

FARMERS COOPERATIVE

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Visit a Suwannee County Herd

Deer Farming Is Profitable

By Pauline Fletcher Cogdill

In the spring of 1986 Danny Lewis found a small fawn in the woods. He took the fawn home and raised her as a pet.

His wife, Pam, realized that Danny had a special talent for taking care of the fawn, so on their first wedding anniversary in May 1986, she purchased a spike and two does for him to raise. This was the beginning of a new business, and today the Lewis' have a herd of approximately 120 white-tail deer.

THE SILVER Stone Trophy White-tails and Silver Stone Plantation Deer Preserve are located just off State Road 51 South, Live Oak, Florida, and both are very successful businesses because all the family members work together to succeed.

Daughter, Lindsey Lewis, is very passionate about caring for the fawns. In fact, she has raised at least 9 fawns, and one of their does produced a set of triplets. Lindsey nurtures them until they are able to be on their own.

One particular point of interest was when Lindsey had to do physical therapy on Penelope, by stretching her legs several times a day and giving her an extra supply of calcium. The end result was that Penelope could lead a normal life running



This buck is only tranquilized in order to get this family photo. His name is Abe, and he has been a breeder deer for 4 years. Abe scored with Boone & Crockett at 253. Pictured are Leroy D. Lewis, Jr.; son, Dan, III; daughter, Lindsey; and wife, Pam.

and jumping with the other fawns. It's not surprising that Lindsey is in her second year of Nursing School in Lake City. In addition to Lindsey's other activities, she volunteers several hours to Surrey Place

in Live Oak.

Son, Dan, III, graduated from Suwannee High School this year and is major-

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Deer Farming Is Profitable

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ing in Underwater Welding at Lake City Community College. This June, Dan, III will be absent from the farm because he will be on a two year mission trip for his church in whatever state or country he is assigned to serve.

PAMLEWIS has been teaching kindergarten for 20 years. Just ask any parent who has been fortunate enough to have her teach their child, and they will tell you she is a wonderful teacher. In 2005, Pam earned her National Board Professional Teaching Certificate. Educators can appreciate the time, effort and diligence required to earn this certificate.

Mrs. Lewis is a very busy lady, beginning her day at 6:30 a.m. teaching an early morning Seminary Class to high school students at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Pam also served an 18-month mission for her church in Spain. It's dedication and sacrifice that keeps the Lewis Family working the Silver Stone Trophy White-Tails and Silver Stone Plantation Deer Preserve to make it a successful operation.

DANNY BELIEVES deer farming is more profitable than raising cattle. The feed for one deer is about \$300.00 a year. If you have about 10 acres, you can have a successful deer farm. Of course all deer are named and tagged as well as ear notched (just in case they get the ear tag off). Additionally, deer farming is very enjoyable so it doesn't feel like work. One key to successful deer farming is not to over populate white-tail deer.

The Silver Stone Plantation has five to seven generations of the white-tail deer, and about 100 deer stay on the preserve. The cycle for deer farming begins with breeding season in November; fawning season is in May, and by June the horns are growing. Your crop is always shifting.

Of course, some of the decisions you make are based on hope and luck by choosing which particular doe to breed for the best renewable crop. Sometimes it's a double edged sword; once you name the deer, they become part of your family.

As all hunters know, Boone & Crockett scores the antlers by their size, which determines their value, so breeding



Lindsey Lewis is holding a fawn named Lauren.

is a very important aspect to your farming operation.

Danny and Lindsey are also involved in the Southeast Trophy Deer Association, which serves the southeastern deer industry. This non-profit association is for everybody who is interested in becoming a part of the deer industry.

SOUTHEAST TROPHY Deer Association is comprised of several members as well as a 12-member board of directors. The directors are located throughout the southeast area. Those members are: Mark Owens, Chris Winsey, Lindsey Lewis, Casey Jones, David King, Greg Noland, Mike Mansfield, Mike Vizcaino, Jim Deason, Danny Lewis, Will Johnson and Greg Boree. If you are interested in joining the association, just contact Danny or any other board member.

Now a deer auction is probably something you do not hear much about; however, if you want to get involved in this non-profit, non-lobbying group of members you'll get a great deal of enjoyment meeting with the members in the association.

Venison is the perfect red meat with a lot of health benefits. For example, venison is a good source of vitamin B12, B6 and B3. The high content of riboflavin in venison helps reduce the occurrence of migraine headaches. Venison helps slow down the risk of osteoarthritis. The meat has a low amount of cholesterol, even lower than

chicken breast.

HOWEVER, THERE is a down side to those individuals with a gout condition as well as individuals prone to kidney stones; they should limit or avoid eating venison because of the naturally occurring substances like purines found in other meats.

Danny believes deer farming is a lot of fun and can be profitable. If you enjoy the outdoors and are willing to take good care of your herd, you can make a good living at deer farming. Danny said visitors are always welcome to visit his Silver Stone Plantation. Just give Danny a call and make an appointment for a farm tour that will give you a great attitude about deer farming.

We're pleased to report that Leroy D. Lewis, Jr. and his family have been loyal Cooperative members since 1996.

The following recipe is one we're sure you are going to enjoy.

Yummy Venison Back Strap

Fresh back strap should be aged in the refrigeration 7-10 days. The meat will turn a dark color. Rinse in cool water. Cut into thin 1/2 inch slices. Dip in beaten egg and then dip into flour seasoned with Everglades seasoning salt. Add pepper, optional.

Heat oil on medium high heat. Deep fry until brown. It doesn't take long. It will melt in your mouth.

How Big?

Florida Wildlife Commission will be at Farmers Co-op in Live Oak January 29th from 9:00 am until 12:00 noon to score your antlers.

This is free to anyone who would like to know the Boone and Crockett score of their antlers.

Any antlers scoring 100 B & C points for a typical rack and 125 B & C points for non-typical rack will make its place in the Florida Buck Registry.

This will also be the official scoring used to decide the winners of the Farmers Coop Big Buck Contest.

Deposit

Our 5% advance deposit program will be available through January 31, 2011.

For our patrons who are not familiar with the Co-op's 5% advance deposit program, we will offer a 5% discount on Fertilizer, Seed, and Chemicals when you deposit a cash advance during the month of January 2011.

The 5% discount does not apply, however, to equipment construction contracts.

WHEN YOU HAVE decided just how much money you will need to spend at the Cooperative for the calendar year, 2011, please stop by your Co-op at Live Oak or Madison and we will be happy to assist you with your farming needs.

So, if you are really interested in getting the most out of your money, our advance deposit program will give you an even greater savings than the 5% discount.

Co-op's Annual Meeting

Farmers Cooperative's 63rd Annual Membership Meeting was held at Live Oak Church of God in Live Oak on October 23, 2010. Following registration, the meeting started at 10:00 a.m.

General Manager Todd Lawrence reported annual sales volume of \$8,662,477 with a net profit of \$10,146. Lawrence reported that with the economic difficulties that our nation has faced, he was pleased to have a profit even if it was a small one.

Lawrence also reported that due to the small amount of profit, the Board of Directors voted not to pay a patronage refund.

Lawrence reminded members of the financial strength of the Co-op, and even though it had been a tough year, the Co-op has survived much better than many businesses during this time.

GENERAL MANAGER Lawrence then made a presentation showing how the Co-op supports local youth activities. These activities include FFA, 4-H, and the Bonnie Plants 3rd grade cabbage program.

After the business meeting, several door prizes were awarded to the members attending the Annual Membership Meeting.

For the Past Quarter

NEW CO-OP MEMBERS

LIVE OAK STORE

NJROTC Booster Club, Live Oak
Russland D. Sanudo, Lee
W M Shiver, Live Oak
Ray Edwards, St. George, GA
Jordan Roberts, McAlpin
Janet K. Bernstrom, Davenport
Tommy D. L. Phillips, Mayo
Ryder Story, Scottsmeer
Luther D. Carver, Bell
Roger N. McDonald, Live Oak
Patrick Roettger, Live Oak
Willie Register, White Springs
Jerry P. Jenkins, Live Oak
Calvin Johnson, Live Oak
Jean McDaniel, Jasper
Daryl Scott, Lake City
Leyany Pacheco, Live Oak
Randi & Gramby Croft, Live Oak
Lloyd Johnson, Port Salerno
Susan Caldwell, Mayo
Irvin Jacob, Live Oak
Salvator Esposito, O'Brien
Donald D. Kemp, Lee
Mary E. Sowerby, Live Oak
Dorothy C. Harrison, McAlpin
Joseph Sperber, Live Oak
Darrell King, Live Oak
Octavio Cruz, Jasper
Lorraine Schmidt, Jasper
Herbert Davis, Live Oak
Mary E. Barricklow, Live Oak
Steve Reeves, Plant City
Wade Creathouse, Live Oak
Joni Griffin, Lake City

Darrell L Wyatt, Mayo
Robert M. Lawson, Mayo
Bob J. Galentine, Jacksonville
Bradley F. Knight Wellborn
Robert D or Jennie Sullivan, Live Oak
Amanda Turner, Live Oak
Lori Creasey, Old Town
Fred Niemczenia, Live Oak
Charles J. Kent, Branford
Jeannette L. Hatch, Wellborn
Svend Diffenbach, White Springs
Sharon Geyer, Wellborn
Vivian Utendorf, Live Oak
Russell J. Wilson, Ft. White
Christopher Saypack, Wellborn
Karen Wood, Live Oak
Melinda Jackson, McAlpin
Lucille Logan, Live Oak
Christine Chavis, Wellborn
Tyler Smith, Live Oak
Paul Burd, Live Oak
Dana B. Dinsmore, Live Oak
Gerald Q. Bussell, Monticello
R-S Lawn & Irrigation, Mayo
David Edwards, Wellborn
Dennis G. Durden, McAlpin
Matt Karlton, Lake City
Corbett Reynolds, Lake City
Grant R. Cotton, O'Brien
Leah Lamontagne, Live Oak
Jane Cairo, Miami
Lisa Meyer, Live Oak
Rosalina Z. Collins, Live Oak
Clara Engelhard, Live Oak
Alpha W B Burgher, White Springs
William L Hadden, O'Brien

David A Horton, McAlpin
Dorie & Fred Bingemann, Live Oak
Sarah L. Maxey, Live Oak
Phillip T. Zebroski, Wellborn

MADISON STORE

Roger Champion, Monticello
Michael Kidd, SW Ranches, FL
Robert M. Lawson, Mayo
David & Darla Vest, Floyd, VA
Rosanna Dela Cruz, Madison
Johnnie Woods, Pinetta
Joyce Hazzard, Madison
Larry S. Adleburg, Madison
Adam Floyd, Greenville
Burnett Adams, Pinetta
Bruce Musgrove, Live Oak
Guy Starling, Mayo
Enrique Villagomez, Greenville
Jammie L. Martin, Lee
Jose L. Lima, Lee
Lillian Bozek, Madison
Tim Day, Greenville
Juanita Cason, Greenville
Steven Salsgiver, Lee
Donald Kemp, Lee
Cindy Mabry, Madison
Dorothy Hubble, Madison
Becky Driggers, Madison
Esther W. Seago, Greenville
Alec Gunter, Perry
Betty S. Williams, Lee
Charles Billington, Lee
Antonio s. Johnson, Lee
Robert Andrews, Greenville
L.C. Sirmon, Madison
James E. Everett, Jacksonville
Duncan Christie, Pinetta
Michael Moore, Perry
Rat Trucking, Madison
Linda Faye Hall, Greenville
Troy A. Gunter, Perry
Keith E. Anderson, Pinetta
Lawrence Fussell, Greenville
Casey Tuten, Madison
William Black, Perry
Chris Driggers, Jasper
Richard Baker, Jr., Tallahassee
Glennie Anderson, Madison
Raymond Haynes, Madison
Bill Stewart, Madison
Lance Billy, Lee
Sam Whyce, Madison
George Farnen, Tallahassee
Joel Love, Monticello
Michael Newbern, Auburndale
Dianne Thompson, Madison
Stuart MacIver, Greenville
Timothy Wojdan, Safety Harbor
William K. Addison, Sr., Greenville
John W. Cruce, Perry
Arc/Madison & Jefferson, Madison
Diane C. Smith, Jennings
Tammy Free, Jasper
Jan L. Green, Madison
Monteen Cave, Madison
Richard Orusbee, Pinetta
Jill Weeden, Pinetta
Donna J. Thomas, Lee

What Is Your Soil pH?

With the rising cost of fertilizer it will be beneficial to correct the pH on your farm. Using the table below you can see the dollar benefit of making sure your soil has the correct pH.

The example used is a blended fertilizer costing \$400.00 per ton. Applied at a rate of 350 Lbs. per acre or a cost of \$70.05 per acre. With a pH of 4.5 you would be losing \$49.97 per acre.

To help you with your pH needs Farmers Cooperative is offering specials on dolomite lime. Call about our special prices on dolomite that will be good through January 31, 2011.

Call the Live Oak (386-362-1459) or Madison (850-973-2269) location for your dolomite needs or to schedule a soil sample for your farm. Soil samples on five acres or more: \$20.00.

Now is the "time to lime" to get your crop or pasture started off right in the spring.

Does the Liming of Acid Soils Pay?

Correcting soil acidity by the use of lime is the foundation of a good soil fertility program. Lime does more than just correct the soil acidity. It also (1) supplies Ca and Mg if dolomitic lime is used, which are essential plant nutrients; (2) it makes other essential nutrients more available; and (3)

Limestone Makes Fertilizer Work Fertilizer Efficiency Goes Up As Soil Acids Go Down

SOIL ACIDITY	NITROGEN	PHOSPHATE	POTASH	FERTILIZER WASTED	DOLLARS LOSS PER ACRE
Extremely acid 4.5 pH	30%	23%	33%	71.34%	\$49.97
Very Strong Acid 5.0 pH	53%	34%	52%	53.67%	\$37.59
Strong Acid 5.5 pH	77%	48%	77%	32.69%	\$22.90
Medium Acid 6.0 pH	89%	52%	100%	19.67%	\$13.77
Neutral 7.0 pH	100%	100%	100%	0%	\$0.00

it prevents elements such as Mn and Al from being toxic to plant growth.

Source: Phosphate and Potash Institute

WHERE ARE THESE FOLKS?

Farmers Cooperative is trying to locate the following people whose patronage refund checks have been returned from the U.S. Postal Service as "undeliverable":

Lee Goins, Bell
 J. B. Russ, Live Oak
 Vance S. Hagan, Live Oak
 James D. Murray, Lake City
 James G. Schell, Lake City
 David Rowell, Tampa
 Donald Russell, Perry
 Pascoe L. Rye, Lee
 Edgar Sampson, Madison
 James L. Sapp, Archer



Barry Long, agronomy division manager in Live Oak, manned the Farmers Co-op product booth at "Christmas on the Square" in early December. Nice gift ideas! It's another reminder that your co-op stores in Live Oak and Madison are much more than seed, feed and fertilizer suppliers.

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Todd Lawrence, Publisher & Editor

Co-op Directors

Kenneth Dasher, McAlpin (Suwannee County)
 Ted Henderson, Live Oak (Suwannee County)
 Eddy Roberts, O'Brien (Suwannee County)
 E. Richard Terry, Madison (Madison County)
 Archie Davis, Lee (Madison County)
 Tim Steichen, Wellborn (Suwannee County)
 John C. Webb, Lee (Madison County)
 Walter K. Brown (Suwannee County)
 Kevin Morgan (Hamilton County)
 Kenneth McLeod (Madison County)
 Jeff Lee (Suwannee County)



General Manager Todd Lawrence celebrated his 25th year at the Cooperative. Several other employees celebrated the following years of service: Larry Deas (not pictured), 5 years; (left to right) Robert E. Lee Sapp, 45 years; Jerry Owens, 20 years; Todd Lawrence, 25 years; Diane Williams, 15 years; and Kathy Pope, 10 years.