



Harvesting and Preparing Game Birds

Unit: Animal Wildlife Management

Problem Area: Game Birds Management

Lesson: Harvesting and Preparing Game Birds

- **Student Learning Objectives.** Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

- 1 Describe how game birds can be harvested.**
- 2 Describe how harvested game birds are prepared.**

- **List of Resources.** The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

Cutter, Catherine N. *Proper Care and Handling of Game Birds: From Field to Table*. The Pennsylvania State University College of Agricultural Sciences Agricultural Research and Cooperative Extension.

Cutter, Catherine N. *Proper Field Dressing and Handling of Wild Game and Fish*. The Pennsylvania State University College of Agricultural Sciences Agricultural Research and Cooperative Extension.

Penner, Karen P. *Care and Handling of Game Birds: From Field to Table*. Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service. April 2000.

Thornberry, Fred D. *Producing Quail for Home Consumption*. Texas Agricultural Extension Service. 1998.

Stutzenbaker, Charles D., et. al. *Wildlife Management: Science & Technology*, Second Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall Interstate, 2003.

- **List of Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities**

- ✓ Writing surface
- ✓ Samples of game birds

■ **Terms.** The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- ✓ Hunting
- ✓ Point

■ **Interest Approach.** Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situations. A possible approach is included here.

If possible, prepare a sampling of game birds for consumption by the class. Tell the class that this lesson will show them how to harvest and prepare game so they can enjoy them at home.

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Describe how game birds can be harvested.

Anticipated Problem: How can I harvest game birds?

- I. The method used to harvest game birds depends on the location of the bird. Birds in the wild are harvested through hunting. **Hunting** is the killing of game for food and/or recreation. When hunting game birds it is important to know the general habitat of the bird you are seeking. Many game bird hunters use trained dogs. The dogs move ahead of the hunters and freeze into a statue-like pose when they smell or see birds on the ground. This is called a **point**. The birds remain hidden and motionless near the dog. Hunters walk to the dog with shotguns ready. When the birds fly, the hunters shoot. The dog retrieves downed birds and the hunt resumes.
 - A. Game birds raised in captivity are slaughtered as they reach optimum size. It is suggested that operators remove feed and water 4 to 6 hours before slaughter to minimize carcass contamination during processing.

There are many techniques that can be used to assist students in mastering this material. Students can use the suggested resources to aid in understanding the content of this objective.

Objective 2: Describe how harvested game birds are prepared.

Anticipated Problem: How are game birds processed?

- II. Wild game birds may become contaminated with bacteria or gastric juices if they are improperly handled. Off flavors and odors may develop in the meat, and the risk of food borne illness may increase. For optimum eating quality, become familiar with the following guidelines.
 - A. Care in the field and transport—Remember to bring a sharp knife, a length of nylon cord, plastic bags, and paper towels to the field when going on a hunt. Birds should be field dress shortly after being harvested. To field dress remove the entrails and crop. The grain in the crop may ferment if not removed. The heart and liver may be saved for giblets. Wipe out the carcass cavity with a clean cloth or paper towel. Allow air to circulate in the carcass by hanging or laying the bird in a well-ventilated place. Store meat in a plastic bag on ice to keep the meat clean and cold. The meat temperature should be kept below 40°F.
 - B. Care in processing and storage—Don't cross-contaminate during processing. Be certain to wash your hands, knife, and cutting board with hot soapy water and rinse thoroughly. Soak the birds in cold water for one to two hours to remove the excess blood. For immediate use, store in the refrigerator for up to three days. For long-term storage, freeze the whole cleaned carcass or individual parts at 0°F or lower.
 - C. Care in preparation—Thaw frozen birds in the refrigerator or microwave oven. Microwave-thawed food should be cooked immediately. Other thawed meat should be used within one to two days. Game birds may be prepared like chicken. Being certain that all game meats are heated to 155-160°F to reduce the risk of food borne illness. Use a calibrated meat thermometer to ensure proper cooking. Any leftovers should be used within one or two days, or frozen for later use.

There are many techniques that can be used to assist students in mastering this material. Students can use the suggested resources to aid in understanding the content of this objective.

- **Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle. Questions at end of chapters in the textbook may also be used in the review/summary.
- **Application.** Refer to activities in the suggested resources for additional application of this lesson.
- **Evaluation.** Use the following sample test to evaluate the students' comprehension of the material covered in this lesson.

■ **Answers to Sample Test:**

Part One: Completion

1. hunting
2. dogs
3. 4; 6
4. 40
5. one; two
6. immediately
7. 155–160
8. three

Part Two: Short Answer

1. a sharp knife, a length of nylon cord, plastic bags, and paper towels
2. See Objective 2 for scoring this item.

