

1. Does your agency give landowners big game permits or vouchers that they can use or sell to compensate landowners or offset crop damage? If so, are the permits for antlerless animals, bucks/bulls, or both? Please explain the details of these permits or vouchers?

(Yes) Big game management licenses and depredation permits

Under exceptional circumstances big game management licenses or depredation permits may be issued for antlerless animals only. This policy applies to provincially protected big game species only.

Management licenses are issued when animals are a threat to agricultural products or at risk of disease or overpopulation. All available preventative measures must have taken place before tags will be administered. Licenses are issued to manage a population within a designated problem area. Licenses are available for dates between April 1 and July 31. More than 1 tag may be distributed under one license, only 1 animal can be harvested per tag unless stated otherwise. The licensee is responsible for proper care of harvested animals, all products are property of the licensee unless stated otherwise. The licensee is required to report the results of the use of this licence within 14 days following its expiry date.

Depredation permits are used to address depredation to specialty field crops including tree nurseries, sod farms and market gardens, to stored agricultural products and to persistent incursions by numbers of wildlife (single animals are best addressed with a Special Permit below) into occupied yard-sites or towns in cases where all non-lethal prevention measures have been exhausted. Permits will not be made available when the landowner has not taken all reasonable steps to prevent the damage or has not complied to the best of his ability with the prevention measures recommended by MOE (SCIC) crop damage compensation program (see below; <https://www.scic.ca/wildlife/crop-compensation>). Permits may be refused in cases where the landowner does not permit any hunting of wild ungulates during the course of regular hunting seasons. Only one animal may be harvested per permit. Permit is to be issued for specific areas, preferably a legal land location. It is not to be issued for large tracts of land controlled by numerous landowners. There is no fee for this permit. No permits are to be issued for the dates between April 1 and July 31 in any year. Permittee is responsible for proper care of harvested animal. Meat and hide shall remain the property of the permittee unless otherwise specified. Permittee is required to report the results of the use of this permit within 14 days following the expiry of the permit to the issuing MOE office or landowner.

2. Are landowners allowed to remove big game animals depredating on private lands in an effort to protect their agricultural resources? If so, under what circumstances?

(Yes) Problem wildlife policy and *The Wildlife Regulations, 1981*

Problem wildlife policy - Big game management licenses and/or depredation permits may be issued to address damage to agricultural products under exceptional circumstances. See above for details.

The Wildlife Regulations, 1981 (6.2(1b)) - Game farm producers may kill any wildlife of the same species as their domestic game farm animals, including big game, if that wildlife has gained entry to their farm and poses a direct and immediate threat or is actively fighting through the fence and poses a direct and immediate threat. The killing must be reported to a wildlife officer immediately.

The Wildlife Regulations, 1981 (6.2(4)) - Agricultural producers may kill, without a license, any carnivore or black bear that poses an immediate threat to property, including livestock. The killing must be reported to a wildlife officer immediately.

3. Does your agency call depredation hunts to target populations on private lands?

(No) No depredation hunts are administered by the Ministry of Environment. Big Game Licenses are issued to address localized problem populations.

A Big Game Management licence is issued for the specific area (eg. legal land location) that is of immediate relevance to the problem occurring. When addressing overpopulation or disease concerns, the license conditions should be developed jointly by department conservation officers, area wildlife biologists and the FWL Branch. For this purpose, licences may be issued for a specific area (eg. legal land location), a portion or the entirety of a wildlife management zone (WMZ), or a combination of several WMZs.

e issued to the public, or a similar program that promotes hunting on private property?

(No) Most land in Saskatchewan is privately owned. Private landowners are encouraged to permit hunting on their land as this is the primary management strategy for big game.

5. What type of landowner incentive programs does your agency have that promotes wildlife and allows public hunters on private property (e.g., ranching for wildlife in CO or - programs where landowners financially benefit from big game)?

SCIC Crop Damage Compensation Program (<https://www.scic.ca/wildlife/crop-compensation>)

The SCIC administers a Crop Damage Compensation program provides up to 100% compensation on damage to crops caused by white-tailed deer, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, elk, bears, moose, bison, wild boars, ducks, geese, beavers, blackbirds, gophers and sandhill cranes or other non-domestic species. To qualify for crop loss compensation, producers are required to allow hunters reasonable access to farmland where wildlife damage occurs.

6. Does your agency provide damage payments or fencing for big game on private lands? If so, how much per year is paid and how is it funded?

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All seeded commercial crops, including crops not currently insured by SCIC

Stacked hay, silage, and bales (In order to receive compensation, hay must be put into stacks. Producers will not be compensated for unstacked hay left in fields unless it is part of an alternative feeding system.)

Crops used for alternative feeding systems

Market gardens, tree nurseries, sod farms, honey and leaf cutter bees, including their structures

7. What mitigation measures does your agency employ to reduce big game damage (e.g., provide temporary fencing, hazing animals, agency removals of big game)?

SCIC Crop Damage Prevention Program (<https://www.scic.ca/wildlife/crop-prevention>) and social tolerance during season setting

SCIC Crop Damage Prevent Program provides compensation for steps taken to prevent wildlife damage to feed supplies through this program. Eligible prevention measures include fencing, lure crops, intercept feeding for forage, scare cannons. If fencing is recommended, funding is available to offset material costs.

Social tolerance is considered in season setting decisions. This is assessed through meetings with conservation officers prior to quota proposals.

8. Does your agency have an urban deer program? If so, what does that entail?

(No) No urban deer program is available. However, we expect this to be a growing issue, a pilot project is underway to control a resident mule deer population in a rural town.

Depredation permits will be issued to an authorized, qualified, individual working on behalf of a town to address persistent incursions by numbers of wildlife where licensed hunting and all non-lethal prevention measures have been exhausted. In addition to lethal removal efforts, towns must implement measures to prevent future deer occupation of the town, including but not limited to:

town council pass a motion to permit the lethal removal of mule deer from the town site, in accordance with our depredation permit and reporting conditions, and to adopt future preventative measures outlined by us

develop a list and map of town residents who may permit hunting within 500 meters of their residence to be provided to us and posted within the community.

fencing attractive food sources within and near the town site,

planting shrubs / ornamentals / vegetation that is not attractive to deer,

seek permission to haze deer upon entering the town site,

9. What other programs does your agency have in place to promote tolerance of big game on private lands?

No other programs are available. There is little communication between our agency and private landowners other than those contacting us

10. Does your agency respond to all wildlife conflict calls or is it limited to specific species or guilds of species?

(Yes) Fish, Wildlife, and Lands branch responds to all conflict calls related to game wildlife. Private landowners are encouraged to contact SCIC to use their Crop Damage Compensation Program.

11. What program(s) in your agency provide response to negative wildlife interaction (wildlife conflict) complaints and depredation. If the responsibility is split or shared between programs (i.e. Wildlife Program/Enforcement Program) or contracted or referred to another agency or private party, please describe how the work is assigned or shared. (e.g. by species, commercial agriculture versus residential, public safety versus property damage, etc.)

High level messaging is developed by wildlife biologists into a communications guide for front-line customer service representatives. Representatives are responsible for disseminating these messages to clients. If clients are not satisfied with the messaging or have further issues to discuss their case is escalated to a wildlife biologist to address.

12. Please describe what funding sources support wildlife conflict response and depredation payments if applicable in your agency. Please include specifics regarding where the funding comes from for expenses such as staff and equipment, commercial crop loss compensation, livestock predation compensation, non-lethal deterrent programs, outreach and education, or any other services or materials provided in response to wildlife conflict issues.

Big Game Licenses a fee is associated with administering this license. No fee is associated with a depredation permit, the costs of administering the permit is covered by the Ministry of Environment.

Compensation for prevention and mitigation is provided through programs administered by SCIC. SCIC administers the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program under the Canadian Agriculture Partnership agreement on behalf of the federal and provincial

governments. Funding for crop and predation losses is cost shared 60% by the federal government and 40% by the provincial government for 80% of the compensation. The remaining 20% has been provided through an increased investment from the Government of Saskatchewan.