



## MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

Wes Shoemyer  
18<sup>th</sup> Senate District

CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 434  
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101

**A Weekly Column for the  
Week of Oct. 22, 2007**

**Contact: Kathy Armstrong  
(573) 751-7852**

# Hunting Season

---

JEFFERSON CITY – Firearm season for deer hunters begins November 10, and that means there will be a lot of hunters in the countryside with orange vests and loaded weapons. We all need to be mindful of that, and we as hunters need to practice safety because we want everyone to have a successful and enjoyable hunting experience.

My son and I enjoy hunting together – it’s part of our family tradition and one that has led to a lot of the values I hold in serving in this office – those strong rural values that come from hunting and the right to own a gun for hunting. For me it’s an important part of my heritage and something I want to be able to pass on to future generations.

During the 2006 firearms season, deer hunters took 235,054 deer, and state conservation officials say this fall’s harvest should be just as good.

The way we hunt has changed quite a bit over the years. Years ago everyone just hunted in their own neck of the woods and everybody was everywhere. Today there are some real opportunities for landowners and communities that cater to hunters. I think there are a lot of folks in the cities that do not have a place to hunt, but more and more landowners are leasing their land to hunters as a way to recoup some of their farming expenses for the year.

A number of communities also cater to hunters, like Kirksville in Adair County. That community is building a tradition around opening weekend, and it has become one of the largest sales weekends for local merchants, second only to the weekend before Christmas. It’s just one way to bring some economic development to rural parts of Missouri.

I think it’s also important to make sure none of this game goes to waste. Hunters can donate their meat to the Share the Harvest Program, which will then donate the meat to needy

families. In the 18<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District, there are a number of meat lockers participating in the Share the Harvest Program, including:

- Mexico Meat Market, 731 E. Liberty, Mexico, Audrain County;
- Garretson Meat Processing, 7045 Hwy AA, Shelbina, Shelby County;
- Western's Meat Market, Rt. 2, Greentop, Schuyler County;
- Robert Aldridge, PO Box 276, Queen City, Schuyler County;
- Rutledge Meat Locker, Rt. 1, Rutledge, Scotland County;
- Kahoka Meat Processing, 115 S. Jefferson, Kahoka, Clark County;
- Lumley Locker, 109 E. Liberty, LaBelle, Lewis County;
- Hannibal Custom Processing, 1142 Lindell Ave., Hannibal, Marion County;
- Walnut Hills Farms, 1831 CR 117, Philadelphia, Marion County;
- Center Locker Service, PO Box 115, Center, Ralls County;
- Four Quarter Processing, Hwy 154 West, Perry, Ralls County;
- Woods Smoked Meats, 1501 Bus. Hwy 54 W, Bowling Green, Pike County;
- Hiltys Custom Butchering, 11116 Pike 466, Bowling Green, Pike County;
- L&M Processing, 17575 Hwy NN, Bowling Green, Pike County.

Pike County, by the way, had the third largest opening weekend deer harvest in the state last year with 2,334 deer taken, and the third largest firearms season harvest in the state with 4,216 deer taken.

Finally, I am working with the Department of Conservation to encourage them to respect private landowners and to develop programs to reimburse farmers for the damage caused by deer. Being a farmer myself, I've seen some of the tremendous damage that comes from the state's increasing "livestock" population. I just want to make sure that farmers are respected and our property is respected and that we're not forced to foot the bill for the state's expanding deer population. Of course, if farmers have a real problem they can apply for a permit to harvest some deer to alleviate the damage.

Fall firearms season is a great time of the year and one I look forward to each year. It's one of many great rural traditions that we need to preserve and pass on to future generations.

If you have any questions or comments about this or any other issue, give my Capitol office a call at (573) 751-7852, send me an email at [wes.shoemyer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:wes.shoemyer@senate.mo.gov), or drop a line to Room 434, State Capitol, 201 West Capitol Ave., Jefferson City, MO 65101.