit; not on opening day but at a later date.]

1 hen allowed in the daily bag limit…….1928-1929, 1933, 1938-1941…….7 seasons
2 hens allowed in the daily bag limit……1926, 1930, 1934-1935, 1942, 1946…….6 seasons
3 hens allowed in the daily bag limit……1927, 1943…….2 seasons
4 hens allowed in the daily bag limit……1945……1 season
5 hens allowed in the daily bag limit……1944……1 season

Possession Limit—based on the maximum limit in any regional zone for the entire season

2 pheasants……..1919……..1 season
4 pheasants……..1920……..1 season
6 pheasants……..1921-1922, 1931, 1937, 1950…….5 seasons
8 pheasants……..1932, 1936, 1938-1939……...4 seasons
9 pheasants……..1947, 1951……..2 seasons
10 pheasants……1933-1934, 1940-1941, 1966, 1975-1978……...9 seasons
12 pheasants……1935, 1948-1949, 1952-1953……..5 seasons
15 pheasants…1924-1925, 1928-1929, 1946, 1954-1957, 1964-1965, 1967-1974, 1979-2018……59 seasons
16 pheasants……1960……..1 season
18 pheasants……1923……..1 season
20 pheasants……1958, 1962……...2 seasons
21 pheasants……1926-1927, 1930, 1942-1943……..5 seasons
24 pheasants……1945, 1963……...2 seasons
25 pheasants……1959, 1961……...2 seasons
30 pheasants……1944……..1 season

Six Opposite Pairs of South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Facts

EARLIEST Opening Hunting Season Date…September 20…….....1944 season
LATEST Closing Hunting Season Date……..February 29, 1944……...end of 1943 season

SHORTEST Season.……..one day…….....1919 season
LONGEST Season…….162 days……...1944 season

SMALLEST Harvest……..200……...1919 season
LARGEST Harvest…….7,507,000……1945 season

SMALLEST Daily Limit…2 roosters……..1919-1922, 1950, 1966, 1975-1978 seasons
LARGEST Daily Limit…..10 pheasants of which 5 may be hens…….1944 season

SMALLEST Possession Limit…….2 roosters……..1919, 1921-1922 seasons
LARGEST Possession Limit……30 pheasants of which 15 may be hens…….1944 season

SMALLEST Number of Hunters……1,000……...1919 season
LARGEST Number of Hunters……...212,150……...1963 season

South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Seasons Length—Longest to Shortest

162 to 70 days

1. 162 days - 1944
2. 158 days - 1943
3. 153 days - 1945
4. 126 days - 1942
5. 90 days - 1927
6. 79 days - 2004
7. 79 days - 2005
8. 79 days - 2006
9. 79 days - 2007
10. 79 days - 2008
11. 79 days - 2009
12. 79 days - 2010
13. 79 days - 2011
14. 79 days - 2012
15. 79 days - 2013
16. 79 days - 2014
17. 79 days - 2015
18. 79 days - 2016
19. 79 days - 2017
20. 79 days - 2018
21. 77 days - 1926
22. 76 days - 1930
23. 75 days - 2003
24. 74 days - 1963
25. 74 days - 2002
26. 73 days - 2001
27. 72 days - 2000

69 to 50 days

28. 65 days - 1991
29. 65 days - 1992
30. 65 days - 1993
31. 65 days - 1994
32. 65 days - 1995
33. 65 days - 1996
34. 65 days - 1997
35. 65 days - 1998
36. 65 days - 1999
37. 64 days - 1973
38. 63 days - 1980
39. 61 days - 1962
40. 60 days - 1946
41. 60 days - 1964
42. 58 days - 1959
43. 58 days - 1961
44. 55 days - 1940
45. 51 days - 1958
46. 51 days - 1979
47. 51 days - 1981
48. 51 days - 1982
49. 51 days - 1983
50. 51 days - 1984
51. 51 days - 1985
52. 51 days - 1986
53. 51 days - 1987
54. 51 days - 1988
55. 51 days - 1989
56. 51 days - 1990
57. 50 days - 1941

49 to 30 days

58. 49 days - 1971
59. 49 days - 1972
60. 49 days - 1974
61. 45 days - 1947
62. 45 days - 1948
63. 45 days - 1949
64. 44 days - 1965
65. 44 days - 1977
66. 44 days - 1978
67. 42 days - 1960
68. 40 days - 1928
69. 40 days - 1955
70. 37 days - 1935
71. 37 days - 1957
72. 37 days - 1967
73. 37 days - 1968
74. 37 days - 1970
75. 35 days - 1956
76. 30 days - 1932
77. 30 days - 1933
78. 30 days - 1934
79. 30 days - 1952
80. 30 days - 1953
81. 30 days - 1954
82. 30 days - 1969
83. 30 days - 1976

29 days to 1 day

84. 29 days - 1939
85. 25 days - 1951
86. 23 days - 1975
87. 20 days - 1922
88. 20 days - 1936
89. 16 days - 1929
90. 16 days - 1966
91. 15 days - 1924
92. 15 days - 1925
93. 15 days - 1931
94. 14 days - 1938
95. 13 days - 1950
96. 7 days - 1921
97. 6 days - 1923
98. 4 days - 1937
99. 2 days - 1920
100. 1 day - 1919

Fun Figure
From 1919 through 2018 South Dakota had a total of 5,348 pheasant hunting days.

South Dakota Pheasant Preseason Population Estimate for each Season—Highest to Lowest

High Density Level (7 million or more)	Medium Density Level (between 4 & 7 million)	Low Density Level (less than 4 million)
1. 16,000,000 - 1945	35. 6,700,000 - 2000	71. 3,800,000 - 1987
2. 15,000,000 - 1942	36. 6,600,000 - 2011	72. 3,700,000 - 1971
3. 15,000,000 - 1944	37. 6,300,000 - 1955	73. 3,700,000 - 1990
4. 12,000,000 - 1935	38. 6,200,000 - 1954	74. 3,600,000 - 1979
5. 12,000,000 - 1936	39. 6,200,000 - 2013	75. 3,600,000 - 1997
	40. 6,100,000 - 1952	76. 3,500,000 - 1970
6. 11,900,000 - 2007	41. 6,100,000 - 1999	77. 3,300,000 - 1965
7. 11,100,000 - 1958	42. 6,000,000 - 1927	78. 3,300,000 - 1968
8. 11,000,000 - 1941	43. 6,000,000 - 1938	79. 3,300,000 - 1984
9. 11,000,000 - 1943	44. 6,000,000 - 1939	80. 3,200,000 - 1950
10. 11,000,000 - 1946	45. 6,000,000 - 1951	81. 3,200,000 - 1985
11. 11,000,000 - 1961	46. 6,000,000 - 2001	82. 3,100,000 - 1988
		83. 3,000,000 - 1937
12. 10,300,000 - 2008	47. 5,900,000 - 1957	84. 3,000,000 - 1974
13. 10,200,000 - 1962	48. 5,500,000 - 1993	
14. 10,000,000 - 1963	49. 5,500,000 - 2002	85. 2,900,000 - 1967
	50. 5,400,000 - 1994	86. 2,700,000 - 1969
15. 9,800,000 - 2010	51. 5,100,000 - 1964	87. 2,700,000 - 1989
16. 9,600,000 - 1948	52. 5,000,000 - 1928	88. 2,300,000 - 1977
17. 9,500,000 - 1960	53. 5,000,000 - 1931	89. 2,200,000 - 1966
18. 9,200,000 - 2005	54. 5,000,000 - 1932	90. 2,100,000 - 1975
	55. 5,000,000 - 1991	91. 2,100,000 - 1978
19. 8,700,000 - 2003	56. 5,000,000 - 1998	92. 2,100,000 - 1986
20. 8,500,000 - 2009		93. 2,000,000 - 1925
21. 8,400,000 - 2006	57. 4,900,000 - 1953	
22. 8,200,000 - 2016	58. 4,900,000 - 1995	94. 1,400,000 - 1976
23. 8,100,000 - 1949	59. 4,800,000 - 1983	95. 1,000,000 - 1924
24. 8,100,000 - 2004	60. 4,800,000 - 1996	
25. 8,000,000 - 1933	61. 4,600,000 - 2017	96. 700,000 - 1923
26. 8,000,000 - 1940	62. 4,300,000 - 1956	97. 500,000 - 1922
	63. 4,200,000 - 1973	98. 300,000 - 1921
27. 7,700,000 - 2015	64. 4,200,000 - 1980	99. 200,000 - 1920
28. 7,600,000 - 2012	65. 4,200,000 - 1981	100. 100,000 - 1919
29. 7,500,000 - 1959	66. 4,200,000 - 1982	
30. 7,500,000 - 2014	67. 4,200,000 - 1992	
31. 7,100,000 - 2018	68. 4,100,000 - 1972	
32. 7,000,000 - 1930	69. 4,000,000 - 1926	
33. 7,000,000 - 1934	70. 4,000,000 - 1929	
34. 7,000,000 - 1947		

Photo 11-3. A summer brood survey, a winter sex-ratio count, and a hunter survey are used to calculate the fall population each year.

Photo 11-4. The pheasant winter sex-ratio count is conducted annually after the hunting season is over.

Fun Figure

The total fall pheasant population to inhabit South Dakota from 1919 through 2018 was gauged to be 454,805,000. This figure was based on the premise that 77 percent of the fall population each year was juvenile birds.

South Dakota Pheasant Harvest Estimate for each Season—Highest to Lowest

Category One
(1,500,000 or More)

1. 7,507,000 - 1945
2. 6,439,000 - 1944
3. 4,500,000 - 1942
4. 3,550,000 - 1946
5. 3,247,000 - 1961
6. 3,168,000 - 1943
7. 3,125,000 - 1941
8. 3,095,000 - 1963
9. 2,790,300 - 1962
10. 2,635,000 - 1958
11. 2,572,000 - 1960
12. 2,500,000 - 1940
13. 2,212,000 - 1959
14. 2,148,341 - 1948
15. 2,122,345 - 2007
16. 2,000,000 - 1933
17. 1,949,063 - 2005
18. 1,936,228 - 2008
19. 1,864,523 - 1949
20. 1,846,356 - 2006
21. 1,831,576 - 2010
22. 1,814,739 - 2003
23. 1,750,000 - 1936
24. 1,653,286 - 2004
25. 1,648,191 - 2009
26. 1,608,000 - 1955
27. 1,555,307 - 2011
28. 1,500,000 - 1927
29. 1,500,000 - 1930
30. 1,500,000 - 1934
31. 1,500,000 - 1935
32. 1,500,000 - 1938
33. 1,500,000 - 1939

Photo 11-5. A hunter survey is conducted annually to obtain harvest statistics.

Category Two
(1,000,000 to 1,500,000)

34. 1,496,000 - 1947
35. 1,490,318 - 1952
36. 1,473,700 - 1964
37. 1,464,171 - 1999
38. 1,447,734 - 2000
39. 1,434,430 - 1983
40. 1,428,874 - 2012
41. 1,370,600 - 1994
42. 1,361,250 - 2001
43. 1,339,000 - 1957
44. 1,302,000 - 1954
45. 1,299,125 - 1981
46. 1,292,400 - 1995
47. 1,283,100 - 1973
48. 1,261,689 - 2002
49. 1,255,878 - 2015
50. 1,250,000 - 1928
51. 1,222,600 - 1991
52. 1,221,000 - 1956
53. 1,213,800 - 1993
54. 1,210,253 - 1953
55. 1,200,826 - 1996
56. 1,200,600 - 1972
57. 1.199,803 - 2014
58. 1,185,322 - 1998
59. 1,184,048 - 1951
60. 1,170,596 - 2016
61. 1,158,725 - 1980
62. 1,105,800 - 1971
63. 1,071,300 - 1974
64. 1,068,252 - 1982
65. 1,000,000 - 1926
66. 1,000,000 - 1929
67. 1,000,000 - 1931
68. 1,000,000 - 1932

Photo 11-6. The hunter survey asks hunters to report the number of pheasants they harvested.

Category Three
(Less Than 1,000,000)

69. 979,081 - 2013
70. 969,000 - 1992
71. 962,680 - 1984
72. 950,883 - 2018
73. 943,800 - 1979
74. 931,250 - 1987
75. 920,717 - 1997
76. 908,300 - 1967
77. 900,900 - 1970
78. 880,900 - 1968
79. 828,079 - 2017
80. 796,850 - 1965
81. 791,350 - 1985
82. 779,760 - 1988
83. 775,025 - 1990
84. 690,000 - 1989
85. 624,760 - 1986
86. 622,900 - 1969
87. 558,300 - 1978
88. 518,600 - 1977
89. 507,000 - 1950
90. 500,000 - 1925
91. 497,500 - 1975
92. 408,700 - 1966
93. 372,550 - 1976
94. 250,000 - 1924
95. 75,000 - 1937
96. 25,000 - 1923
97. 15,000 - 1922
98. 7,000 - 1921
99. 1,000 - 1920
100. 200 - 1919

Fun Figure

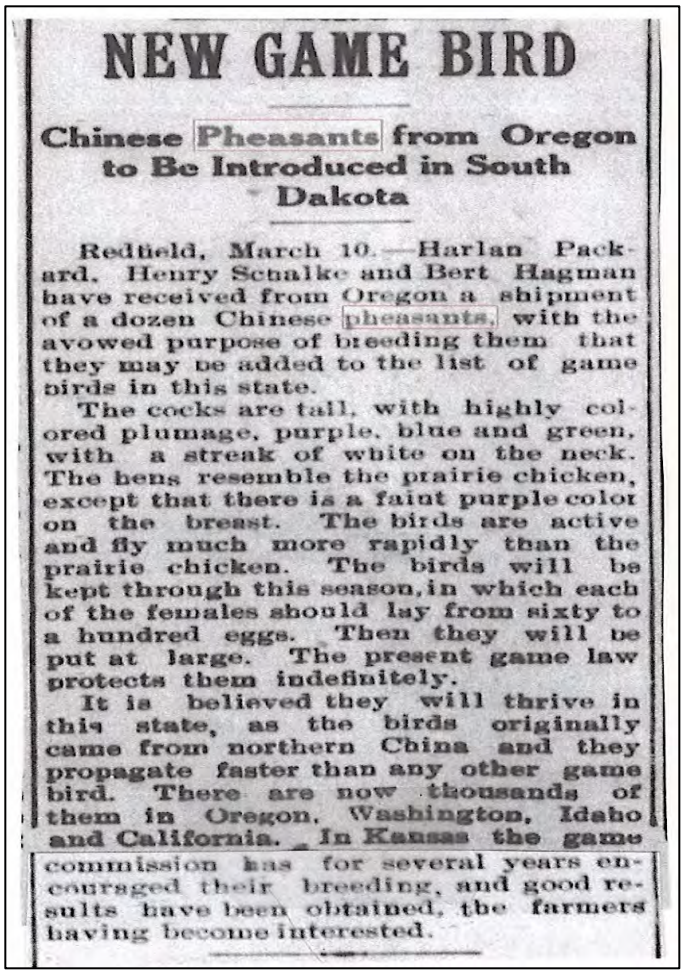
The South Dakota pheasant harvests from 1919 through 2018 add up to a grand total of 144,723,534.

South Dakota Pheasant Population Shifts of 3,000,000 or more in One Year

#	Year	Population	Next Year	Population	Decrease
1.	1936	12,000,000	1937	3,000,000	-9,000,000
2.	1945	16,000,000	1946	11,000,000	-5,000,000
3.	1949	8,100,000	1950	3,200,000	-4,900,000
4.	1963	10,000,000	1964	5,100,000	-4,900,000
5.	1942	15,000,000	1943	11,000,000	-4,000,000
6.	1946	11,000,000	1947	7,000,000	-4,000,000
7.	1958	11,100,000	1959	7,500,000	-3,600,000
8.	2016	8,200,000	2017	4,600,000	-3,600,000
9.	2010	9,800,000	2011	6,600,000	-3,200,000
					Increase
1.	1957	5,900,000	1958	11,100,000	+5,200,000
2.	1934	7,000,000	1935	12,000,000	+5,000,000
3.	1941	11,000,000	1942	15,000,000	+4,000,000
4.	1943	11,000,000	1944	15,000,000	+4,000,000
5.	2006	8,400,000	2007	11,900,000	+3,500,000
6.	2002	5,500,000	2003	8,700,000	+3,200,000
7.	1929	4,000,000	1930	7,000,000	+3,000,000
8.	1932	5,000,000	1933	8,000,000	+3,000,000
9.	1937	3,000,000	1938	6,000,000	+3,000,000
10.	1940	8,000,000	1941	11,000,000	+3,000,000

As this table points out, pheasant populations can increase and decrease by multimillions in a year's time. The two factors that have the greatest influence on the fluctuation of pheasant populations are weather and habitat. Weather was responsible for the biggest decrease of pheasants in a one-year period. The drop of 9,000,000 birds, between 1936 and 1937, was due to one of the most severe winters in the history of the state. Habitat was the main reason for the biggest increase of pheasants in a one-year period. The Soil Bank Program provided plentiful amounts of idle grassland habitat making possible the gain of 5,200,000 birds, between 1957 and 1958.

Five Factors Favoring the Increase of Populations	Five Factors Resulting in the Decrease of Populations
1. Mild winter weather	1. Severe winter weather
2. Warm, moderate spring weather	2. Cool, wet spring weather
3. Federal agriculture set-aside programs	3. Intensive agriculture practices
4. Adequate year round habitat	4. Lack of nesting cover and winter cover
5. Land use that allows for habitat	5. Drought accompanied with vegetation removal



NEW GAME BIRD

Chinese Pheasants from Oregon to Be Introduced in South Dakota

Redfield, March 10.—Harlan Packard, Henry Schalke and Bert Hagman have received from Oregon a shipment of a dozen Chinese pheasants, with the avowed purpose of breeding them that they may be added to the list of game birds in this state.

The cocks are tall, with highly colored plumage, purple, blue and green, with a streak of white on the neck. The hens resemble the prairie chicken, except that there is a faint purple color on the breast. The birds are active and fly much more rapidly than the prairie chicken. The birds will be kept through this season, in which each of the females should lay from sixty to a hundred eggs. Then they will be put at large. The present game law protects them indefinitely.

It is believed they will thrive in this state, as the birds originally came from northern China and they propagate faster than any other game bird. There are now thousands of them in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and California. In Kansas the game commission has for several years encouraged their breeding, and good results have been obtained, the farmers having become interested.

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The above news article was published in the following seven newspapers in March of 1909. [*The Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD) March 11, 1909, page 3.]-[*Lead Daily Call*, (Lead, SD) March 13, 1909, page 1.]-[*The Redfield Press*, (Redfield, SD) March 25, 1909, page 3.]-[*Pierre Weekly Free Press*, (Pierre, SD) March 25, 1909, page 7.]-[*Union County Courier*, (Elk Point, SD) March 25, 1909, page 3.]-[*The Herald Advance*, (Milbank, SD) March 26, 1909, page 7.]-[*Sisseton Weekly Standard*, (Sisseton, SD) March 26, 1909, page 7.]

The Redfield Story

Herbert "Bert" A. Hagman, Henry J. Schalkle, and Harland P. Packard, all of Redfield, are credited with the first successful stocking of ring-necked pheasants in South Dakota. In March of 1909 they secured pheasants from the Simpson Pheasant Farm in Corvallis, Oregon. Three pairs were released on Hagman's farm north of Redfield, adjacent to the James River. These pheasants survived and were seen the following year along the river. Hagman and others collected eggs from two other pairs of pheasants from the Oregon purchase. From those eggs they hatched and raised more pheasants that were released. [*Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD) March 15, 1921, page 1.]-[Russell L. Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, page 11.]

State Game Wardens W. F. Bancroft and Harry S. Hedrick

The first two State Game Wardens for the SDGF were instrumental in the stocking of the pheasant on a large scale. Warden W. F. Bancroft led the way by purchasing 200 pairs of ring-neck pheasants with state funds in 1911. These birds were distributed to interested parties throughout the state as an experiment in propagating game birds. Warden Harry S. Hedrick made the first large purchase of 1,775 pheasants for South Dakota in 1913. While in office from 1913 through 1921, Hedrick secured over 5,000 pheasants for the stocking program. A 1921 news article contained the following statement about Hedrick: "State Game Warden Hedrick has spared neither expense nor time in endeavoring to stock the state with these beautiful and highly prized game birds." [*Queen City Mail*, (Spearfish, SD) February 9, 1921, page 1.]

South Dakota Hunting Handbook Excerpts

Possession Limit: No person shall have in his possession at any time more than 15 male Chinese ring-necked or English pheasants taken by him according to the daily bag limit. *SD 1957 Hunting Regulations*

Author's Addendum:

Chinese ring-necked or English pheasants were customary language in the hunting regulations from 1919 to 1957. Why did the Game and Fish Commission specify that the birds, which could be hunted, were Chinese ring-necked and English Pheasants? This question has a two-part answer. First, these were the two species of pheasants that South Dakota had stocked. The second reason was that hunters in western South Dakota referred to ruffed grouse as "pheasants." The December 27, 1939, issue of the *Lead Daily Call* contained an article entitled **Grouse Called Pheasant**. "There is really no native American pheasant, although the ruffed grouse is often referred to in many parts of the country as a 'pheasant.' This 'native pheasant' is the same bird that is sometimes known as a 'partridge' in most of the northern states. Our native birds who resemble the pheasant are mostly grouse. Only members of the ringneck variety of pheasants, of which there are about 17 species, have been introduced into this country with any wide success."

What is the difference between a Chinese ring-necked pheasant and English pheasant? Carl G. Trautman in his book *History, Ecology and Management of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota* wrote this about the English pheasant. "The 'old English blackneck' that flourished on the continent of Europe was originally introduced into Greece from the Caucasian region of Asia in about 1300 B.C. It was ultimately replaced between 1740 and 1783 by a hybrid known as the English ring-necked pheasant." The fact is that both Chinese and English pheasants originated in Asia, and made different routes to the United States and eventually South Dakota. The Chinese ring-necked pheasant was introduced on the west coast in Oregon and was transported east from there. The English ring-necked pheasant was shipped to the east coast from Europe and transported westward.

Pheasant Shooting Hours

Folks who come to South Dakota often want to know why we start pheasant hunting so late in the day, and wonder what they'll do with their mornings.

Well, the real reasons for opening at noon or 10 a.m. are lost (it began in 1931), but there's been a variety of reasons given. Among them, the fact that our excellent hunting made it too easy for hunters to illegally take double limits is prominent.

It's also been suggested that small-town chambers of commerce lobbied for it to allow hunters to spend their evenings in the local establishments and still have time after a late breakfast to stop by the local hardware store. Some businessmen have said they like the late opener because they can open their shop and still get out for the first drive.

Some have suggested that farmers support it because they prefer not being bothered by hunters while they are doing their morning chores. They also likely appreciate being able to join the first drive of the day without ignoring their chores.

Whatever the reasoning, most South Dakotans have learned to love the shooting hours. Midday is a wonderful time to begin a hunt. It allows for a leisurely morning, and can eliminate the stress of rushing around in the dark to get ready.

For most of the season, there are about 6 hours to hunt, and that should be plenty. If you're the type who can't waste a moment, use the morning to talk to landowners or find a new spot to hunt.

But better yet, relax and enjoy yourself. Hunting ought to be fun. *SD 1993 Hunting Handbook*

Author's Addendum:

Research by the author revealed that the first season to actually open at noon was in 1929. Newspaper accounts from the era disclose a reason why South Dakota shifted to a noon opener.

1929: Tuesday, October 29, the pheasant season will open at noon. "The opening at noon was decided upon by members of the state Game and Fish Commission as a protective measure for the birds. It will do away with the opening morning slaughter of former years, they believe." [*The Daily Plainsman* (Huron), October 28, 1929, pages 1 and 3.]

1930: The pheasant season will open at noon on October 16. "Opening at noon, to prevent early morning slaughter of unwary birds, the hunting season continues during daylight hours until the evening of November 14 in 34 counties east of the Missouri River." [*The Black Hills Weekly* (Deadwood), October 15, 1930, page 1.]

1931: "The open season on pheasants in South Dakota will begin tomorrow, October 15 at noon, and continue until October 26. The open season begins at noon each day and closes at sunset. No hunting will be permitted in the forenoons." [*Lead Daily Call*, October 14, 1931, page 1.]

1932: "With game authorities reporting an abundance of birds from nearly all regions, South Dakota's pheasant hunting season opens Thursday noon for 30 afternoons. … Mr. Johnson (SDGF Director O. H. Johnson) said the afternoon shooting, noon to sunset, has met with general favor. The same plan was followed last year." [*The Daily Plainsman* (Huron), October 18, 1932, page 2.]

75th Pheasant Season

This fall marks the 75th incarnation of what has become a South Dakota institution. The fall of 1919 was the first season held in the state. Now that the 75th season is here, a look back might be interesting.

Game conditions in South Dakota during the fall of 1919 were better than they had been for several years. Grouse and prairie chickens were plentiful in the central part of the state and the limit could be easily secured at any time. As it was a very wet season, all of the lakes and sloughs were filled with water, and ducks nested over the state, so that at the opening of the season there were millions of ducks here that had been raised in the state.

"The Game and Fish Commission declared a one-day open season on cock pheasants in Spink County, October 30, 1919, under authority granted by Section 1, Chapter 214, Laws of 1919, which seems to work out very well. Under the order, each person holding a small game license was permitted to kill two cock pheasants. As the weather was very bad, there being a heavy wet snow on the ground, and rain later in the day, not many hunters were out and the best estimate that could be arrived at by the wardens on the ground was that not to exceed two hundred pheasants were killed on that day." (11th annual report of the Department of Game and Fish, June 1920.)

With that inauspicious start, 75 years of ringneck hunting began. A couple of things are apparent from that quote: South Dakota weather hasn't changed much in 75 years, and pheasant hunters have never liked bad weather.

But a year later things picked up considerably. The next year's annual report said, "There was a two-day open season, November 4th and 5th, in Spink County, for the killing of cock pheasants. The weather was very nice both days, although there was considerable snow on the ground, and wardens estimate that there were about one thousand cock pheasants killed during the two-day shoot. Observations seem to indicate no depletion of birds, and it would seem that a longer season could be declared another year, as the birds become very wild after the first day's shoot, which materially reduces the number killed."

Apparently the pheasants haven't changed much either. *SD 1993 Hunting Handbook*

Where Are the Pheasants?

Pheasants often spend autumn and winter days involved in activities in the following manner: sunset to sunrise in roosting cover, early morning and late afternoon in feeding cover, mid-morning to mid-afternoon in loafing cover. As the weather worsens, loafing time becomes shorter and roosting time becomes longer. At the same time, feeding time will tend to be concentrated around the warm part of the day, noon. These same general rules apply to all types of cold or wet conditions. In mid-winter, pheasants may not loaf at all; feeding time may be reduced as well. *SD 1989 Hunting Handbook*

Where Do They Go?

When severe winters occur like the winter of 1996-97, people who live here in the Dakotas often wonder how any living thing can survive. It is no mystery that harsh conditions are hard on wildlife, but each species has its own way of dealing with such conditions.

During severe weather, pheasants seek out areas of dense cover; if its also windy, they seek out areas protected from the wind as well. Normally, pheasants first look for grasses and other herbaceous cover like cattail sloughs. In tough winters, though, snow often fills up most or all of this type of cover, so pheasants head for an alternative, shrub and tree cover. This could be shelterbelts, woody draws, woody creek bottoms, or other types of woody cover protected from the biting wind and driven snow.

Obviously, it is best if the woody cover has grass either in it or on its lee side, protected from the snow. An open feed lot on the lee side of a shelterbelt can also provide needed food and access to grit. But if good cover doesn't exist, pheasants will try to make do with what they have. What else is there?

The problem is that often there is no suitable cover within a reasonable traveling distance for the birds. This is often disastrous for the birds and they suffer chronic losses to predation and exposure as they weaken due to weather conditions. Last winter there were a lot of pheasants lost for just this reason. And it all comes down to habitat.

What can we do to help? Well, plant shelterbelts, restore wetlands, plant durable herbaceous cover. In fact, Game, Fish and Parks has been working with partners from South Dakota Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Pheasants Forever and many other private groups and individuals for many years to do just these kinds of things. In fact, without the combined efforts of all these folks over the last few decades or so, the impact from last winter would have been even more devastating. If we keep up our efforts, though, eventually our pheasants will be able to survive almost any winter storm. *SD 1997 Hunting Handbook*

Conservation Reserve Program, An Update

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) has been the most important conservation program in history. Even so, there were a lot of people in Congress who wanted it to end. However, with considerable effort, wildlife and agricultural interests teamed up to reinstate the program under the current Farm Bill.

Because of this joint effort, CRP has a future that is bigger and brighter than its past. There is still hope that the new CRP in South Dakota will top the 2-million-acre mark by the time enrollments end. There were only 1.7 million acres at the peak of the old program. Furthermore, there will be more CRP tracts and they will focus more on environmental concerns, especially wildlife habitat in South Dakota.

CRP is land that is rented from private landowners by the U.S. government for conservation purposes. Landowners are paid at least the going cash-rental rate for 10-15 years and are provided funding to establish permanent cover on the site. The objectives of the CRP program are to decrease erosion, improve water quality and increase and improve wildlife habitat.

The benefits of CRP for wildlife have been obvious. Our pheasant numbers have been fairly stable and at relatively high levels the last seven years. Our duck numbers have exploded. And many other wildlife species, from deer to meadowlarks, have also benefited. The future looks bright for CRP and wildlife in South Dakota. But we cannot be caught with our guard down. Let people know that wildlife and wildlife habitat is a priority to you. *SD 1998 Hunting Handbook*

Author's Addendum:

At the time of assembling this *Data Book*, CRP had been in operation for 34 years, 1985-2019. Seven farm bills have been passed in total. These farm bills each contained provisions for CRP. The grassland habitat provided by CRP has been and continues to be a benefit to the ring-necked pheasant population.

1. 1985 Farm Bill, Food Security Act of 1985
2. 1990 Farm Bill, Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990
3. 1996 Farm Bill, Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996
4. 2002 Farm Bill, Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002
5. 2008 Farm Bill, Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008
6. 2014 Farm Bill, Agricultural Act of 2014
7. 2018 Farm Bill, Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018

From 2007 to 2018, the number of acres allowed in CRP was reduced. The 2018 Farm Bill reversed this trend and increased the acreage cap from 24 million acres in 2018 to 27 million acres in 2023.

- 2007 nearly 37 million acres was enrolled in CRP nationwide
- 2008 acreage cap, 32 million acres
- 2014 acreage cap, 27.5 million acres
- 2015 acreage cap, 26 million acres
- 2016 acreage cap, 25 million acres
- 2017 and 2018 acreage cap, 24 million acres
- 2023 acreage cap, 27 million acres

As the CRP acres decreased, the goal of conservationists was to make the most of these fewer acres for pheasant habitat. Researchers found that in prime pheasant habitat, a four percent increase in CRP herbaceous vegetation was associated with a 22 percent increase in pheasant counts. [Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc. 2006 study.]

Section 12

John Q. Ringneck and Jane A. Pheasant -- Forever Calendar

January: "cold and snow, roosting cover, pheasants and survival."

February: "weather, winter habitat, pheasants and water."

March: "dispersal, courting, hens and roosters."

April: "harem, mating, hens and eggs."

May: "calcium, nesting, hens and incubation."

June: "hatching, imprinting, hens and chicks."

July: "insects, poults, pheasants and feathers."

August: "hens and stress, drought, poults life."

September: "weight gains, omnivore, pheasants and diet."

October: "food sources, full-grown, pheasants and hunters."

November: "hunting regulations, pheasants and habitat needs, body tools."

December: "history, pheasants and adaptation, blizzards."

The Origins of the Midwest Hybrid Pheasant

South Dakota Pheasant Introductions and Distribution

John Q. Ringneck and Jane A. Pheasant -- Forever Calendar

Introduction

In 1969 Mel Steen was the Director of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and made the following prophecy. "I cannot predict what agricultural practices may prevail a half century hence, but whatever they are, I'm sure that John Q. Ringneck will still strut across NEBRASKAland acres in gaudy, cocky display during closed seasons, only to disappear from this earth when hunting seasons open. He may not be as numerous as in the past, but he'll still be the most elusive and colorful quarry the hunter seeks, a prize that sportsmen will always cherish. … The truth is the truth and always will be. If we cannot save pheasant environment, we cannot save the bird. … Only when all of us understand and accept the truth can we solve the problem; only then will we make the necessary effort to save and improve as many acres of adequate environment as agricultural economics permit." [M. O. Steen, "The Pheasant's Destiny," *NEBRASKAland*, July, 1969, page 53.]

The above quote was the inspiration for assembling the John Q. Ringneck and Jane A. Pheasant -- Forever Calendar. The calendar contains 366 data items about the ring-necked pheasant and its needs for survival and reproduction. The information was collected from a variety of sources pertaining to pheasants. A data item was listed for each day of the year. The primary goal was to present an activity a pheasant could be experiencing that very day of the month. If the first goal was not attained, a fact about pheasants or their habitat needs was presented.

The purpose of this calendar is twofold. The first objective is that the reader will learn more about pheasants and their daily needs. The second objective is to inspire all who enjoy pheasant hunting to support state game departments and Pheasants Forever. These organizations are at the forefront to create pheasant habitat, thus saving the pheasant.

Photo 12-1. Pheasants thrive in areas where their year-round habitat needs are abundant.

Calendar Guidelines

In order to follow the life of ring-necked pheasants in a logical sequence for a calendar year, a set of guidelines was established:

1. The information in the calendar pertains to pheasants inhabiting the Midwest states.
2. The calendar is based on a typical year concerning weather and the changing of the seasons. The Fahrenheit scale was used in the text to express temperature measurement.
3. The data presented about hen pheasants refers to hens that have successfully raised a brood of chicks.
4. In a normal year, the peak of the pheasant hatch in the Midwest states occurs in mid-June. Therefore, the data presented about chick pheasants uses this time period as the time of hatching.

Acknowledgements

Appreciation is extended to Jeffrey Lusk and Travis Runia for their contributions to the calendar. Jeffrey Lusk is Upland Game Program Manager with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. Travis Runia is Senior Upland Game Biologist for the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks. Both men contributed information used in the calendar, read the manuscript and offered suggested improvements. Travis authored "Pheasant Ecology," a recent publication germane to the subject of the calendar. The contents of "Pheasant Ecology" were used extensively for data.

Photo 12-2. John Q. Ringneck

Photo 12-3. Jane A. Pheasant

John Q. Citizen and Jane Doe are used for the typical man and woman in our society. The author used Mr. Steen's designation of John Q. Ringneck to represent a rooster pheasant and added Jane A. Pheasant to represent a hen pheasant in the calendar title.

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Photo 12-4. Woody cover can help pheasants survive the rigors of winter. In winters that deep snow accumulates, woody cover may be the habitat of last resort for pheasants.

January: "cold and snow, roosting cover, pheasants and survival."

January 1: January can be the coldest month of the year for the ring-necked pheasant in the Midwest.

January 2: The three keys for a pheasant to stay alive during the cold winter months are food, habitat, and the size of the bird. The odds of surviving winter favor the larger and heavier pheasants.

January 3: During this very cold month, pheasants require twice the energy they burned in October.

January 4: A pheasant must increase its energy intake to offset the increased loss of body heat in cold weather.

January 5: One study found the food intake for pheasants in January was nearly 90 percent commercial grains, 6 percent plant foliage, and 4 percent weed seeds.

January 6: Where available, corn can make up 70 percent or more of the pheasant's diet during winter. Other common waste grains used by pheasants are sorghum, wheat, oats, sunflowers, and soybeans.

January 7: Corn is a good food source for pheasants, because it contains more metabolizable energy than most other food items. Soybeans are a poor food source because they contain digestive inhibitors, which reduce the nutritional value.

January 8: Only a quarter of an inch of ice created by a winter storm can cause food problems for the pheasant, if the ice does not melt within a few days.

January 9: Pheasants can easily scratch for food in snow up to three to four inches deep.

January 10: By using both their feet and wings, pheasants are able to dig through a foot of snow to find food.

January 11: In very bad weather, like a blizzard, pheasants will stay on a roost several days without eating.

January 12: Pheasants are fortunate in that most winter storms only last two to three days. Once a storm subsides, pheasants will come out of their roosting cover and search for food.

January 13: Strong winds during a blizzard do provide one advantage for pheasants—by blowing snow off some of their food sources.

January 14: Hen pheasants are smaller and weaker than roosters. This disadvantage makes it more difficult for a hen to dig through deep winter snow to find food.

January 15: Rooster pheasants are bigger and stronger than hens. This advantage enables roosters to uncover food in winter conditions that can benefit the survival of both sexes.

January 16: Every day that a pheasant cannot find enough food to generate the same amount of body heat that it is losing, fat reserves must be used to make up the difference.

January 17: Death from starvation during inclement weather is extremely rare if pheasants have adequate winter habitat. Most winter mortality of pheasants is attributed to exposure to the elements and predation.

January 18: Severe weather, especially deep snow over long periods, can weaken pheasants and make them more vulnerable to predators. Lack of concealment cover can also make then more visible to predators.

January 19: In captivity, during the month of January, rooster pheasants have survived 19 days without food and hens 16 days.

January 20: Since the hen is smaller, during an extremely snowy winter, more hens than roosters will die.

January 21: A two-acre food plot in each 160 acres can increase the winter survival of hens and help them produce more, better-quality eggs next spring.

January 22: With normal January weather, hens will stop producing fat and use what they eat for warmth, without using existing fat or muscle.

January 23: Pheasants prefer to roost year-round in fairly open vegetation such as grasses, weeds, and tall grain stubble.

January 24: A flock of pheasants require 10 to 20 acres of good quality roosting habitat in their environment.

January 25: When snow limits normal roosting cover, pheasants move into tall, thick grass or weed patches, and into wetland vegetation with dense stands of cattail reeds.

January 26: If all ground vegetation has been filled with snow, pheasants roost in woody cover. A high quality shelterbelt, a type of woody cover, can improve pheasant winter survival.

January 27: Good roosting cover provides pheasants with insulation from cold and protection from predators.

January 28: When blizzard conditions hit, pheasants need adequate cover to wait out the storm.

January 29: Under severe winter conditions, a hen hatched in May is able to survive two days longer than a hen hatched in July.

January 30: The later a chick hatches, the less time it has to reach adult body size and body fat content before winter hits. Having less fat, the younger of the juvenile birds dies first during harsh winters.

January 31: Good winter cover can reduce a pheasant's energy requirements to stay warm by 25 percent. This energy savings can be the difference between life and death.

Photo 12-5. Pheasants dwell in thick winter cover as close as possible to necessary food sources. This scenario enables pheasants to avoid exposure and predators, increasing their chances of survival.

February: "weather, winter habitat, pheasants and water."

February 1: February will likely be another cold month for the pheasant to endure.

February 2: One cause of pheasant winter mortality is freezing. This can occur during blizzards and prolonged periods of sub-zero temperatures combined with deep snow.

February 3: If body heat is lost at a greater rate than it is produced, the internal temperature declines below normal and a pheasant will freeze to death.

February 4: High quality winter habitat is the salvation of the pheasant in winter and prevents freezing.

February 5: Examples of quality winter habitat for pheasants are shelterbelts, large cattail sloughs, and tall warm season grasses such as switchgrass, Indiangrass, and big bluestem.

February 6: The insulating effect of thermal habitat moderates wind chills, resulting in a warmer environment for the birds.

February 7: The best shelterbelts provide loafing, feeding, roosting, and escape cover for pheasants.

February 8: A shelterbelt planted for wildlife protection should avoid tall deciduous trees in which hawks and owls could perch and search for prey.

February 9: Calm air inside a shelterbelt and the solar collection ability of dark colored conifers provide pheasants some relief from winter winds on frigid days.

February 10: The warmer pockets of air within a shelterbelt enable a pheasant to conserve energy and preserve fat reserves.

February 11: In winter, woody cover provides pheasants warmth and protection from aerial predators.

February 12: Woody cover used by pheasants in winter includes shelterbelts, brushy draws, plum thickets, and abandon farmsteads.

February 13: Shrubs and trees that have low growing branches are good winter loafing areas for pheasants.

February 14: Shelterbelts with 8 to 12 rows of trees and shrubs provide the best protection for pheasants.

February 15: Shelterbelts with six to eight varieties of tree and shrub species help ring-necks survive a wide range of environmental conditions.

February 16: The initial rows on the windward side of a shelterbelt should be designed to catch drifting snow. The blocking of deep snow to one area allows pheasants to utilize the rest of the belt.

February 17: Pheasants prefer to feed in areas within 300 yards of the loafing cover, but they will venture longer distances to find food if necessary.

February 18: Food plots, placed close to winter cover, reduce the amount of time birds need to search for food and the distance traveled. These advantages help protect them from predators and exposure to harsh winter weather.

February 19: In winter, pheasants may make numerous trips between woody cover and food sources all day. It is not uncommon for pheasants to forage most of the day when snow makes food difficult to find.

February 20: The first trip pheasants make to food sources is normally early in the morning around sun up. The last trip to food sources is in the evening usually until sunset, especially during winter.

February 21: Daily food consumption of captive pheasants revealed that they consumed about 3.5 ounces of food daily. This breaks down to 1.75 ounces for each of the two major feeding periods in the morning and evening.

February 22: Availability of permanent open water is not crucial to survival, although pheasants are attracted to and will drink from available water sources.

February 23: Frost and snow, together with moisture assimilated from grain kernels and weed seeds, furnish the pheasant with enough water in the winter months.

February 24: Adequate moisture for a pheasant's living needs in spring, summer, and fall can be obtained from dew, fruits, berries, vegetation, insects, earthworms, succulent green vegetation, and other food items eaten.

February 25: Pheasants may get all or most of the water they need in their food. During the digestive process, the small intestine of the pheasant absorbs water contained in the food it has eaten.

February 26: Birds require less water than other animals because they do not sweat or urinate, and they lose only a small amount of moisture when they exhale and in their droppings.

February 27: Weather is an uncontrollable factor that can endanger pheasant populations. During severe winters, pheasant mortality can be high. The opposite is true during mild winters.

February 28: Suitable cover is essential for pheasants to survive the cold months, but where such cover exists, they can endure almost anything that winter can offer. Where good habitat exists, it takes pheasant populations less time to recover from tough winters.

February 29: Two factors determine the abundance of pheasants: weather and habitat. Favorable weather patterns can result in increased populations from one year to the next. Plentiful habitat is the main ingredient for the upswing of the population over the long term.

Photo 12-6. Roosters begin establishing a "crowing territory" to attract hens. When a hen appears, the rooster then goes into his courtship display.

March: "dispersal, courting, hens and roosters."

March 1: The annual mortality rate in the pheasant population is about 75 percent. Thus, spring is an important time of the year as pheasants prepare for reproduction.

March 2: As winter transitions to spring, wintering flocks of pheasants begin to disperse from heavy winter cover.

March 3: Finding food in March becomes easier for pheasants since higher temperatures melt winter snows.

March 4: Moderating temperatures and food availability enable pheasants to gain weight in March.

March 5: As the days lengthen, distinctive changes begin to occur in the rooster pheasant as he prepares for the breeding season.

March 6: The enlarging wattle on a rooster's head is the first visual sign of sexual development.

March 7: Internally the dormant testes of a pheasant rooster begin to enlarge, enabling him to produce semen for the upcoming breeding season.

March 8: Once a rooster begins sexual development, he is no longer content to be crowded with other roosters.

March 9: Spring dispersal varies among roosters. For some, movement is simply spreading about the area they wintered in. But others may move several miles away. One study revealed that on average, roosters disperse about two miles.

March 10: As roosters move about this time of the year, they are looking for idle grasslands and woody cover to establish their courting territory. These two types of habitat give them escape cover from predators.

March 11: Just as roosters disperse after winter subsides, hen flocks break up later and start to scatter.

March 12: Once a courting territory is selected, roosters begin crowing to attract hens.

March 13: Within a rooster's spring area, he struts and crows and defends it from any intrusion by other males.

March 14: The size of a rooster's territory varies from a few acres to a half-section of land, depending on how many other males are in the area.

March 15: A rooster's loud crowing, followed by a rapid beating of wings, proclaims that this is his realm. He is also announcing to hens that he is a virile male.

March 16: Early in the courting season, a hen will show little interest, if any, in a rooster's display. She may watch briefly, then continue feeding.

March 17: Hens lag behind roosters in sexual preparation for reproduction and use this time to gain weight.

March 18: Hens are putting on weight by storing extra food as fat, and are also targeting specific foods in preparation for future egg production.

March 19: Hen pheasants need calcium to produce eggshells. In order to obtain calcium, hens consume snails, eggshell fragments, and calcareous grit like limestone gravel. Hens have the inborn ability to select grit that contains calcium.

March 20: If hens cannot consume enough calcium for eggshell production, they will resort to extracting calcium from their own bones. Finding enough calcium is usually not a problem.

March 21: Hens have many characteristics that are different from roosters.

March 22: Hens cluck with a "puck-puck" sound while roosters crow with a "cuck-et, cuck-et" sound. Roosters sometimes cackle when flushed; hens do not.

March 23: Hens have shorter tail feathers than roosters. Roosters have wattles; hens do not.

March 24: Hens raise the brood; roosters do not. Roosters have a shorter life span on average than hens. One study of wild pheasants revealed the life span of roosters was 10 months and hens 20 months.

March 25: Hens are brownish-colored, while roosters are multicolored. Roosters have spurs; hens do not.

March 26: Hens are smaller than roosters. Normally a hen is about two-thirds the height and weight of a rooster. Roosters have a ring-necked; hens do not.

March 27: Spring and very severe winters are two seasonal periods of potentially high mortality of hens.

March 28: Some research studies revealed that half of all hen losses in a normal year occurred in the spring.

March 29: Rooster pheasants can experience high rates of mortality during spring, second only to the fall hunting season.

March 30: In the early morning hours of the breeding season, both hens and roosters spend more time in open areas. Open spaces without nearby escape cover can leave them vulnerable to predators.

March 31: The leading predators of adult pheasants are red foxes, various types of hawks, and great horned owls.

Photo 12-7. Roosters seek dominance and gather a harem of hens for mating. A rooster pheasant is polygamous and has the capability to mate with numerous hens.

April: "harem, mating, hens and eggs."

April 1: A rooster is seeking dominance over other roosters and intensifies his spring display to attract a harem of hens for mating.

April 2: A rooster may have 15 or more hens in his harem. The normal harem is more likely to contain two or three hens.

April 3: The hen's productive energy increases for ovary growth and for body weight gain.

April 4: A hen will reach her greatest weight in spring so she needs more nutrients to produce muscle and fat.

April 5: The diet of the hen varies from the rooster at this time of the year, because of her need to produce eggs.

April 6: A hen pheasant's diet will contain more calcium than the rooster's diet, so that she can make eggshells.

April 7: Insects provide the greatest protein source, and the hen will consume more insects than the rooster. Protein is needed for the content of a hen's egg.

April 8: A rooster's main priority at this time is to tend his harem and defend his territory.

April 9: The rooster's urge to reproduce exceeds his need to eat, so he loses weight.

April 10: Since dominant roosters draw numerous hens in their harem there will be some roosters without mates.

April 11: Bachelor birds tend to be a nuisance, roaming about picking fights with dominant roosters. Males fight by raking savagely with their sharp spurs and flapping their wings ferociously.

April 12: Rooster pheasants are polygamous meaning they will mate with more than one hen. Thus, only a few roosters are needed for the breeding season.

April 13: Game farm experiments have proved one rooster is capable of successfully fertilizing the eggs of 25 hens.

April 14: A rooster's crowing and beating of his wings reaches peak intensity in mid-April, and continues through May.

April 15: The greatest influence in the onset of egg production in the hen pheasant is the fact that day light hours are getting longer. Longer days stimulate a set of hormones in her system to govern each phase of the reproductive cycle: egg laying, incubation, and brood rearing.

April 16: Hen pheasants can initiate their first nest as early as mid-April, but most nests are initiated in May.

April 17: When a hen is ready to breed, her reproductive organ, the ovary has enlarged and is producing ova.

April 18: A rooster's testicles have reached maximum size, signifying that he is fully prepared for the mating season.

April 19: During a rooster's courtship display, he tilts his body toward the hen, spreads his tail feathers, and extends one wing downward. The wattles on the sides of his head swell and turn a vivid red.

April 20: When the hen is ready to mate, she will crouch by her selected rooster to allow him to mount her.

April 21: Pheasants mate by pressing their vents together. Sperm cells quickly pass from the rooster's vent into the hen. This act is called the cloacal kiss.

April 22: After mating, a hen stores the rooster's sperm, and then as each ovum from the ovary moves into the oviduct, it gets fertilized.

April 23: A single copulation between a hen and rooster will produce fertile eggs for an average of 22 days. Hens will normally copulate several times during the breeding season.

April 24: While the hen is building her ovary to the point where she can lay about one egg per day, she will drop eggs randomly or in a dump nest.

April 25: A hen may lay 15 to 20 eggs before building a permanent nest. Over the course of a breeding season she may lay 30 to 50 eggs.

April 26: Once a hen's ovary is producing about one egg each day, she will instinctively build a nest and fill it. Laying a clutch of a dozen eggs takes approximately 15 to 16 days.

April 27: A hen does not begin to incubate her nest until the clutch is complete. The eggs can take a few frosty nights without a problem. But, any eggs exposed to temperatures below 29 degrees for three consecutive hours between laying and the beginning of incubation will not hatch.

April 28: A 94-degree day can start embryo development in unattended nest eggs. A cool night will then kill the embryo.

April 29: Pheasant hens produce precocial chicks; precocial chicks hatch with their eyes open, well developed legs, and are covered with down.

April 30: The biological process of producing precocial chicks requires a hen pheasant to put extra nutrients in her eggs.

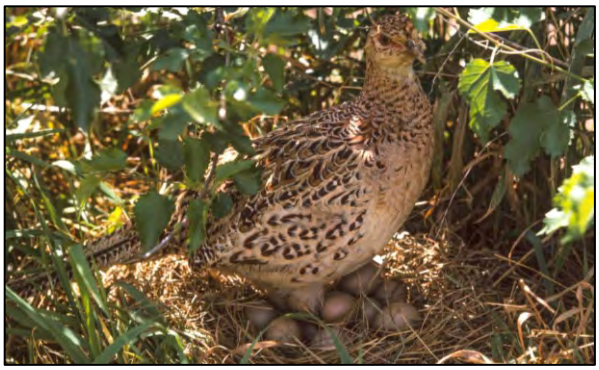


Photo 12-8. Hens prepare a nest and begin laying eggs for the incubation period. Undisturbed nesting cover is a vital habitat needed in order for pheasants to thrive.

May: "calcium, nesting, hens and incubation."

May 1: May is a very active month for both roosters and hens.

May 2: Roosters continue their spring activities of fighting, crowing, displaying, and courting hens.

May 3: Early in the day, roosters crow every two to three minutes to attract hens. On a calm day, his crowing can be heard up to a mile away.

May 4: May is the top month for egg laying, nest building, and starting incubation for hen pheasants.

May 5: A hen is now consuming 14 times more calcium than a rooster, and her protein intake, mainly from insects, is six times greater. The calcium and protein intake allow the hen to produce good quality eggs.

May 6: The supply of May insects is extremely important to the pheasant hen for egg production.

May 7: Pheasants nest on the ground. Therefore, nesting cover is of prime importance during the spring for the increase of a pheasant population.

May 8: Biological studies have revealed that hens are more successful nesting in undisturbed grassy vegetation of at least 40 acres in size or larger.

May 9: Narrow strips and small plots of grass are not good nesting sites. These small areas make it easier for nest predators to find and destroy a hen's eggs. Predators either eat the entire egg or crack the egg and eat the contents.

May 10: Nests are established in a variety of vegetation types, depending on what is available. Grasslands, grazing lands, hay fields, and small grain fields can all be utilized for nesting.

May 11: Research studies indicate that idle, herbaceous grasslands are the best habitats for nesting pheasants.

May 12: A good nest location is an idle grassy area with last year's grasses still standing upright. Tall grasses provide concealment and shelter for a hen's nest.

May 13: A hen pheasant starts constructing her nest by using her feet to scratch a depression in the soil. Her next step is to line it with grass, leaves, and other plant material.

May 14: Down, feathers, and additional vegetation are added to the nest by the hen as egg laying and incubation progress.

May 15: As incubation approaches, a hen will shed breast feathers, exposing a bare patch of skin. This brood patch is well supplied with surface blood vessels and keeps the eggs at the proper temperature for hatching.

May 16: Pheasant eggs are an olive-brown color. This dull color aids in keeping the eggs hidden.

May 17: A hen's dull plumage is well suited to remain camouflaged while incubating eggs and raising young.

May 18: A completed nest will typically have 10 to 12 eggs, but may have up to 18.

May 19: A hen begins incubating her eggs after she has finished her clutch. Since she waits until all eggs are laid before incubation, the chicks will all hatch within hours of each other.

May 20: During incubation, the hen will spend 23 hours a day on the nest for 23 consecutive days.

May 21: In a normal year peak nest initiation takes place in May with incubation starting around this time of the month. Hence, the pheasant hatch peaks in mid-June.

May 22: Throughout the 23-day incubation period, a hen only leaves the nest once or twice a day for short intervals to consume limited amounts of food and water.

May 23: If a hen is absent from her nest and the temperature of an egg drops below 80 degrees, the embryo's physiological processes stop and the embryo dies.

May 24: Protecting the eggs is priority for the hen, while feeding is secondary. As a result of this, the hen will lose weight during the incubation period.

May 25: While on the nest, the hen keeps the eggs warm, and she protects them from predators, rain, and extreme hot afternoon temperatures.

May 26: Throughout incubation, a hen will rearrange the eggs in her nest each day. Using her beak she pushes the eggs to new locations. Because the center of the nest is warmer, this allows for a better distribution of heat to all eggs over the course of the sitting period.

May 27: The hen must turn each egg over regularly during incubation. The turning of an egg prevents the developing chick from sticking to one side of the eggshell and allows the chick to emerge from the egg safely at hatching time.

May 28: Hen pheasants have been known to abandon their nest if disturbed. Hens are less likely to abandon a nest the more time they have invested in incubating it. So as the incubation period progresses, it requires greater and greater disturbances for the hen to permanently abandon a nest.

May 29: A successful hatching of a hen's first nesting attempt improves the chances of the hen and her chicks surviving the winter, because both have the opportunity to weigh more entering the cold months.

May 30: Re-nesting costs the hen valuable energy. She must again increase ovary size, produce another clutch of eggs, and incubate them.

May 31: Warm, moderate springs result in better nesting success and chick survival, so pheasant numbers increase with warm, moderate springs, and decrease with cool, wet springs.

Photo 12-9. The hatch peaks around mid-June, and hens begin tending the brood. For the next several weeks the hen will be the guardian of her young, guiding them to food and safety.

June: "hatching, imprinting, hens and chicks."

June 1: June is a transitional month. Nesting cover continues to be needed in late spring, and brood rearing cover becomes a necessary component of pheasant habitat as they enter summer.

June 2: The peak of the pheasant hatch usually occurs in mid-June but could be delayed by cool, wet spring weather.

June 3: If the beginning of the breeding season is delayed, it will affect the future population. Clutch size declines for the nest the later the initiation date is. Thus, the further along it is in the breeding season a hen initiates a nest, the fewer eggs she will lay, even if it is her first nesting attempt of the season.

June 4: Pheasants are persistent nesters. If a hen's nest is destroyed she almost always re-nests and may initiate up to four nests per season. Hence, a few hatches occur as late as August.

June 5: Due to the energy demands of producing and incubating eggs, the clutch size of a hen decreases with each succeeding nest attempt. If a hen is into her third nesting attempt, the clutch size could be as low as five or six eggs.

June 6: Depending on the year and area, hen success of hatching a clutch varies between 40 and 80 percent.

June 7: The majority of nesting failures can be attributed to four factors: extreme weather conditions, farming operations, predation, and nest abandonment.

June 8: The leading nest predators of pheasant's eggs are red foxes, raccoons, and striped skunks.

June 9: In any year, a complete nesting failure would result in a very low fall population of pheasants.

June 10: During the 23-day incubation period, the embryos are breathing through the eggshell. The shell is porous enough that oxygen and carbon dioxide pass through it.

June 11: The chicks start peeping three or four days before they hatch. A hen starts communicating with her chicks a couple of days before hatching to enforce the bond between chick and hen.

June 12: The process of breaking out of the eggshell is known as pipping. The chick rotates within the egg and pecks away at the shell until it weakens and cracks open. It may take a pheasant chick as long as 12 hours to complete the job and emerge from the egg.

June 13: To pip the eggshell, a chick has an egg tooth on the top of its beak and specialized hatching muscles on the back of its head. These specialized muscles cause convulsive movements to occur through the chick's body. Each convulsion allows the egg tooth to peck at the eggshell.

June 14: A newly hatched pheasant chick weighs slightly less than one ounce and is covered with wet down. Pheasant broods typically have an even sex ratio at the time of hatching.

June 15: Being precocial, pheasant chicks are able to walk as soon as their down is dry after hatching.

June 16: Usually within 24 hours of hatching, the hen will leave the nest with her clutch, allowing the chicks to search for insects, their primary food.

June 17: Grasshoppers, crickets, ants, leafhoppers, beetles, spiders, and flies are common insects consumed by chicks. The chick's reflexes are to peck at anything that moves.

June 18: The empty eggshells give off a stinky odor that can attract predators. Hence, permanently leaving the nest protects the pheasant family from potential harm.

June 19: The phenomenon of imprinting means that a chick is attracted to the hen and will respond to her. Chicks imprint to their mother while still at the nest. When the hen decides to leave the nest, the chicks instinctively follow after her.

June 20: The imprinting process insures that the pheasant family stays close together, so the chicks are better protected.

June 21: The hen warns her chicks of approaching danger with a low-pitched call causing the chicks to scatter and then hide. After the threat is gone, she calls the chicks together with a clucking call.

June 22: Two basic vocal sounds used by chicks are a peep of contentment and a plaintive cry to get the attention of their mother.

June 23: For the first 10 days after hatching, the hen broods her chicks during cold periods since they cannot regulate their own body temperature and need their mother's warmth to survive.

June 24: The hen is like a mobile home for her fragile baby chicks. During idle time, rain, and overnight the chicks huddle under their mother's body and wings for protection.

June 25: Susceptibility to the cold quickly decreases with age, and by 11 days of age, the chicks can regulate their body temperature.

June 26: Pheasant chicks primarily eat insects the first two weeks of their life. Insects provide protein, calcium, and fat for the chick's development. Protein functions as building blocks to form muscle tissue and feathers, which allows for rapid chick growth.

June 27: A mixture of grass and broadleaf plants are good habitat for pheasant chicks. This environment provides insects, aerial concealment, and easy ground movement for the young birds.

June 28: Vegetation furnishing aerial concealment protects chicks from flying predators and provides shade during hot days.

June 29: Even with favorable habitat, the mortality rate for chicks is high during the first two weeks of their life. Predators, extreme weather, and farm machinery are the leading causes of death.

June 30: Brood rearing areas center around the site of hatching. For the first three weeks, the area range is small, about 10 to 20 acres.

Photo 12-10. Hens with broods inhabit vegetation that provides insects for food. Insects are a vital part of a young pheasants diet providing them with the nutrients needed for rapid growth.

July: "insects, poults, pheasants and feathers."

July 1: July is an active month for the hen and her chicks.

July 2: A chick at birth is only slightly taller than a hen's knee. At two weeks of age, the chick stands about one-fourth of a hen's height, and at six weeks, it is half as tall as the hen.

July 3: Daily, a hen leads her brood in search of insects. She also keeps them out of harm's way by being on the outlook for predators.

July 4: Brood rearing habitat used by hens to raise their chicks include weed patches, hay fields, weedy cropland edges, roadsides, railroad right-of-ways, grassy shelterbelts, ungrazed pastures, and wetland edges.

July 5: An excellent brood rearing area is an undisturbed field with a mixture of grasses, annual weeds, and perennial legumes. This cover type provides food, daytime resting, and night roosting for the pheasant family.

July 6: During the summer, the chick's diet continues to differ from that of adults. Insects comprise considerably more of the chick's diet and plant seeds more of the adult's diet.

July 7: Chick survival depends on the amount of food available to them in their surroundings. Broods that are short of food tend to wonder over larger areas and suffer heavier mortality.

July 8: Studies of pheasant chicks have revealed that they will eat as many as 22 different groups of insects. Abundance of insects increases a chick's chances of survival.

July 9: Wheat and foxtail seeds are rich in protein and chicks need protein. Chicks that have access to these two food items will eat them.

July 10: Pheasant chicks begin growing flight feathers immediately after hatching. Thus, at the age of three weeks, they are capable of short flights of 150 feet. Once chicks can fly, the pheasant family expands their living territory.

July 11: By four weeks of age, improvements in flight and running abilities assist the chicks in escaping predators and evading farm machinery.

July 12: When the chicks are one month old, they have replaced most of their yellow down with feathers. Both sexes will be the same size and color.

July 13: A young pheasant, known as a poult, weighs a little over half a pound at five weeks. These immature birds are similar in color to hens.

July 14: A hen does not take in enough food to keep up with the high-energy demands of raising her chicks. Therefore, she continues to lose weight that began with nesting.

July 15: During the summer months, it is not uncommon to see a hen with two different sizes of chicks. This occurs when two hens join their broods together or when a hen adopts chicks from another brood.

July 16: It takes a hen from three to four months to lay a clutch of eggs, incubate them, and raise her chicks to independence. Hence, she only has enough time to rear one brood of her own per reproduction season.

July 17: The life of the rooster is easier in the summer, since he plays no role in incubating or raising the young.

July 18: A rooster will remain sexually active through July to serve any re-nesting hens.

July 19: Roosters begin to regain weight that was lost during the breeding season.

July 20: July and August are the main molting months for a rooster. He started dropping feathers in June and will grow a complete new set over the next three to four months. Adult hens start molting later than roosters because of nesting activities. In approximately 12 weeks, a hen will re-grow her entire plumage.

July 21: Molting keeps a birds feathers in top condition by replacing old feathers that have become worn or damaged with completely new feathers. Because pheasants have thousands of feathers, it takes a large amount of energy to replace them.

July 22: Pheasants do not lose their ability to fly during the molt, because of the sequence in which they lose and replace flight feathers.

July 23: Pheasants have two types of feathers, down and contour.

July 24: Down feathers provide pheasants with warmth during cold weather.

July 25: Contour feathers supply pheasants with protective coloration and the ability to fly.

July 26: Pheasants have broad, rounded wings, made up of contour feathers. This type of wing enables them to take off quickly for short distance flights.

July 27: Feather development in a pheasant chick is rapid. In the first two days after hatching, primary wing feathers start growing, followed by secondary wing feathers. Breast, back, rump, and tail feathers begin growing in the second week.

July 28: Head, neck, and belly feathers begin growth in week four of a chick's life. By the end of week five, very little down remains.

July 29: The chick's first feathers, or any new feathers on an adult, are not naturally waterproof.

July 30: Pheasants preen their feathers to keep them in good condition. To preen a feather, a bird will place it in its beak to straighten and clean it.

July 31: A preen gland at the base of the pheasant's tail secretes an oily substance. While preening, a pheasant will activate the gland with its beak and spread the oil to its feathers. The oily substance makes the feathers waterproof and flexible.

Photo 12-11. Poults are starting to grow their second set of feathers. Adults also molt during the summer, replacing old feathers with new ones.

August: "hens and stress, drought, poults life."

August 1: As summer proceeds into August, the role of roosters and hens are similar to July.

August 2: A rooster will continue his weight gain that he started last month.

August 3: Although most breeding is complete by July, roosters produce active semen into August.

August 4: Normally a hen remains with her brood until the young are 8 to 12 weeks old. Hence, most hens are still actively tending their clutches.

August 5: Hen pheasants can be in poor physical condition at this time and may weigh 30 percent less than they did before egg laying.

August 6: Pheasants die when they reach 60 percent of their normal body weight. A two-pound hen will die at one pound three ounces.

August 7: Several factors contribute to why a hen may be in poor physical condition at this time of the year.

August 8: A hen loses weight during the summer, because brood rearing duties place a high demand on her energy.

August 9: The amount of eggs a hen lays during the spring can influence her body weight by late summer. The more eggs she laid, the more energy she expended.

August 10: When a hen was hatched the previous year influences her condition going into winter and ultimately the next spring and summer. The later she hatched the lighter she will be.

August 11: The severity of the previous winter can influence a hen's condition during spring and summer. Harsh winters result in a lighter hen.

August 12: Throughout the month, a hen continues to expend energy for the replacement of her feathers.

August 13: Extreme summer heat places stress on pheasants.

August 14: A combination of stress factors can result in the death of a hen. Hen survival during August can be lower than during a normal winter.

August 15: As long as temperatures stay under 102 degrees, pheasants can stay cool by limiting their activities to morning and evening and by utilizing shade during midday.

August 16: Pheasants cannot sweat to air condition their body. They pant, rapidly inhaling and exhaling, to remove excess body heat on hot days. The bird behavior of panting is known by the term, gular flutter.

August 17: In addition to gular fluttering, birds also hold their wings away from their bodies to lower their body temperature.

August 18: Birds utilize woody cover and row crops, like corn and milo, for shade to escape summer heat. These loafing areas also provide safety where pheasants can rest, preen, and dust.

August 19: Dusting, the act of fluffing dirt into the feathers, helps birds rid parasites from their feathers.

August 20: Drought may result in hens not entering breeding condition, or they will go out of breeding condition when temperatures get too high for too long. Drought may have a greater impact on re-nesting attempts.

August 21: Drought decreases the number of insects available. The lack of insects affects the growth and survival of young pheasants.

August 22: Drought reduces vegetation for the following year. The result is less nesting cover for the next breeding season.

August 23: Hailstorms can reduce pheasant populations. If hailstones are large enough, they can kill both adult and young pheasants.

August 24: In this mid-summer month, the poults are consuming large quantities of insects and seeds to grow tissue and feathers.

August 25: A young pheasant will molt twice before its first winter. The down feathers at hatching, called natal plumage, are replaced by dull brown feathers known as juvenile plumage.

August 26: This is the month poults begin their post-juvenile molt, which will give them adult colored feathers.

August 27: The growth of adult feathers of various colors will distinguish the young males from young females.

August 28: A young male ends up with an iridescent plumage, a white ring around his neck and long reddish-brown tail feathers. The young female ends up with a mixture of brown, buff, and tan feathers with dark brown and black markings.

August 29: As a general rule, half of the young pheasants will not survive until fall. The main causes of death are predation, severe weather conditions, and farming operations.

August 30: Movement into new territory may be forced upon a pheasant family when farmers harvest summer crops in an area the birds were using for habitat.

August 31: By late August, the home range of a pheasant family has expanded to about 70 acres. At this time, it is common to see several female pheasants with mixed broods of varying size and age.

Photo 12-12. Young of the year become independent of the hen's care. Coloration is in full swing for the young roosters.

September: "weight gains, omnivore, pheasants and diet."

September 1: As summer winds down and fall approaches, life gets easier for pheasants.

September 2: Pheasants gain weight during this time period, making them better prepared for the upcoming winter months.

September 3: Roosters have been putting on weight for the past two months and will continue to do so this month.

September 4: As a hen enters September, she may be at her lowest weight and lowest body fat content of the year.

September 5: A hen will still be replacing feathers, a process that started in early summer.

September 6: Hens begin to recover from nesting and brood rearing activities. September will be the first time a hen has had an opportunity to gain weight since April.

September 7: Several factors are working in favor of the hen to add weight in late summer into fall.

September 8: The heat of summer has faded, along with the struggles that accompanied it, enabling a hen to gain weight.

September 9: A hen is free from the demands of raising young for the first time all summer. She can now care for her own needs and replace lost weight.

September 10: The days are still long and food sources are abundant. These advantages help the hen recover from her summer weight losses.

September 11: The pheasant is an omnivore, eating both insect and vegetable matter. By being an omnivore, a pheasant is able to survive on a variety of foods.

September 12: Pheasants will eat more than 500 different food items. The exact foods pheasants consume will be based on what is available in the locale they inhabit.

September 13: Birds have gizzards in their digestive track to grind up food. Thus, along with foodstuffs, pheasants ingest small pebbles, soil particles, and other grit to aid the gizzard in the grinding process.

September 14: Waste grains, weed seeds, fruits of various wild plants, and insects provide abundant food at this time of the year for the birds.

September 15: Pheasants also dine on green plants. Common plant materials eaten by pheasants are alfalfa, clover, dandelion, grasses, and wild mustard.

September 16: Corn and wheat are the primary waste grains available to pheasants during fall in much of the Midwest.

September 17: Corn contains more metabolizable energy for pheasants than wheat. Wheat contains more protein for pheasants than corn.

September 18: Most weed seeds provide both metabolizable energy and protein for pheasants.

September 19: Sunflower, millet, oats, barley, and grain sorghum fields are agricultural crops utilized by pheasants for food.

September 20: Pheasants are seldom found in areas where they do not have easy access to agricultural crops. One scientific study of pheasants, covering a one-year period, revealed that 70 percent of their diet was waste grains.

September 21: Protein-rich insects remain available as a food source for pheasants through early fall. Common insects consumed by pheasants are beetles, grasshoppers, leafhoppers, and caterpillars.

September 22: Since wheat and weed seeds are abundant and a good source of protein and energy, hens target these foods. A hen needs the protein to finish her replacement of feathers.

September 23: Roosters only need protein for body maintenance, and this can be supplied through weed seeds, wheat, and corn.

September 24: By the age of 12 weeks, poults are no longer under the care of their mother. Pheasants gather in loose-knit flocks in the fall, and young birds will join a flock at this time.

September 25: Young males began surpassing young females in weight at six weeks of age and continue to outweigh them from that time on. At 13 weeks of age, the female weighs about 1.5 pounds and the male weighs about 2 pounds.

September 26: Although young pheasants weigh less than their adult counterparts, they will eat just as much food as adults.

September 27: Poults will consume two to three times more insects and weed seeds but less waste grain than adults to meet their protein demand.

September 28: A high protein diet allows the young pheasant to continue growing to adult size.

September 29: Poults are carrying on the post-juvenile molt, replacing their juvenile feathers with adult plumage.

September 30: Coloration is in full swing for the young roosters, making them distinguishable from hens.

Photo 12-13. Most young of the year are full-grown when the hunting season opens. Some pheasants may not be mature at this time due to a late hatch by a re-nesting hen.

October: "food sources, full-grown, pheasants and hunters."

October 1: Just as in the previous month, pheasants are preparing for winter by gaining weight and building fat reserves.

October 2: Pheasants are now concentrated wherever the eating is good: cornfields, wheat fields, weed patches, or a variety of other possible food sources.

October 3: Due to their abundance during October, pheasants eat more weed seeds than at any other time of the year.

October 4: Wild sunflowers, foxtail, barnyard grass, ragweed, smartweed, and kochia are common weed seeds consumed by pheasants.

October 5: Hens target weed seeds and corn to eat at this time. Corn is one food that provides more energy than the hen needs, so she will gain weight.

October 6: Hen pheasants have completed the molting process and no longer have to spend energy on the growth of feathers.

October 7: Roosters are adding to their fat reserves at this time, as winter is right around the corner.

October 8: The rooster's diet mirrors what is accessible, but corn is preferred.

October 9: This is the month poults reach adult size and weight, but they are consuming more food than adults, as the final stages of their molt require additional energy and protein.

October 10: Poults began their post-juvenile molt in August. By late October, they have replaced the juvenile feathers with adult colored feathers.

October 11: It is almost impossible to tell a 21-week-old bird from an adult by its plumage.

October 12: Most full-grown pheasant hens weigh about 2 pounds, stand 10 to 12 inches tall, are between 21 to 25 inches in length, and have a wingspan of about 24 inches.

October 13: Most full-grown pheasant roosters weigh between 2.5 and 3 pounds, stand 12 to 18 inches tall, are between 30 and 36 inches in length, and have a wingspan of about 32 inches.

October 14: A pheasant rooster can be 36 inches in length, half of which can be the long, pointed tail feathers.

October 15: A male pheasant chick starts out at about one ounce at hatching and increases his weight 40 times in four months to 2.5 pounds.

October 16: Pheasants do not migrate south for the winter as many bird species do this time of the year. They stay relatively local all year long.

October 17: Local movement of pheasants occurs for two reasons: to seek either food sources or warmer cover due to colder weather.

October 18: Hunting season for rooster pheasants open about this time of the year. One reason hunting is allowed now is because hunters are able to tell a young rooster from a hen by his colored plumage.

October 19: Pheasants are unique in being the only upland game bird in which males and females can be easily distinguished by color.

October 20: The primary goal of pheasant management during hunting season is to provide hunters with maximum recreational opportunity and to leave enough brood stock for spring reproduction.

October 21: A side benefit of hunting is that it reduces the number of roosters eating over the winter months. Thus, more food is available to hens.

October 22: Hunters normally harvest 45 to 65 percent of the roosters during a hunting season. Some state game departments estimate that an additional 10 percent are lost to crippling, so total roosters removed from the population is 55 to 75 percent.

October 23: Harvest information shows that hunters shoot a majority of the total harvest of roosters during the first nine days of the hunting season. In some areas, that majority can be as high as 70 to 90 percent.

October 24: Herbst's corpuscles, or nerve endings, are pressure-sensitive pads on the feet of pheasants that enable them to feel ground vibrations.

October 25: Pheasants rely on their eyesight, hearing, and the special pads on their feet to detect approaching hunters. To escape, they employ one of the following tactics: hide, run, or fly.

October 26: The pheasant rooster is a multicolored wonder with a mottled feather pattern that provides excellent camouflage for hiding in his environment.

October 27: Pheasants are masters of concealment. By crouching down, they can avoid detection on terrain with sparse cover.

October 28: To evade potential harm, a pheasant can move silently and undetected in as little as six inches of vegetation by lowering its head and body toward the ground as it flees.

October 29: Pheasants can run up to 10 miles per hour. Their long powerful legs, combined with short blunt claws on their feet, make them superb sprinters.

October 30: When flushed, a pheasant's flight is a sudden furious explosion of wings beating three times per second. Once in the air a pheasant can reach a speed of 45 miles per hour.

October 31: Pheasants are a renewable resource. As a species, pheasants are short-lived but prolific.

Photo 12-14. Frosty weather means hunting for roosters in the fall. Habitat is the key to good pheasant hunting. The eras of high populations in the past were during periods of abundant pheasant habitat.

November: "hunting regulations, pheasants and habitat needs, body tools."

November 1: The month of November brings a continuation of the hunting season and a change into cooler weather.

November 2: Scientific studies have shown that regulated rooster-only hunting does not harm the reproductive potential of future pheasant populations, since roosters are polygamous.

November 3: Most roosters harvested in the fall will be young birds. Approximately 75 percent of the fall pheasant population is birds raised the previous spring and summer.

November 4: Hunting season regulations allow only the shooting of roosters; hens are protected.

November 5: Even though protected, past Midwest state game department studies revealed that from 6 to 16 percent of the hen population was killed during hunting season.

November 6: The most important reason for protecting hen pheasants during hunting season is to permit a high population of egg-laying females to enter the spring breeding season to produce the next generation.

November 7: Hunting is only one of many factors causing losses among pheasants in a year. However, it is the factor that game departments have the most control over.

November 8: Habitat affects rooster harvest. Inadequate cover concentrates birds and results in a larger portion of the roosters taken by hunters. Good cover in large fields reduces the harvest.

November 9: A variety of habitat types are necessary for pheasants to survive and reproduce. Certain kinds of habitat are needed year-round and others only seasonally.

November 10: Pheasants need a mosaic of habitat for feeding, roosting, loafing, nesting, raising young, escaping predators, and surviving harsh winters.

November 11: Ring-necks thrive where farmlands contain a diverse mix of needed habitat in a small area.

November 12: A good mix of pheasant habitat includes: undisturbed grasslands and forbs, row crops, small grain crops, wetlands, and woody cover.

November 13: The two types of seasonal habitat pheasants require are nesting cover in the spring and brood rearing cover in the summer.

November 14: The pheasant carrying capacity of an area is determined by whatever habitat factor is in the shortest supply.

November 15: Lack of adequate winter and nesting habitat are the biggest factors limiting pheasant numbers in many places. Providing pheasants with these seasonal habitat requirements can improve survival and reproduction.

November 16: Pheasants will easily move two or more miles a year looking for habitat requirements. If they find what they need, they will stay in the new area.

November 17: Pheasant populations are highest where all of their seasonal requirements occur in close proximity.

November 18: Pheasants can spend their entire life in an area of less than one square mile as long as the conditions needed for survival are in that area.

November 19: Pheasant populations can more than double in a year's time given proper weather and habitat.

November 20: Of all the strategies proposed for increasing pheasant populations, only one really works—increasing the amount of habitat available.

November 21: Federal agriculture set-aside programs result in better pheasant habitat and increased pheasant populations.

November 22: As cooler weather sets in during the fall, the pheasant has several body tools to cope with the changing conditions.

November 23: A pheasant is equipped with rake-like feet and clawed toes to scratch and find food buried under snow.

November 24: Birds' legs and feet are covered with specialized scales that minimize heat loss in cold weather.

November 25: A pheasant has keen eyesight that can be used to find food and a stout, curved beak to gather food.

November 26: During cool, fall days, a pheasant may only need to fluff out its feathers to create air pockets for additional insulation to keep warm.

November 27: Once temperatures drop below 40 degrees, pheasants increase their food intake to stay warm and to produce body fat.

November 28: A pheasant consumes 33 percent more food in November than the previous month.

November 29: Pheasants build up fat reserves to serve as insulation and extra energy for generating body heat. These reserves keep the birds alive during blizzards or ice storms when they may go without food for a few days.

November 30: Food plots with standing grain above the snow and ice provide pheasants with needed food sources now and in the winter months to come. Corn and milo are good standing grains and provide high-energy food.

Photo 12-15. Hens are more sociable than roosters and generally gather in larger groups. But, during very cold winter weather mixed-sex flocks of birds are common.

December: "history, pheasants and adaptation, blizzards."

December 1: *Phasianus colchicus* is the scientific name for the ring-necked pheasant. The name comes from the Phasis River and the ancient country of Colchis, where Greek Europeans first discovered this Asian bird.

December 2: *Phasianus* (Latin) and pheasant (English) come from the Greek word phasianos, meaning "bird of the Phasis." Today the Phasis River is called the Rioni and located in the Republic of Georgia. The river has its origins in the Caucasus Mountains and flows into the Black Sea.

December 3: The first successful stocking of pheasants in the United States came in the 1880s when Judge Owen Denny, Consul General at Shanghai, China, shipped Chinese ring-necked pheasants to his brother's farm in Oregon.

December 4: The flourishing of the pheasant in Oregon prompted the Midwest states to make stockings in the early 1900s.

December 5: One factor in the success of initial pheasant stockings was the lack of life threatening diseases. Even today, diseases are not considered a major limiting factor of pheasant populations.

December 6: Although not native, pheasants are hardy birds and quite adaptable to changing conditions. Subsistence can be high especially where prime habitat exists.

December 7: December is the beginning of winter and a time of adaptation for pheasants.

December 8: As colder weather arrives, pheasants begin to move into thicker cover.

December 9: On average, pheasants require one-third more energy in December than in October to stay warm.

December 10: Pheasants need to consume enough food to continue to store energy as fat and gain weight before the coldest months of January and February.

December 11: Pheasants now have the fewest daylight hours of the year to search for food.

December 12: Comparing December to September, pheasants are consuming more food in three hours less time and enduring colder nights that are three hours longer.

December 13: Even with the challenges December brings, pheasants still manage to gain weight by storing energy in the form of fat.

December 14: To compensate for the shorter daylight hours, most pheasants are feeding before sunrise and many will even feed after sunset.

December 15: Pheasants are consuming twice as much food now as they did during summer.

December 16: If available, nutritious corn is the food of choice by pheasants as winter approaches.

December 17: A pheasant hen continues the weight gain she began in September. By the end of fall, a hen will have recovered most of the weight she lost over the summer months.

December 18: During freezing 15 hour-long nights in winter, pheasants prefer to roost in idle vegetation that is dense and tall. A quality roosting cover reduces the amount of energy a pheasant uses to keep warm and preserves their fat reserves.

December 19: In cold conditions, a pheasant may sleep and rest with its head partially placed under its wing feathers. This position can help cut the loss of body heat.

December 20: A pheasant has no more feathers in winter than it had in the spring. Pheasants do not grow extra feathers in the fall.

December 21: The feathers of a pheasant provide insulation against the cold, and the oil that coats its feathers provides both insulation and waterproofing.

December 22: Food habits and feeding behavior during early winter are the same for both young and old birds.

December 23: A young pheasant reaches full adult maturity at 25 weeks of age. Even though a juvenile bird attains adult size at 20 weeks of age, the internal organs (heart, liver, kidneys, and lungs) continue growth for another five weeks.

December 24: Both young roosters and hens reach maturity in a matter of months and are capable of reproducing before their first birthday.

December 25: Winter blizzards can mean death to pheasants caught out in the open away from protective cover.

December 26: Suffocation of a pheasant can occur when wind driven snow and ice form around their nasal openings and mouth.

December 27: Without adequate shelter, ring-necks can perish when snow blows under their feathers. The snow melts from their body heat and refreezes, thus, taking away the insulating qualities of their feathers.

December 28: Pheasant flocks tend to be segregated by sex in the winter months.

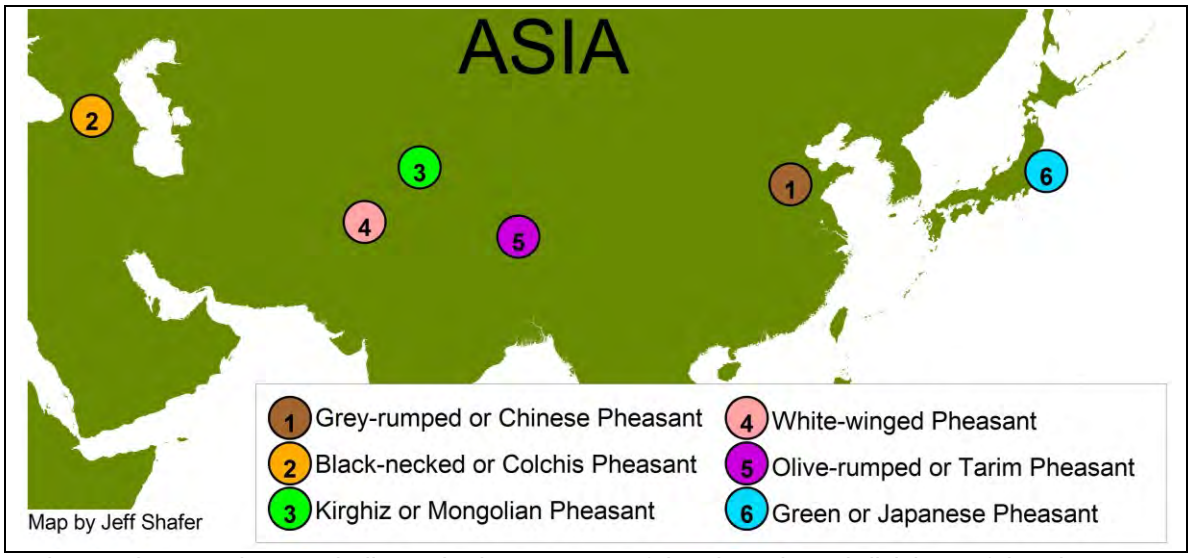
December 29: Hens are more tolerant of crowding than are roosters and generally gather in larger groups.

December 30: Roosters are inclined to roost in small groups or alone, apart from the hens.

December 31: Most pheasants are in good shape in December and are able to overcome the challenging conditions of early winter weather. Survival is typically good, particularly where adequate habitat is available.

The Origins of the Midwest Hybrid Pheasant

Carl G. Trautman in his book *History, Ecology and Management of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota* listed six subdivisions of the genus *phasianus*. The six subdivisions are grey-rumped or Chinese pheasant, black-necked or Colchis pheasant, green or Japanese pheasant, Kirghiz or Mongolian pheasant, white-winged pheasant, and olive-rumped or Tarim pheasant. Trautman indicated that the first four subdivisions listed were the predominant ones to influence the makeup of Midwest pheasants. He also made comments about the other two subdivisions. He stated that the white-winged pheasant could have had contact with the Kirghiz pheasant. Trautman stated this about the olive-rumped pheasant, "It has never been introduced into Europe or America."



The numbers on the map indicate the home range of the six major subdivisions of the pheasant.

A history lesson is in order to find out how the subdivisions mixed to create the Midwest hybrid pheasant. The first successful subdivision of pheasants to be transplanted into the United States was the grey-rumped or Chinese pheasant. In 1881 and 1882 Judge Owen N. Denny, U. S. Consul General in Shanghai, China, shipped Chinese ring-necked pheasants to Oregon. The second shipment in 1882 went to Owen's brother, John Denny. John released those pheasants near the family's Willamette Valley homestead in Linn County. The first Oregon pheasant hunting season was held in the Willamette Valley in 1892. Once the success of the pheasant in Oregon became well known: individuals, sportsmen groups, and state game departments of the Midwest started stocking pheasants. Pheasants were imported into the Midwest from where ever they could be purchased. "Pheasants came here from all over Europe and Asia and met in a kind of giant genetic melting pot in the Midwest," according to information from Pheasants Forever.

The Denny story in Oregon makes known the introduction of the Chinese pheasant to the United States and eventually the Midwest. Following is a summary of the journey of other pheasant subdivisions from Asia to the Midwest. Historians believe the Colchis pheasant was discovered by ancient Greeks along the Phasis River in the Colchis region of Asia. The Greeks brought pheasants back to Europe with them. Later the Romans conquered the Greeks. The Romans then spread the pheasant across their Empire in Europe, including England. England rose to power in the 1700s and started trading with Asia. A result of this contact with Asia was the introduction of three more subdivisions of the pheasant to England. By 1900, the Colchis pheasant had been crossbred with the Chinese pheasant, the Japanese pheasant, and the Kirghiz pheasant. The crossing of these four subdivisions of pheasant resulted in an English hybrid pheasant. "Of these four true pheasant types, the Chinese and the Kirghiz have white neck rings, and the Caucasian [Colchis] and the Japanese pheasants have dark necks without white collars. In hybridization the black-neck characteristic eventually disappeared, with the white-ring characteristic persisting," according to Trautman. Therefore, both English and Chinese pheasant roosters had a white ring-neck when they were imported by the Midwest states in the early 1900s.

This mixture of the various Asian subdivisions of pheasant imported into the Midwest resulted in more hybridization. Trautman pointed out that, "All species and subspecies of true pheasants interbreed freely when accessible to each other and produce completely fertile hybrids." Because the Asian subdivisions of pheasant differed in color characteristics, the Midwest hybrid pheasant rooster could vary in feather color though out the body. These variations have become less prevalent over the years.

grey-rumped or Chinese pheasant

Kirghiz or Mongolian pheasant

black-necked or Colchis pheasant

green or Japanese pheasant

(By H. Jones [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons)

These four subdivisions of pheasants were the predominant ones to influence the makeup of the Midwest pheasant. Note, the Chinese pheasant and the Kirghiz pheasant have the white neck rings. The Colchis and Japanese have dark necks without white collars. In hybridization the dark-neck eventually disappeared with the white-ring characteristic persisting.

In conclusion, the original stock of Midwest pheasants came from the hybrid English ring-necked pheasant and Chinese ring-necked pheasant. Literature may refer to the Midwest pheasant as the Chinese ring-necked. In reality the Midwest pheasant is not solely the Chinese ring-necked, but a blend of several pheasant subdivisions.

Source: Trautman, Carl G. 1982. *History, Ecology and Management of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota*. South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, Pierre.

Photo 12-16. A pair of Midwest Hybrid Pheasants

South Dakota Pheasant Introductions and Distribution

Records of initial pheasant introductions in South Dakota from the late 1800s and early 1900s are too vague or incomplete to provide accurate numbers, origin or exact locations of releases. One known early attempt to establish pheasants was by Dr. A. Zetlitz of Sioux Falls. He had several varieties of pheasants shipped to South Dakota in 1898. Some were ring-necked pheasants, assumed to be of the hybrid English ring-neck variety. These birds, along with others hatched and reared at his home, were released in Minnehaha County. It was reported that some of the birds were seen as far away as Yankton County by 1902, but the population eventually disappeared due to uncontrolled hunting.

The first successful introductions occurred in 1909 on farms and a ranch in Spink County. In March of 1909, H. P. Packard, H. J. Schalkle, and H. A. Hagman secured pheasants from a game farm in Oregon. Six of these birds were released at Hagman's Grove north of Redfield. Also in 1909 A. C. Johnson released 25 pheasants on his ranch south of Frankfort. A. E. Cooper and E. L. Ebbert, operators of adjoining farms south of Doland, purchase several pairs from a Pennsylvania game farm in 1908 and released them on their farms. It was presumed these pheasants perished in the heavy snow that winter. The following year, 1909, they again released a few dozen birds that survived. As a result of these early releases in Spink County, pheasants began to propagate the area.

Private releases continued in the early 1900s to establish pheasant populations. In 1911, the sportsmen of Redfield released another 30 pair of pheasants in the Redfield area. SDGF began releasing pheasants that same year as well. The first released pheasants by the SDGF were 48 pairs near Redfield. These birds were purchased with privately donated funds. The first state money spent on ring-necked pheasants was in May of 1911 when 200 pairs of were bought. These pheasants were distributed throughout the state.

SDGF purchased nearly 1,800 Chinese ring-necked pheasants in 1913 and approximately 1,400 in 1914. These birds were bought from the Wallace Evans Game Farm at Oak Park, Illinois. They were placed on exhibit at the State Fair. After the Fair closed these pheasants were dispersed to practically every county in the state for propagation purposes. SDGF followed out the policy of former years by purchasing 650 pheasants in 1916, 360 in 1917, 360 in 1918, 300 in 1919, 255 in 1921, and then liberating them in the state. The first South Dakota pheasant hunting season was a one-day hunt held in Spink County on October 30, 1919.

Once populations were established in central and eastern South Dakota, SDGF trapped and transferred 33,500 pheasants to West River counties from 1926 through 1941. Trap and transfer projects continued to supplement areas of the state that experienced significant losses due to severe winter conditions and to fill unoccupied areas containing suitable pheasant habitat.

Although trap and transfer projects were used to fill suitable pheasant habitat primarily in western South Dakota, this technique has not been utilized since the mid-1990s except for small stockings at the recently acquired Hill Ranch Game Production Area in Fall River County. As a result of public pressure during periods of low pheasant densities, SDGFP has in the past paid landowners and other interested groups to raise and release pheasants. This state-sponsored program was discontinued in 1990 due to mounting evidence that this technique is ineffective.

After the success of initial stockings and the saturation of the state's traditional pheasant range, pheasant populations have been particularly high on four occasions: the 1930s during the Great Depression and drought period when much farmland was idle; the 1940s during World War II when again much habitat was unintentionally created on idled cropland; the early 1960s at the peak of the Soil Bank Program; and the first decade of the 21st Century due to abundant Conservation Reserve Program acres.

It is not surprising that these periodic high pheasant numbers were the result of the widespread availability of high quality pheasant habitat. Large-scale declines in upland habitat across much of the pheasant range resulted in far fewer pheasants during the interim time periods. [Excerpts in this article were taken from pages 4 and 5 of the following document: SDGFP. 2016. *Ring-necked Pheasant Management Plan for SD 2016-2020*. Wildlife Division Report 5-02. SDGFP, Pierre.]

Section 13

A Treatise on the Stocking of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota

by

Lonnie W. Shafer

2019

Wildlife Division Director
Tony Leif

Wildlife Division Deputy Director
& Chief of Wildlife
Tom Kirschenmann

Wildlife Program Administrator
Chad Switzer

Senior Upland Game Biologist
Travis Runia

[Image source: William L. Finley, January 1, 1912. OrgLot 369, Finley B0927, Oregon Historical Society Research Library.]

Gene M. Simpson with a pheasant chick on his shoulder.

Simpson Pheasant Farm

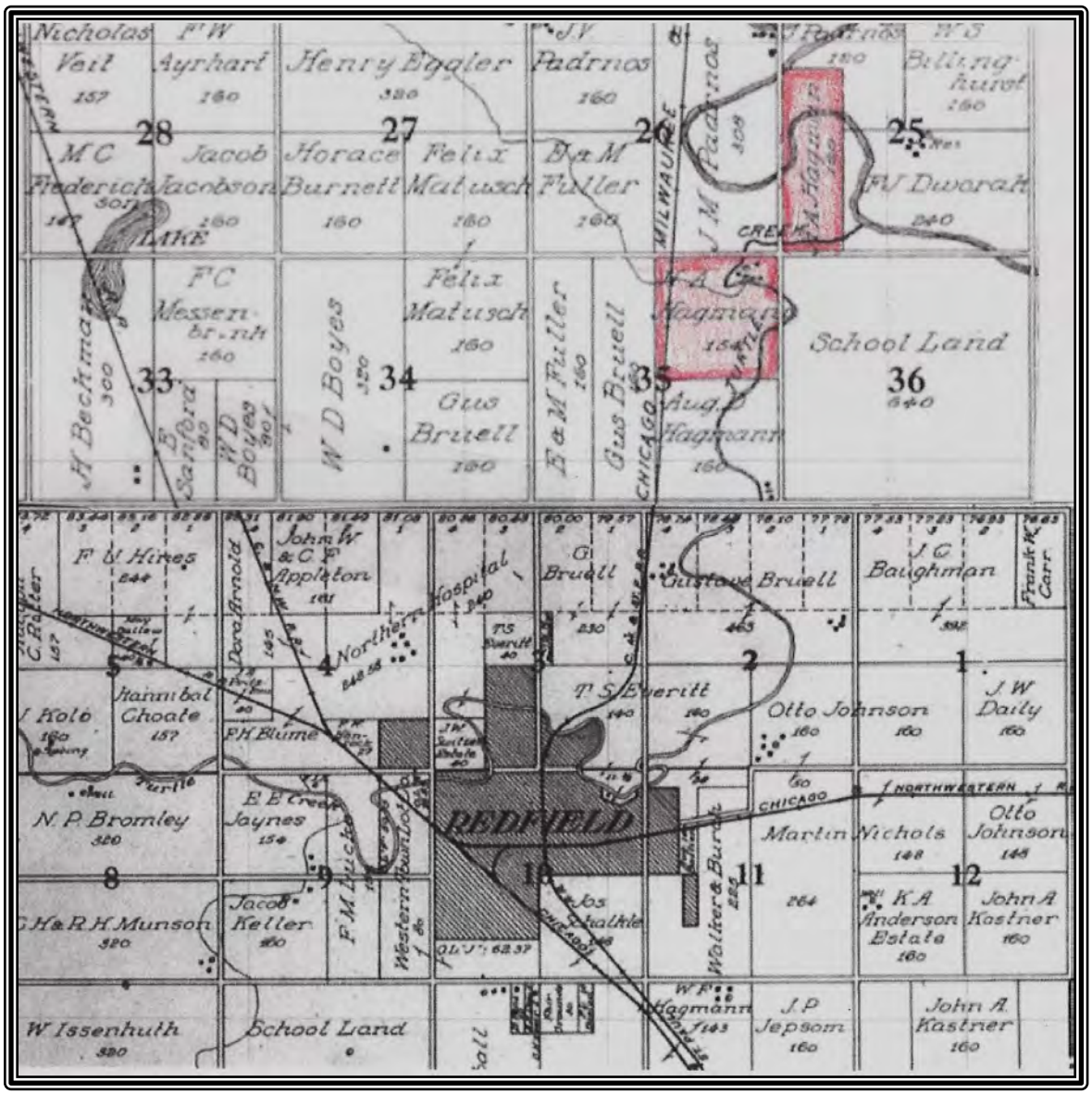
In 1900 Eugene "Gene" Milton Simpson started a game farm in Corvallis, Oregon. The Simpson Pheasant Farm grew to be the largest pheasant operation west of the Mississippi River. Simpson was recognized as an expert in raising pheasants. In 1906 he published a booklet entitled "Pheasant Farming." The annual reports of China pheasants shipped out of Oregon by Gene M. Simpson for the years of 1908-1910 listed shipments to 28 different states. The largest sale was 1,000 China pheasants to Idaho in 1909. Also, in 1909 he sold a dozen China pheasants to three men in Redfield, South Dakota. The buyers were Hebert A. Hagman, Henry J. Schalkle, and Harland P. Packard. The story of this transaction continues on the next page. [Annual Report of the Game and Forestry Warden to the Governor of Oregon for the year 1908, pages 7-8.]-[Annual Reports of the Game and Forestry Warden to the Governor of Oregon for the years 1909-1910, pages 10-11, 23.]

[Image source: same as above, Finley C0080.]

[Image source: same as above, Finley A1480.]

Ring-necked pheasant rooster and ring-necked pheasant hen photos taken at the Simpson Pheasant Farm.

Twelve pheasants were shipped from Corvallis, Oregon, to Redfield, South Dakota, in 1909.



[Map source: Library of Congress, 1909 Map of Spink County, South Dakota.]

1909 Map of Redfield, South Dakota and Surrounding Area

The Redfield Story

Herbert "Bert" A. Hagman, Henry J. Schalkle, and Harland P. Packard, all of Redfield, are credited with the first successful stocking of ring-necked pheasants in South Dakota. In March of 1909 they secured pheasants from the Simpson Pheasant Farm in Corvallis, Oregon. Three pairs were released on Hagman's farm north of Redfield, adjacent to the James River. These pheasants survived and were seen the following year along the river. The above map has two tracts of land shaded in red. According to the information on the map, H. A. Hagman owned those shaded properties. Since the James River flows through the north property of Hagman, this would be the location of where the six pheasants were released.

Hagman and others collected eggs from two other pairs of pheasants from the Oregon purchase. From those eggs they hatched and raised more pheasants that were released. In 1911, Hagman and Schalkle took up a collection from the sportsmen of Redfield and purchased 30 pairs of pheasants that were released in the Redfield area. According to Hagman, 52 of these birds were put out on his park on the James River, three miles northeast of Redfield. [*The Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD) March 11, 1909, page 3.]-[*Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD) March 15, 1921, page 1.]-[Russell L Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, page 11.]

Preface

Lonnie Shafer is a retired secondary history teacher residing in York, Nebraska. He is an avid pheasant hunter and has made frequent trips to South Dakota to hunt pheasants. He enjoys researching pheasant history and facts and then sharing his findings with others. He is the author of *The South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Seasons Data Book*.

The reader of "A Treatise of the Stocking of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota" is about to step back in history and examine historical articles that were written more than a century ago relating to the introduction of pheasants in South Dakota. The author believes his "Treatise" contains data on the pheasant stocking history of South Dakota that has been concealed for a long time. He understands that is a bold statement. However, some of the data he was able to uncover is absent from any account he has read on the subject. The author's findings also challenge some of the customary data that has been passed down as stocking history.

From this author's perspective, it appears that 1959 was the last time anyone attempted to piece together the South Dakota pheasant stocking history. With today's research technology, the author was able to do an extensive in-depth research. He collected data on stocking history that would have been very difficult for a writer to obtain 60 years ago.

The author spent 41 years behind the teacher's desk presenting history lessons to students. His goal was to teach the facts to the best of his knowledge. He cringed at the thought of teaching erroneous information. That may be why when he reads historical articles that contain mistakes, he has the impulse to make corrections.

Why did this author write a treatise on pheasant stocking in South Dakota? The answer lies in the fact that he is a pheasant enthusiast and history buff. His researching of pheasant history in South Dakota, the state best known for pheasants, was an enjoyable endeavor. Now he encourages, the reader to read the "Treatise" and evaluate his conclusions.

In 1924 South Dakota hunters declared pheasant hunting "to be some of the greatest sport they had ever enjoyed." [H.S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Fifth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1924 to June 30, 1925, page 5.] The author of this treatise pictured above would concur with their assessment of pheasant hunting.

Acknowledgements

Appreciation is extended to Tony Leif, Wildlife Division Director of the SDGFP; Tom Kirschenmann, Wildlife Division Deputy Director & Chief of Wildlife; Chad Switzer, Wildlife Program Administrator; and Travis Runia, Senior Upland Game Biologist for their consultation with the author on this document.

Introduction

Lonnie Shafer gathered historical articles pertaining to South Dakota ring-necked pheasant stocking while doing research for *The South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Seasons Data Book*. "Like so many early records, those of South Dakota pheasant introductions are often vague or incomplete, particularly with respect to the number and variety of pheasants comprising each of the several releases." Carl Trautman stated these words of caution in his book, *History Ecology and Management of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota*.

Some of the historical articles collected by the author bears out Trautman's assessment of early records being "vague and incomplete." The articles do not all agree, probably because some are secondary sources and not primary sources. Each article may contain a grain of truth in it and was saved by the author for that reason. The format of this treatise contains an annotated bibliography. The bibliography has the complete text of what the author used to write the treatise. The reader has the opportunity to read those same historical records.

The following acronyms were used in the text: SD (South Dakota), SDGF (Department of Game and Fish of South Dakota), and SDGFP (South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks).

Objective

The objective of this document was to present a history of pheasant stockings in South Dakota in a logical sequence. The timeline synopsis on pages 190-191 and the table on page 192 present the theme of this treatise.

Contents

Wallace Evans Game Propagation Farm

The Evans Game Farm in Illinois was listed as the supplier of pheasant stock for South Dakota for the years of 1913, 1914, 1916, 1917, 1918, and 1919. To find out more about the Evans Game Farm, the author made an online internet search. He was able to garner the following bits of information.

The full name was the Wallace Evans Game Propagation Farm. Wallace Evans started his game farm in 1895 in Oak Parks, Illinois. He became so successful in raising a wide variety of game that more space was needed. Evans moved his operation to St. Charles, Illinois, in 1915. The game farm was one of the largest in the United States. The August 1907 issue of *Western Field* stated Evans was "a master in the art of breeding pheasants," and had "about four thousand staunch young English pheasants" that year. He was the largest commercial dealer of ring-necked pheasants in the nation. These pheasants were sold to conservation groups. He also sold eggs for incubation.

In 1913 Harry S. Hedrick, South Dakota State Game Warden, visited the Evans Game Farm. "While absent Mr. Hedrick looked up the proposition of securing more pheasants for stocking the fields of this state. For this purpose he visited a pheasant farm at Oak Park, Ill., where thousands of ring necks are produced each year. Having investigated the source of supply, the warden will now look up and check up the results of the state's last purchase of pheasants under Former Warden W. F. Bancroft with the view of getting the best results out of the stock to be purchased this coming fall." [*Dewey County Advocate*, (Timber Lake, SD) July 11, 1913, page 1.]

South Dakota Pioneer Pheasant Enthusiasts

Bert Hagman, Harland Packard, and Henry Schalkle; all of Redfield

These three men are credited with the first successful release of ring-necked pheasants in South Dakota in 1909. The following 1921 newspaper article cites Bert Hagman's story of the early release of pheasants in the Redfield area.

"There is an interesting story in connection with the planting of the first pheasants in South Dakota. About ten years ago H. J. Schalkle, H. P. Packard and H. A. Hagman purchased a dozen pheasants from Gene M. Simpson of Corvallis, Ore.

"'At this time,' writes Mr. Hagman, 'I had never seen a pheasant at large in Spink County. Six of these birds were given their liberty. Two pairs we kept in captivity for a time and from them we got about 60 to 80 eggs. These were set under hens. Some of the young birds I raised remained on the farm, roosting in the chicken coop until the middle of the next winter when they suddenly decided to leave.

"The following spring Mr. Schalkle and I took up a collection among the sportsmen in Redfield and purchased 57 pheasants. About March 20 we took 52 of these birds out to my park on the James River, three miles northeast of Redfield. We set the crates down and let the pheasants walk out of the crates into the brush. Five of the birds we put into a grove three miles southwest of Redfield. I observed these birds very closely for the first year. There were a large number of little chicks hatched on my farm. In the first year I would say that the pheasants spread about 10 miles from where they were planted.

"At the present time there are thousands of pheasants in Spink County and they have spread over an area of from 40 to 60 miles. They prefer plum and cherry thickets, tree claims, even patches of weeds are good enough cover for them. The pheasant does not drive out the prairie chicken. I have more prairie chickens about the place now than before the pheasants were planted.

"Pheasants eat all sorts of insects, particularly grasshoppers, and the farmers of Spink County will fight to protect the pheasant. Pheasants are worth thousands of dollars every year in protecting the alfalfa fields against grasshoppers.'" [*Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD), March 15, 1921, page 1.]

A. C. Johnson of Frankfort

"A. C. Johnson of Frankfort also purchased 25 birds the same year (1909) and released them on his ranch south of Frankfort." [Russell L Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, page 11.]

A. E. Cooper and E. L. Ebbert of Doland

"A. E. Cooper and E. L. Ebbert, operators of adjoining farms south of Doland in Spink County, purchased several pairs from a Pennsylvania game farm in 1908 and released them in wooded sections of their farms. These birds apparently failed to survive the heavy snows of that winter. The following year (1909) the two men tried again, releasing a few dozen young birds, which evidently survived. Many were killed by hunters but some of these are believed to be the progenitors of much of the pheasant population in that vicinity today." [Russell L Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, page 11.]

Dr. Karsten "Arne" Zetlitz (also known as Dr. A) of Sioux Falls

From 1898 to the time that pheasants were established in South Dakota Dr. Zetlitz labored to stock his area of the state with ring-necked pheasants. His early attempts in 1898 and 1903 resulted in pheasant populations starting to develop. However, it is believed that hunters shot those birds.

Newspaper articles from 1907, 1909, and 1910, reveal further efforts of Dr. Zetlitz that apparently brought success. "Dr. Zetlitz, of Sioux Falls has been breeding the pheasants for some time and they are thriving and are now occasionally seen along the streams of the lower Sioux." [*The Mitchell Capital*, (Mitchell, SD) July 28, 1910, page 3.]

Frank L. Bramble of Watertown

Frank L. Bramble was best known for his recreational interest in pheasants. In 1910, he had several coveys of ring-necked pheasants in confinement. "The following year (1911) State Game Warden, W. F. Bancroft, purchased 200 pairs of pheasants for the State through the F. L. Bramble Aviary at Watertown." [Russell L Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, page 11.] The *State-Line Herald* issue for May 19, 1911, reported the pheasants were obtained from Washington.

W. F. Bancroft, South Dakota State Game Warden, 1909-1913 of Watertown

W. F. Bancroft purchased the first pheasants with state funds in 1911. "The department just at the close of the present fiscal year (1911) had made arrangements for the purchase of 200 pairs of Chinese Ring-neck pheasants to be put out over the state as an experiment in propagating game birds, … " [W. F. Bancroft, State Game Warden, Annual Report SDGF, July 1, 1910 to June 30, 1911, page 7.] "The game department reports that the 200 (pairs of) Chinese pheasants purchased by that department at the cost of $1,200 last spring (1911), and distributed to interested parties throughout the state, have greatly prospered during the summer, as is indicated by numerous reports received giving notice of large increase. They were all placed in wooded districts." [*Pierre Weekly Free Press*, (Pierre, SD) January 18, 1912, page 3.]

Robert E. Dowdell of Artesian

"In 1913 Robert E. Dowdell imported nine pairs of pheasants from Illinois, which he released at Ruskin Park along the James River near Forestburg." [Russell L Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, page 12.]

Harry S. Hedrick South Dakota State Game Warden, 1913-1925 of Chamberlain

In 1913, Harry S. Hedrick made the first large purchase of pheasants for South Dakota. "During the fall of 1913 the State purchased about 1,800 Chinese Ring-necked Pheasants from the Wallace Evans Game Farm at Oak Park, Illinois, which were placed on exhibit at the State Fair, together with several varieties of fancy pheasants and wild waterfowl which were loaned to the department by Mr. Evans. After the Fair closed these pheasants were distributed over the state for propagation purposes and from reports filed with this department, in response to requests from all parties with whom the birds had been placed, we find that the pheasants have done very well." [H.S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Fifth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1913 to June 30, 1914, page 6.] While in office, Hedrick secured over 5,000 pheasants for the stocking program. "State Game Warden Hedrick has spared neither expense nor time in endeavoring to stock the state with these beautiful and highly prized game birds." [*Queen City Mail*, (Spearfish, SD) February 9, 1921, page 1.]

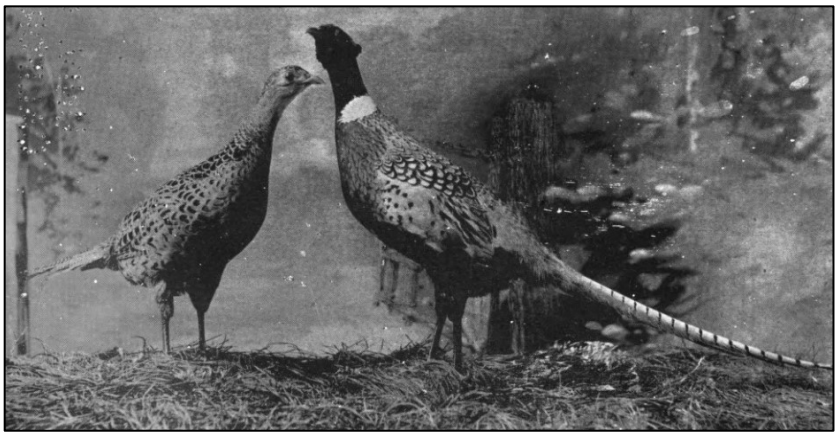
The private stockings, along with the work of Bancroft and Hedrick led to the first pheasant hunting season in 1919. The results of these pioneering efforts can be summed up in the evaluation given by South Dakota pheasant hunters in 1924. Hunters declared pheasant hunting "to be some of the greatest sport they had ever enjoyed." [H.S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Fifth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1924 to June 30, 1925, page 5.]

Chinese? English? Mongolian? Ring-necked Pheasant

While doing research on the stocking of pheasants in South Dakota the author encountered different names for the ring-necked pheasant. The following names were listed: Chinese, English, and Mongolian. In most cases these were names used by writers referring to the same ring-necked pheasant. An example of this interchangeable name usage can be found in the SDGF purchase of ring-necked pheasants in 1913. SDGF Commission Minutes for August 19, 1913, authorized the purchase of 1,775 Chinese ring-necked pheasants from the Evans Game Farm in Illinois. The Evans Game Farm filled the order with English ring-necked pheasants. When Lawrence County received a portion of the birds a newspaper article referred to them as Mongolian pheasants. Three different names were used for the same pheasants.

Based on the author's research the vast majority of the pheasants stocked in South Dakota were the English ring-necked variety. SDGF purchased approximately 5,000 pheasants from the Evans Game Farm between the years of 1913 and 1919. The pheasant raised by the Evans Game Farm was the hybrid English ring-necked. The crossbreeding of the Colchis, Chinese, Japanese, and Mongolian subdivisions of the species became known as the English ring-necked pheasant. All of this crossbreeding occurred in England long before the pheasant was shipped to the United States.

Most writers of early historical articles in South Dakota used Chinese ring-necked pheasant to refer to the bird. There is more than one reason why Chinese ring-neck was the most common usage. Chinese ring-neck pheasants were the first subdivision to succeed in the United States. This occurred in the 1880s when Owen Denny, Consul General at Shanghai, China, shipped Chinese ring-necked pheasants to his brother's farm in Oregon. Also, the Oregon shipment record of the 12 pheasants to South Dakota in 1909 described the birds as China pheasants. Another contributing factor was that the plumage of the hybrid English ring-necked pheasant rooster most closely resembled the Chinese ring-necked rooster in color pattern.



(Image source: 1900 Annual Report of the Game and Forestry Warden to Governor of Oregon)

Ringneck or China Torquatus Pheasant was the caption accompanying this 1900 image.

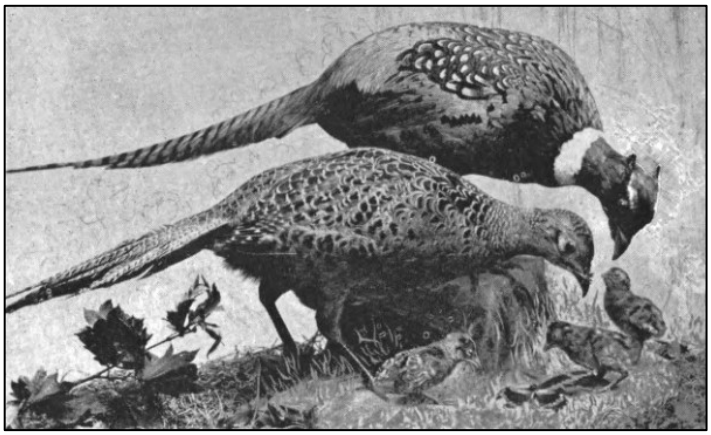
The following article was published in the 1900 Oregon Annual Report of the Game and Forestry Warden. It points out that the terminology for the pheasant was somewhat misaligned even before the ring-necked pheasant was successfully introduced in South Dakota.

PHEASANT NOMENCLATURE

By reason of the many appellations given the imported pheasant introduced into this state from China by the late O. N. Denny, and the probability of the introduction of still other varieties of the pheasant family, it seems important, to the end that confusion be avoided, that the bird already here be called by its proper name. It has been indiscriminately called the China pheasant, Mongolian, Ringneck and Denny. The proper name of this bird is the Ringneck or China Torquatus. Mongolian is a misnomer, as no specimen of the Mongolian pheasant has yet been landed on the American continent. The name Denny is given the bird in honor of him who introduced it into Oregon, and while no harm can come from perpetuating this compliment to recognized benefactor of the state, the name can only have local favor and limited prestige. The generic or scientific name of the bird can never be divorced from it, even should custom make another name popular. Whether or not custom will accept the name of Denny as descriptive of Oregon's most famous game birds, the name of Judge Denny will forever be linked with the game resources of the state.

The writer adopted the name of Mongolian in his first report, but, after research, would urge that the correct name be adhered to. [1900 Annual Report of the Game and Forestry Warden to Governor of Oregon, pages 13-15.]

This 1900 article stressed the use of Ringneck or China Torquatus as the proper name of the ring-necked pheasant. By 1909 the hybrid English ring-necked pheasant was wide spread in the United States and the scientific name *Phasianus colchicus* was adopted. Today the bird is generally referred to as the ring-necked pheasant or pheasant.



(Image source: 1900 Annual Report of the Game and Forestry Warden to Governor of Oregon)

In 1909 ring-necked pheasants were shipped from Corvallis, Oregon to Redfield, South Dakota.

NEW GAME BIRD

Chinese Pheasants from Oregon to Be Introduced in South Dakota

Redfield, March 10.—Harlan Packard, Henry Schalke and Bert Hagman have received from Oregon a shipment of a dozen Chinese pheasants, with the avowed purpose of breeding them that they may be added to the list of game birds in this state.

The cocks are tall, with highly colored plumage, purple, blue and green, with a streak of white on the neck. The hens resemble the prairie chicken, except that there is a faint purple color on the breast. The birds are active and fly much more rapidly than the prairie chicken. The birds will be kept through this season, in which each of the females should lay from sixty to a hundred eggs. Then they will be put at large. The present game law protects them indefinitely.

It is believed they will thrive in this state, as the birds originally came from northern China and they propagate faster than any other game bird. There are now thousands of them in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and California. In Kansas the game commission has for several years encouraged their breeding, and good results have been obtained, the farmers having become interested.

[*The Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD) March 11, 1909, page 3.]

March 1909—New Game Bird for South Dakota

Could it be that the pheasant was introduced in Spink County in 1909, rather than 1908? Upon examining the historical articles this author had access to he came to the conclusion that the introduction of the pheasant in Redfield was in 1909. The following historical articles were used for his assessment.

Primary and Secondary Source Historical Articles related to 1909

1909-March-11

NEW GAME BIRD – Chinese Pheasants from Oregon to Be Introduced in South Dakota

Redfield, March 10—Harland Packard, Henry Schalkle and Bert Hagman have received from Oregon a shipment of a dozen Chinese pheasants, with the avowed purpose of breeding them that they may be added to the list of game birds in this state.

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Author's comments: In March of 1909, seven newspapers published this article giving the date the men of Redfield received a shipment of a dozen Chinese pheasants. That date was 1909 and not 1908 as recorded in secondary sources beginning in 1938.

1908 and 1910 (Primary Sources)

Annual Reports of the Game and Forestry Warden to the Governor of Oregon

List of Game Transported Out of State. Following is a list of game transported out of the State, by permit in writing given by the State Game and Forestry Warden, … for the year ending (December 1, A. D., 1908): (December 1, A. D., 1909): (December 1, A. D., 1910).

Name of shipper.	Description of game.	Destination.	Year	Page(s)
No shipments were listed for South Dakota in 1908			1908	pages 7-8
Gene M. Simpson	12 China pheasants	South Dakota	1909	page 10
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Gene M. Simpson	24 China pheasants	South Dakota	1910	page 23

[Annual Report of the Game and Forestry Warden to the Governor of Oregon for the year 1908, pages 7-8.]-[Annual Reports of the Game and Forestry Warden to the Governor of Oregon for the years 1909-1910, pages 10-11, 23.]

Author's comment: The Annual Report records of game transported out of Oregon, list no shipment of pheasants to South Dakota in 1908. The records do list a shipment of 12 China pheasants to South Dakota in 1909. The news article 1909-March-11 states: "Harland Packard, Henry Schalkle and Bert Hagman have received from Oregon a shipment of a dozen Chinese pheasants." The news article 1921-March-15 states: " … H. J. Schalkle, H. P. Packard and H. A. Hagman purchased a dozen pheasants from Gene M. Simpson of Corvallis, Ore."

It would have been useful if the Oregon records contained the buyers name and city of destination. This author would like to know where the other shipments of pheasants to South Dakota ended up.

1921-March-15

Pheasants Aid Grain Crops—Hunters Favor Birds, According to Questionnaire of Game Protective Assn.

Pierre, March 15. —That pheasants are the logical game birds for the future in South Dakota is the opinion of many hunters in the state who have answered questionnaires sent out by the South Dakota Game and Fish Protective Association. As a result of these questionnaires the association wants more pheasants planted in the state.

There is an interesting story in connection with the planting of the first pheasants in South Dakota. About 10 years ago H. J. Schalkle, H. P. Packard and H. A. Hagman purchased a dozen pheasants from Gene M. Simpson of Corvallis, Ore.

"At this time," writes Mr. Hagman, "I had never seen a pheasant at large in Spink County. Six of these birds were given their liberty. Two pairs we kept in captivity for a time and from them we got about 60 to 80 eggs. These were set under hens. Some of the young birds I raised remained on the farm, roosting in the chicken coop until the middle of the next winter when they suddenly decided to leave.

"The following spring Mr. Schalkle and I took up a collection among the sportsmen in Redfield and purchased 57 pheasants. About March 20 we took 52 of these birds out to my park on the James River, three miles northeast of Redfield. We set the crates down and let the pheasants walk out of the crates into the brush. Five of the birds we put into a grove three miles southwest of Redfield. I observed these birds very closely for the first year. There were a large number of little chicks hatched on my farm. In the first year I would say that the pheasants spread about 10 miles from where they were planted.

"At the present time there are thousands of pheasants in Spink County and they have spread over an area of from 40 to 60 miles. They prefer plum and cherry thickets, tree claims, even patches of weeds are good enough cover for them. The pheasant does not drive out the prairie chicken. I have more prairie chickens about the place now than before the pheasants were planted.

"Pheasants eat all sorts of insects, particularly grasshoppers, and the farmers of Spink County will fight to protect the pheasant. Pheasants are worth thousands of dollars every year in protecting the alfalfa fields against grasshoppers."

There have been two open seasons for the hunting of pheasants in Spink County. The first was for one day in 1919 when each hunter was allowed to kill two cock pheasants. About 200 birds were killed. The second open season was for two days in 1920 when each hunter was allowed to kill two cock pheasants each day. About 1000 birds were killed. [*Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD) March 15, 1921, page 1.]

Author's comment: This account by Bert Hagman relates the activities of the Redfield residents was more than just releasing six pheasants in 1909. An online internet search revealed that Gene M. Simpson of Corvallis, Oregon, operated a pheasant farm and was a well-known pheasant breeder.

It would have been helpful if this 1921 newspaper article had used a specific year when the pheasant was introduced by Hagman and others. Unfortunately, the news reporter only refers to the date as "about ten years ago." Since this article was written in 1921, that would put the date around 1911. So, that does not help much, except 1909 is closer to "about ten years ago" than 1908. However, if one follows the story being told by Bert Hagman—1909 makes sense to the author. He has inserted dates into Hagman's statement with parenthesis.

"At this time (1909)" writes Mr. Hagman, "I had never seen a pheasant at large in Spink County. Six of these birds were given their liberty. Two pairs we kept in captivity for a time and from them we got about 60 to 80 eggs. These were set under hens. Some of the young birds I raised remained on the farm, roosting in the chicken coop until the middle of the next winter (1910) when they suddenly decided to leave.

"The following spring (1911) Mr. Schalkle and I took up a collection among the sportsmen of Redfield and purchased 57 pheasants. …"

The dates inserted by this author are based on the 1909-March-11 newspaper report that Hagman and others had secured pheasants in 1909 and the 1915-June-30 Annual Report of the SDGF stating: "In 1911, the sportsmen of Redfield bought thirty pairs of pheasants … "

1915-June-30 (Primary Source)

Annual Report

During the fall of 1914, the state purchased about fourteen hundred Chinese ring-necked pheasants from the Wallace Evans Game Farm at Oak Park, Illinois. These were exhibited at the State Fair, with other varieties of fancy pheasants and wild waterfowl, and at the close of the Fair they were distributed over the state and placed with parties who agreed to keep them in captivity until the spring of 1915, when they should be liberated. Many parties with whom pheasants have been placed during the past two years report that they have done well, and in these localities the people seem to think that they may be successfully raised as a game bird. On the other hand, they have disappeared from some of the sections of the state in which they were liberated and no results were obtained. I think one mistake was made in the placing of these pheasants, viz., they were not placed in sufficiently large numbers. There was such a great demand for the birds that it seemed almost impossible not to divide them up into small lots to meet the demand. In 1911, the sportsmen at Redfield bought thirty pairs of pheasants and placed them on the Jim River on a farm owned by Bert Hageman, of Redfield, who is a very enthusiastic sportsman, and they have multiplied to such an extent that they have driven out the prairie chickens throughout that part of the Jim River Valley. [H.S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Sixth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1914 to June 30, 1915, pages 6-7.]

Author's comment: This primary source gives the date of the 30 pairs of pheasant purchased by the sportsmen of Redfield as 1911. This article refers to 30 pairs of pheasants or 60 pheasants. Bert Hagman mentioned 57 in his account, recorded in the 1921-March-15 news article. It would not be out of the question that three of the pheasants died in shipment.

1941

The next attempts to introduce this game bird into South Dakota were also made by private individuals. A. E. Cooper and E. L. Ebbert, operators of adjoining farms south of Doland in Spink County, purchased several pairs from a Pennsylvania game farm in 1908 and released them in wooded sections of their farms. These birds apparently failed to survive the heavy snows of that winter. The following year the two men tried again, releasing a few dozen young birds, which evidently survived. Many were killed by hunters but some of these are believed to be the progenitors of much of the pheasant population in that vicinity today.

Three Redfield men also undertook to introduce the ring-necked pheasant the same year. H. P. Packard, H. J. Schalkle, and H. A. Hagman purchased birds which were eventually released on Hagman's farm north of Redfield, adjacent to the James River. These pheasants survived and were seen the following year along the river. A. C. Johnson of Frankfort also purchased 25 birds the same year and released them on his ranch south of Frankfort. [Russell L. Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, page 11.]

Author's comments: This record is the earliest source found by the author to relate the story of many of the private individuals to stock pheasants in South Dakota.

The author believes that this source indicated the first introduction of pheasants was in 1909. In the first paragraph above when Rice states "the following year" he is referring to 1909. Then in the next paragraph he states "the same year" twice. It was this author's assessment that "the following year" and "the same year" were both referring to the year of 1909. The author has inserted dates into the text by Russell L. Rice with parenthesis.

"The next attempts to introduce this game bird into South Dakota were also made by private individuals. A. E. Cooper and E. L. Ebbert, operators of adjoining farms south of Doland in Spink County, purchased several pairs from a Pennsylvania game farm in 1908 and released them in wooded sections of their farms. These birds apparently failed to survive the heavy snows of that winter. The following year (1909) the two men tried again, releasing a few dozen young birds, which evidently survived. Many were killed by hunters but some of these are believed to be the progenitors of much of the pheasant population in that vicinity today.

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This author's conclusion is that "the following year" and "the same year" was both referring to the year of 1909. The rules of grammar would indicate that "the same year" would refer back to

"the following year," which was 1909. It also appears to this author, the chronological arrangement of these two paragraphs by Rice indicates a 1909 reading for "the same year".

The exact same text of this 1941 article was repeated in a 1961 historical article entitled "The Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota" by William H. Over. [William H. Over, " The Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota" Museum News, W. H. Over Museum, State University of South Dakota, Vermillion, S. D., Volume 22, No. 9, September 1961, page 2. A footnote to the byline gave this information: "Dr. William H. Over, was the former director of the Museum, retiring in 1949. This article was found in his collections of notes."]

1945-May-3

Henry Schalkle Laid To Rest On Wednesday Of This Week

" … For most of his life Mr. Schalkle was an ardent sportsman and in 1909 with his own money he brought a pair of Chinese Ringneck Pheasants to the city. Later learning that the birds would thrive in this section, he interested the late Bert Hagman and H. P. Packard in the purchase of several pair which were released in Hagman's grove. It is Mr. Schalkle however who has been usually conceded the credit for the introduction of Pheasants to this section." [*The Redfield Press*, (Redfield, SD) May 3, 1945, page 1.]

Author's Comment: This 1945 obituary article recounting the life of Henry Schalkle uses the date of 1909 as the date that he was involved in pheasant introductions in Spink County.

Secondary Source Historical Articles related to 1908

1938

Hunting and Recreation

The connection of Redfield with the introduction of pheasants into South Dakota and the excellent hunting which the vicinity has offered the nimrod for nearly a score of years would seem to validate its claim to the name "The Pheasant City." As early as 1908 a trio of sportsmen of the Redfield vicinity procured a cock and three hen pheasants each, which were released along the James River. These birds multiplied rapidly and this fact encouraged sportsmen to purchase by subscription four dozen additional birds, which were also released along the James River, north of the city.

The success of these plantings brought the cooperation of the State Game and Fish Commission in subsequent plantings of pheasants breeding stock in the Redfield vicinity. When a limited open season on pheasants was declared, it was in Spink County that South Dakota sportsmen first experienced the thrill which the ring-necked pheasant provides those who go in search of game.

Pheasants gradually spread to the greater part of the State and hunting has been allowed in most counties, but the brilliantly plumed birds have perhaps been more numerous in the region around Redfield than in any other areas. …" [Redfield South Dakota booklet, Redfield Chamber of Commerce and Federal Writers' Project, Redfield Press, 1938.]

Author's Comment: This secondary source was the earliest historical article the author found using 1908 as the date the three Redfield men introduced pheasants. The use of 1908 does not mesh with the newspaper article of 1909-March-11. That newspaper article stated the three men in Redfield had purchase pheasants in 1909.

1946-January

Ring-Necked Pheasant (*Phasianus torquatus)*

This bird was originally from China and is known in some localities as the Chinese Pheasant. It has, however, been crossed with the English Pheasant, *Phasianus colchius*, and specimens without the white neck ring are hybrids. Both the Chinese and Japanese Pheasants have been bred in England for 300 years, which is the source of our birds, hence it is doubtful if we have any pure stock in the State.

From the records available it is evident that Dr. A. Zetlitz, Sioux Falls, brought the first Pheasants into the State in 1898. They were kept in a pen and about two dozen young were reared and released in Minnehaha County the next spring. Most of these apparently did not survive satisfactory. Dr. Zetlitz released a few pairs in Split Rock Township in Minnehaha County in 1903. Other small importations were released in Spink County in 1908 and 1911 with encouraging results. From this date until 1915 thousands of birds were released over the State. Which thoroughly established the Ring-necked Pheasant in South

Dakota. [William H. Over and Craig S. Thomas. January 1946. *Birds of South Dakota*, revised edition, page 112.]

Author's comment: This article uses the date of 1908 for a release in Spink County. The author has already dealt with this topic in comments made with previous articles.

1959

The next attempts to introduce pheasants were also made by private individuals. A. E. Cooper and E. L. Ebbert, operators of adjoining farms south of Doland in Spink County, bought several pairs from a Pennsylvania game farm in 1908 and introduced them in wooded sections of their farms. Heavy snows that winter apparently wiped out their first release, and Cooper and Ebbert tried again the next year, releasing a few dozen wild birds. Many were killed by hunters, but some survived, and are believed to be the progenitors of much of the pheasant population in that vicinity today.

Three Redfield men also undertook to introduce pheasants the same year. H. P. Packard, H. J. Schalkle and H. A. Hagman bought ringnecks which were eventually released on Hagman's farm north of Redfield adjacent to the James River. Also in 1908, A. C. Johnson purchased twenty-five birds and released them on his ranch south of Frankfort. [Don Hipschman. 1959 Annual Report. *Looking Back Past 50 Years*, SDGFP, Pierre, page 36.]

Author's comment: Hipschman, writer of the 1959 historical article, took a different view of what Rice had written in 1941. Hipschman choose to use "Also in 1908" for "the same year" rather than the author's interpretation of 1909 for "the same year." As a result of Hipschman's view, writer's like Trautman who wrote his book in 1982 followed suit and used the 1908 date.

1982

Table 4. Pheasant introductions in South Dakota

Individuals responsible	Date
H. P. Packard, H. J. Schalkle and H. A. Hagman (Redfield residents)	1908
A. C. Johnson (Frankfort)	1908

[Carl G. Trautman. 1982. *History Ecology and Management of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota*, SDGFP, Pierre, page 14.]

Summary remarks: The author ran the same search through the Library of Congress digital collection of South Dakota newspapers for 1908 and 1909. The 1908 search did not reveal any articles related to pheasant introduction in South Dakota. The 1909 search provided the news article announcing a NEW GAME BIRD for South Dakota in March of 1909.

The 1909 NEW GAME BIRD article and the news article for 1921-March-15 together report the three Redfield men received a dozen Chinese pheasants from Gene M. Simpson of Corvallis, Oregon. That information matches up with the 1909 Oregon Annual Report of Gene M. Simpson shipping 12 China pheasants to South Dakota.

Six primary and secondary sources found by this author indicated it was 1909 when the ring-necked pheasant was introduced in Redfield. The publication dates of those six sources were 1909, 1910, 1915, 1921, 1941, and 1945. Four secondary sources were found that used 1908 as the date of introduction. The publication dates for those four secondary sources were 1938, 1946, 1959, and 1982.

Based on the research of this author it appears that one or more secondary writers made an error in using the date of 1908 for the Redfield stocking. Once the mistake occurred, others perpetuated it.

"Clearer and More Complete" as an Alternative to "Vague and Incomplete"

"Vague and incomplete" were the words used by Carl Trautman, author of *History, Ecology and Management of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota,* in referring to the early records of South Dakota pheasant introductions. Trautman penned the "vague and incomplete" statement in 1982. So how far back does the "vague and incomplete" assessment apply. Did it apply to Oscar H. Johnson, Director of the Department of Game and Fish of South Dakota, in 1930?

In a 1930 circular Johnson wrote: "The pheasant hunting enjoyed in South Dakota today is the result of an investment of less than $20,000.00 in the purchase of stock. The pheasant was first introduced into our state in 1912 when about 300 birds were released by the Game Department. During 1912 and 1913 a number of birds were purchased with funds contributed by a group of sportsmen, but the real program was not started by the Department until in 1914 when some 2,000 birds were purchased. During 1915 another 2,000 birds were liberated. In 1917, 1918 and 1919 smaller purchases were made and in all approximately 7,000 birds were purchased." [H. C. Severin. 1933. *Food Habits of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota,* SDGF, page 5.]

One of the author's most challenging figures to deal with in evaluating sources was the stocking account by Johnson. The SDGF Annual Reports written between 1910 and 1922 contain stocking figures that do not agree with Johnson's account. Other stocking sources also present information contrary to Johnson's. The predicament for the author was which set of figures to use. The author opted to go with the SDGF Annual Reports for most of the stocking data. The Annual Reports were primary sources and considered reliable first-hand accounts.

The author made an objective analysis of Johnson's stocking account. To do so, he broke down the statement of Johnson and inserted information from the historical articles he had access to.

(1) "The pheasant hunting enjoyed in South Dakota today is the result of an investment of less than $20,000.00 in the purchase of stock. The pheasant was first introduced into our state in 1912 when about 300 birds were released by the Game Department." Author's findings: The pheasant hunting enjoyed in South Dakota today is the result of an investment of less than $20,000.00 in the purchase of stock. The pheasant was first introduced into South Dakota in 1909 with private releases in Spink County.

(2) "During 1912 and 1913 a number of birds were purchased with funds contributed by a group of sportsmen … " Author's findings: In 1911 the sportsmen of Redfield purchased 30 pairs of birds and SDGF purchased 48 pairs of birds with private funds.

(3) " … but the real program was not started by the Department until in 1914 when some 2,000 birds were purchased. During 1915 another 2,000 birds were liberated." Author's findings: The first state funds were spent in 1911 when 200 pairs of pheasants were purchased by SDGF. In 1913 about 1,800 birds were purchased, and in 1914 about 1,400 birds were purchased.

(4) "In 1917, 1918 and 1919 smaller purchases were made and in all approximately 7,000 birds were purchased." Author's findings: Smaller purchases were made in 1916-650 pheasants, 1917-360, 1918-360, 1919-300, and 1921-255. In all approximately 5,500 pheasants were purchased by the SDGF. The documentation of the author's findings is listed with additional information on pages 190-191.

The author would like to know what sources Johnson used to make his assessment of the introduction of the pheasant in South Dakota. Did he have records that have been lost over the years? Or, are there records still available, but not discovered by this author? Was Johnson's stocking account intended to be a scholarly evaluation or was it just a general sweeping statement on the subject?

One decided advantage this author had over Johnson was access to online digital library collections. The author was able to collect valuable stocking information via digital records that have only become easily accessible in recent years. The author collected historical records from libraries in Oregon, California, Illinois, Ohio, and Washington, D. C. (Library of Congress). This modern method of retrieving information enabled him to collect over 75 documents relating to pheasant stocking in South Dakota.

This treatise was not written to prove who is right or wrong, but was an honest effort to uncover the facts. For the author researching the pheasant stocking history seemed like working on a jigsaw puzzle with some pieces missing. So, in the end that just might be the case. No one, not even Johnson or this author, had all the missing pieces to put together a complete picture of the pheasant introduction in South Dakota. However, it is the hope of the author that his research has made the stocking history "clearer and more complete."

Ring-necked Pheasant Stocking in South Dakota Timeline Synopsis 1891-1941

A synopsis of the sources was placed into a timeline by the author. The author evaluated the information, made judgments, and placed data in what he considered a logical condensed order.

--Early stocking attempts

1891: N. L. Witcher was to receive pheasants from Oregon with the intent to stock the West River grouse range. It is unknown whether the birds were ever received. [Russell L Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, page 10.]

1898 and **1903**: Dr. A. Zetlitz of Sioux Falls attempted to stock pheasants in southeastern South Dakota without long-term success. [Russell L Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, pages 10-11.]

--Stockings by private individuals

1909: H. P. Packard, H. J. Schalkle, and H. A. Hagman released three pairs of pheasants on Hagman's farm north of Redfield. [*The Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD) March 11, 1909, page 3.] et al.

1909: Besides the six pheasants released by Packard, Schalkle, and Hagman they kept two pairs and collected 60 to 80 eggs. From those eggs they hatched and raised young birds. Some of these birds were released on Hagman's farm. [*Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD) March 15, 1921, page 1.]

1909: A. C. Johnson released 25 pheasants on his ranch south of Frankfort. [Russell L Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, page 11.]

1909: A. E. Cooper and E. L. Ebbert released a few dozen pheasants on their farms south of Doland.
[Russell L Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, page 11.]

1910: Despite earlier attempts that failed, Dr. Zetlitz of Sioux Falls continued his efforts to stock pheasants in the Sioux Falls area. In 1910, pheasants were thriving and could be seen along the streams of the lower Sioux. [*The Mitchell Capital*, (Mitchell, SD) July 28, 1910, page 3.]

1911: The sportsmen of Redfield purchased 30 pairs of pheasants and released them in the Redfield area.
[H. S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Sixth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1914 to June 30, 1915, pages 6-7.]

1913: Robert E. Dowdell released nine pairs of pheasant at Ruskin Park along the James River near Forestburg. [Russell L Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, page 12.]

--Activities and stockings of the Department of Game and Fish of South Dakota (SDGF)

1911: SDGF released 48 pairs of pheasants near Redfield that were purchased with private funds. [Russell L Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, page 11.]

1911: SDGF purchased 200 pairs of pheasants with state funds in May. These pheasants were distributed throughout the state. [W. F. Bancroft, State Game Warden, Annual Report SDGF, July 1, 1911 to June 30, 1912, page 5.]

1912: SDGF lacked a specific appropriation for the purpose of stocking pheasants. [W. F. Bancroft, State Game Warden, Annual Report SDGF, July 1, 1911 to June 30, 1912, page 5.]

1913: SDGF purchased 1,775 pheasants in September. These pheasants were dispersed to practically every county in the state. [August 19, 1913, Minutes of SDGF Commission Meeting, page 9.]-[H. S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Fifth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1913 to June 30, 1914, page 6.]

1914: SDGF purchased approximately 1,400 pheasants. They were distributed over the state. [H. S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Sixth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1914 to June 30, 1915, page 6-7.]

1915: SDGF reported it practically impossible to secure pheasants for distribution this year. [*Lead Daily Call*, (Lead, SD) April 3, 1915, page 1.]

1915: SDGF secured a consignment of pheasants in the spring, built coops and laying pens, collected the eggs, and hatched at least 350 pheasants in 1915. These pheasants were raised and released on the State Game Park near Custer. Game Keeper Charlie J. Kelley conducted this operation. [H. S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Seventh Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1915 to June 30, 1916, pages 19-20.]

1916: SDGF purchased 650 pheasants and distributed most of them in the southeastern part of the state. [*Queen City Mail*, (Spearfish, SD) February 9, 1921, page 1.]

1917: SDGF purchased 360 pheasants and placed them mainly in eastern areas of the state. [*Queen City Mail*, (Spearfish, SD) February 9, 1921, page 1.]

1918: SDGF purchased 360 pheasants and shipped them to responsible parties to be liberated. Most of the birds went to East River counties. [H. S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Tenth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1918 to June 30, 1919, page 5.]

1919: SDGF purchased about 300 pheasants and released them primarily in East River counties. [H. S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Eleventh Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1919 to June 30, 1920, page 5.]

1921: SDGF purchased 255 pheasants and sent them to new areas that had not yet been stocked. [H. S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Thirteenth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1921 to June 30, 1922, page 7.]

1926-1941: SDGF trapped 33,500 pheasants in East River counties and stocked them in West River counties. [Russell L Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, page 13.]

The usual procedure for SDGF was to purchase pheasants in the fall and display them at the State Fair. After the State Fair the pheasants were given to responsible parties who would keep the birds over winter and release them in the spring.

(By H. Jones [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons)
1922 painting of Eastern Chinese Ring-necked Pheasants by Henry Jones

Pheasant Stockings in South Dakota 1909-1921

Individual or Agency Responsible	Year of Purchase	Source of Pheasants	Number of Birds Released	Location of Release
H. P. Packard, H. J. Schalkle, and H. A. Hagman of Redfield	1909	Simpson Pheasant Farm in Oregon	6	Hagman farm north of Redfield
H. A. Hagman et al. of Redfield	1909	Raised from Oregon birds	few dozen	Hagman farm
A. C. Johnson of Frankfort	1909	unknown	25	Johnson ranch south of Frankfort
A. E. Cooper and Ebbert E. L. Ebbert of Doland	1909	unknown	few dozen	Cooper and farms south of Doland
Dr. A. Zetlitz of Sioux Falls	1910	Raised by Dr. Zetlitz	few dozen	along streams of the lower Big Sioux River
Sportsmen of Redfield	1911	unknown	60	Redfield area
SDGF (private funds)	1911	Bramble Aviary in Watertown	96	near Redfield
SDGF (state funds)	1911	Washington via Bramble Aviary in Watertown	400	throughout the state
SDGF	1913	Evans Game Farm in Illinois	1,775	almost every county
Robert E. Dowdell of Artesian	1913	Illinois	18	near Forestburg
SDGF	1914	Evans Game Farm in Illinois	about 1,400	across the state
SDGF	1915	Raised at State Game Park	350	State Game Park near Custer
SDGF	1916	Evans Game Farm in Illinois	650	most placed in the south-eastern part of the state
SDGF	1917	Evans Game Farm in Illinois	360	mainly eastern areas
SDGF	1918	Evans Game Farm in Illinois	360	mainly East River areas
SDGF	1919	Evans Game Farm in Illinois	about 300	mainly East River areas
SDGF stocked	1921	unknown	255	new areas not yet
	Column Total Approximately……6,000 pheasants			

Annotated Bibliography

The author (Lonnie Shafer) has made comments on some sources and none on others. Sources the author considered primary sources have (Primary Source) labels at the beginning of the historical article. The sources are listed according to the date of their publication. The author copied these articles as they were originally written. An exception was the spelling of personal names. He used the same spelling of personal names throughout the text. Some articles were shorten to gather only the material related to the subject of the treatise.

1907-December-14

Some months ago Dr. K. Zetlitz purchased two dozen ring-necked pheasants and gave them liberty in the timber along the Sioux river near his farm. He wanted to know whether or not the pheasant would thrive in this latitude and was watching those he had brought here with much interest. He went so far as to secure the passage of a law for the protection of these beautiful birds, but that law seems to have become inoperative.

All those pheasants, save two, have been killed and Dr. Zetlitz is in possession of information as to who killed them. Should he decide to prosecute the case the fine imposed would be very heavy, but he is not inclined to do that. [*The Madison Daily Leader,* (Madison, SD) December 14, 1907, page 4.]

Author's comment: Dr. Zetlitz's name will appear several times in the reading of this treatise. According to other records he began working to stock pheasants in 1898.

1908 and 1910 (Primary Sources)

Annual Reports of the Game and Forestry Warden to the Governor of Oregon

List of Game Transported Out of State. Following is a list of game transported out of the State, by permit in writing given by the State Game and Forestry Warden, … for the year ending (December 1, A. D., 1908): (December 1, A. D., 1909): (December 1, A. D., 1910).

Name of shipper.	Description of game.	Destination.	Year	Page(s)
No shipments were listed for South Dakota in 1908			1908	pages 7-8
Gene M. Simpson	12 China pheasants	South Dakota	1909	page 10
Gene M. Simpson	18 China pheasants	South Dakota	1909	page 10
Gene M. Simpson	3 China pheasants	South Dakota	1909	page 11
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[Annual Report of the Game and Forestry Warden to the Governor of Oregon for the year 1908, pages 7-8.]-[Annual Reports of the Game and Forestry Warden to the Governor of Oregon for the years 1909-1910, pages 10-11, 23.]

Author's comment: The Annual Report records of game transported out of Oregon, list no shipment of pheasants to South Dakota in 1908. The records do list a shipment of 12 China pheasants to South Dakota in 1909. The news article 1909-March-11 states: "Harland Packard, Henry Schalkle and Bert Hagman have received from Oregon a shipment of a dozen Chinese pheasants." The news article 1921-March-15 states: " … H. J. Schalkle, H. P. Packard and H. A. Hagman purchased a dozen pheasants from Gene M. Simpson of Corvallis, Ore."

It would have been useful if the Oregon records contained the buyers name and city of destination. This author would like to know where the other shipments of pheasants to South Dakota ended up.

1909-March-11

NEW GAME BIRD – Chinese Pheasants from Oregon to Be Introduced in South Dakota

Redfield, March 10—Harland Packard, Henry Schalkle and Bert Hagman have received from Oregon a shipment of a dozen Chinese pheasants, with the avowed purpose of breeding them that they may be added to the list of game birds in this state.

The cocks are tall, with highly colored plumage, purple, blue and green, with a streak of white on the neck. The hens resemble the prairie chicken, except that there is a faint purple color on the breast. The birds

are active and fly much more rapidly than the prairie chicken. They will be kept through this season, in which each of the females should lay from sixty to a hundred eggs. Then they will be put at large. The present game law protects them indefinitely.

It is believed they will thrive in this state, as the birds originally came from northern China and they propagate faster than any other game bird. There are now thousands of them in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and California. In Kansas the game commission has for several years encouraged their breeding and good results have been obtained, the farmers having become interested. [*The Madison Daily Leader,* (Madison, SD) March 11, 1909, page 3.]-[*Lead Daily Call,* (Lead, SD) March 13, 1909, page 1.]-[*The Redfield Press,* (Redfield, SD) March 25, 1909, page 3.]-[*Pierre Weekly Free Press,* (Pierre, SD) March 25, 1909, page 7.]-[*Union County Courier*, (Elk Point, SD) March 25, 1909, page 3.]-[*The Herald Advance*, (Milbank, SD) March 26, 1909, page 7.]-[*Sisseton Weekly Standard*, (Sisseton, SD) March 26, 1909, page 7.]

Author's comments: In March of 1909, seven newspapers published this article, signifying that the men of Redfield introduced the pheasant in South Dakota in 1909. This would indicate that the pheasant was introduced in 1909 and not 1908 as recorded in secondary sources beginning in 1938.

1909-March-26

Dr. Zetlitz of Sioux Falls Liberates a Bunch of Pheasants

Sioux Falls, March 25 – Dr. A. Zetlitz has initiated a movement which he hopes will result in propagating this section of the country with pheasants. Dr. Zetlitz realizes that the days of prairie chicken in this section is a thing of the past. He has made study of the pheasant and is confident that the bird will thrive in this section and that if a concerted effort is made to stock this country with this game bird by the time when the law will permit their shooting, 1915, there will be abundance of game.

Dr. Zetlitz has accrued six pair of pheasants and he is having enclosed a ten acre tract of land on his farm north of the city. He is having a ten foot wire fence stretched around this ten acres. In this tract he will release six pair of birds, each of which had a wing clipped at the first joint, which will prevent their flying over the fence. Dr. Zetlitz claims that each pair of birds, if left to themselves, will raise about a dozen birds each season, but if robbed of their eggs and those eggs placed under domestic chickens that a much larger number of pheasants can be secured. However, he will permit the pheasants to sit on their own eggs, and will allow the young birds their freedom, and in this summer he hopes to assist in stocking the country.

Dr. Zetlitz is also trying to interest the local gun clubs in the matter of propagating pheasants and place them out with farmers. In this way he thinks that the country will be well stocked in a few years.

The Redfield gun club has purchased several pairs of pheasants which they have placed with farmers in that section of the state. [*Madison Daily Leader,* (Madison, SD) March 26, 1909, page 2.]

1909-April-15

The local gun club at Redfield, this state, has purchased a flock of four hundred Chinese pheasants and placed them in groves upon the farms in that portion of the state. [*Pierre Weekly Free Press*, (Pierre, SD) April 15, 1909, page 1.]

Author's comment: The purchase of 400 pheasants was only mentioned in this article. Whether this event actually happened left the author puzzled. The 1909-March-11 news article only stated a dozen pheasants being purchase by three men from Redfield. The previous 1909-March-26 article states the Redfield gun club purchased several pairs of pheasants. In a 1921-March-15 article relating Bert Hagman's story, Bert does not mention the purchase of 400 pheasants.

1910-June-30 (Primary Source)

Propagation of Small Game

It is the intention of the state game warden next year to purchase two or three hundred pairs of Chinese Ring-neck pheasants for the purpose of stocking the state with them, many farmers having already signified a willingness to take a pair or two for the purpose of raising others, to be turned loose when they become of sufficient growth. This kind of pheasant is the best adapted to this state, and reports of the United States government concerning these birds is most encouraging for propagating purposes. [W. F. Bancroft, State Game Warden, Annual Report of the Department of Game and Fish of South Dakota, July1, 1909 to June 30, 1910, page 25.]

1910-July-28

Chinese Pheasants to be Introduce – State Game Warden will Distribute them just as soon as his $11,000 Fund is Available

Pierre, S. D.—State Game Warden Bancroft is in some difficulty through the fact that under the operation of the law some $11,000 has accumulated in the game fund which he cannot spend, for the reason that the act does not make a specific appropriation of it. The fund is larger than it was anticipated would be derived from the fees provided and some of it might be expended to good advantage. For instance, the law provides the warden may introduce Chinese pheasants and other game birds into this state and he made preparations to do so, but cannot use a penny of the fund for the purpose. However, he has his plans complete and is awaiting the necessary legislative permission to carry them out the coming spring. He will start with 100 pairs of pheasants which he obtains from Washington and Oregon and these he will place with responsible persons in each county, who have agreed to take the birds and care for them without expense and at the proper time turn the chicks into the open.

Dr. Zetlitz, of Sioux Falls, has been breeding the pheasants for some time and they are thriving and are now occasionally seen along the streams of the lower Sioux. Frank L. Bramble, of Watertown, has several covies of them but he keeps them in confinement. Warden Bancroft says he is satisfied that they are well adapted to our climate and conditions and will readily be propagated so that with the continuance of adequate protection they will soon provide the state with a very gamy bird. …. [*The Mitchell Capital*, (Mitchell, SD) July 28, 1910, page 3.]

Author's comment: This 1910-July-28 article states that pheasants released by Dr. Zetlitz were thriving.

1911-March-24

New Varieties Game Birds for the State

While State Game Warden Bancroft did not secure the new game law he desired from the last legislature, he is going ahead under the old law, in attempting to secure new varieties of game birds for the state, and is sending out notices over the state that he will probably provide parties who will agree to care for and protect the birds until they have had a chance to propagate themselves, pairs of Chinese golden pheasants.

Parties in the state who care to look after such birds until they have become numerous enough to place them in the list of game birds of the state can be supplied by notifying the state game wardens department at this city. [*Saturday News*, (Watertown, SD) March 24, 1911, page 10.]

1911-March-24

The Chinese Pheasants—State Game Warden Will Make an Attempt to Stock the State With Foreign Game

Sheriff Swanson is in receipt of a communication from the State game warden announcing he has contracted for a large number of Chinese ring-neck pheasants which he proposes to place in different parts of the State. These birds it has been proven by experiments made in other of the northwest states will thrive in a country where there is plenty of trees and underbrush.

The State game warden demands a guarantee they will be protected before he will send any number of birds to this county.

Mr. Swanson has sent out letters to ascertain how many farmers and others will take these pheasants and give them a chance to propagate. In the extreme northwestern section of the United States the Chinese pheasants have been "planted" until at the present time the sportsman find excellent shooting during the season. The same conditions would prevail here if the birds are given, the proper protection from the pot hunters and unsportsmanlike hunters. [*The Sisseton Weekly Standard*, (Sisseton, SD) March 24, 1911, page 1.]

1911-March-27

Bird Farming—Success of Dr. Zetlitz of Sioux Falls in Raising Pheasants

Sioux Falls, March 26.—Dr. A. Zetlitz, in speaking of the feathered inhabitants of his farm south of the city, to a reporter for the Press yesterday, said that all the birds had come through the past winter in excellent shape and are now enjoying themselves to the fullest.

"Forty of my ring necked pheasants stood the cold weather all right and are in excellent plumage.

"Unfortunately some of the pheasants have been killed by the hunters who have no respect for the law nor for the rights of other people, but I have found that a number of the younger birds, from my flock, have gone to live with the neighbors and are eating regular meals with the barnyard fowls at adjoining farms.

"Two or three pheasants have been roosting on the straw stacks in the country south of my farm which shows that they are not inclined to fly away from this section, if they can be let alone. …

"The swimming pool which I have built, is the great attraction for the web footed fowl and the pheasants like the fields and the meadows and the trees.

"I feel that people are generally desirous of aiding me in making a success of the effort, I am making to introduce pheasants into this country and that after another year there will be many of the birds in South Dakota." [*The Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD) March 27, 1911, page 3.]

1911-March-31

Game Warden Bancroft Gives Away Chinese Pheasants

Pierre, Special.—State Game Warden W. F. Bancroft did not secure the new game law which he desired from the last legislature, but he is going ahead under the old law, in attempting to secure new varieties of game birds for the state, and is sending out notices over the state that he will provide parties who will agree to care for and protect the birds until they have had a chance to propagate themselves, pairs of Chinese golden pheasants. Parties in the state who care to look after such birds until they have become numerous enough to place them in the list of game birds of the state, can be supplied by notifying the state game wardens department in this city. [*The State-Line Herald*, (North Lemmon, North Dakota) March 31, 1911, page 1.]

1911-May-2

Watertown—Two hundred pair of Chinese pheasants have been purchased by the state through Game Warden Bancroft and distributed to the various counties to be raised by responsible parties and let loose. It is hoped to stock the state with this new game bird by the year 1915, when it will be lawful to kill them. The 200 pair cost over $1,200. [*The Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD) May 2, 1911, page 3.]

Author's comment: Several historical articles relate the purchase of 200 pairs of ring-necked pheasants by W. F. Bancroft in 1911, The next set of articles point out that they were distributed over the state.

1911-May-4

Buys 200 Pairs of Chinese Pheasants—State Game Warden Also Will Place Number of Elks and Mountain Sheep.

Pierre, S. D.—State Game Warden Bancroft, while in this city yesterday completed arrangements for the purchase of about two hundred pairs of Chinese pheasants, for distribution over the state, and also arranged for the placing of a number of pairs of elk and mountain sheep in the Black Hills. [*The Mitchell Capital*, (Mitchell, SD) May 4, 1911, page 3.]

1911-May-12

To Breed Pheasants.

State Game Warden Bancroft is sending out 200 pairs of Chinese Ring-necked pheasants to the different parts of the state where there are groves for them to find shelter and breed. County Game Warden Mount is to have two pairs for Grant County. [*The Herald-Advance,* (Milbank, SD) May 12, 1911, page 1.]

1911-May-19

The Pheasants are Here

Wednesday Cashier Finch received from the state game warden a consignment of six pairs of Mongolian pheasants which are to be liberated in Perkins County. Mr. Finch has made arrangements to set free two pair each near the August Scholaas and Chas. Ottman places, on Grand River, and two pair at Chas Hall's on Rabbit Creek. Neighboring farmers are one and all willing to do all in their power to protect these beautiful birds which if the experiment proves a success will eventually furnish rare sport and luscious game, not to mention the idealistic interest that attaches to this rarely beautiful specimen of the pheasants.

The state game warden received a consignment only a few days ago, and the six pair apportioned to Perkins County are among the first sent out. They were secured from Washington, where the birds were

first introduced from China some 20 years ago, and where they have prospered so abundantly and multiplied so much that they are a feature of the animal life of that state and highly valued as the orchardist's greatest benefactor in his war against insects. [*The State-Line Herald*, (North Lemmon, North Dakota) May 19, 1911, page 1.]

1911-May-19

Several coops of pheasants to be distributed in this section arrived in Watertown last week. Many of the birds were dead when they arrived here. [*Saturday News*, (Watertown, SD), May 19, 1911, page 1.]

Author's comment: This article points out that some pheasants died in being transported.

1911-May-25

County Game Warden J. L. White went to Fort Pierre Tuesday where he received the shipment of Chinese Pheasants that had been allotted to this county. Applications had been sent in for fifty-four of these birds, but State Game Warden Bancroft allotted but nine pairs to Stanley county. –Kadoka Press. [*Philip Weekly Review*, (Philip, SD) May 25, 1911, page 1.]

1911-May-26

County Game Warden Mount received from the state game warden last week two pairs of Chinese ring-necked pheasants and took them out to the W. G. Ackerman farm in the hills and released them in the grove on that place. It is believed that if the birds are left alone they will thrive and multiply, and it is hoped that no one will be foolish or mean enough to disturb them for a year or two at least. [*The Herald-Advance*, (Milbank, SD) May 26, 1911, page 5.]

1911-May-26

Game Warden Collins has received five pair of golden pheasants from the state game warden and will distribute them among farmers who will give the proper care. [*Dakota Farmers' Leader,* (Canton, SD) May 26, 1911, page 5.]

Author's comment: The author wonders if these were actually golden pheasants or just the newspaper's way of referring to the ring-necked pheasant.

1911-June-30 (Primary Source)

CHINESE RING-NECKED PHEASANTS

The department just at the close of the present fiscal year had made arrangements for the purchase of 200 pairs of Chinese Ring-neck pheasants to be put out over the state as an experiment in propagating game birds, which the state auditor kindly allowed your State Game Warden to do, as I had practically closed the matter before the absence of the appropriation clause in the law was discovered. The matter of whether the experiment will prove a success or not cannot be learned until after this year, as the condition of the birds after passing through the winter season will be the most important phase of it. [W. F. Bancroft, State Game Warden, Annual Report SDGF, July 1, 1910 to June 30, 1911, page 7.]

1911-July-21

Game Warden John S. Swanson recently received four pairs of Chinese ring-necked pheasants from the state game warden and has turned them loose on the farm of W. R. Dimick, where it is hoped that they will be fruitful and multiply. The penalty for killing one of these birds is $50, and the season on Chinese ring-necked pheasants is very likely to be closed one for two or three years, at least. But in time the embargo will be raised, and local sportsmen will be given some extra fine shooting. [*The Sisseton Weekly Standard*, (Sisseton, SD) July 21, 1911, page 7.]

1911-July-21

Game Warden Mount last week received two more pairs of the Chinese ring-necked pheasants, which he took out and placed in one of the large groves towards the hills. The game warden says that some of the pheasants have been noticed on the trees near the Thomas Hicks farm. They have undoubtedly come up the creek from near Big Stone or in Minnesota. All parties are requested not to shoot or disturb them. [*The Herald-Advance*, (Milbank, SD) July 21, 1911, page 5.]

1911-August-31

The Pheasant

The game warden's department is receiving reports from a number of those who secured pheasants for propagation last spring, and most of them report broods of young chickens progressing finely. While no official reports of anyone attempting to kill the pheasants has been made to the office, it is claimed that some of the birds have been killed by the class of hunters who pay no attention to game laws, and feel that it is up to them to shoot at anything they find flying. [*Pierre Weekly Free Press*, (Pierre, SD) August 31, 1911, page 1.]

Author's comment: The pheasants secured in the spring of 1911 were producing broods by the fall.

1911-September-22

Chinese pheasants liberated by several game wardens throughout South Dakota are reported as doing a fine stunt of propagation, breeding three times a year. At that rate it won't be long before they will become a pest, and the state may ultimately have to place a bounty on Chinese pheasants. [*The Sisseton Weekly Standard*, (Sisseton, SD) September 22, 1911, page 6.]

Author's comment: This might be a case of not believing everything you read. Today's biological knowledge has revealed that pheasant hens only raise one brood of chicks a year. This article indicated that three broods were being produced annually.

1912-January-18

Pheasant Doing Well.

Pierre.—The game department reports that the 200 Chinese pheasants purchased by that department at the cost of $1,200 last spring, and distributed to interested parties throughout the state, have greatly prospered during the summer, as is indicated by numerous reports received giving notice of large increase. They were all placed in wooded districts. [*Pierre Weekly Free Press*, (Pierre, SD) January 18, 1912, page 3.]

Author's comment: This article only mentioned 200 pheasants and seems to be an error. Many of the 1911 historical articles mention 200 pairs of pheasants. From research the typical cost of purchasing a pheasant was about $3.00 including shipping. Hence 400 pheasants times $3.00 would equal the $1,200 figure of the cost.

1912-March-1

Pierre—Bernard Vessey, deputy state game warden, reports that he has received many inquires from farmers throughout the state as to whether the department would make another distribution of Chinese pheasants this spring. The department is unable to do this because of the lack of a specific appropriation for the purpose. The state game fund amounts to $32,000, contributed by a special tax on the hunters of the state for the improvement of game birds, animals and fish, but work is largely hampered by the lack of an appropriation which will permit the expenditure of this fund, which is constantly increasing. [*Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD) March 1, 1912, page 2.]

Author's comment: This article and the next by the SDGF point out that pheasants were not purchased in 1912 because of the lack of a specific appropriation.

1912-June-30 (Primary Source)

No Propagating of Game

No progress whatever has been made in the way of further propagating game, other than the putting out of the 200 pairs of Chinese Ring-neck pheasants last year on account of the absence of the necessary appropriation clause in the game law, which has greatly interfered with the work of this department, as well as the proper enforcement of the game and fish laws. [W. F. Bancroft, State Game Warden, Annual Report SDGF, July 1, 1911 to June 30, 1912, page 5.]

1913-June-30 (Primary Source)

Annual Report

As to the advisability of propagating game birds, we learn that Washington, Oregon and several other western states have stocked their states quite extensively with the Chinese pheasant with reported good

success; also in many localities in our own state where these birds were put out in 1911 there are good covies where the birds seem to be thriving and increasing to a considerable extent. Some of the pheasants which were distributed at that time have been killed by parties who were ignorant of the species of bird they were destroying, and in some cases I am informed that they were shot by hunters who afterwards made inquiry as to the kind of bird they had killed. [H.S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Fourth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1912 to June 30, 1913, page 3.]

1913-July-11

While absent Mr. Hedrick looked up the proposition of securing more pheasants for stocking the fields of this state. For this purpose he visited a pheasant farm at Oak Park, Ill., where thousands of ring necks are produced each year. Having investigated the source of supply, the warden will now look up and check up the results of the state's last purchase of pheasants under Former Warden W. F. Bancroft with the view of getting the best results out of the stock to be purchased this coming fall. [*Dewey County Advocate*, (Timber Lake, SD) July 11, 1913, page 1.]

1913-August-19 (Primary Source)

Motion made and carried that the State Game Warden be authorized to purchase of Wallace Evans, of Oak Park, Illinois, 562 pairs of Chinese ring-necked pheasants at $5.00 per pair and 651 extra hens at $3.50 each. [August 19, 1913, Minutes SDGF Commission Meeting, page 9.]

Author's comment: The sum of 562 pairs of pheasants and 651 extra hens equals 1,775 pheasants. Many of the following articles will simply refer to this figure as about 1,800.

1913-August-29

$5,000 for Pheasant Purchase

Pierre.—The state game commission has appropriated $5,000 of the game fund for the purchase of pheasants to be distributed over the state where the conditions are the best for their propagation, and where the proper care and protection will be promised them by those receiving the birds. These birds will be shipped to the state for exhibition purposes at the state fair before being distributed and this will allow thousands of residents of the state to familiarize themselves with the general appearance of the birds, and not put a strange specimen before some wondering hunter who will want to shoot it to see just what kind of bird he has run across. [*The Herald-Advance*, (Milbank, SD) August 29, 1913, page 3.]

1913-September-3

THE PHEASANTS ARE COMING STATE GAME WARDEN HEDRICK NOTIFIED THAT FIRST OF CHINESE BIRDS FOR DISTRIBUTION HAVE BEEN SENT.

State Game Warden Hedrick has received notice of the first shipment of Chinese pheasants for the state which with other game birds will be on exhibition at the state fair. Mr. Hedrick goes to Huron this evening to care for the birds on their arrival at that place, and will put in his time from this until the birds are distributed after the fair at that place. He has purchased five thousand of these game birds for distribution, securing them from a game farm near Chicago. This flock will be in the pen at the state fair grounds for the week of the fair, and along with them for exhibition purposes will be ducks, geese, swan and other birds for exhibition purposes only. The pheasants in "families" of one cock to several hens will be distributed over the state following the close of the fair, the places of location being determined by the showing for natural protection and care which will be assured the birds for the first few years. [*Daily Capital Journal*, (Pierre, SD) September 3, 1913, page 1.]

1913-September-4

1700 Pheasants for State Fair—Birds Purchased by Game Department with many others to be Exhibited at Huron.

Huron, S. D,--The 1700 Chinese ring-necked pheasants which have been purchased by the state game commission for distribution in South Dakota will be exhibited on the state fair grounds at Huron during the entire week of Sept. 8th to 12th. In fact, the state fair will be the central distribution point for these game birds. [*The Mitchell Capital*, (Mitchell, SD) September 4, 1913, page 7.]

Author's comment: This article states that 1,700 of the purchased 1,775 pheasants were on display at the State Fair. After the State Fair closed the birds were to be distributed over the state. Many of the following articles indicate where some of the birds were placed.

1913-September-18

Deputy game warden Kelly was here Wednesday with a shipment of Chinese pheasants which he liberated along the Jim river between the Maxwell colony and Olivet. This was a portion of the collection on exhibition at the state fair, and which are to be distributed over the state. These birds are protected by law against slaughter, and a fine of fifty dollars is imposed for every bird killed, so the hunters should be very cautious about shooting at them. [*The Citizen-Republican*, (Scotland, SD) September 18, 1913, page 5.]

1913-September-19

Chinese Pheasants

Senator C. S. Amden this week received a consignment of Chinese pheasants from the state authorities for distribution over the county, the object being to propagate them as game birds. Some five bunches each one with cock and three hens, were put out in the groves as follows:

John Black, for the park at Big Stone; J. E. McKenoa, Kilborn; Seigfreid Bohn, at Twin Brooks; Wesley Swenson, at Laboit; B. Peschong, Alban. Several years ago a number of these birds were placed in groves in the county, but it is believed that hunters shot them down before they had a chance to breed. It is hoped that this will not be done, as any one known to shoot them will be prosecuted. [*The Herald-Advance*, (Milbank, SD) September 19, 1913, page 1.]

1913-Septmber-24

Pheasant for Lawrence County Pioneer Times:

Deputy Game Warden Edholm has received from State Game Warden Hedrick sixty-five (65) Mongolian pheasants, which with 1,635 others were exhibited at the state fair at Huron. The birds are protected for all time in this state, and are expected to multiply rapidly, as the climatic conditions here are said to be ideal for their propagation.

The Mongolian pheasant is a more handsome bird than the native pheasant, especially the cock, which is adorned with a long tail and beautiful plumage. The birds have been distributed to various points in this part of the county. It is the intention to keep them confined until the close of the chicken season, so there will be no danger of hunters mistaking the hens for native pheasants. They could not mistake the cocks.

Fifteen of the sixty-five birds are for Butte County, and one trio, a cock and two hens, will be liberated on Congressman Martin's ranch at Hot Springs. Applications for all the pheasants thus far received have been turned in to the deputy game warden. There is some doubt whether or not Lawrence County has received all the Mongolian pheasants it is entitled to if the distribution throughout the state has been made in the ratio of the hunters' licenses issued in each county. [*Queen City Mail*, (Spearfish, SD) September 24, 1913, page 1.]

1913-September-25

Warning to Hunters

Below is listed certain lands in Turner County upon which the State Game Department has placed for propagation, a number of Chinese Ring Neck Pheasants. You are hereby notified that, by consent of owners of said lands, and by order of the Game Department, the said lands are exempt from hunting upon for any kind of game whatsoever.

The state game law prohibits hunting Pheasant, as the season on same is closed. A sharp look out for hunters will be maintained where said hunters have not procured the license for other game as required by law. And vigorous prosecution will be commenced in all cases brought to the attention of the Game Warden.

Lands where Pheasants are distributed: NW ¼ 21-96-52, F. J. Krause; SW ¼ 6-96-62, C. Swenson; NW ¼ 7-96-53, Miner Meieguard; SE ¼ 35-97-53, S. N. Monk; NW ¼ 26-97-54, F. C. Flyger;
SE ¼ 1-97-55, Lara Jorgenson; S ½ 5-96-52, L. E. Stoddard; SE ¼ 22-96-53, J. S. Pingrey; NE ¼ 21-98-53, J. Perkins; SE ¼ 27-99-53, W. H. Rector; SE ¼ 9-99-53, C. Brookans; E ½ 14-99-53, W. Rathbun; NW ¼ 16-99-54, Jacob Pfaff; SE ¼ 18-100-54, Albert Vogel; SW 1/415-100-53, Geo. Guenther. [*Turner County Herald,* (Hurley, SD) September 25, 1913, page 12.]

1913-September-25

The city of Watertown has received thirty-one of the Chinese ring-necked pheasants that are being distributed over the state and the birds have been placed in the enclosures in Flatiron park. Twelve others

have been distributed to farmers in the county, three hens and one cock to each farm. It is thought these birds will thrive well in this part of the state. [*Saturday News*, (Watertown, SD) September 25, 1913, page 4.]

1913-September-25

Confine Pheasants During Open Season

Deadwood, S. D.—Sixty-five Mongolian pheasants just received by Deputy Game Warden Edholm, are now being distributed in this county and others are being put out in various parts of the Black Hills. The birds are protected for all time and are being confined until after the chicken season ends that none of them may be killed by mistake. They were part of a group shown at the recent state fair and are the first of the kind brought into the Black Hills. [*The Mitchell Capital*, (Mitchell, SD) September 25, 1913, page 7.]

1913-October-2

Elk Point—Forty Chinese ring-neck pheasants were distributed in this county last week by T. J. Welby, deputy state game warden. They were given to eight farmers in different parts of the county. [*The Citizen-Republican*, (Scotland, SD) October 2, 1913, page 2.]

1913-October-3

CHINESE PHEASANTS (Special to Call) Pierre, Oct. 3

The Chinese pheasants exhibited at the Fair have all been distributed, with a part of them going to practically every county in the state, although some sent in no applications. The birds clipped when shipped, were starting to fly again for the past few days and State Game Warden Hedrick who returned last evening, reports some difficulty in catching the last. [*Lead Daily Call*, (Lead, SD) October 3, 1913, page 2.]

1913-October-9

Recently 15 Chinese pheasants were liberated on American Island at Chamberlain to increase and multiply. [*The Mitchell Capital*, (Mitchell, SD) October 9, 1913, page 7.]

1913-October-9

Pheasant Shipments

Game Warden Hedrick has returned to his office after a strenuous time in getting the shipments of pheasants located. He reports that practically every county in the state was supplied with shipments of these game birds, and if any was missed, it was due to the fact that no application came from the county, or that it came after the distribution was made. [*Pierre Weekly Free Press*, (Pierre, SD) October 9, 1913, page 1.]

1913-October-29

Helpless Pheasants Devoured by Coyotes

Pierre, S. D.—A number of the beautiful Chinese pheasants brought to this section of the state, have been killed by coyotes, because they were let out into the open before their wings had grown sufficiently to enable them to fly away and save themselves. Their wings had to be closely clipped for shipping and exhibit at the fair, and they should be kept in captivity and safety until the wings have grown again, when they will be quite able to care for themselves. It is the idea of Game Warden Hedrick that the birds should be turned loose as soon as possible for they do not take well to captivity. [*The Mitchell Capital*, (Mitchell, SD) October 29, 1913, page 6.]

Author's comment: The standard procedure was for the pheasants to be held over the winter and released in the spring. This article points out that some birds were released to soon.

1914-June-30 (Primary Source)

Annual Report

During the fall of 1913 the State purchased about 1,800 Chinese Ring-necked Pheasants from the Wallace Evans Game Farm at Oak Park, Illinois, which were placed on exhibit at the State Fair, together with several varieties of fancy pheasants and wild waterfowl which were loaned to the department by Mr. Evans. After the Fair closed these pheasants were distributed over the state for propagation purposes and from reports filed with this department, in response to requests from all parties with whom the birds had

been placed, we find that the pheasants have done very well. [H.S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Fifth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1913 to June 30, 1914, page 6.]

Author's comment: This primary source states that the SDGF purchased about 1,800 pheasant in the fall of 1913. The report indicated that the released birds were doing well.

1914-August-13

Chinese Pheasant Crop Making Good Progress

Pierre, S. D., Aug. 12.—Though official reports have not yet been fully secured from over the state, the increase of the beautiful Chinese pheasants imported in South Dakota last year distributed in pairs over the state at the time of the fair at Huron has apparently resulted in flocks of the pheasants being scattered in very considerable numbers over the entire state. Some skeptical persons at first believed that the pheasants would not winter successfully in South Dakota, and others thought the long plumage of the birds would make them easier prey to coyotes but both these apprehensions have evidently been groundless. After a few more years of increase they will make excellent hunting. [*The Citizen-Republican*, (Scotland, SD) August 13, 1914, page 2.]

1914-September-3

Centerville, S. D.—Success in the planting of Chinese pheasants in Turner county has led E. C. Nelson, county treasurer to endeavor to have the state game department continue its experiments in the propagation of the birds in this vicinity. The birds hatched large broods and a number of covies have been seen. The birds were placed on a number of the farms and the success of the experiment has brought about fifty demands for more pheasants. According to H. S. Hedrick, state game warden, attempts to raise Chinese pheasants in South Dakota the past year have been very successful. [*The Mitchell Capital*, (Mitchell, SD) September 3, 1914, page 7.]

1914-October-8

Deputy Game Warden C. J. Kelley has received a shipment of seventy-five Chinese pheasants which he is distributing over Bon Homme and Hutchinson counties. [*The Citizen-Republican*, (Scotland, SD) October 8, 1914, page 1.]

Author's comment: This news article and the next indicate that more pheasants were distributed in the fall of 1914.

1914-Nobember-5

Must Protect Birds—Six Chinese Pheasants Liberated in Sherman Park—More to Follow.

Sioux Falls.—The sixty pheasants allotted to Minnehaha county which were turned over to Joe Brown for distribution have been located at different points in the county. Six of these birds have been liberated in Sherman park and as many more in woods around the city. Aside from the general reward of $25 which is offered by the state for information that would lead to the arrest and conviction of any one shooting one of these birds the county game protective association has added a reward of $50.

Last year 90 pair of these birds were liberated in the county and half of that number were shot. The state and county game organization do not propose to allow this law-breaking to go on.

It is known that it is not the hunters but the boys who are shooting the birds. The law in this respect is strenuous and any one caught interfering with these pheasants will receive harsh treatment. [*Turner County Herald*, (Hurley, SD) November 5, 1914, page 5.]

1915-April-3

NO PHEASANTS FOR STOCKING – Only a Few Being Distributed This Spring Pierre, April 13

The state game department reports it practically impossible to secure pheasants for distribution this year, on account of the demand from the east for all the birds which can be secured. That section of the country has been securing its stock from European countries, and the war in Europe has wiped out that source of supply. The department last fall secured a shipment of birds and has had them wintered by different persons over the state who were willing to look after them, and has about one hundred birds which are being sent out this spring on orders which were in early in the season. These are being supplied from the nearest flocks to the shipping point, and all will be sent out within a few days. [*Lead Daily Call*, (Lead, SD) April 3, 1915, page 1.]

Author's comment: This article points out that World War I was having an effect on obtaining pheasants. Indications are that South Dakota did not make a fall purchase in 1915.

1915-April-22

The distribution of 225 pheasants has just been made to the points of McCook, Jefferson, Marion, Delmont, Wausa, Tyndall, Mission Hill, Centerville and Yankton. [*Pierre Weekly Free Press*, (Pierre, SD) April 22, 1915, page 5.]

Author's comment: The 225 pheasants distributed in the spring of 1915 were probably some of the 1,400 purchased by the SDGF in the fall of 1914. The next article by the SDGF indicates that about 1,400 pheasants had been purchased in the fall of 1914.

1915-June-30 (Primary Source)

Annual Report

During the fall of 1914, the state purchased about fourteen hundred Chinese ring-necked pheasants from the Wallace Evans Game Farm at Oak Park, Illinois. These were exhibited at the State Fair, with other varieties of fancy pheasants and wild waterfowl, and at the close of the Fair they were distributed over the state and placed with parties who agreed to keep them in captivity until the spring of 1915, when they should be liberated. Many parties with whom pheasants have been placed during the past two years report that they have done well, and in these localities the people seem to think that they may be successfully raised as a game bird. On the other hand, they have disappeared from some of the sections of the state in which they were liberated and no results were obtained. I think one mistake was made in the placing of these pheasants, viz., they were not placed in sufficiently large numbers. There was such a great demand for the birds that it seemed almost impossible not to divide them up into small lots to meet the demand. In 1911, the sportsmen at Redfield bought thirty pairs of pheasants and placed them on the Jim River on a farm owned by Bert Hageman, of Redfield, who is a very enthusiastic sportsman, and they have multiplied to such an extent that they have driven out the prairie chickens throughout that part of the Jim River Valley. Various hunters in that locality have told me that they have found numerous pheasants but no chickens during their hunting trips in that section, and that in this particular locality the pheasants are more plentiful than the chickens have ever been. These birds thrive best in those sections of the state where there are plenty of farms with good groves and brush, and we find that they will not do well in the open country or thinly settled sections of the state, being just the opposite of the prairie chicken in their habits. It has been found that during cold, stormy weather these birds will come in around the farmers' barns and feed with the chickens, so that it would seem that they are well able to take care of themselves when placed in their natural environment. [H.S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Sixth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1914 to June 30, 1915, pages 6-7.]

Author's comment: This primary source states that about 1,400 pheasants were purchased in the fall of 1914. It also gives the date of the 30 pairs of pheasant purchased by the sportsmen of Redfield as 1911.

1916-June-30 (Primary Source)

State Game Park

We secured a consignment of pheasants in the spring of 1915 and placed them in the state game park in charge of Game Keeper Kelley, as an experiment to see what could be done in the way of raising these birds for stocking the park. Owing to the lateness of the season and having young birds, we did not secure as many eggs as we would if we had had older birds which had become acclimated. However, we succeeded in hatching three hundred and fifty pheasants which were liberated in the Park as soon as they were large enough to fly. Feed and water are kept constantly at the feeding grounds so that the birds will stay in this locality and breed in the wild another year. There were also over two hundred eggs sent out to farmers, to be set under chicken hens.

Pheasants

Considering the late start I had with the pheasants on account of building pens and coops, they have done very well. The spring was very late and cold and there was a heavy snow in May after the birds were in the laying pens. I have set 500 eggs and hatched out 350 pheasants. Some hens yet to come off with broods. 55 soft-shell and broken eggs, 200 eggs shipped out. [H. S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Seventh Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1915 to June 30, 1916, pages 12, 19-20.]

Author's comment: In this Annual Report of the SDGF no number of the amount of pheasants purchased was stated. It only mentioned "a consignment of pheasants in the spring of 1915." One would assume this was a small number, since they were kept to gather eggs and raise pheasants. The normal procedure was to purchase pheasants in the fall to be released the following spring.

1916-December-21

Brookings—Dr. E. C. Miller a physician, has received a consignment of 14 English ringnecked pheasants form the state game warden. Dr. Miller will care for them during the winter, and in the spring will distribute them in trios about Brookings county. [*The Citizen-Republican*, (Scotland, SD) December 21, 1916, page 2.]

Author's comment: This article indicates that SDGF had made a purchase of pheasants again in 1916 and were distributing them.

1917-Janary-18

Poultry Show on Next Week—State Event Will be Held at City Hall Auditorium.—State to Display Pheasants

One of the features this season will be a display of 50 pheasants sent here for the event by the state game and fish department. H. S. Hedrick, of Chamberlain, state game warden, sent his deputy, L. C, Hawley, of Sioux Falls, here to make arrangements for the display, and Mr. Hawley will be here all through the show to talk about the pheasants and pass out literature regarding the law. [*The Mitchell Capital*, (Mitchell. SD) January 18, 1917, page 6.]

Author's comment: The 50 pheasants mentioned in this article could be a part of the purchase made in the fall of 1916.

1917-June-30 (Primary Source)

Game Conditions

During the fall of 1916, the commission followed out the policy of former year, that of purchasing a limited number of pheasants and liberating them in the state. Most of them were sent to the southeastern part of the state, where the prairie chickens are practically extinct and the conditions are most favorable for the propagation of these birds. [H. S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Eighth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1916 to June 30, 1917, page 4.]

Author's comment: The SDGF only mentions "a limited number of pheasants" being purchased in 1916. Two 1921 newspapers reported the number of pheasants purchased was 650.

1917-August-30

Residents of the northern part of the state report a large increase in the Chinese pheasants which were liberated along Grand river last year with a number of flocks of these birds on Grand river and Thunder Butte creek. At the same time they report poachers getting some of the birds in spite of the settlers attempting to protect them from hunters. [*Saturday News*, (Watertown, SD) August 30, 1917, page 6.]

1917-August-30

Fish and Game Department—Provision Made for Annual Exhibits at South Dakota State Fair

Under the management of H. S. Hedrick, state game warden, a permanent building, small game parks and enclosures around the lake now in course of construction will add one more permanent fixture for the annual exhibit upon the state fair grounds, and it is doubtful if there is any other exhibit that will attract more attention or be of more interest to one than this will be. Five hundred Ring Neck pheasants, many varieties of aquatic fowl and herds of buffalo, elk, antelope and deer will be in separate parks. [*Newell Reclamation News*, (Newell, SD) August 30, 1917, page 4.]

Author's comment: This newspaper article mentions 500 pheasants on display for the State Fair. It does not record where the pheasants originated. Two 1921 newspapers reported the number of pheasants purchased by the SDGF was 360 for the year of 1917.

1918-June-30 (Primary Source)

Game Conditions

The Chinese ring-necked pheasants that have been liberated by the Commission in the eastern part of the state for the past several years are doing very nicely, judging from all reports and personal investigation and in some localities they have become so numerous that a short open season should be place upon the male birds if the best results are to be obtained in the matter of propagation. [H. S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Ninth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1917 to June 30, 1918, page 5.]

1919-June-30 (Primary Source)

Game Conditions

The prairie chickens and grouse were more plentiful in the western two-thirds of the state than they have been for years, largely because of better weather conditions during the hatching season and a good breeding stock being left over from the previous year. The prairie chicken has practically disappeared from the eastern one-third of the state where the population has increased to such an extent that practically all of the land has been placed under cultivation, leaving but few suitable nesting places for the birds. Because of this condition, the game and fish commission has, for several years past, been purchasing Chinese ring-necked pheasants with which to restock this area, as they are the only game birds known at the present time that will live and propagate close to the habitation of man. The success of this undertaking is being demonstrated on every side in the territory where these birds have been liberated, and frequent reports are received by this department showing a rapid increase in number.

Last fall we purchased 360 ring-necked pheasants from the Wallace Evans Game Farm at St. Charles, Illinois, at a cost of $931.00. These were exhibited at the State Fair and afterwards shipped out to responsible parties who agreed to provide suitable winter quarters for them and liberate them in the spring. [H. S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Tenth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1918 to June 30, 1919, page 5.]

Author's comment: This primary source states that the SDGF purchased 360 pheasants in the fall of 1918.

1919-October-9

Ring-Necked Pheasants for Union County, S. D.

Elk Point, S.D., Oct. 4.—County Agent Crandall has received 19 ring-necked pheasants from the state fish and game department at Pierre to be used for stock purposes in this county. They will be kept in confinement this winter and will be turned loose next spring. They are great insect eaters, which is the reason for their being put out and are now absolutely protected by the law. [*The Citizen-Republican*, (Scotland, SD) October 9, 1919, page 2]

1919-October-16

Novelty in Hunting; Pheasant Open Season

Pierre, Oct. 16.—Before the state began to "plant" Chinese pheasants generally over the country a fund was raised among sportsmen in Spink county and several hundred pairs of these birds were turned loose in that county. As a result there has been a greater spread of these birds in Spink county than in any other county of the state. At the request of hunters in that county, the state game department has declared an open season of one day, October 30, for male pheasants in that county only with a limit of two to any hunter. This is open to any holder of a hunter's license in South Dakota. While the date is open for the one day, it does not allow the shooting of any of the hens. [*The Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD) October 16, 1919, page 1.]

1920-March

Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus torquatus)*

This bird was originally from China and is known in some localities as the Chinese Pheasant. It has however, been crossed with the English Pheasant, *Phasianus colchius*, and specimens without the white neck ring are hybrids.

This beautiful Pheasant was introduced into South Dakota several years ago and is living in a semi-wild state. In some localities it is said to be increasing rapidly; but it is perhaps too early to say whether or not it is really a valuable addition to our list of game birds. [William H. Over and Craig S. Thoms. March 1920. *Birds of South Dakota*, page 77. (William Henry Over, ornithologist of the University of South Dakota)]

1920-June-30 (Primary Source)

Game Conditions

During the fall of 1919 the Commission secured about three hundred pheasants from the Wallace Evans Game Farm at St. Charles, Illinois, which were shipped to the State Fair for exhibition and afterwards shipped out to responsible persons who were willing to care for them during the winter and liberate them in the spring, an arrangement which has proven to be very satisfactory. The Game and Fish Commission declared a one-day open season on cock pheasants in Spink County, October 30, 1919, under authority granted by Section 1, Chapter 214, Laws of 1919, which seems to work out very well. Under the order, each person holding a small game license was permitted to kill two cock pheasants. As the weather was very bad, there being a heavy wet snow on the ground and rain later in the day, not many hunters were out and the best estimate that could be arrived at by the wardens on the ground was that not to exceed two hundred pheasants were killed on that day. [H. S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Eleventh Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1919 to June 30, 1920, page 5.]

Author's comment; This primary source states the SDGF purchased about 300 pheasants in 1919.

1921-February-1

The state game department started the introduction of the pheasants in 1912 by placing 1,800 that year. The next year 1,400 were put out, 650 in 1916, 360 in 1917, 360 in 1918 and 200 in 1919. The last bunch, while purchased in the fall of 1919 and exhibited at the fair, were not liberated until the following spring. [*Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD) February 1, 1921, page 4.]

Author's comment: This article and the next both give the figures for the SDGF purchase of pheasants for 1916 as 650 and 1917 as 360.

1921-February-9

RING-NECKED PHEASANTS – Chase Tinan Relates a Little History Relative to the Introduction of Ring-necked Pheasants in South Dakota

Under a Pierre date line, C.R. Tinan writes as follows. The killing of a number of ring-necked pheasants in Hanson county recently by a trio of hunters, said to be from Mitchell and Alexandria has naturally created much indignation all over the state, the state game and fish department will spare no effort in identifying this gang of pot-hunters and bringing them to justice, it is stated.

State Game Warden Hedrick has spared neither expense nor time in endeavoring to stock the state with these beautiful and highly prized game birds. Naturally, a good deal of the effort has been wasted because it was largely experimental at the beginning. But where the birds have got a fair start they are doing well and will continue to do if left unmolested. The pheasants are protected by law indefinitely, the only exceptions being at times and places designated by the state warden at his discretion.

The first attempt made to introduce these birds was made at Redfield about 16 years ago, when a dozen of them were placed on the H. A. Hagman farm a few miles out of the city. The next year Redfield sportsmen provided 57 more of them. From the first dozen about 200 were hatched, none of which, according to the best information to be obtained, got over six miles from the farm. The Jim River runs through this farm and there is also a running creek, both of which streams afford abundant cover and ideal breeding and wintering spots for the pheasants. The place is now well stocked with the birds, it being a simple matter to walk a short distance from the house and put up dozens of them. From this likely breeding place, likely because Mr. Hagman is an ardent game protectionist, the birds have spread all over Spink County. In 1919 a traveling man on a train going south from Ashton counted 132 of the birds before getting out of the county. Mr. Hedrick lifted the ban in this county October 30 that year and about 200 of the pheasants were killed, cock birds only. Last year he gave permission to shoot November 4 and 5 and something like 1,000 were brought to bag, according to the best estimates of the deputy wardens superintending the shooting.

The state game department started the introduction of the pheasants in 1913 by placing 1,300 that year. The next year 1,400 was put out, 650 in 1916, 360 in 1917, 360 in 1918 and 300 in 1919. The last bunch, while purchased in the fall of 1919 and exhibited at the state fair, were not liberated until the following spring. During the earlier years the birds were spread over the state, care being taken of course to put them out where they were most likely to propagate and increase in numbers. It was the practice to put them out in trios, one cock and two hens. Experience has shown that the places where they will do well are comparatively few. They are by no means the hardy type of the native grouse, the cocks being especially

delicate and require timber and brush and similar shelter, along with plenty of feed. Experience has also shown that too much risk is attached to placing them in trios, and the later practice is to stock a likely place with a dozen at least, thus assuring some breeding stock in case of disaster of any kind to some of the brood. The birds are obtained from the Evans game farm at St. Charles, Ill., and cost $8.50 a trio or approximately $3 each delivered. [*Queen City Mail,* (Spearfish, SD) February 9, 1921, page 1.]

1921-March-15

Pheasants Aid Grain Crops—Hunters Favor Birds, According to Questionnaire of Game Protective Assn.

Pierre, March 15. —That pheasants are the logical game birds for the future in South Dakota is the opinion of many hunters in the state who have answered questionnaires sent out by the South Dakota Game and Fish Protective Association. As a result of these questionnaires the association wants more pheasants planted in the state.

There is an interesting story in connection with the planting of the first pheasants in South Dakota. About 10 years ago H. J. Schalkle, H. P. Packard and H. A. Hagman purchased a dozen pheasants from Gene M. Simpson of Corvallis, Ore.

"At this time," writes Mr. Hagman, "I had never seen a pheasant at large in Spink County. Six of these birds were given their liberty. Two pairs we kept in captivity for a time and from them we got about 60 to 80 eggs. These were set under hens. Some of the young birds I raised remained on the farm, roosting in the chicken coop until the middle of the next winter when they suddenly decided to leave.

"The following spring Mr. Schalkle and I took up a collection among the sportsmen in Redfield and purchased 57 pheasants. About March 20 we took 52 of these birds out to my park on the James River, three miles northeast of Redfield. We set the crates down and let the pheasants walk out of the crates into the brush. Five of the birds we put into a grove three miles southwest of Redfield. I observed these birds very closely for the first year. There were a large number of little chicks hatched on my farm. In the first year I would say that the pheasants spread about 10 miles from where they were planted.

"At the present time there are thousands of pheasants in Spink County and they have spread over an area of from 40 to 60 miles. They prefer plum and cherry thickets, tree claims, even patches of weeds are good enough cover for them. The pheasant does not drive out the prairie chicken. I have more prairie chickens about the place now than before the pheasants were planted.

"Pheasants eat all sorts of insects, particularly grasshoppers, and the farmers of Spink County will fight to protect the pheasant. Pheasants are worth thousands of dollars every year in protecting the alfalfa fields against grasshoppers."

There have been two open seasons for the hunting of pheasants in Spink County. The first was for one day in 1919 when each hunter was allowed to kill two cock pheasants. About 200 birds were killed. The second open season was for two days in 1920 when each hunter was allowed to kill two cock pheasants each day. About 1000 birds were killed. [*Madison Daily Leader,* (Madison, SD) March 15, 1921, page 1.]

Author's comment: This account by Bert Hagman relates the activities of the Redfield residents was more than just releasing six pheasants in 1909. An online internet search revealed that Gene M. Simpson of Corvallis, Oregon, operated a pheasant farm and was a well-known pheasant breeder.

It would have been helpful if this 1921 newspaper article had used a specific year when the pheasant was introduced by Hagman and others. Unfortunately, the news reporter only refers to the date as "about ten years ago." Since this article was written in 1921, that would put the date around 1911. So, that does not help much, except 1909 is closer to "about ten years ago" than 1908. However, if one follows the story being told by Bert Hagman—1909 makes sense to this author. This author has inserted dates into Hagman's statement with parenthesis.

"At this time (1909)" writes Mr. Hagman, "I had never seen a pheasant at large in Spink County. Six of these birds were given their liberty. Two pairs we kept in captivity for a time and from them we got about 60 to 80 eggs. These were set under hens. Some of the young birds I raised remained on the farm, roosting in the chicken coop until the middle of the next winter (1910) when they suddenly decided to leave.

"The following spring (1911) Mr. Schalkle and I took up a collection among the sportsmen of Redfield and purchased 57 pheasants. …"

The dates inserted by this author are based on the 1909-March-11 newspaper report that Hagman and others had secured pheasants in 1909 and the 1915-June-30 Annual Report of the SDGF stating: "In 1911, the sportsmen at Redfield bought thirty pairs of pheasants …"

1922-June-30 (Primary Source)
Game Conditions

… The pheasants have become very plentiful in many of the Jim river counties, where the conditions for their propagation seem to be ideal, and it is reported that they are found in the entire eastern part of the state in considerable numbers. Nevertheless, there are still large areas that have not been stocked with pheasants and for this reason the commission bought 255 birds last fall. These were exhibited at the State Fair and sent out immediately thereafter to new localities where they were to be kept up during the winter and liberated in the spring for propagation purposes. [H. S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Thirteenth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1921 to June 30, 1922, page 7.]

Author's comment: This primary source states that the SDGF purchased 255 pheasants in 1921.

1922-September-22
Arrange Care English Pheasants

Gettysburg, Sept. 22—Earl Gifford and Ed Loitwood, of this neighborhood, have been authorized by State Game Warden Hedrick to care for several dozen English pheasants on their place this winter. It is the plan to feed and shelter the birds in the farmyards this fall and winter and then next spring early, they will be liberated and allowed to multiply in this section. [*The Madison Daily Leader*, (Madison, SD) September 22, 1922, page 4.]

1924-June-30 (Primary Source)
Game Conditions

In November, 1924, the game and fish commission declared an open season on cock pheasants in 23 counties, ranging in duration from two to fifteen days, depending on the number of birds in the various counties opened. The wardens in charge of this hunt, as well as many of the hunters, declared this to be some of the greatest sport they had ever enjoyed in the state, it being estimated by Supervisor of Wardens L. C. Hawley that the number of pheasants killed during the season was about 250,000. [H.S. Hedrick, State Game Warden, Fifth Annual Report SDGF, June 30, 1924 to June 30, 1925, page 5.]

1926-December-9
TRAPPING CREWS BEGIN PHEASANT ACTIVITIES – Game and Fish Department Has Many Requests for Birds Pierre, Dec. 9 (AP)

Three trapping crews of the state game and fish department began pheasant activities this week in connection with the department's program distributing stock birds throughout the state O.H. Johnson director has announced.

The department has now on file about 150 requests for birds which were not filled last year and these will be given first consideration in the shipment of trapped birds, Mr. Johnson said.

Mr. Johnson is hopeful that the trapping season will net enough stock birds to greatly develop the state's program. The birds are in particular demand in the alfalfa growing sections as an asset toward the extermination of grasshoppers during crop seasons.

With the birds now concentrated in the Jim River valley Mr. Johnson forecasts the ultimate extension of the birds in the state unless they can be placed so extensively thru-out the state that a good breeding can be expected every year.

The greatest difficulty in trapping is to obtain hens and cocks in the right proportion. Mr. Johnson said. For stock purposes the department ships out a crate of 20 birds of 16 hens and four cocks.

The trapping crews of two men each use the spot lights on their trapping cars as the method of enticement. With their crate, which will hold 60 birds, a spotlight and a 30-inch net the trappers start across the field in their car. Hens caught by the light crouch close to the ground and it is a simple matter for the trapper to throw his net over them. Cocks provide some difficulty however, for while they will not fly outside of the lights they will fly ahead of them and it is often necessary for the trappers to chase the birds in their car for some distance before they light. Taking the hypnotic effect to light upon the birds into consideration, the trappers find that bright moonlight nights are bad for trapping because of the contrast

between the spot light and darkness is lessened. Pheasants avoid all manner of traps and baits, the trappers say.

On an average night Mr. Johnson said, the trappers would catch about 50 birds. The record last season was 130 birds in one night.

The state pays cost of transportation in shipping stock birds, and when shipments are ready Mr. Johnson will notify the person requesting stock birds of the time of shipment. [*Lead Daily Call*, (Lead, SD) December 9, 1926, page 2.]

1927-January-31

CHINESE PHEASANTS RELEASED IN HILLS – Birds Consigned to Rapid City Izaak Waltons
Rapid City, Jan. 31

Three crates of Chinese pheasants were released in the vicinity of the city springs on Lime Creek Saturday according to Dr. R.J. Jackson, president of the local chapter of the Izaak Walton League.

The birds were consigned to the local chapter by the state game department from the eastern part of the state. There were 12 bright hued cocks and 48 of the less colorful hens in the shipment. With the 20 released near Cleghorn Springs about two weeks ago, this makes 80 of those beautiful game birds to be freed in the environs of Rapid City this year.

"With the small stream open year round" said Dr. Jackson commenting on the natural advantages on Lime Creek, "the grain fields for feed, and the thorn thickets for cover the valley affords ideal conditions for the propagation of the birds." [*Lead Daily Call,* (Lead, SD) January 31, 1927, page 1.]

1933

The following account of the introduction of the pheasant into South Dakota is taken from a circular prepared in 1930 by O. H. Johnson, Director of the Department of Game and Fish of South Dakota: "The pheasant hunting enjoyed in South Dakota today is the result of an investment of less than $20,000.00 in the purchase of stock. The pheasant was first introduced into our state in 1912 when about 300 birds were released by the Game Department. During 1912 and 1913 a number of birds were purchased with funds contributed by a group of sportsmen, but the real program was not started by the Department until in 1914 when some 2,000 birds were purchased. During 1915 another 2,000 birds were liberated. In 1917, 1918 and 1919 smaller purchases were made and in all approximately 7,000 birds were purchased. From this original stock, the birds have increased to such an extent that it is conservatively estimated that approximately two million birds were taken by licensed hunters during the open seasons of 1927 and 1928. Unfavorable weather conditions somewhat reduced the kill in 1929, it being estimated that about one million were taken." [H. C. Severin. 1933. *Food Habits of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota*, SDGF, Pierre, page 5.]

Author's comment: Mr. Johnson's account of the introduction of the pheasant in South Dakota seems to be a generalization, rather than the use of the exact dates and numbers of pheasants stocked each year. Go to page 189 to read more on this subject. Page 189 has a detailed account comparing Johnson's statement with the author's findings. Unfortunately, many others have quoted the general statements made by Johnson over the years as facts.

1938

Hunting and Recreation

The connection of Redfield with the introduction of pheasants into South Dakota and the excellent hunting which the vicinity has offered the nimrod for nearly a score of years would seem to validate its claim to the name "The Pheasant City." As early as 1908 a trio of sportsmen of the Redfield vicinity procured a cock and three hen pheasants each, which were released along the James River. These birds multiplied rapidly and this fact encouraged sportsmen to purchase by subscription four dozen additional birds, which were also released along the James River, north of the city.

The success of these plantings brought the cooperation of the State Game and Fish Commission in subsequent plantings of pheasants breeding stock in the Redfield vicinity. When a limited open season on pheasants was declared, it was in Spink County that South Dakota sportsmen first experienced the thrill which the ring-necked pheasant provides those who go in search of game.

Pheasants gradually spread to the greater part of the State and hunting has been allowed in most counties, but the brilliantly plumed birds have perhaps been more numerous in the region around Redfield

than in any other areas. …" [Redfield South Dakota booklet, Redfield Chamber of Commerce and Federal Writers' Project, Redfield Press, 1938.]

Author's Comment: This secondary source was the earliest historical article the author found using 1908 as the date the three Redfield men introduced pheasants. The use of 1908 does not mesh with the newspaper article of 1909-March-11. That newspaper article stated the three men in Redfield had purchase pheasants in 1909.

1941

Credit for the earliest attempts to propagate the ringneck in South Dakota is quite generally given to Dr. A. Zetlitz, (Dr. Karsten "Arne" Zetlitz) a former resident of Sioux Falls, but the following news item appeared in the *Sturgis Weekly Record* on July 10, 1891: "About the first of the month N. L. Witcher will receive an invoice of Chinese pheasants from Oregon. He will turn them loose at various places on Bear Butte Creek [Meade County] and asks as a particular favor that all sport loving men leave them alone . Do not shoot them or harm them under any circumstances. These birds are said to be both prolific and hardy, and with a little protection for a few years will drive out the vulgar native grouse, which are not really game birds, but a near relative to the fly up the creek." However, a search of the files of the Sturgis paper failed to unearth any further mention of the introduction of pheasants.

Dr. Zetlitz is said to have brought two male and four female ringnecks, as well as a few of the golden and silver varieties, to Sioux Falls from Illinois in 1898. These birds were kept in pens at his home. He was successful in raising about two dozen young the first year and 10 of them were liberated at the junction of the Split Rock and Sioux Rivers in Minnehaha County. By watching these birds, Dr. Zetlitz discovered that they did not stay where they were liberated, for they were seen at various times in adjacent territory. Birds were seen in the Sioux Falls locality for some years, and in 1902 several were discovered near Yankton. They apparently prospered while left alone but it is believed that unethical hunters cleaned them out. In 1903 Dr. Zetlitz again released a number of pheasants in Split Rock Township and this flock was often seen between East Sioux Falls and Brandon.

The next attempts to introduce this game bird into South Dakota were also made by private individuals. A. E. Cooper and E. L. Ebbert, operators of adjoining farms south of Doland in Spink County, purchased several pairs from a Pennsylvania game farm in 1908 and released them in wooded sections of their farms. These birds apparently failed to survive the heavy snows of that winter. The following year the two men tried again, releasing a few dozen young birds, which evidently survived. Many were killed by hunters but some of these are believed to be the progenitors of much of the pheasant population in that vicinity today.

Three Redfield men also undertook to introduce the ring-necked pheasant the same year. H. P. Packard, H. J. Schalkle, and H. A. Hagman purchased birds which were eventually released on Hagman's farm north of Redfield, adjacent to the James River. These pheasants survived and were seen the following year along the river. A. C. Johnson of Frankfort also purchased 25 birds the same year and released them on his ranch south of Frankfort.

The first large planting of pheasants in this vicinity was made by the Redfield Chamber of Commerce, and was in all probability a result of the success previously attained by individuals. In 1911 the State Game Department purchased 48 pairs of birds with privately subscribed funds and released them near Redfield. The following year State Game Warden, W. F. Bancroft, purchased 200 pairs of pheasants for the State through the F. L. Bramble Aviary at Watertown. The Game Department exhibited the birds at the State Fair, then issued three hens and a cock each to reliable farmers living along the James River in Spink and Beadle Counties, where cover and water were readily available. In 1913 Robert E. Dowdell imported nine pairs of pheasants from Illinois, which he released at Ruskin Park along the James River near Forestburg.

The pheasant program was pushed in earnest in 1914-15, when the State purchased and released a total of 4,000 birds. The next three years brought the total up to 7,000 birds, nearly all of which were turned into the open field. Thus the pheasant stock within the State today is the result of a cash investment of less than $20,000.

… Many pheasants, however, have been transplanted from localities where they were thickest to counties where they were not so numerous. Trapping operations have been carried on chiefly in the counties along the James River, from which the birds are transplanted into the western counties of the State. The Sand Lake Waterfowl Refuge has become one of the most populated pheasant areas in the State; during the winter of 1939-40 about 2,000 ringnecks were trapped there. Operations on a much larger scale were carried on in February and March of 1941, when a total of 8,500 pheasants were trapped, banded with aluminum bands, and transported by trucks to Corson, Dewey, Fall River, Lawrence, Meade, Pennington,

Perkins, and Ziebach Counties, where they were released. The pheasants will be protected in these areas for two years, to give them a good start. Since 1926 a total of 33,500 pheasants have been trapped and transplanted.

A new system of trapping, used for the first time in the spring of 1941, enables a crew of six men to gather more than 1,400 birds a week. Formerly they had been caught at night by blinding them with car lights and using nets attached to long poles. This was slow and difficult. The new method consists of large traps made by suspending fish netting over poles driven into the ground and bowed together at the top, somewhat like the hoops of a covered wagon. Funnel-shaped openings and corn to attract the birds does the rest. [Russell L. Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, pages 10-14.]

Author's comments: This record is the earliest source found by the author to relate the story of many of the private individuals to stock pheasants in South Dakota.

The author believes that this source indicated the first introduction of pheasants was in 1909. In paragraph three when Rice states "the following year" he is referring to 1909. Then in paragraph four he states "the same year" twice. It was this author's assessment that "the following year" and "the same year" were both referring to the year of 1909. The author has inserted dates into the text by Russell L. Rice with parenthesis.

"The next attempts to introduce this game bird into South Dakota were also made by private individuals. A. E. Cooper and E. L. Ebbert, operators of adjoining farms south of Doland in Spink County, purchased several pairs from a Pennsylvania game farm in 1908 and released them in wooded sections of their farms. These birds apparently failed to survive the heavy snows of that winter. The following year (1909) the two men tried again, releasing a few dozen young birds, which evidently survived. Many were killed by hunters but some of these are believed to be the progenitors of much of the pheasant population in that vicinity today.

Three Redfield men also undertook to introduce the ring-necked pheasant the same year (1909). H. P. Packard, H. J. Schalkle, and H. A. Hagman purchased birds which were eventually released on Hagman's farm north of Redfield, adjacent to the James River. These pheasants survived and were seen the following year along the river. A. C. Johnson of Frankfort also purchased 25 birds the same year (1909) and released them on his ranch south of Frankfort."

The author's conclusion is that "the following year" and "the same year" was both referring to the year of 1909. The rules of grammar would indicate that "the same year" would refer back to "the following year," which was 1909. It also appears to this author, the chronological arrangement of these two paragraphs by Rice indicates a 1909 reading for "the same year."

The records of the SDGF and other historical articles dispute the distribution of the 200 pairs of pheasants in 1911. The records show that these birds were released in the spring and not at the State Fair. Also, that they were dispersed throughout the state and not just along the James River. The article also used the general statements of Johnson pertaining to stocking, which this author has already addressed.

The exact same text of this 1941 article was repeated in a 1961 historical article entitled "The Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota" by William H. Over. [William H. Over, " The Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota" Museum News, W. H. Over Museum, State University of South Dakota, Vermillion, S. D., Volume 22, No. 9, September 1961, page 2. A footnote to the byline gave this information: "Dr. William H. Over, was the former director of the Museum, retiring in 1949. This article was found in his collections of notes."]

1945-May-3

Henry Schalkle Laid To Rest On Wednesday Of This Week

" … For most of his life Mr. Schalkle was an ardent sportsman and in 1909 with his own money he brought a pair of Chinese Ringneck Pheasants to the city. Later learning that the birds would thrive in this section, he interested the late Bert Hagman and H. P. Packard in the purchase of several pair which were released in Hagman's grove. It is Mr. Schalkle however who has been usually conceded the credit for the introduction of Pheasants to this section." [*The Redfield Press*, (Redfield, SD) May 3, 1945, page 1.]

Author's Comment: This 1945 obituary article recounting the life of Henry Schalkle uses the date of 1909 as the date that he was involved in pheasant introductions in Spink County.

1946-January

Ring-Necked Pheasant (*Phasianus torquatus)*

This bird was originally from China and is known in some localities as the Chinese Pheasant. It has, however, been crossed with the English Pheasant, *Phasianus colchius*, and specimens without the white neck ring are hybrids. Both the Chinese and Japanese Pheasants have been bred in England for 300 years, which is the source of our birds, hence it is doubtful if we have any pure stock in the State.

From the records available it is evident that Dr. A. Zetlitz, Sioux Falls, brought the first Pheasants into the State in 1898. They were kept in a pen and about two dozen young were reared and released in Minnehaha County the next spring. Most of these apparently did not survive satisfactory. Dr. Zetlitz released a few pairs in Split Rock Township in Minnehaha County in 1903. Other small importations were released in Spink County in 1908 and 1911 with encouraging results. From this date until 1915 thousands of birds were released over the State. Which thoroughly established the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota. [William H. Over and Craig S. Thomas. January 1946. *Birds of South Dakota*, revised edition, page 112.]

Author's comment: This article uses the date of 1908 for a release in Spink County. The author has already dealt with this topic in comments made with previous articles.

1946-September-18

… "South Dakota's bird bonanza, which is worth according to one enthusiastic estimate, a cool $20,000,000 or more annually, mush roomed from an original $20,000 expenditure by the state, according to Elmer Peterson, thoughtful director of the State Department of Game, Fish, and Parks.

"God and the farmers did the rest to help the South Dakota pheasant multiply. The farmers set a nice table for the pheasants with the corn, wheat, milo, and other grains they grow. Nature caters to the feathered rainbow with wild sunflower and pigeon-grass. Prairie grasses and other seed-producing wild plants grow rankly to the edges of cultivated fields." [*Lead Daily Call*, (Lead, SD) September 18, 1946, page 2.]

1959

The next attempts to introduce pheasants were also made by private individuals. A. E. Cooper and E. L. Ebbert, operators of adjoining farms south of Doland in Spink County, bought several pairs from a Pennsylvania game farm in 1908 and introduced them in wooded sections of their farms. Heavy snows that winter apparently wiped out their first release, and Cooper and Ebbert tried again the next year, releasing a few dozen wild birds. Many were killed by hunters, but some survived, and are believed to be the progenitors of much of the pheasant population in that vicinity today.

Three Redfield men also undertook to introduce pheasants the same year. H. P. Packard, H. J. Schalkle and H. A. Hagman bought ringnecks which were eventually released on Hagman's farm north of Redfield adjacent to the James River. Also in 1908, A. C. Johnson purchased twenty-five birds and released them on his ranch south of Frankfort. [Don Hipschman. 1959 Annual Report. *Looking Back Past 50 Years*, SDGFP, Pierre, page 36.]

Author's comment: Hipschman, writer of the 1959 historical article, took a different view of what Rice had written in 1941. Hipschman choose to use "Also in 1908" for "the same year" rather than this author's interpretation of 1909 for "the same year." As a result of Hipschman's view, writer's like Trautman who wrote his book in 1982 followed suit and used the 1908 date.

1982

Like so many early records, those of South Dakota pheasant introductions are often vague or incomplete, particularly with respect to the number and variety of pheasants comprising each of the several releases. Insofar as is known, the earliest attempts to propagate pheasants in South Dakota were made by Dr. A. Zetlitz, Sioux Falls, who had several varieties shipped from Illinois in 1898. Intention of stocking efforts was reported as early as 1891. N.L. Witcher was to receive pheasants from Oregon "in about a month" to be stocked in the West River grouse range. No further mention was made as to whether the Oregon birds were ever received (Hipshman 1959).

The 1898 Zetlitz introduction consisted of two male and four female ringnecks (most likely of the English ringneck variety) and a few of the golden and silver varieties. In the first year, Dr. Zetlitz hatched and reared at his home about two dozen birds, 10 of which were released at the junction of the Split Rock and Sioux rivers in Minnehaha County. From this introduction, birds were seen at various times in adjacent

territory and as far away as Yankton County in 1902. All eventually disappeared supposedly shot by hunters. In 1903, Dr. Zetlitz again released a number of pheasants in Split Rock Township. Birds that developed from this release were often seen between East Sioux Falls and Brandon.

A.E. Cooper and E.L. Ebbert, operators of adjoining farms south of Doland in Spink County, bought several pairs from a Pennsylvania game farm in 1908 and introduced them in wooded sections of their farms. All allegedly were lost in the heavy snow that winter. They tried again the following year, releasing a few dozen wild birds that are believed to be one of the progenitors of the present pheasant population in that vicinity. Whether they were from English or from Chinese ringneck stocks is unknown. …

Subsequently, the Game and Fish and Parks Department conducted extensive pheasant trapping programs to introduce birds into other parts of the state. From 1926 through 1941, more than 33,000 pheasants were moved to Corson, Fall River, Lawrence, Meade, Perkins, Pennington and Ziebach counties. After World War II, pheasant trapping and transplanting was resumed in some areas. Severe winter losses occurred during the winter of 1947-48. Birds were trapped and moved to places which had suffered the most (Hipschman 1959). Altogether, more than 40,000 pheasants were trapped in areas where abundant and released throughout the state (Kimball et. al. 1956).

… Within the same year of the final stocking by the department (1919), the first open season on pheasants was held in South Dakota for one rainy day in Spink County during which no more than 200 birds were bagged.

In 1908 H.P. Packard, H.J. Schalkle and H.A. Hageman, Redfield residents, released pheasants on the Bert Hageman farm north of Redfield adjacent to the James River. In 1908 A.C. Johnson released 25 pheasants on his ranch south of Frankfort.

In 1911 the Redfield Chamber of Commerce released 30 pairs of pheasants on the Bert Hagmann farm. In 1911 the Department of Game and Fish, complemented private releases with privately subscribed funds, by releasing 48 pairs of pheasants near Redfield. In 1911 the Department of Game and Fish, under Game Warden Bancroft, obtained 200 pairs of pheasants from Frank L. Bramble Aviary in Watertown. These birds were exhibited at the State Fair. Then they were divided with three hens and a cock issued to "reliable farmers" living along the James River in Spink and Beadle counties.

In 1913, State Farm patrons purchased 1,800 pheasants from the Wallace Evans Game Farm and primarily released the birds in East River counties. In 1913, Robert E. Dowdell released 9 pairs of Illinois-bred ringnecks at Ruskin Park along the James River.

From 1914 to 1917 the Department of Game and Fish purchased 7,000 pheasants from Commercial game farms and primarily released them in East River counties.

In 1918 the Department of Game and Fish purchased 360 pheasants from Commercial game farms and released them primarily in East River counties.

In 1919 the Department of Game and Fish purchased 300 pheasants from the Wallace Evans Game Farm and released them primarily in East River counties.

[Carl G. Trautman. 1982. *History Ecology and Management of the Ring-necked Pheasant in South Dakota,* SDGFP, Pierre, pages 12-14.]

Author's comment: Seven newspapers in 1909 indicated the introduction of the pheasant by the Redfield men was in 1909 and not 1908.

The 1941 *Fifty Million Pheasants* article stated the more than 33,000 pheasants trapped from 1926 through 1941 went to West River counties in general, and that the seven counties listed in this article received 8,500 of those pheasants in 1941.

This article stated the last pheasant stocking was made in 1919. The SDGF (1922-June-30) Annual Report for 1921-1922 stated 255 pheasants were purchased in 1921 for stocking purposes. The author in reviewing previous articles addressed other questionable information contained in this article.

2011-May-31

The first successful stocking of pheasants in South Dakota took place in June 1908 when H. P. Packard, H. J. Schalkle and H. A. Hagman secured three pairs of pheasants from Grants Pass, Oregon. The birds were kept in crates on the Schalkle farm before they were released.

L. J. Howard, who at the time was the Spink County Clerk of Courts, went with the three men to Hagman's Grove, just north of Redfield, to release the birds. The number of pheasants grew steadily over

the years and the state game department purchased 48 pairs of birds with privately subscribed funds and released them near Redfield. ["Pheasant History," Historical Marker, Redfield, SD, Internet Website, posted May 31, 2011]

Author's comment: Seven newspapers in 1909 indicated the introduction of the pheasant by the Redfield men was in 1909 and not 1908.

The 1921 *Madison Daily Leader* article (1921-March-15) in relaying the Bert Hagman story, quotes the pheasants were purchased from Corvallis, Oregon, not Grants Pass.

2015-January-30

Act of Excellence—Frank Bramble and the Introduction of Pheasants in South Dakota

Submitted by Ms. Jan Johnson, SD Hall of Fame

Frank Bramble, who died in 1966, was a giant in Codington County and South Dakota. His professional life centered on the insurance industry, and he helped found the Dakota Mutual Life Insurance Company in August 1906, which later became Midland National Life Insurance Company.

But his legacy, "his act of excellence," centered on his recreational interest in the pheasant. In 1911 Frank Bramble imported 40 pairs of Chinese Ringneck Pheasants through New York to Watertown, SD. Others were also importing pheasants to South Dakota, but Bramble also worked with state officials to release another 250 pair into the wild. Then in 1912, Bramble donated pheasants and waterfowl to the city of Watertown for exhibition, which was the beginning of the zoo there. Named Bramble Park Zoo, it moved to its present location along Highway 2 in 1940 and today has over 500 animals representing 130 species. It remains one of two zoos in eastern South Dakota.

Bramble continued to raise pheasants after his donation. His pheasant shed was in the backyard of the house he built in 1924 and is still on the property. His work led to South Dakota's first hunting season in Spink County in 1919 and the first in Codington County in 1926. It was a two-day season with a 7-pheasant limit.

Frank Bramble's work in 1911 and 1912 left a lasting legacy. It would be hard to measure the recreational and economic value of the Watertown zoo and especially of South Dakota's pheasant hunting season over the years, but it is obviously remarkable. [Jan Johnson, "Frank Bramble and the Introduction of Pheasants in South Dakota," South Dakota Hall of Fame website, posted January 30, 2015.]

Author's comments: This article relates that Frank Bramble "worked with state officials to release another 250 pair into the wild." The *Fifty Million Pheasants* source named Bramble Aviary as the supplier of the first 200 pair of pheasants purchased by the SDGF in 1911 with state funds. This Hall of Fame document mentions 250 pair, which indicates to the author that Bramble was also the supplier of the 48 pair of pheasants purchased by SDGF in 1911 with private funds. It also makes sense that State Game Warden W. F. Bancroft would use Frank Bramble to purchase pheasants for SDGF in 1911 since they were both from Watertown. [Russell L. Rice. 1941. *Fifty Million Pheasants*, SDGF, Pierre, pages 10-13.]

Summary remarks: The author would not have been able to do this research without the use of online digital texts of historical records and newspapers. The method available to research digitally recorded newspapers made the task of gathering pheasant stocking history manageable. Much of this author's newspaper research was through the Library of Congress via the South Dakota Archives website.

Appendices

A. South Dakota Bonus Hunting Areas

B. South Dakota County Maps

C. Ring-necked Pheasant Statistics for South Dakota

D. South Dakota Additional Seasons

E. Parting Shots

Photo A-1. "We can have about as many pheasants as we want if we supply the appropriate habitat ... "
[*Ring-Necked Pheasants: Thriving in South Dakota*, page 58.]

To gain more knowledge of the South Dakota ring-necked pheasant, the author recommends to readers the following book available from SDGFP: Flake, L.D., A.E. Gabbert, T.R. Kirchenmann, A.P. Leif, and C.T. Switzer. 2012. *Ring-Necked Pheasants: Thriving in South Dakota*. South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, Pierre.

Copies may be ordered from:
South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks
523 E. Capitol Avenue, Foss Building
Pierre, SD 57501
(gfp.sd.gov: Look under online shopping for gift cards, books and prints)

Appendix A. South Dakota Bonus Hunting Areas

Twenty-nine South Dakota pheasant hunting seasons had additional hunting days beyond the regular season length. The extra days were permitted on designated refuges, Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs), Game Production Areas (GPAs), and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land along the Missouri River. These additional hunting days were not used to calculate season length in the text.

1. 1968 Season had 7 additional hunting days on designated refuges.
2. 1969 Season had 7 additional hunting days on designated refuges.

3. 1970 Season had 7 additional hunting days on designated refuges.
4. 1974 Season had 16 additional hunting days on designated refuges.

5. 1975 Season had 31 additional hunting days on designated refuges.
6. 1976 Season had 26 additional hunting days on designated refuges.

7. 1977 Season had 20 additional hunting days on designated refuges.
8. 1978 Season had 21 additional hunting days on designated refuges.

9. 1979 Season had 22 additional hunting days on designated refuges.
10. 1980 Season had 12 additional hunting days on designated refuges.

11. 1981 Season had 25 additional hunting days on designated refuges.
12. 1982 Season had 19 additional hunting days on designated refuges.

13. 1983 Season had 20 additional hunting days on designated refuges.
14. 1984 Season had 22 additional hunting days on designated refuges.

15. 1985 Season had 23 additional hunting days on designated refuges.
16. 1986 Season had 24 additional hunting days on designated refuges.

17. 1987 Season had 25 additional hunting days on designated refuges.
18. 1988 Season had 27 additional hunting days on designated refuges.

19. 1989 Season had 21 additional hunting days on designated refuges and GPAs.
20. 1990 Season had 22 additional hunting days on designated refuges and GPAs.

21. 1991 Season had 9 additional hunting days on designated refuges and GPAs.
22. 1992 Season had 11 additional hunting days on designated refuges and GPAs.

23. 1993 Season had 12 additional hunting days on designated refuges and GPAs.
24. 1994 Season had 13 additional hunting days on designated refuges and GPAs.

25. 1995 Season had 7 additional hunting days on designated refuges, WPAs, GPAs, and Corps land.
26. 1996 Season had 9 additional hunting days on designated refuges, WPAs, GPAs, and Corps land.

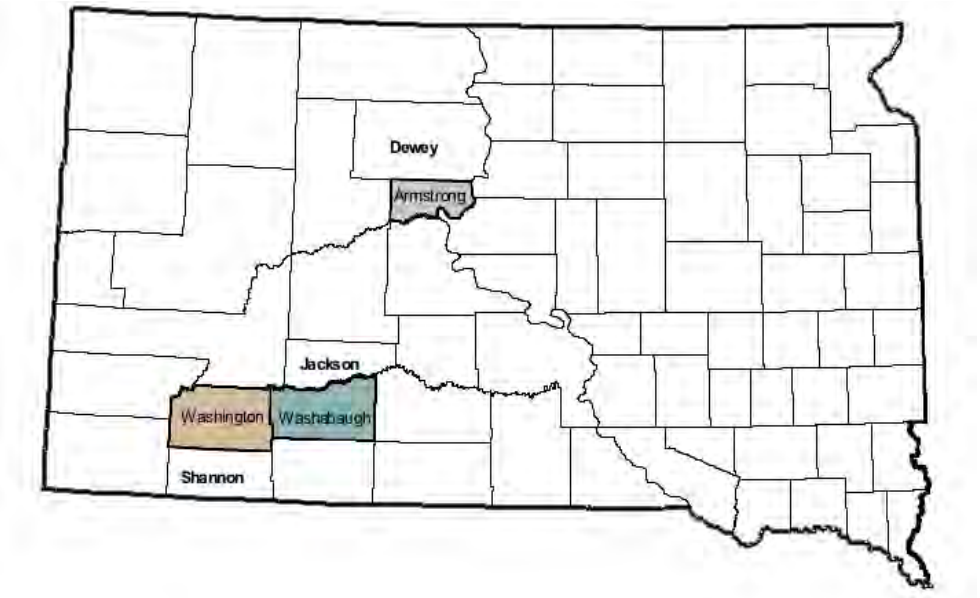
27. 1997 Season had 10 additional hunting days on designated refuges, WPAs, GPAs, and Corps land.
28. 1998 Season had 11 additional hunting days on designated refuges, WPAs, GPAs, and Corps land.

29. 1999 Season had 12 additional hunting days on designated refuges, WPAs, GPAs, and Corps land.

Appendix B. South Dakota County Maps

Four different county outline maps were uses in the *Data Book* to depict the pheasant hunting seasons.

1. 1919-1943, a 69 county map was used that included Armstrong, Washabaugh, and Washington Counties.
2. 1944-1953, a 68 county map was used that included Armstrong and Washabaugh Counties. In 1944 Washington County merged with Shannon County.
3. 1954-1978, a 67 county map was used that included Washabaugh County. In 1954 Armstrong County was dissolved and joined Dewey County.
4. 1979-2018, a 66 county map was used. In 1979 Washabaugh County merged with Jackson County. Another change occurred on the South Dakota map in 2015 when Shannon County was renamed Oglala Lakota County.



The above map shows where the counties of Washington, Armstrong, and Washabaugh were once located.

This map shows the location of South Dakota's 66 counties. Sixty-three of these counties had no change during the pheasant hunting seasons of 1919 through 2018. The three counties that had changes during that time span were Dewey, Jackson, and Oglala Lakota.

Appendix C. Historical chart 1919-2018 published by the SDGFP

Ring-necked Pheasant Statistics for South Dakota

Season Structure				Pheasant Hunters			Population Estimates			Survey Indices		
Year	Length (days)	Opening Day	Bag limit	Residents	Nonresidents	Total	Harvest	Pheasants harvested per hunter	Preseason Population	Preseason pheasants per mile	Average brood size	Postseason cocks per 100 hens
1919	1	30-Oct	2	500	500	1,000	200	0.2	100,000			
1920	2	04-Nov	2	1,000	1,000	2,000	1,000	0.5	200,000			
1921	7	21-Nov	2	10,000	1,000	11,000	7,000	0.6	300,000			
1922	20	09-Nov	2	30,000	1,500	31,500	15,000	0.5	500,000			
1923	6	19-Nov	3	40,000	1,500	41,500	25,000	0.6	700,000			
1924	15	07-Nov	3	50,000	2,100	52,100	250,000	4.8	1,000,000			
1925	15	30-Oct	3	75,000	1,100	76,100	500,000	6.6	2,000,000			
1926	77	15-Oct	7	82,000	1,400	83,400	1,000,000	12.0	4,000,000			
1927	90	07-Oct	7	90,000	2,600	92,600	1,500,000	16.2	6,000,000			
1928	40	25-Oct	5	100,000	2,800	102,800	1,250,000	12.2	5,000,000			
1929	16	29-Oct	5	95,000	2,700	97,700	1,000,000	10.2	4,000,000			
1930	76	16-Oct	7	96,000	2,600	98,600	1,500,000	15.2	7,000,000			
1931	15	15-Oct	3	61,000	700	61,700	1,000,000	16.2	5,000,000			
1932	30	20-Oct	4	62,000	700	62,700	1,000,000	15.9	5,000,000			
1933	30	10-Oct	5	63,000	600	63,600	2,000,000	31.4	8,000,000			
1934	30	21-Oct	5	53,000	400	53,400	1,500,000	28.1	7,000,000			
1935	37	21-Oct	6	57,000	1,900	58,900	1,500,000	25.5	12,000,000			
1936	20	10-Oct	4	61,000	1,600	62,600	1,750,000	28.0	12,000,000			
1937	4	09-Oct	3	25,000	800	25,800	75,000	2.9	3,000,000			
1938	14	01-Oct	4	44,000	1,800	45,800	1,500,000	32.8	6,000,000			
1939	29	14-Oct	4	63,000	2,800	65,800	1,500,000	22.8	6,000,000			
1940	55	01-Oct	5	73,000	6,200	79,200	2,500,000	31.6	8,000,000			
1941	50	01-Oct	5	83,000	11,000	94,000	3,125,000	33.2	11,000,000			
1942	126	26-Sep	7	80,000	16,000	96,000	4,500,000	46.9	15,000,000			
1943	158	25-Sep	7	60,000	18,000	78,000	3,168,000	40.6	11,000,000			
1944	162	20-Sep	10	77,000	42,000	119,000	6,439,000	54.1	15,000,000			
1945	153	29-Sep	8	88,000	87,000	175,000	7,507,000	42.9	16,000,000			
1946	60	15-Oct	5	103,000	84,000	187,000	3,550,000	19.0	11,000,000		6.57	
1947	45	11-Oct	3	103,000	13,000	116,000	1,496,000	12.9	7,000,000		7.15	60
1948	45	09-Oct	4	126,124	25,934	152,058	2,148,341	14.1	9,600,000		7.63	53
1949	45	15-Oct	4	119,124	21,980	141,104	1,864,523	13.2	8,100,000	3.10	7.15	45
1950	13	04-Nov	2	88,000	2,000	90,000	507,000	5.6	3,200,000	1.99	6.79	63
1951	25	20-Oct	3	95,359	10,037	105,396	1,184,048	11.2	6,000,000	3.69	7.13	55
1952	30	18-Oct	3	106,983	13,355	120,338	1,490,318	12.4	6,100,000	5.62	7.89	43
1953	30	17-Oct	3	99,921	17,363	117,284	1,210,253	10.3	4,900,000	4.27	6.89	41
1954	30	23-Oct	3	104,600	16,900	121,500	1,302,000	10.7	6,200,000	4.84	6.92	37
1955	40	22-Oct	3	111,000	19,400	130,400	1,608,000	12.3	6,300,000	6.72	6.90	39
1956	35	27-Oct	3	102,000	20,200	122,200	1,221,000	10.0	4,300,000	6.46	6.88	34
1957	37	26-Oct	3	102,000	19,700	121,700	1,339,000	11.0	5,900,000	7.31	5.90	43
1958	51	18-Oct	4	125,000	35,600	160,600	2,635,000	16.4	11,100,000	11.03	6.80	40
1959	58	17-Oct	5	117,500	44,927	162,427	2,212,000	13.6	7,500,000	7.64	5.70	22
1960	42	22-Oct	4	129,800	28,500	158,300	2,572,000	16.2	9,500,000	6.73	6.23	28
1961	58	21-Oct	4	141,100	51,250	192,350	3,247,000	16.9	11,000,000	11.38	6.34	26
1962	61	20-Oct	4	138,400	57,100	195,500	2,790,300	14.3	10,200,000	6.52	5.80	44
1963	74	19-Oct	4	143,650	68,500	212,150	3,095,000	14.6	10,000,000	11.24	6.50	23
1964	60	17-Oct	3	123,500	23,150	146,650	1,473,700	10.0	5,100,000	3.74	5.91	24
1965	44	16-Oct	3	101,650	14,500	116,150	796,850	6.9	3,300,000	2.55	6.28	37
1966	16	15-Oct	2	81,900	6,040	87,940	408,700	4.6	2,200,000	2.23	6.30	56
1967	37	21-Oct	3	111,160	15,315	126,475	908,300	7.2	2,900,000	2.42	6.30	39
1968	37	19-Oct	3	116,700	18,960	135,660	880,900	6.5	3,300,000	2.08	7.17	37

Ring-necked Pheasant Statistics for South Dakota

Season Structure				Pheasant Hunters			Population Estimates			Survey Indices		
Year	Length (days)	Opening Day	Bag limit	Residents	Nonresidents	Total	Harvest	Pheasants harvested per hunter	Preseason Population	Preseason pheasants per mile	Average brood size	Postseason cocks per 100 hens
1969	30	18-Oct	3	96,060	13,610	109,670	622,900	5.7	2,700,000	1.91	7.60	48
1970	37	17-Oct	3	107,950	18,285	126,235	900,900	7.1	3,500,000	2.73	7.50	40
1971	49	16-Oct	3	117,090	24,790	141,880	1,105,800	7.8	3,700,000	2.45	7.22	32
1972	49	21-Oct	3	119,680	27,950	147,630	1,200,600	8.1	4,100,000	2.75	7.64	39
1973	64	20-Oct	3	126,575	37,400	163,975	1,283,100	7.8	4,200,000	3.51	7.04	29
1974	49	19-Oct	3	125,550	25,260	150,810	1,071,300	7.1	3,000,000	2.64	7.08	25
1975	23	18-Oct	2	99,800	12,335	112,135	497,500	4.4	2,100,000	1.53	7.08	42
1976	30	16-Oct	2	89,260	8,065	97,325	372,550	3.8	1,400,000	1.03	6.30	35
1977	44	15-Oct	2	89,950	10,090	100,040	518,600	5.2	2,300,000	1.62	7.33	43
1978	44	21-Oct	2	81,500	13,200	94,700	558,300	5.9	2,100,000	1.38	7.14	38
1979	51	20-Oct	3	105,000	18,740	123,740	943,800	7.6	3,600,000	3.20	7.50	39
1980	63	18-Oct	3	107,500	28,450	135,950	1,158,725	8.5	4,200,000	3.70	7.80	21
1981	51	17-Oct	3	106,250	33,000	139,250	1,299,125	9.3	4,200,000	3.60	6.84	21
1982	51	16-Oct	3	95,340	31,820	127,160	1,068,252	8.4	4,200,000	3.37	6.53	34
1983	51	15-Oct	3	102,300	36,370	138,670	1,434,430	10.3	4,800,000	3.80	6.66	21
1984	51	20-Oct	3	91,290	35,170	126,460	962,680	7.6	3,300,000	2.23	6.20	28
1985	51	19-Oct	3	85,500	34,700	120,200	791,350	6.6	3,200,000	2.27	6.19	31
1986	51	18-Oct	3	70,850	24,000	94,850	624,760	6.6	2,100,000	1.81	7.04	34
1987	51	17-Oct	3	83,000	31,900	114,900	931,250	8.1	3,800,000	2.58	7.01	34
1988	51	15-Oct	3	79,800	30,000	109,800	779,760	7.1	3,100,000	2.22	6.23	29
1989	51	21-Oct	3	71,700	26,100	97,800	690,000	7.1	2,700,000	2.08	6.54	27
1990	51	20-Oct	3	71,325	26,475	97,800	775,025	7.9	3,700,000	2.09	6.86	38
1991	65	19-Oct	3	91,200	32,127	123,327	1,222,600	9.9	5,000,000	3.25	6.63	31
1992	65	17-Oct	3	83,400	42,900	126,300	969,000	7.7	4,200,000	2.77	6.04	35
1993	65	16-Oct	3	78,900	45,500	124,400	1,213,800	9.8	5,500,000	2.83	6.33	36
1994	65	15-Oct	3	78,800	65,200	144,000	1,370,600	9.5	5,400,000	4.13	6.48	29
1995	65	21-Oct	3	75,286	65,361	140,647	1,292,400	9.2	4,900,000	2.68	6.22	26
1996	65	19-Oct	3	78,026	64,564	142,590	1,200,826	8.4	4,800,000	2.67	6.86	31
1997	65	18-Oct	3	70,573	42,808	113,381	920,717	8.1	3,600,000	2.66	7.63	32
1998	65	17-Oct	3	74,727	60,364	135,091	1,185,322	8.8	5,000,000	5.08	7.20	33
1999	65	16-Oct	3	84,342	71,956	156,298	1,464,171	9.4	6,100,000	4.53	7.07	32
2000	72	21-Oct	3	79,790	70,182	149,972	1,447,734	9.7	6,700,000	4.22	6.31	37
2001	73	20-Oct	3	76,772	73,425	150,197	1,361,250	9.1	6,000,000	3.30	6.76	38
2002	74	19-Oct	3	70,822	74,874	145,696	1,261,689	8.7	5,500,000	2.64	6.25	37
2003	75	18-Oct	3	78,396	83,538	161,934	1,814,739	11.2	8,700,000	6.20	7.55	40
2004	79	16-Oct	3	78,984	91,948	170,932	1,653,286	9.7	8,100,000	5.66	6.39	38
2005	79	15-Oct	3	79,270	94,956	174,226	1,949,063	11.2	9,200,000	6.63	6.72	39
2006	79	21-Oct	3	79,955	98,213	178,168	1,846,356	10.4	8,400,000	6.36	6.06	38
2007	79	20-Oct	3	77,788	103,048	180,836	2,122,345	11.7	11,900,000	7.85	6.71	48
2008	79	18-Oct	3	75,978	100,254	176,232	1,936,228	11.0	10,300,000	8.56	6.38	47
2009	79	17-Oct	3	69,949	97,350	167,299	1,648,191	9.9	8,500,000	6.31	6.03	47
2010	79	16-Oct	3	72,465	100,189	172,654	1,831,576	10.6	9,800,000	6.45	6.25	50
2011	79	15-Oct	3	69,120	95,077	164,197	1,555,307	9.5	6,600,000	3.55	5.80	41
2012	79	20-Oct	3	68,337	93,419	161,756	1,428,874	8.8	7,600,000	4.19	6.26	50
2013	79	19-Oct	3	57,647	74,413	132,060	979,081	7.4	6,200,000	1.52	5.50	59
2014	79	18-Oct	3	61,776	79,195	140,971	1,199,803	8.5	7,500,000	2.68	5.96	52
2015	79	17-Oct	3	65,135	84,901	150,036	1,255,878	8.4	7,700,000	3.80	6.17	52
2016	79	15-Oct	3	61,746	81,141	142,887	1,170,596	8.2	8,200,000	3.05	5.91	58
2017	79	21-Oct	3	52,538	67,232	119,770	828,709	6.9	4,600,000	1.68	4.99	56
2018	79	20-Oct	3	53,577	69,018	122,595	950,883	7.8	7,100,000	2.47	6.08	62

Appendix D. South Dakota Additional Seasons

South Dakota added a Youth Pheasant Season in 1999 and an Early Resident-Only Pheasant Season in 2001. The first guidelines for each of these seasons are listed below.

1999 Youth Pheasant Season

Dates: October 9-10, statewide, including Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in Bennett County

Daily Limit: 2 rooster pheasants

Possession Limit: 4 rooster pheasants, taken according to the daily limit. The limit accrues at the rate of 2 birds a day.

Shooting Hours: Noon Central Time to sunset

Eligibility: Youths must be 12 (or turn 12 by December 31) through 15 years of age, possess a valid hunter safety card and be properly licensed in South Dakota to hunt small game.

Special Requirements:
--An adult not carrying a firearm must accompany each hunter
--Public road rights-of-way are closed

SD 1999 Hunting Handbook

2001 Early Resident-Only Pheasant Season

Dates: October 13-15

Open Area: Only public lands are open to hunting. They include:
--U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Waterfowl Production Areas
--U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land adjacent to the Missouri River
--U.S. Forest Service National Grasslands
--U.S. Bureau of Reclamation land
--State parks, recreation areas, and lakeside use areas
--GFP managed or leased property otherwise open to public hunting, including Game Production Areas open during the regular pheasant season
--GFP managed and leased property designated as Walk-In Areas
--The only public road rights-of-way open are those adjacent to these public lands

Daily Limit: 3 rooster pheasants

Possession Limit: 9 rooster pheasants, taken according to daily limit

Shooting Hours: Noon Central Time to sunset

SD 2001 Hunting Handbook

The Youth Pheasant Season and the Early Resident-Only Pheasant Season have been held annually since being inaugurated. The extra hunting days allowed by these two seasons were not used to calculate season length in the text.

Appendix E. Parting Shots by the author, Lonnie Shafer

The 2006 South Dakota state quarter commemorated the pheasant and Mount Rushmore.

What do Theodore Roosevelt, pheasants, and this *Data Book* have in common for the author?

Theodore Roosevelt, 26th President and hunter, is one of the four presidents depicted on Mount Rushmore. According to the National Parks Service, sculptor Gutzon Borglum chose to honor Roosevelt because of his work in developing the United States. As a former American History teacher, I am in agreement with Borglum's inclusion of Roosevelt on Mount Rushmore.

- **"**No, I'm not a good shot, but I shoot often."
- "There can be no greater issue than that of conservation in this country."
- "The more you know about the past, the better prepared you are for the future,"

These three quotes from Roosevelt are contributing factors of why he is one of my favorite presidents. As a fellow hunter, I can closely relate to the first two quotes. On certain days of hunting, I have experienced the first quote, first hand! In my opinion the second quote directly relates to the habitat needs of pheasants today, a healthy Conservation Reserve Program. I believe the third quote about history can be applied to *The South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Seasons Data Book*. It is one reason I chose to compile the history of the pheasant hunting seasons in South Dakota.

In my retirement, I discovered that no one had taken the time to record a comprehensive work of South Dakota pheasant hunting seasons. Being a lifelong pheasant hunter and former history teacher, I joyfully set out to record the season structure of each of South Dakota's pheasant hunting seasons over the past century. I felt the recording of the pheasant hunting history would be a way of honoring this South Dakota bird that has provided me with some of my best hunting outings. It is hoped that the contents of the *Data Book* will help the public understand season structures, the habitat needs of pheasants, and support forthcoming conservation plans for pheasants. Thus, the affinity to the quote, "The more you know about the past, the better prepared you are for the future."

Once work began on the *Data Book* care was taken to present the gathered facts with accuracy. Many hours were spent examining the source documents searching for solutions when conflicting information was encountered. Hopefully no errors were made in transferring the data. But, being human this may not have occurred in every instance.

In conclusion, this *Data Book* is unique. It is a collection of information about the history of the South Dakota pheasant hunting seasons and about pheasants that cannot be found in any other single document. The contents should be invaluable to pheasant enthusiast everywhere for years to come.

Postscript

After the manuscript for *The South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Seasons Data Book* was completed, it had to be refined and prepared for printing. Lonnie Shafer, the author, would like to recognize Allie Hoeft, Lead Graphic Designer with the SDGFP, for her work in finalizing the text for printing.

The South Dakota Pheasant Hunting Seasons Data Book celebrates South Dakota's 100th Anniversary of ring-necked pheasant hunting in South Dakota since the first season in 1919.

This *Data Book* provides coverage of South Dakota's first 100 pheasant hunting seasons. The information on each season includes historical data and statistics: a map detailing which areas of the state were open for hunting, hunting dates, shooting hours, daily limit, possession limit, season length, harvest estimate, and amended season information. Each of the first ten sectional divisions of the book opens with a summary of the decade covered in that section. Section 11 contains facts and figures about South Dakota's pheasant hunting seasons. Section 12 has a perpetual calendar dealing with the daily life of the ring-necked pheasant, facts about pheasants, and their habitat needs. Section 13 is a treatise that provides information on the pheasant stocking history of South Dakota that has been concealed for a long time.

South Dakota has a heritage as the world's premier pheasant hunting destination over the past century. The contents of this *Data Book* unfold the past for anyone who enjoys the pursuit of this phenomenal bird in South Dakota.

Tracks of the Past Leading to the Future

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