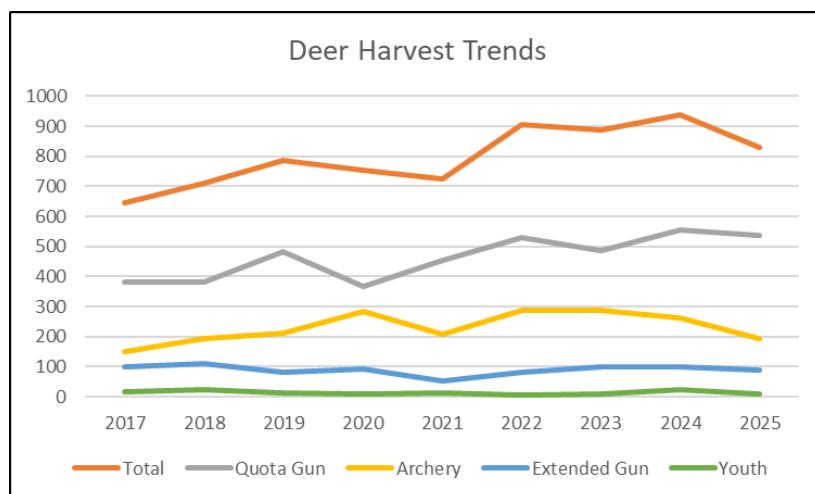


2025-26 Fort Knox White-Tailed Deer Harvest Data and Review



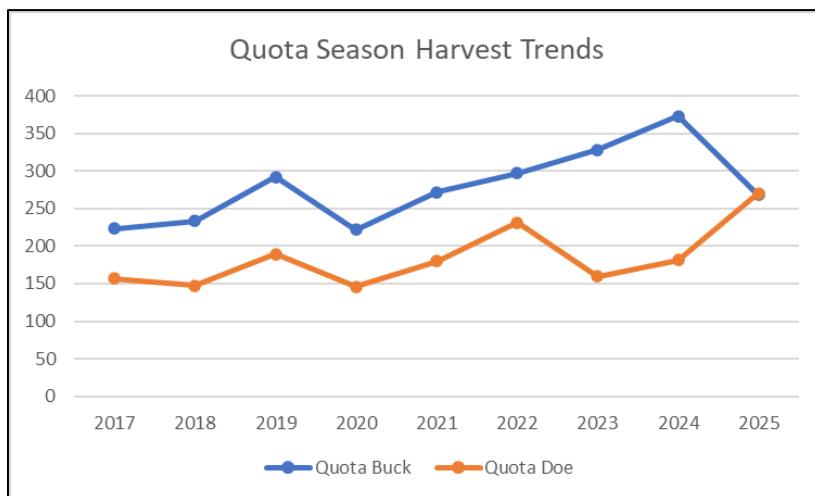
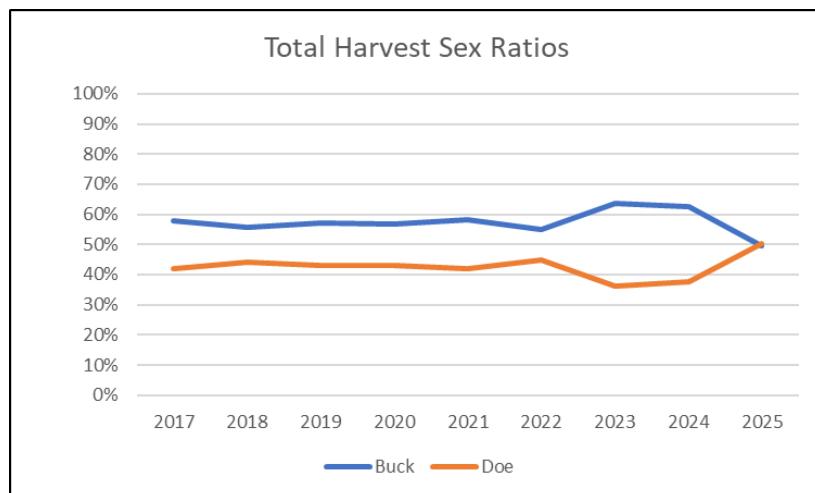
- Total Harvest: 829
 - 5-year Average: 857
 - 10-year Average: 787
- Total Quota Gun: 538
 - 5-year Average: 512
 - 10-year Average: 453
- Total Archery: 192
 - 5-year Average: 248
 - 10-year Average: 224
- Total Extended Gun: 89
 - 5-year Average: 84
 - 10-year Average: 94
- Total Youth: 10
 - 5-year Average: 12
 - 10-year Average: 16

Notes: Our total harvest is slightly down on the 5-year average but has increased on the 10-year average. However, the total harvest still meets program objectives. Total Quota Gun harvest has increased on both the 5 & 10-year averages. There is an obvious increase of interest in quota gun opportunity as well as an increase in quota gun harvest success at Fort Knox. The total archery harvest has gone down on both the 5 & 10-year averages. However, this number may have been impacted by the Government shutdown occurring October 2025 as well as area availability and the Hemorrhagic disease (HD) outbreak. Total extended gun harvests fell in between the 5 & 10-year averages. Total youth harvest (for youth-specific seasons) dropped slightly from the 5 & 10-year averages. New guideline changes now allow all youths to hunt on Fort Knox for free, so we hope to see an increase in youth participation and success in the coming years.



- Total Harvest Sex-Ratios
 - Bucks: 49.6%
 - Does: 50.4%
- Quota Season Harvest Trends
 - Bucks: 268
 - Does: 270

Notes: Research indicates whitetail deer are born at a 50/50 ratio (male/female). A Quality Deer Management Program suggests the harvest ratios should match or closely resemble recruitment ratios. Fort Knox Natural Resources Branch (NRB) implemented a mandatory antlerless deer harvest on opening quota weekend for Tier 3 hunters only. This regulation change was established to slow down the rapidly increasing quota buck harvest, which exceeded program objectives based on previous season's trends. This adjustment allows us to meet herd reduction objectives, while simultaneously allowing the recruitment of younger bucks into the older age classes. Total harvest sex-ratios for the entire season on Fort Knox was essentially 50/50. This is a major accomplishment for the program!



Hemorrhagic disease (HD) had an impact on the Fort Knox landscape starting late August of 2025. Reports of dead deer were made across the installation with significant impacts concentrated on areas with higher deer densities like the Cantonment and various ranges. HD outbreaks occur almost every year throughout the southeast, but some regions may be impacted more severely depending on the history of the disease in that region. Some deer can develop immunity to HD if they survive the initial sickness, which can be passed on to the next generation. Common signs of deer that survived HD are sloughing of the hooves, and in some cases, retention of velvet on antlered deer. The NRB made note of a significant number of deer with clinical signs of HD survival during the quota gun check stations. This, coupled with maintaining a healthy and balanced deer herd through habitat improvement and the mandatory antlerless harvest on the Quota opener should mitigate any significant HD outbreaks over the next few years.