

PALATABILITY OF MOOSE MEAT AS AFFECTED BY THE RUT

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A hunter survey was conducted during the 1960 general moose season to determine if, and to what extent, the rut affects the palatability of the meat. Successful moose hunters who stopped at three check stations were asked a series of questions designed to evaluate the manner in which the moose was taken, condition of the meat, and the care utilized in dressing and transporting the meat. Additional data on meat aging and meat palatability were collected by a post season telephone and mail survey of the same hunters after a time lapse of two months. Palatability ratings by hunters of kills from September 15 through September 30 (end of first season) were related to a sample taken prior to September 15. September 15 was set as the date separating pre-rut bulls and bulls in the rut.

The findings of this study are summarized as follows:

- (1) Of the 731 moose sampled, 58 % (424) were harvested before September 15. Forty-one percent (172) of the successful hunters were recontacted and 77% (132) rated the palatability of the meat as excellent; 20% (34) rated it as good; 3 % (6) rated it as fair; and none classed it as poor.
- (2) Hunters took 42% (307) of the moose sampled after September 15. Seventy-two percent (222) were recontacted and 74% (165) rated the palatability of the meat as excellent; 21% (46) rated it as good; 4 % (9) rated it as fair; and 1% (2) rated it as poor.
- (3) It was determined that 2% (4) of the 172 moose taken during the early period had entered the rut; one of these four animals was rated as excellent in taste and three were rated as good.
- (4) Twenty-nine percent (64) of the 222 moose taken from September 15 through September 30 were determined as being in the rut; two of these 64 animals were classed as poor tasting and three as fair.
- (5) Two bulls, of the 394 rated, were indicated as having a strong "musk" odor; both animals were rated as excellent in taste.
- (6) Since there were no appreciable differences in the pre-rut and rut moose palatability ratings, it was concluded that palatability was negligibly affected by the rut.

Note

1. Contribution from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Pittman-Robertson Project W-6-R-2.

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