



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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INTERIOR'S CHANGE IN BAITING REGULATION WILL HELP DOVE HUNTERS

A clarifying change in the basic waterfowl regulations for the 1960-61 season pertaining to a modification of the baiting regulation which will particularly affect dove hunting was announced today by the Department of the Interior.

The change consists solely of adding the words "planting or" immediately preceding the word "harvesting" in the section which outlines permitted hunting methods. Under this change, hunting will be permitted over freshly seeded or planted fields.

On June 27, at a meeting held in Washington to discuss proposed dove hunting regulations for the coming season, all delegates and particularly the Southeastern Association of Game and Fish Commissioners (which represents the principal dove hunting States) urged officials of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife to modify the existing baiting regulation because it was unduly restrictive and was responsible for unwitting violations by dove hunters.

Marked changes in agricultural practices have occurred in recent years, particularly in the southern States. More diversified farming has taken the place of cotton planting and, as a result, planting occurs now during most all periods of the year.

Seeding for small grain crops is done in the fall. The seed is either drilled in or scattered over the surface of the ground depending upon the farming methods. Doves, especially, are attracted to these freshly planted fields where the seed has not had time to germinate.

The current Federal baiting regulation prohibits the shooting of migratory game birds on or over freshly seeded or planted fields, thus arbitrarily closing large areas to legal hunting. As a consequence, many dove hunters found that they had unwittingly or inadvertently violated the Federal regulations.

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