



Dove Food Plot Demonstration

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Dove hunting is a traditional outing for hunters nationwide which ushers in the hunting seasons. Coastal Louisiana holds good populations of doves in the summer and fall of the year. Planting food plots is an excellent way to attract and hold doves before and during hunting seasons. Coastal landowners can take advantage of this opportunity to enjoy early season hunting and possibly realize some income through eco tour operations and hunting lodges. Lots of grains are used for dove food plots; for this one we chose Browntop millet.

Browntop takes about 60 days to grow and produce mature seed, so advance planning and work are essential. Each step in the process takes time, and there must be at least 2 weeks allowed for the burndown herbicide to work. If excess vegetation exists in the planting area, additional cutting and burning may be required to prevent matted vegetation during planting. It is also a good idea to get a soil sample analyzed for liming and fertilizer recommendations.

A demonstration plot was established at the 4-H Shooting Sports Range in Creole, in lower Cameron Parish. Two, one tenth acre plots were measured and laid out. In these replicated plots, LSU AgCenter recommendations were followed for establishing food plots. Two other methods were tested for demonstration purposes.

Food Plot Demonstration Layout

Control One	Test One	Control Two	Test Two
1.	1.	1.	
2.		2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.

1. Herbicide burndown

2. Disc/plow

3. Planting

Herbicide Burndown

<u>Herbicide tank mix used for burndown:</u>	<u>Example for 10 gallons:</u>
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- 2% glyphosate (2.56 oz/gallon)	X 10 gallons =25.6 oz
- 1% 2,4-D (1.28 oz/gallon)	X 10 gallons=12.8 oz
- ½% surfactant “Activator” (.64 oz/gallon)	X 10 gallons=- .64 oz

First herbicide application was made on June 16, 2014. A second application was made on July 1, 2014 to control remaining grasses and briars. 1% glyphosate, 1% remedy, ½% surfactant.

Planting

On July 17, 2014, the plots were tilled using a 6 foot disc plow.

- July 17, planted at a rate of 20 lb./ac. , for this ¼ acre area; 5 lbs.
- Dragged a hurricane fence gate over to contact the seed with the soil.
- July 17 thru 19 it rained 4 inches.

Management

It is important to scout for army worms from the time the plants emerge from the soil. Control using carbaryl (sevin) when 1 or more worms are present per square foot. Remember, doves have very short legs therefore prefer to feed on nearly bare ground. So you will need to get rid of the foliage and plant residue to attract them. One method of accomplishing this is by cutting the millet for hay, as this practice will shatter the seed all over the ground plus leaves a clean area for the doves to feed. If hay is not an option you can mow the mature plants to shatter the seed and then burn the plant residue, where burning can be accomplished safely.

Once you have the seed on the ground, you will want to give the doves at least a week prior to the season to find the field and start feeding so they will be there on your planned hunt day.

