



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

PANHANDLE REGION

2885 West Kathleen Avenue

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83815

Brad Little / Governor
Ed Schriever / Director

Please Don't Feed Me

Some people feel like they are helping wild deer, elk and moose by feeding them. However, wild animals are well-adapted experts at seeking out adequate food resources from their natural habitats. Supplemental feeding of wild deer, elk and moose is typically discouraged and can have negative consequences, as detailed below. Please don't feed and help **keep wildlife wild!**

Undesired problems with feeding deer, elk and moose:

Predation: Feeding sites can attract predators, such as mountain lions, because deer, elk and moose are concentrated and found in the same spot every day. Without feeding, animals are more spread out and it is harder for the predator to predict where potential prey may be. Feeding can also bring predators closer to your house, possibly resulting in the loss of family pets.

Disease: Animals that are concentrated at a feed site can pass infectious diseases among themselves rapidly, resulting in more sick animals than if feed is not provided. Eye and respiratory infections are more common in animals gathered at feeding sites.

Digestive Problems: Deer, elk and moose digestive systems are set up to digest food differently throughout the year. Changing from natural to supplemental high quality feed can result in problems like diarrhea, acidosis or grain overload, especially in younger animals. Acidosis is a toxicity that can lead to death.

Younger animals lose out: Older, stronger animals may dominate feed sites, leaving fawns and calves with little to eat. Once adults have fed, they're content and don't take their young to find other food.

Seasonal movement patterns and property damage: Providing artificial feed can change seasonal movement patterns. Animals that would normally move to or from winter range might choose to stay at your feed site and start causing problems by feeding on shrubs around your house. You may be stuck with these animals throughout the year!

Habituation and human safety: Feeding deer, elk and moose can allow for animals to become habituated to humans. Habituated animals pose a potential human safety threat and in some cases have even caused bodily harm because they no longer show fear of people. Attracting animals to supplemental feed can also increase the likelihood for wildlife/vehicle collision to occur.

