

California WS Factsheet

February 27, 2009

Managing Waterfowl Depredation on Agricultural Crops in the Central Valley

What Are You Allowed To Do?

1. You may legally drive, herd, or scare waterfowl in order to prevent damage to agricultural crops. You may use pyrotechnics (cracker shells, bangers, whistlers, propane cannons) but not live ammunition. See the attached list of sources/suppliers of these materials, and check for local ordinances regarding their use.
2. You must not injure or kill any of the birds.
3. Be aware of county laws and regulations in regard to use of pyrotechnics.
4. We recommend eagle and coyote silhouettes or parking vehicles around field borders: and/or electronic harassment devices.
5. Geese respond to pressure, but it must be persistent. Also be aware of their late evening and early morning movements.
6. Begin discouraging goose use of newly planted crops immediately, rather than let them develop any comfort level in your area.



Methods To Reduce or Prevent Waterfowl Depredation

1. Habitat Modification - Habitat modification involves physically altering property to make it less attractive to geese. A) Modifications made to crop types/varieties to result in later planting dates and delayed sprouting will work toward alleviating spring depredation. B) Leave some fields undisked to allow geese to forage on annual grasses.
2. Harassment Tools - Dogs, herding, hazing, pyrotechnics, scarecrows, electronic calls, and silhouettes/effigies are most effective when used in combination, so that discouragement is consistent rather than sporadic and one type/tool reinforces the effectiveness of another.
3. Lethal control –

A) Depredation permits- need to be applied for well in advance (<http://www.fws.gov/permits>).

B) Hunting regulations for geese are controlled by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act which does not allow hunting after March 10. Conservation Orders, that allow harvest after March 10, have been issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for light geese in other Flyways, but goose populations in the Pacific Flyway do not meet the criteria used elsewhere to establish these control methods.

Laws and Regulations – Read control orders and obtain depredation permits prior to use

Depredation permits: Issued by USFWS. They are required prior to lethally removing migratory birds except for control orders, <http://www.fws.gov/permits>, \$100 Fee.

Depredation control orders: Identifies and allows lethal removal of various species of birds in certain situations. Read control orders completely prior to implementing!

50 CFR 21.43: Allows lethal take of yellow-headed, red-winged, rusty and brewers blackbirds, cowbirds, grackles, crows and magpies committing depredations upon trees, crops, livestock, or wildlife.

California's Central Valley provides wintering habitat for 60% of the Pacific Flyway's waterfowl. They begin arriving from their breeding grounds as early as August, with peak numbers present from November to January. The return migration begins in late January, with most wintering waterfowl departing by mid May.

Historically, crop depredation issues usually occurred in the fall, but increased goose populations in the Flyway are now resulting in spring complaints. Cold wet springs up north and early planting of crops in the Sacramento Valley due to dry springs has resulted in birds remaining into late April or early May grazing on newly sprouted spring crops.

Equipment Used To Scare Waterfowl and Other Birds.



For further information or assistance in solving waterfowl problems, contact any of the organizations listed on the back or the USDA APHIS Wildlife Services District Office for your area.

50CFR 21.44: Allows lethal take in California of horned larks, golden crowned, white-crowned, other crowned sparrow sand house finches under extraordinary conditions, ... the county Ag commissioner may without permit kill or cause to be killed to safe guard any agricultural or horticultural crops.

50CFR 21.47: Allows removal of double crested cormorants at aquaculture facilities

50 CFR 21.48: Allows removal of double crested cormorants to protect public resources

50 CFR 21.49: Allows for control of resident Canada geese at civil and military airports

50 CFR 21.50: Allows for control of resident Canada geese nests and eggs

Assistance and Contact Information

Butte County Agricultural Commissioner
(530) 538-7381

Colusa County Agricultural Commissioner
(530) 458-0580

Glenn County Agricultural Commissioner
(530) 934-6501

Sutter County Agricultural Commissioner
(530) 822-7500

Tehama County Agricultural Commissioner
(530) 527-4504

Yuba County Agricultural Commissioner
(530) 749-5400

CA Department of Fish and Game
(530) 846-7500

USFWS Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge
(530) 934-2801

USFWS Migratory Bird Office - Sacramento
(916)-414-6727

USFWS Resident Agent in Charge
(916)-414-6667

USDA WS North District Office
(530) 336-5623

USDA WS Sacramento District Office
(916) 434-0663

USDA WS State Office
(916) 979-2675

Supplier Information

Hand held lasers

www.z-bolt.com, 1-877-801-9299

www.aviandissuader.com

<http://www.wickedlasers.com>

Farm Supply Company

224 Tank Farm Rd.

San Luis Obispo, CA 64106

Tel: 805-543-3751

Web: www.farmsupplycompany.com

Vegetable Growers Supply

40602 El Camino

Greenfield, CA 93972

Tel: 831-674-8416

Fax: 831-674-8418

Web: www.veggrow.com

Bird Barrier America, Inc

20925 Chico St

Carson, Ca 90746

Tel: 800-503-5444

Fax: 310-527-8005

Web: www.birdbarrier.com

Butler Bamboo

3514 Westminster Ave.

Santa Ana, CA 92703

Tel: 714-554-0600 or 800-666-0606

FAX: 714-554-0606

Web: www.butlerbamboo.com

Vegetable Growers Supply

121 Cooper Rd

Oxnard, CA 03030

Tel: 805-486-5909

Fax: 805-486-5917

Web: www.veggrow.com

Vegetable Growers Supply

280 N. Dogwood Rd.

El Centro, CA 92243

Tel: 760-352-2133

Fax: 760-352-2154

Web: www.veggrow.com

Wildlife Control Technology

2501 N. Sunnyside

Fresno, CA 93727

Tel: 800-235-0262

Fax: 559-4909-2260

Web: www.wildlife-contol.com

Bird Guard LLC

254 W. Adams Ave.,

Sister, OR, 97759

Tel: 541-549-0205 or 888-332-2328

Fax: 541-549-5286

Web: www.birdguard.com

Reed-Joseph International Co.

800 Main St.

Greenville, MS 38702

Tel: 800-647-5554

Fax: 662-335-8850

Web: www.reedjoseph.com

