

Game Bird Farm & Stocking Permit Requirements

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Interest in upland game bird hunting remains high in Wyoming even though hunters are faced with crowded hunting conditions, limited access to private land, reduced populations of wild birds, and shorter hunting seasons. To help satisfy this demand for bird hunting, commercial game bird farms are becoming more prevalent, offering bird hunters opportunities while producing income for the owner/operator.

Commercial game bird farms offer the prospective bird hunter several advantages. They are generally closer to home than natural coverts, offer a 243-day hunting season, and allow more time to be spent hunting rather than obtaining access to hunting lands. Also, conventional bag and possession limits do not apply on commercial game bird farms.

Requirements for Game Bird Farm Operation

To apply for a game bird farm license, complete an application form available from game wardens or any office of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Before a license is issued, an applicant must:

1. Produce evidence that the land to be used as a game bird farm is a continuous tract owned by the applicant or is under lease for a period of five years. A "continuous tract" is



chukar partridge (left) and ring-necked pheasant

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defined as one parcel of fee land not divided by a public road, highway, or a railroad right-of-way.

2. Describe his or her purpose for raising and/or holding game birds. Is the applicant intending to hunt the birds personally, allow others to hunt, and/or sell the birds to others? The applicant must describe the proposed method of breeding (if any) as well as the number of acres of land to be used, including a legal description.

3. Allow department personnel to inspect his or her facilities. The facilities for the confinement of game birds shall be of such construction and size as to provide reasonable space and protection for the welfare of the birds held, and to prevent escape.

4. Specify the type of identifying leg or wing band to be placed on the game birds. The department will determine the proper age to band the birds and if the specified band is suitable for the species.

5. Fence the land to be used as a game bird farm with a legal fence as defined in Wyoming Statute 11-28-102. The land must be posted with legible signs with the wording "Private Game Bird Farm" at all gates or cattle guards on roads entering the property.

6. Remit a fee for each wild game bird believed to be on the proposed game bird farm. To determine the number of wild game birds, the department and the applicant will each appoint a person, and these two shall select a third person, to act as a board to go upon the proposed game bird farm and determine as nearly as possible the number of wild game birds.

Other Requirements

Once the above requirements have been met, the department will issue a license describing the lands, and certifying that the licensee is entitled to use the lands for the breeding, propagating, hunting, killing, and selling of licensed game birds. The licensee is then the owner of all offspring of the game birds maintained on the property. To remain qualified as a licensee, a

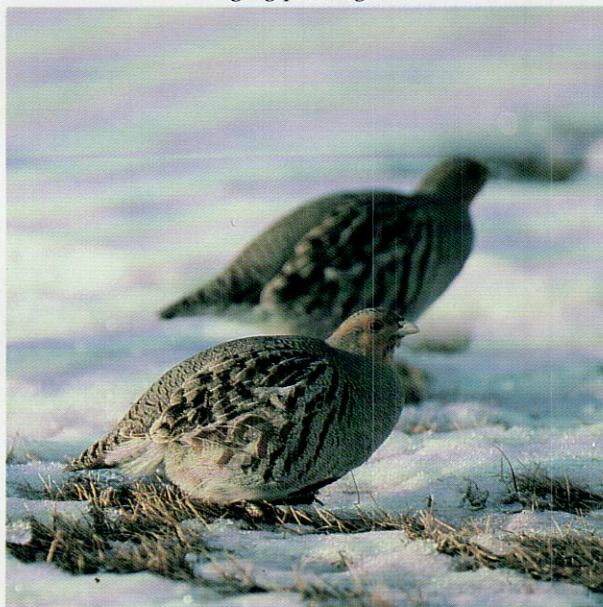
minimum of 100 game birds must be released each year on the premises. Failure to release the minimum number of birds is cause for revocation of the license. The licensee may not shoot or kill more than 96 percent of the birds reared or released on the premises.

The department requires certification that game birds imported into Wyoming meet disease-free requirements. The official health certificate must be issued within 48 hours of importation of the game birds. The licensee keeps the original certificate and must send a copy of it to

the headquarters office of the department. A copy of the certificate must accompany live birds or viable eggs transported into Wyoming. The certificate must contain the names and addresses of the consignor and consignee, the origin of the game birds, the destination of the game birds, and an accurate description or identification of the game birds. The certificate must also indicate the health status of the game birds, including dates and results of tests, if appropriate. Official health certificates shall be void 30 days after the date of inspection and issuance. Licensees can obtain copies of the certification and inspection procedures from the department.

All game birds must be maintained so as to prohibit the acquisition, spread, or transmittal of diseases. Game birds held in captivity that become diseased must be destroyed or placed

grey partridges



under the care of a licensed veterinarian immediately. The licensee is required to report any such incidents immediately to the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

Department personnel may inspect facilities and/or game birds to insure they meet disease-free requirements. If facilities and/or game birds are found to be in violation of the department's requirements, or if diseased game birds present a threat to the wildlife of the state, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department may order necessary action, including quarantine or destruction of game birds, sterilization of enclosures and facilities, cessation of activities, and disposal of the diseased game birds. The department will lift the quarantine or allow operation of the game bird farm only when the facilities and/or birds meet disease-free requirements.

Game bird farms are allowed a consecutive 243-day hunting season between the first day of August and the last day of March. Applicants or licensed operators must indicate on their initial or annual renewal applications the opening and closing dates of their hunting season for approval by the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission. No person shall take game birds on any licensed game bird farm except during the established season dates, and unless the person is carrying a Wyoming bird hunting license or a special bird license.

All game bird farm licensees are authorized license-selling agents of the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission. They may issue a special bird license on forms prescribed by the commission to any person who does not possess a regular game bird license. Special bird licenses are valid for three consecutive days from the date of issuance and valid for use only on the premises of the bird farm issuing the license. The appro-

priate fee for the special bird license is remitted to the department. The bird farm operator may charge an additional fee for providing this special service. Live or dressed game birds may be sold directly to a commercial operator or restaurant operator, provided the birds are properly receipted. The purchaser is not required to possess a valid game bird license. Before any bird may be removed from the li-

ring-necked pheasant



censed premises, the licensee must issue a receipt to the person removing the birds. The receipt must be dated and indicate the number, sex, and species of game birds being removed. The bird farm operator must keep accurate and complete records, on forms provided by the department, of the species and number of game birds received, shipped, purchased, reared, released, disposed of, killed, or sold. Records shall include names and addresses of all recipients, purchasers, suppliers, hunters, and the license number of all hunters and the

date of each transaction. Records shall also include the number and species of game birds reared and released on the game bird farm. Wyoming Game and Fish Department law enforcement personnel may request to inspect records, holding facilities, and game birds in captivity during the term of the bird farm license and for 60 days after expiration of the license.

Game bird farm licenses expire February 1 of each year. The license may be renewed each year at the discretion of the department once the bird farm operator has paid the fee.

Should a bird farm licensee fail to renew his or her license for any reason, all game birds held in captivity on the premises must be disposed of within 60 days following the expiration of the game bird farm license. After this 60-day period, any remaining live game birds on the premises shall become property of the State of

Wyoming and may be disposed of by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

Failure to maintain required records, harvesting or killing more than 96 percent of the birds reared or released, or failing to maintain disease-free facilities and game birds is just cause for revocation of a game bird farm license by the commission.

The authority to establish commercial game bird farms is vested in Title 23, Wyoming Statute (The Game and Fish Act). While this bulletin contains some guidelines for operating game bird farms, detailed information concerning

such farms can be found in Title 23, Chapter 5, Article 1. Game bird farms are administered by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

Written by Joe Gilbert of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department through the Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit.

This publication is one in a series of habitat extension bulletins produced by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Call 1-800-842-1934 for additional information or assistance.

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