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Missouri Department of Conservation

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COYOTE TRAPPING AS A METHOD OF DAMAGE CONTROL

by

Robert A. Smith^{1/}

Sponsor of Program

Missouri Department of Conservation.

Purpose of Program

To provide predator control training to livestock and poultry producers losing domestic animals to wild predators.

Method

This training is accomplished by trap setting demonstrations, usually in the area where damage is occurring. Requests for assistance are channeled to the central office at Jefferson City, Missouri. Requests are scheduled for assistance in the order received. Demonstrations are conducted on a request basis only. Requests for service may be handled through the local county Extension Agent, local Conservation Agent, or by individual request to our central office.

Cost of Service

There is no direct cost to trainees. The Missouri Department of Conservation finances the program except for traps and trapping supplies which the cooperator is expected to furnish. Traps may be purchased at near cost during predator control demonstrations through the Missouri predator control fund. Victor #3N traps are generally recommended for coyotes and may be purchased when available.

Subjects Covered in Field Demonstrations

1. Sign hunting in relation to the damage area.
2. Selecting suitable trap-set sites.
3. Making a double trap-set for coyotes or foxes.
4. Suitable equipment (traps, drags, scent and other equipment needed to make the set).

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5. Types of scent (synthetic, fetid and natural with reaction of animals to each).
6. Den hunting of pups in season as a control measure in reducing damage.
7. Simplified methods of trap setting (setting traps barehanded, not treating traps and dispelling other erroneous ideas regarding predator trapping).

Conclusion

1. The biggest part of catching an offending coyote is done before a trap-set is made. This consists of sign hunting and determining the animal's travel routes.
2. Sets should be made only in areas of the target animal's travel routes as determined by track sign.
3. Make sets which are attractive to target animals through habit and instinct.

Under favorable weather conditions, livestock and poultry producers following instructions as provided at a predator control demonstration are able to catch problem predator and achieve a reduction in losses.

Missouri has found trapping to be an effective tool in reducing damage to flocks and herds caused by predators.