

Gun Hunting

Guide

2022



NEW MEDIA INC.

New calibers join old favorites for more options

Chances are good that if you grew up in a deer-hunting family, you've been given the chance to hunt with Granddad's beat-up Winchester lever-action .30-30, Uncle Joe's pump-action .308 with the taped stock or Dad's Remington bolt-action .30-06.



ROSS BIELEMA

Classic cartridges like these, the .270, the 7mm Remington Magnum, the .243 and others have been around for decades, but they continue to be the go-to choices for millions of deer hunters

nationwide.

Enter ammo shortages, fueled mainly by user stockpiling, and COVID-19, which sent more hunters afield and created an estimated 14 million new gun owners. Suddenly even the old-reliable cartridges became scarce, with some gun shops even buying ammo from customers so they had something to sell.

Online sources like Gun Broker gave some hunters an option, but often at prices that were four to 10 times the original price. Some buyers snapped ammo off store shelves to turn a huge profit at Gun Broker.

The ammo shelves at chain sporting goods stores like Scheel's, Cabela's, Fleet Farm and others have finally been filled, and prices have begun to stabilize, although some, like .22 long rifle, remain bewilderingly high. Hunters now have two basic choices: Use the traditional calibers they have always used and search for an extra box or two, if needed, or try a new caliber that may offer a larger supply.

Those who reload their own ammo have faced shortages of components like primers, and those component prices have mimicked the soaring prices of factory ammo.

When I edited Krause Publications' "Cartridges of the World," one of the most comprehensive books on global cartridges ever written, I was overwhelmed at the number of oddball options available to hunters. Since my work on that book, many new cartridges have surfaced, including those designed specifically for deer.

Here's a look at just a few great choices for deer hunting, and their pros and cons.

Before you pick one or more, you need to first look at your overall needs, average shot distance where you hunt, your tolerance for recoil (also called



Two classic deer cartridges, the .308 Winchester, introduced in 1952, and the .45-70 Government, designed in 1873 for blackpowder cartridges used in the Army's Trapdoor Springfield rifles, are represented by these two made-in-Wisconsin Henry single-shot rifles chambered for each. ROSS BIELEMA

"kick"), your physical size and your willingness to damage valuable meat. Big calibers in general make fast, clean kills, can tackle thick-skinned game such as elk and moose if you also hunt those and can damage meat more than smaller calibers.

They also can make clean kills beyond 300 yards, but if most of your shots are 100 yards or less, do you need a 7mm Remington Magnum or one of the Weatherby calibers? Probably not.

Calibers for young, meek

The last thing you want to do to a young shooter with virgin shoulders is to load up a .30-06, .270 or other long-action rifle and let them shoot targets in a short-sleeve shirt. That youngster will not only leave the range with bruises but also may become gun-shy, develop a flinch and may not want to hunt again.

Although the .243 is still a good option for shooters in their early teens and older, the recoil can spook smaller kids. The .223 and its almost-twin 5.56

in an AR-15 semi-auto platform, with the right bullet, can be a decent deer gun that has very light recoil.

Be sure you get a soft-pointed hunting round (full-metal jacket target rounds in any caliber are prohibited in Wisconsin) that will expand and make a clean kill with proper shot placement.

Another option is to use a pistol caliber in a rifle configuration, such as the Ruger carbine in .44 Magnum or a single-shot or lever-action .44. The longer barrel of a rifle will give the hunter more velocity in a great round that makes big holes and fast kills without much recoil.

The new .350 Legend, a straight-wall cartridge launched by Winchester in 2019, was initially designed to be used in AR-15 platforms but has now been embraced by most firearms makers and is offered in bolt-actions, single shots and lever guns as well. The bullet is .357 and the 160-grain bullet moves at about 2,300 feet per second, making it a 250-yard deer caliber.

Other weights are offered, including

165 and 180 grains. Recoil is minimal.

The classic .30-30 round is a good deer round with light recoil, but lever guns are not recommended for beginners (exposed hammers with half-cocks and tubular magazines create a number of safety issues for newbies).

Newcomers offer new twists

The .450 Bushmaster, developed in 2007, was another cartridge developed for use in AR-15 platforms. It's designed for efficient one-shot kills because of the .45-caliber, 250- or 260-grain bullet moving at around 2,200 fps. It compares well with the .450 Marlin, invented in 2000, which was designed for lever guns.

The .450 Marlin starts out about 25 fps faster, but because of its larger 325-grain bullet, it retains energy better at distances to 300 yards (1,278 foot-pounds at 300 yards, vs. 874 for the Bushmaster).

The .444 Marlin, created in 1964, is a straight-wall, lever-action round that is essentially an elongated .44 Magnum with power equivalent to the classic .45-70 Government cartridge. This a round built for the biggest of game, including bears, moose, elk and feral hogs. It can push a 240- to 300-grain bullet at 2,400 fps and generate around 3,000 foot-pounds of energy.

For comparison, the .45-70 round fires a 300- or 325-grain bullet at 2,000 to 2,300 fps and a 405-grain bullet at 1,330 fps.

Metric round comes from the target range One hot deer round born out of long-range competitive shooting, the 6.5mm Creedmoor, was developed by Hornady in 2007. The 120- and 143-grain bullets have high ballistic coefficients, meaning they buck the wind efficiently, and travel around 3,000 and 2,700 fps, respectively.

Both bullet weights retain more than 1,600 foot-pounds of energy at 300 yards — far more than needed to drop a whitetail cleanly. By comparison, the .308 Winchester, a legendary deer round, fires a 125- to 185-grain bullet at 3,100 and 2,500 fps, respectively. The round's twin is the 7.62 x 51mm NATO military round.

So which deer cartridge is the best? It's the one you feel most comfortable with and the one you can locate ammo for. If you can shoot all your practice rounds into a 4-inch circle at 200 yards, you are good to go.

Ross Bielema is a freelance writer from New London and owner of Wolf River Concealed Carry LLC. Contact him at Ross@wolfriverccw.com.

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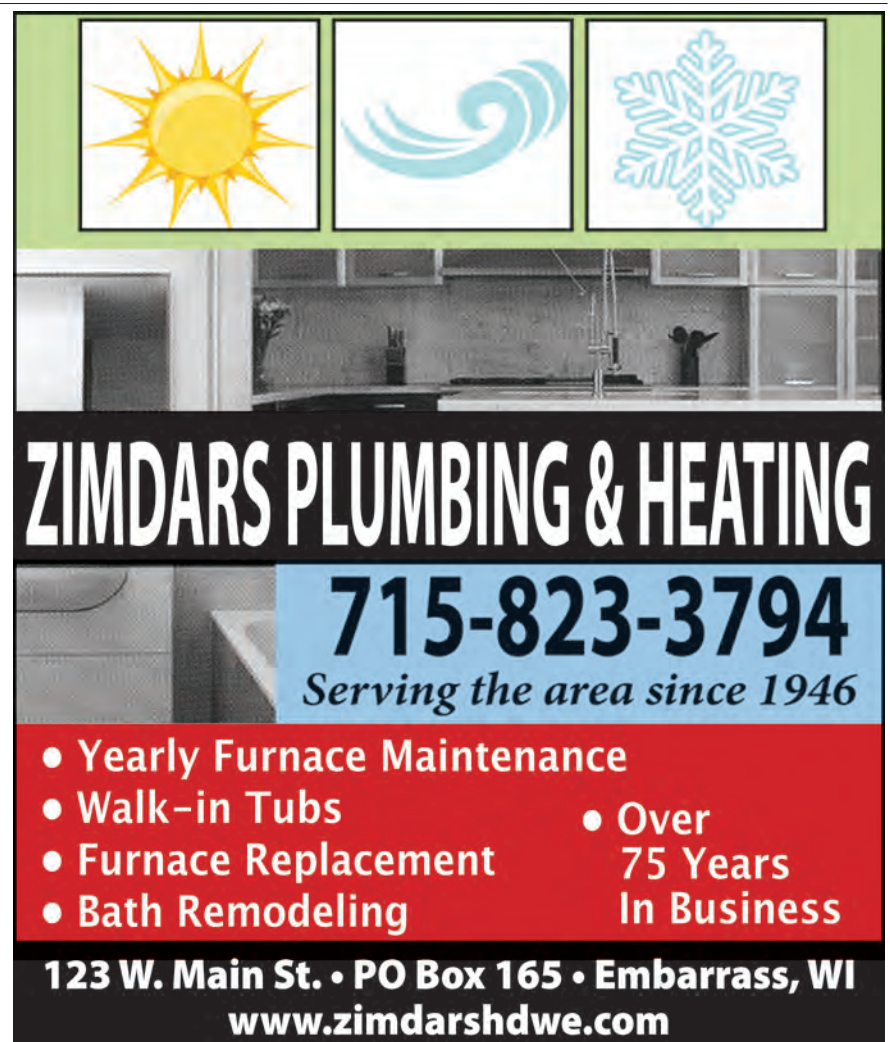
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Local meat processors stand ready to turn your deer into venison treats

By **ROSS BIELEMA**
Correspondent

You've just shot a dandy buck or fat doe. Now the work begins!

After carefully field-dressing your deer and hauling it out so the delicious meat isn't dragged through the brush, some of you will spend hours cutting up your own for the table and freezer.

The easier alternative is to head for a meat processor who will not only do a professional job cutting it into steaks, roasts and other cuts, but in many cases grind the burger into handy packages and even vacuum-seal your venison so it will stay fresher in your freezer.

Here is a list of some area meat processors who handle deer and other wild game. Be sure to call first before driving there (some processors require a call). Also noted are extended hours during the firearms deer season when applicable.

Don't forget to bring your registration confirmation number provided by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources when dropping off your deer.

Never let your deer hang if the temperature is above 40 degrees, processors warn. The meat will begin to spoil.

There are other meat processors in the area that will make products from your deboned venison. Those listed below will process your deer from the carcass after harvest.

Here's to some tasty venison, which is lower in cholesterol than chicken and as natural as it gets!

• **Pingel Processing LLC**
W9248 County Road A, Shawano (715) 851-8281
www.pingelprocessing.com
Normal hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday and 8 a.m. to noon Saturday
Gun season hours: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily

Processing fee: \$100; includes skinning, cutting, vacuum sealing and tubed burger; \$40 discount if everything made into sausage

Dani Pingel, co-owner with husband Dallas Pingel, said their venison hot dogs are their top-seller. They offer at least 15 venison products, including brats, jerky and snack sticks. They also are a drop-off site for the state's deer donation program, and have a CWD kiosk on-site to leave the deer's head for testing if you want to donate a deer.

Please call before dropping off a deer and see the website for questions you will be asked. Pingel processes around 1,000 deer per season. They also offer retail beef and pork products and processing.

• **Adams Meats**
W10947 Riverside Road, Marion (Pella)
(715) 754-5136
Normal hours: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Monday-Friday and 7 a.m. to noon Saturday

Gun season hours: Normal weekday hours plus 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

Processing fee: \$100; includes skinning, cutting, grinding and vacuum sealing

Owner Bob Adams, who has been running Adams Meats for 29 years, handles about 1,000 deer per season. He offers a huge variety of venison products, including sausage and snack sticks. They also offer retail beef and pork products and processing.

• **Niemuth's Steak and Chop Shop**
715 Redfield St., Waupaca
715-258-2666

www.niemuthssteakandchop.com

Hours: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Friday and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday

Processing fee: \$99; includes skinning, deboning, grinding and packaging (vacuum pack \$1 per pound extra)
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since 1957, offering a full range of venison products, including summer sausage, brats, snack sticks, wieners, jerky and more. They also offer retail beef and pork products and processing.

• Northwoods Sausage Inc.

N4731 Larry Rd, New London

www.northwoodssausage.com

(920) 982-9773

(920) 944-3842 (cell)

Normal hours: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Monday-Sunday

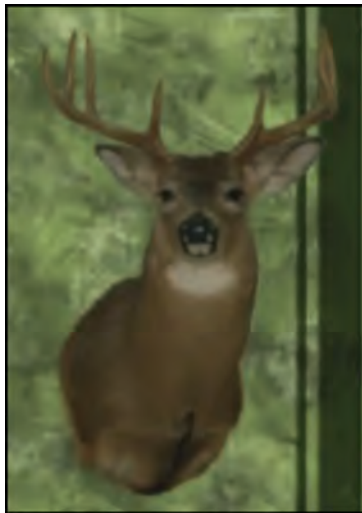
Gun season hours: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

by appointment (call first)

Processing fee: \$130; includes skinning, cutting, grinding and vacuum packing

Northwoods Sausage specializes in wild game processing, as that is their only business. Co-owner Kay Trewin, who shares the business with husband Mike Trewin, says hot dogs are their most popular venison product. They offer several flavors of bratwurst, including a new mushroom and Swiss flavor, as well as ring bologna, Polish sausage, Polska Kielbasa, snack sticks, breakfast links and patties, bacon, jerky, summer sausage and smoked hind. They also offer package deals that vary from \$235 to \$300.

They also process bear, elk, geese and other wild game.



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\$16.99

FINAL COST after \$3 MIR (Reg. Sale Price \$19.99)

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Kessler's Whiskey
1.75 L



\$13.25 ea

FINAL COST after \$4 MIR when you buy 2 Bottles (\$15.25 Reg. Sale Price)

Epic Vodka
1.75 L



\$3.19

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FINAL COST after \$10 MIR when you buy 2 Bottles (\$7.49 Reg. Sale Price)

Bailey's Original Irish Crème
750 ml



\$15.69 ea

FINAL COST after \$12 MIR when you buy 2 Bottles (\$21.69 Reg. Sale Price)

Korbel Brandy
1.75 L



\$15.99 ea

FINAL COST after \$9 MIR when you buy 3 Bottles (\$18.99 Reg. Sale Price)

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Canadian Club 1858 Whiskey
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Christian Brothers Brandy VS
1.75 L



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