Quail Management Strategies

Gleaned from “the best of the best”

Leonard A. Brennan
C.C. Charlie Winn Endowed Chair
Richard M. Kleberg, Jr. Center for Quail Research
Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute
Texas A&M University - Kingsville
Habitat Management

• Grazing Control
  Quail need grass!
  Manage “top down”
  instead of “bottom up”

• Soil Disturbance
  – Disking 15-ft wide, @ 1/16 mile intervals
  – Aerating ca: 20-30% of a pasture/year
  – When? Between Halloween and Easter

• Winter Burning
  – 100-300 yards wide
  – Every 3 years, depending….

• Brush Control
  – Organize based on hunting
  – Mottes for loafing and escape cover
  – IPT to keep mesquite and huisache in line

• Food plots
  – When you need ‘em they usually won’t grow
  – When they grow, you usually don’t need ‘em
  – Planting and irrigating large plots for doves benefits quail, too, though
Population Management

• Harvest Management
  – Previous season’s results
  – Fall census (helicopter?)
  – Rainfall during breeding season
  – Fall bird counts during dog training
  – Hunt intervals 21-30 days
  – Truck limit (12-24), not the allowable daily hunter bag of 15 birds per person
  – Take only 2-3 from a covey and move on

• Harvest Records
  – Hunt location
  – Hunt duration
  – Area covered
  – Number covey found and quail bagged
    • J:A and M:F
    • Weights
Population Management

- **Hunt Management**
  - Space out hunting pressure using feed lanes
  - Protein pellets, corn and milo
  - Every 4-10 days
  - 15 October to March
  - Testing protein during breeding season via a research project.

- **Predator Management?**
  - April thru August
  - Coyotes • Skunks • Badgers • Feral Hogs
  - Raccoons • Armadillos • Opossums

**In Summary**

- **Grazing Control**
- **Saturate landscape with usable space**
- **Be flexible, especially in light of our challenging weather and climate**