

## WHITE-TAILED DEER AND PEN FEEDING SPECIFICATIONS

The following specifications were developed as recommendations for individuals interested in possessing white-tailed deer pursuant to a Domestic Game Animal Breeder License. Applicants must meet space requirements described below. Other recommendations are provided to minimize loss due to escape, predators, or disease.

### I. DEER PEN

- A. Space: Minimum of 15,000 square feet (100' x 150' or reasonable modification of these dimensions) for either one or two adult deer, 3,000 square feet of space to be added for each additional deer up to a total of four. Beyond four deer, an additional 20,000 square feet per deer is required. Fawns may be held with their natural mother in a smaller area, but you must not exceed the required density after October 1. The space specifications for white-tailed deer cannot be diminished or circumvented by including other species either wild or domestic – such as mule deer, sitka deer, caribou, elk, moose, sheep, goats, cattle, horses, etc.
- B. Rotation: It is desirable that two or more pens be available for rotation purposes. If one pen is used consistently, trees may be killed, ground vegetation may be destroyed, and parasitic organisms may build up in the soil. After three years of continuous use, a pen should be rejuvenated. To rejuvenate the pen you should till, lime, fertilize, and reseed with a legume, grass seed mixture.
- C. Wall or Fence:
  1. Material: Nine gauge woven wire with mesh less than 6" in diameter. Smaller diameter mesh is preferable. Changes in wire gauge may be acceptable under certain circumstances (see VI below).
  2. Height: Nine feet minimum, although higher is desirable. In some cases the fence may need to be higher due to heavy snow or topography.
  3. Dog Proofing: An additional 1 ½ feet of wire mesh fencing (same specifications as above), attached to the bottom of the fence and slanted outward at about a thirty degree angle buried beneath the ground, is necessary to prevent dogs from digging in.
  4. Modifications to top of fence: To reduce cost, 11-gauge wire may be used for the top three feet of fence. Barbed wire is not recommended, as it is a hazard to deer.
  5. Poles: Should be of good durable material such as cedar, black locust or metal at least 12' long. If other types of wood are used, at least the under ground portion or lower four feet, should be treated with wood preservative. Poles should be set at least three feet deep. The posts should be no more than 15' apart, with additional posts and braces as needed. The wire must be firmly attached to the poles. one pen, a number of sheds will be necessary.
- D. Shelter must be provided to accommodate all deer within the pen. If natural shelter is not available, shed(s) must be provided. The number of sheds necessary will depend on topography, wind, or other environmental conditions. At least one shed enclosed on four sides, with a doorway facing against the prevailing wind, and large enough to accommodate all of the deer in the pen, will be provided for winter shelter. Bedding material should also be provided during the winter.
- E. Maintenance:
  1. Drainage: Pen space should be well drained, either naturally or through use of tiles. Poor drainage may cause a number of disease problems. Any problems, which develop after the pen is in use, should be treated immediately.
  2. Walkways: A 3' wide strip of crushed stone or gravel should border the inside perimeter of the entire fence, or each pen, in order to provide adequate abrasion to prevent a turned-toe condition from developing in the hooves.

## **II. FOOD, WATER, AND SANITATION:**

- A. Fawns: If being raised separately from their mother- require milk or formula which closely approximates rich white-tailed deer milk, which contains over twice the total solids of Jersey cow milk, nearly three times as much fat, and over three times the protein.
- B. Juveniles and Adults:
  - 1. Feed must be provided in elevated racks, not on the ground. Such racks should be covered and preferably serviceable from outside of the pen. Spilled food must be removed at least twice weekly. Good quality roughage, such as alfalfa or birds foot must be available in the rack at all times. In addition, an 18% protein dairy ration is necessary. This should be added first thing in the morning and last thing in the afternoon. The amount of this feed, as with the roughage, is to be slightly greater than the amount that will be eaten between feeding periods. This amount may vary depending on physiological and environmental conditions.
  - 2. An adequate supply of fresh water must be available at all times.
  - 3. Salt should be provided in the form of salt blocks. Cattle mixture should also be provided.
- C. Care and Sanitation: Deer must be cared for and observed daily. The pen areas in general, food racks, and water containers in particular, should be kept clean and free of debris. Large amounts of fecal matter should not be allowed to accumulate because of insect and disease problems. Sick or injured deer should receive immediate veterinary care. White-tailed deer are not to be mixed with other species of deer or ungulates because of disease or behavior problems.
- D. Public Feeding: White-tailed deer in public displays are not to be fed by the public. This will help ensure that they receive a balanced diet and prevent the public from giving them harmful materials. Deer are fond of table scraps, potato peelings, vegetable tops, etc, but such foods do not adequately meet their nutritional needs.

## **III. EXCEPTIONS FOR THE KEEPING OF FAWNS:**

- A. Pen and Shelter: Minimum of 2,500 square feet for one to five fawns, from birth through October 1st of the same year. Shelter to be provided as for adults.
- B. Walls and Fence Materials: Eleven gauge woven wire with mesh no greater than 2" in diameter attached to stout poles.
- C. Height: Minimum of 8' with additional 1 ½ feet of buried mesh for dog proofing, built to the same specifications as for adult pens.

## **IV. MOVEMENT PERMIT:**

Prior to the movement of white-tailed deer either into the state or within the state, you must call the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, Division of Animal Industry, (518) 457-3502, to obtain instructions about Movement Permits, and Health Certificate requirements.

## **V. GENERAL AND CAUTIONARY COMMENTS:**

During the breeding season, a large number of deer kept in a limited area often results in bucks going the does or each other, sometimes resulting in death. It is usually advisable to separate the bucks from the herd during this period.

## **VI. VARIATIONS IN THE ABOVE SPECIFICATIONS:**

Adaptations in the above specifications, based on experience, may be acceptable so long as the basic principles are not compromised.

GAME ANIMAL BREEDER PEN REQUIREMENTS				
ACRES	SQ. FEET	# ADULT DEER	ACRES	# ADULT DEER
0	15,000	1	29	68
0	15,000	2	30	70
0	18,000	3	31	72
0	18,000	4	32	74
0	21,000	5	33	76
1	61,000	7	34	79
2	101,000	9	35	81
3	141,000	11	36	83
4	181,000	13	37	85
5	221,000	15	38	87
6	281,000	18	39	89
7	321,000	20	40	92
8	361,000	22	41	94
9	401,000	24	42	96
10	441,000	26	43	98
11	481,000	28	44	100
12	541,000	31	45	103
13	581,000	33	46	105
14	621,000	35	47	107
15	661,000	37	48	109
16	701,000	39	49	111
17	761,000	42	50	113
18	801,000	44	51	116
19	841,000	46	52	118
20	881,000	48	53	120
21	921,000	50	54	122
22	961,000	52	55	124
23	1,021,000	55	56	127
24	1,061,000	57	57	129
25	1,101,000	59	58	131
26	1,141,000	61	59	133
27	1,181,000	63	60	135
28	1,241,000	66		

65 Acres 145 Deer 73 Acres 162 Deer 3/4 Acres 5 Deer 150 Acres 338 Deer 80 Acres 163 Deer  
 # acres x 43560 = sq ft - 18,000 = x ---- 20,000 = y + 4 = # deer