

EFFECTS OF SUPPLEMENTAL FEED ON WHITE-TAILED DEER INTAKE RATES

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Abstract

Our objective is to determine effects of supplemental feed on intake rates of white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*). Bite counts and percent foraging time of does in enclosures with and without supplemental feed were determined seasonally. Preliminary results show bite rates in fed enclosures (bites/min) were 17% lower in spring 2007 and 22% lower in winter 2008 ($P < 0.05$) with no effect in other seasons. Percentage of time foraging was 14% lower in fed enclosures in winter 2008 ($P < 0.05$) with no effect in fall 2007. Our results also indicate that foraging intensity increases as a result of lower natural forage quality and abundance and may increase due to reproduction requirements.