

COTTONTAIL & SQUIRREL

The 2015 cottontail rabbit and tree squirrel seasons covered 1 September 2015 - 29 February 2016. Harvest surveys were sent to resident and nonresident hunters after the close of the pheasant season on 3 January 2016. It is assumed that this captured the majority of cottontail and squirrel hunting and harvest.

For cottontail, the daily limit was 10, possession 30, and the season was open statewide. For squirrel, the daily limit was 5, possession 15, and the season was open statewide. Residents holding small game, 1-day small game, adult, senior or junior combination, or youth small game licenses were eligible to participate in the season. Nonresidents were required to obtain either a small game or a youth small game license to hunt upland game.

In 2015, there were 91,789 resident and 89,284 nonresident licenses issued that allowed holders to hunt upland game. Approximately 10% of residents and nonresidents were surveyed for the upland game seasons. Survey response rates were 65% for residents and 67% for nonresidents.

Based on survey responses indicating at least one day of hunting cottontail, there were a projected 5,779 resident and 1,020 nonresident cottontail hunters. Based on survey responses indicating at least one day of hunting squirrels, there were a projected 2,870 resident and 171 nonresident hunters. An estimated 39,803 cottontails and 13,490 squirrels were harvested during the 2015 small game seasons.

When asked their satisfaction on the season, (1 being least satisfied, 7 being most satisfied), resident hunters reported an average satisfaction level of 5.37, while nonresidents reported a rating of 5.47.

Comparison of the 2006 - 2015 cottontail and squirrel harvests

Year	Cottontails				Squirrels			
	Hunters		Harvest		Hunters		Harvest	
	Resident	Nonres	Resident	Nonres	Resident	Nonres	Resident	Nonres
2006	9,617	2,236	105,787	10,040	3,503	115	19,792	210
2007	8,732	1,676	87,320	11,430	2,644	200	13,405	240
2008	8,714	1,955	96,203	8,915	2,833	230	11,785	442
2009	7,485	1,304	65,793	6,090	2,827	181	12,156	309
2010	6,011	885	44,481	1,832	2,901	96	12,677	115
2011	3,019	529	19,835	845	1,547	78	6,806	146
2012	3,133	794	18,758	1,763	1,553	166	7,338	400
2013	4,199	516	21,682	846	2,911	116	10,962	61
2014	5,366	754	28,276	1,591	2,552	150	9,587	241
2015	5,779	1,020	37,407	2,397	2,870	171	13,311	180

Survey design changed in 2005, 2010, and 2014 and may not be directly comparable to previous years.

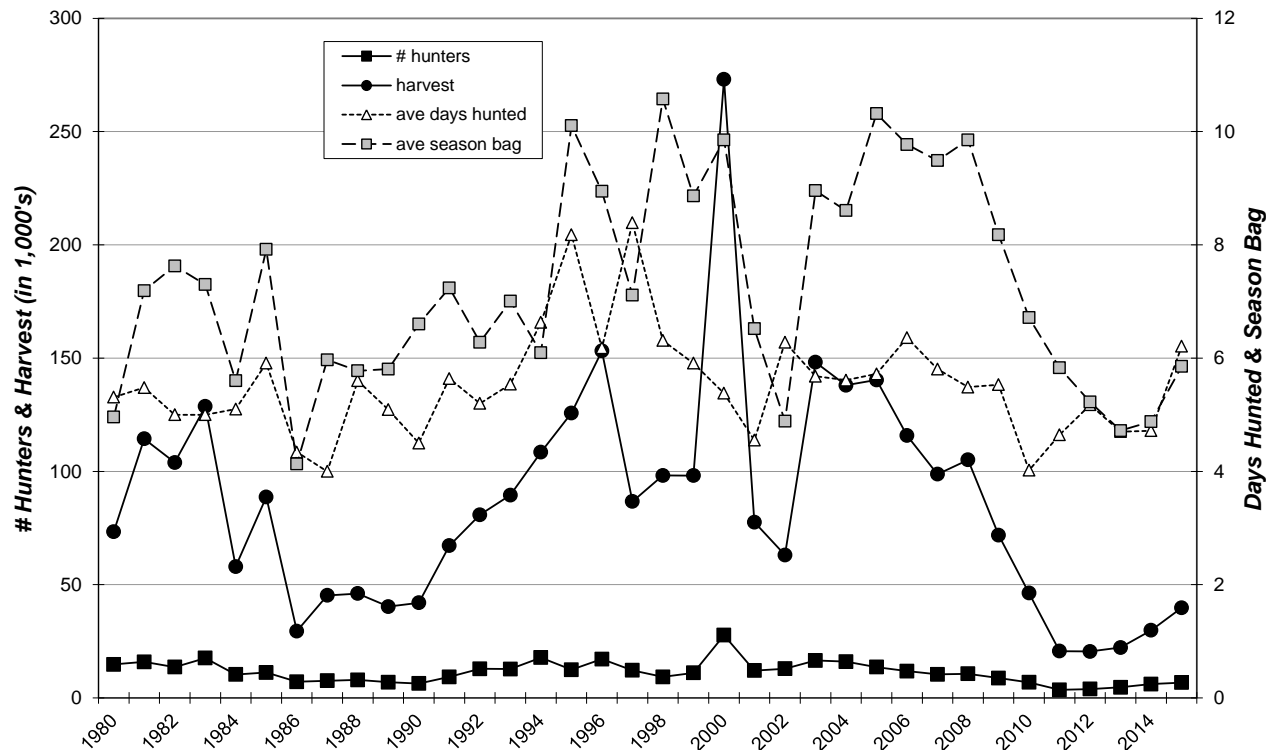
UPLAND GAME HARVEST PROJECTIONS FOR 2015

Last Revised: 10 June 2016

	RESIDENT TOTALS BY LICENSE TYPE						NONRESIDENT TOTALS		
	Small Game	Combination	Senior Combo	Junior Combo	Youth SmGm	Sum Estimates	Non Res Sm Game	Youth Sm Gm	Sum Estimates
Licenses Sold	23,553	47,105	7,739	8,219	5,173	91,789	86,718	2,566	89,284
Projected ACTIVE UPLAND GAME HUNTERS	1,094	3,646	376	659	567	6,341	1,014	96	1,109
Number Sampled by Survey	1,984	4,021	655	631	436	7,727	7,620	206	7,826
Number Responded to Survey	1,163	2,687	577	312	283	5,022	5,168	104	5,272
% Responded and Participated in Season	5%	8%	5%	8%	11%	7%	1%	4%	1%
Responded and Participated in Season	54	208	28	25	31	346	62	4	66
Responded but DID NOT HUNT	1,109	2,479	549	287	252	4,676	5,106	100	5,206
Survey Response Rate	58.6%	66.8%	88.1%	49.4%	64.9%	65.0%	67.8%	50.5%	67.4%
No. Hunters Reporting Cottontail Days	48	191	26	22	29	316	58	3	61
Sum Cottontail Hunted Days	338	1,196	223	141	217	2,115	214	11	225
Average Days Hunted Cottontails	7.04	6.26	8.58	6.41	7.48	6.69	3.69	3.67	3.69
Sum Cottontails Bagged	337	1,222	120	161	181	2,021	137	8	145
Average Cottontail Bag for Season	7.02	6.40	4.62	7.32	6.24	6.40	2.36	2.18	2.38
Projected Days Cottontail Hunting	6,845	20,967	2,991	3,714	3,967	38,484	3,499	264	3,762
Projected No. Cottontail Hunters	972	3,348	349	580	530	5,779	948	72	1,020
Projected Cottontail Bag	6,825	21,423	1,609	4,241	3,309	37,407	2,240	157	2,397
TOTAL COTTONTAIL HARVEST =							39,803		
No. Hunters Reporting Squirrel Days	23	98	10	14	10	155	9	1	10
Sum Squirrel Hunted Days	130	615	90	83	46	964	30	1	31
Average Days Hunted Squirrels	5.65	6.28	9.00	5.93	4.60	6.22	3.33	1.00	3.10
Sum Squirrels Bagged	152	446	47	33	50	728	11	0	11
Average Squirrel Bag for Season	6.61	4.55	4.70	2.36	5.00	4.70	1.22	0.00	1.10
Projected Days Squirrel Hunting	2,633	10,781	1,207	2,186	841	17,649	490	24	514
Projected No. Squirrel Hunters	466	1,718	134	369	183	2,870	147	24	171
Projected Squirrel Bag	3,078	7,819	630	869	914	13,311	180	0	180
TOTAL SQUIRREL HARVEST =							13,490		
Mean Satisfaction Score *	5.57	5.25	5.43	5.08	6.00	5.37	5.45	5.75	5.47

* Based on scale of 1-7 with 1="very dissatisfied" and 7="very satisfied"

SOUTH DAKOTA COTTONTAIL HARVEST, 1980-2015



SOUTH DAKOTA SQUIRREL HARVEST, 1980-2015

