

Spring Turkey Harvest Report - 2025

Performance Report
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INTRODUCTION AND METHODS

Kansas turkey harvest is managed utilizing 6 management units (Figure 1) and an adaptive harvest strategy to guide permit allocations on a per unit basis. In 2025 residents could purchase a permit over the counter that was valid in Units 1,2,3,5, & 6. Non-residents permits were available via unit specific quotas through a draw for units 1,2,3,5, & 6 (Table 1). The Unit 4 quota was set at 375 permits. These permits were available only to residents through a limited draw (Table 1). Resident youth permits are available over the counter and valid statewide including unit 4. No additional game tags were available this year for any hunters. The spring 2025 season ran 61 days (Figure 5), and the total number of permits issued was 29,155 (Table 2).

The spring wild turkey harvest survey has been conducted annually by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) since the first regulated season was established in 1974. However, the survey methodology has changed over the years to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and improve accuracy of estimates. The survey is currently conducted by selecting a random sample of hunters from all the people who provided e-mail addresses when they purchased their permit. The number of individuals that were drawn was equal to 10% of the total number of people who purchased a permit for the spring season ($n = 3,027$). An e-mail was sent to those individuals shortly after the close of the season asking them to complete an online questionnaire about their hunting activity and harvest during this hunting season. Non-respondents were sent up to two subsequent follow-up e-mails on 7 and 21 days after initial request respectively.

Results from the harvest survey were used to develop statewide estimates of the number of hunters participating in each season, harvest (by weapon and property ownership), perceived hunting pressure on publicly owned land and walk-in-hunting area (WIHA) tracts, hunter effort, harvest distribution, hunter success, and hunter satisfaction with Kansas turkey hunting and management. Many of these parameters were also calculated for each of the 6 turkey management units (Figure 1).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Of the selected sample, a total of 2,962 e-mails were deliverable and 1,121 usable responses were provided, resulting in an adjusted response rate of 37.8%. An estimated 88.7% of the 29,155 permit buyers hunted turkeys during the spring season resulting in 25,852 active hunters (17,021 residents and 8,967 non-residents; Figure 2). Those hunters spent an average of 3.4 days (95% CI = 3.2 – 3.6) in the field. The estimated numbers of people participating in the early season as archers were 3,563 (95% CI = 3,041 – 4160). The estimated numbers of people participating in the early season as youth/disabled hunters were 1404 (95% CI = 1082 – 1817). The estimated number of people to hunt with a crossbow during the regular turkey season was 1092 (95% CI = 812 – 1465).

Total harvest during the spring 2025 season was 13,862 turkeys (Figure 3 & 4). The age and sex structure of the 2025 harvest was 87.6% adult gobblers, 12.4% jakes, and 0.0% bearded hens. The percentage of turkey hunters filling their permit was 53.6% during the 2025 season which is the highest success rate since 2015. Prior to 2015, hunter success was routinely >60%. This season, 6.8% of the total harvest was taken on the opening day of the regular season (Figure 5). Prior to the creation of the archery-only season in 2007 the percentage of total harvest taken on opening day was typically >10%. The special early seasons not only provides a unique opportunity, but also spreads out the harvest and helps to reduce hunter crowding during the regular season. By the end of the first week of the regular season an estimated 55.8% of the total 2025 harvest had already occurred and by the end of April that percentage was estimated to be 80% (Figure 5).

The greatest number of hunters and harvest occurred in the northeast management region (Unit 3) where >8,000 hunters harvested nearly 5,000 birds during the spring 2025 season (Figure 6). The number of hunters and harvest have generally been decreasing since its peak in 2015. Hunter success was greatest in Unit 4 where an estimated 64% of all active hunters harvested their birds (Figure 7). Hunt success was

lowest in Unit 5 this spring where an estimated 51% of active hunters harvested their birds. Hunt success improved across all units which may be in part due to the reduction in Non-resident hunters through the quota. However, resident success has still not reached levels outlined in the turkey harvest strategy to stabilize harvest regulations in any unit and resident participation continues to decline (Figure 2). With improved production the last 2 years we anticipate that success rates will increase again this coming spring.

Public hunting access is limited in Kansas with over 98% land being privately owned. Public land is supplemented with a Walk in access program (WIHA) that provides some additional public access to private lands. Despite the limited amount of public access this land is relied upon disproportionately for turkey hunters with 30% of hunters using either WIHA or Public Land. Hunters in Unit 2 had the greatest reliance on public access with only 62 % of hunters utilizing Private land, while Unit 5 had the least reliance on public access with 88% of hunters utilizing private lands. While 30% of the hunting pressure occurred on public access only 19% of the harvest reported occurred on public access.

Table 1. Draw statistics for 2025 spring turkey permit applications.

**2025 Spring Turkey
Nonresident Draw Stats**

Permits Authorized 9700	Permit Unit	Total # of Applicants (1st Choice)	Total # of Applicants (2nd Choice)	Total Number of Permits Drawn	Total Number of Leftovers
700	Unit 1	887	519	700	
2400	Unit 2	2673	2598	2401	
2800	Unit 3	5321	2316	2800	
900	Unit 5	1509	1791	900	
2900	Unit 6	4481	2092	2900	
TOTAL APPS		14871			
TOTAL DRAWN				9701	

**2025 Spring Turkey
UNIT 4 Draw Stats**

Permits Authorized Unit 4	Permit Class	Total # of Applicants	Preference Points (PP)	Number of Permits issued by PP	Total Number of Permits Drawn
375					
	Gen		0	205	
			1	74	
	TOTAL GEN	337	2	4	283
	LO/T		0	68	
			1	4	
	TOTAL LO/T	73	2	1	73
	NR Tenant		0	18	
			1	1	
	TOTAL NR Tenant	19			19
TOTAL APPS		429			
TOTAL DRAWN					375

Table 2 Total permits issued and estimated harvest.

Year	Spring			Fall			
	Permits & Game Tags	Total Harvest	Success (%)	Permits & Game Tags	Total Harvest	Hen Harvest (%)	Success (%)
2019	56,388	23,568	47	4,570	487	29	35
2020	32,324	13,404	48	3,459	506	45	20
2021	45,263	17,611	46	2,779	313	51	16
2022	39,695	13,830	40	2,984	318	44	16
2023	39,123	14,989	45	No Season			
2024	26,986	11,144	41	No Season			
2025	29,155	13,862	54	No Season			

Table 3. Unit specific resident harvest success rates since 2014.

Spring turkey season resident hunter success (%)							
Year	Northwest (Unit 1)	Northcentral (Unit 2)	Northeast (Unit 3)	Southwest (Unit 4)	Southcentral (Unit 5)	Southeast (Unit 6)	Statewide
2014	48.2	55.1	50.5	54.5	52.4	42.7	49.3
2015	60.0	50.9	52.9	56.0	50.5	43.7	46.9
2016	34.5	54.1	48.7	40.7	44.6	41.2	43.0
2017	50.0	58.3	45.1	65.0	48.9	44.3	44.4
2018	37.8	41.8	37.3	37.5	44.3	35.5	36.9
2019	56.3	56.0	40.7	57.1	47.1	42.9	42.9
2020	61.1	58.2	45.7	69.6	44.8	37.7	45.6
2021	43.8	43.4	41.3	52.4	40.5	35.6	39.1
2022	25.0	39.2	39.9	50.0	39.1	34.2	35.9
2023	44.4	41.8	47.3	31.6	36.8	42.6	40.9
2024	45.5	47.6	39.8	50.0	49.3	40.5	36.7
2025	47.1	50.0	51.6	55.6	51.9	45.0	47.6

Figure 1. The spring wild turkey hunting and management units in Kansas.

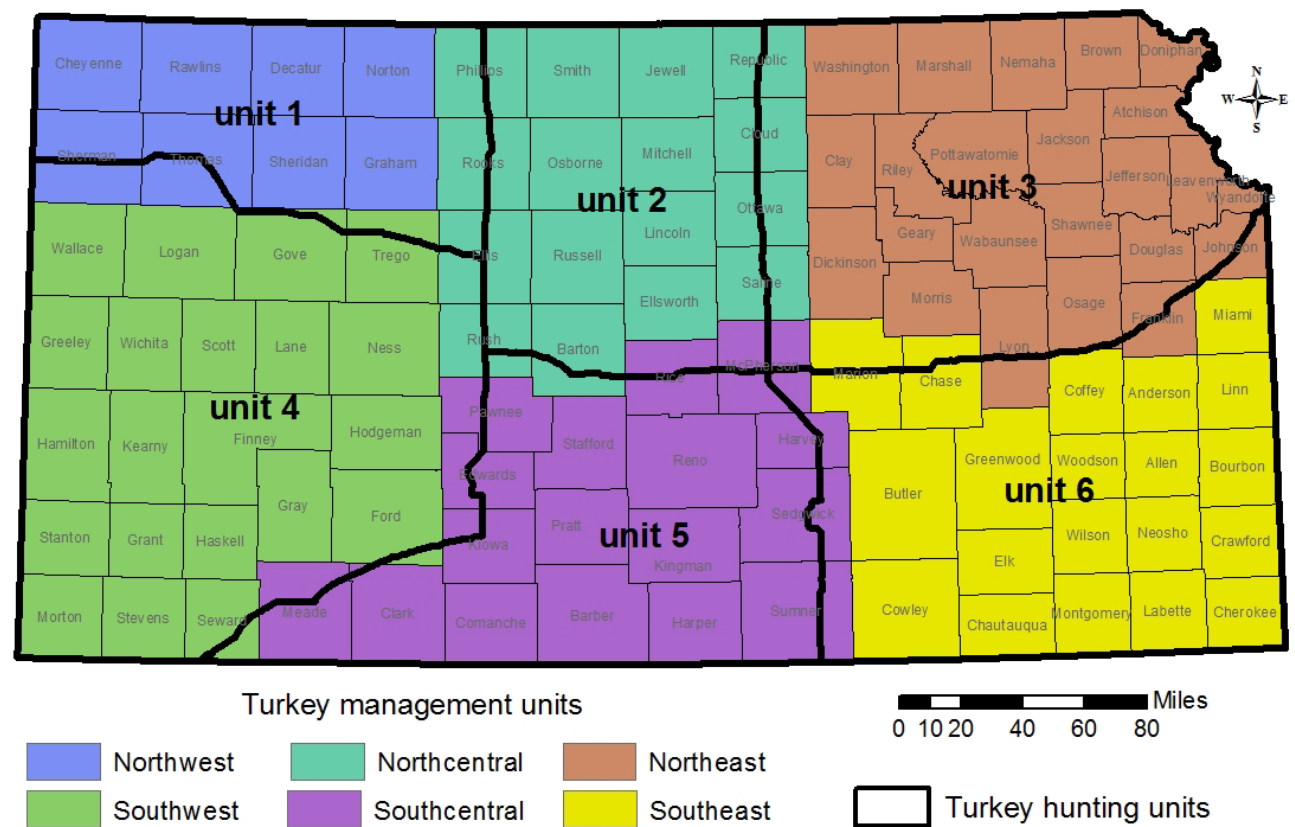


Figure 2. Total Kansas Spring Turkey permits issued by residency.

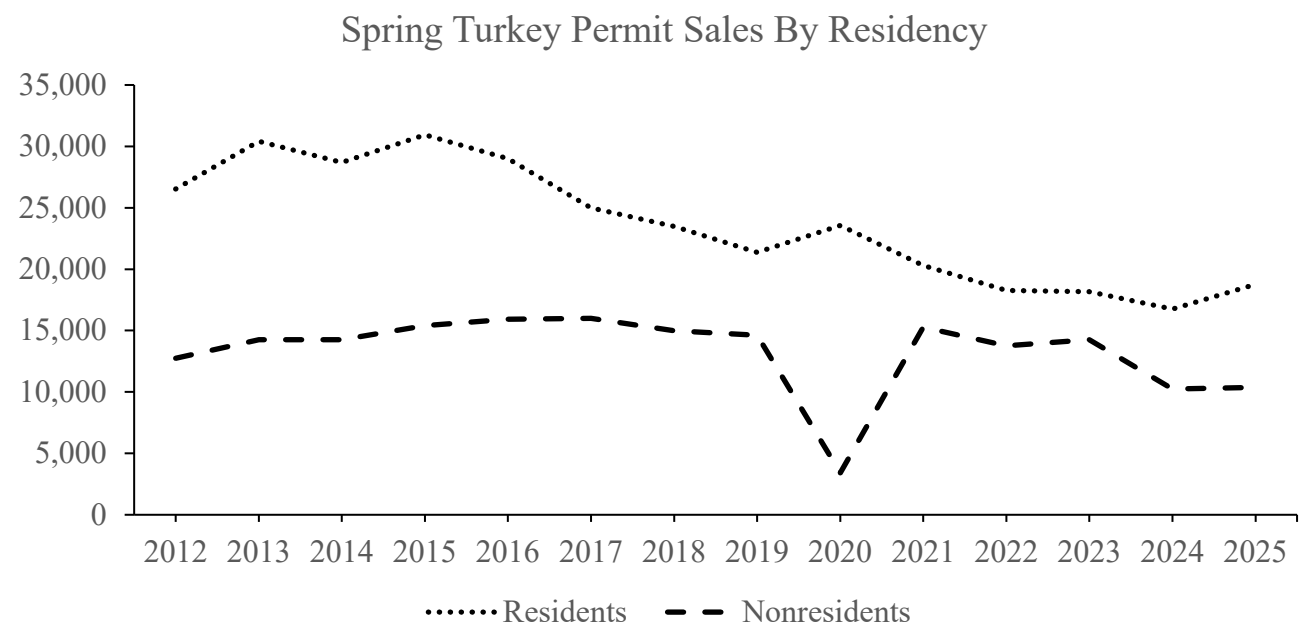


Figure 3. Total Kansas Spring Turkey harvest by residency.

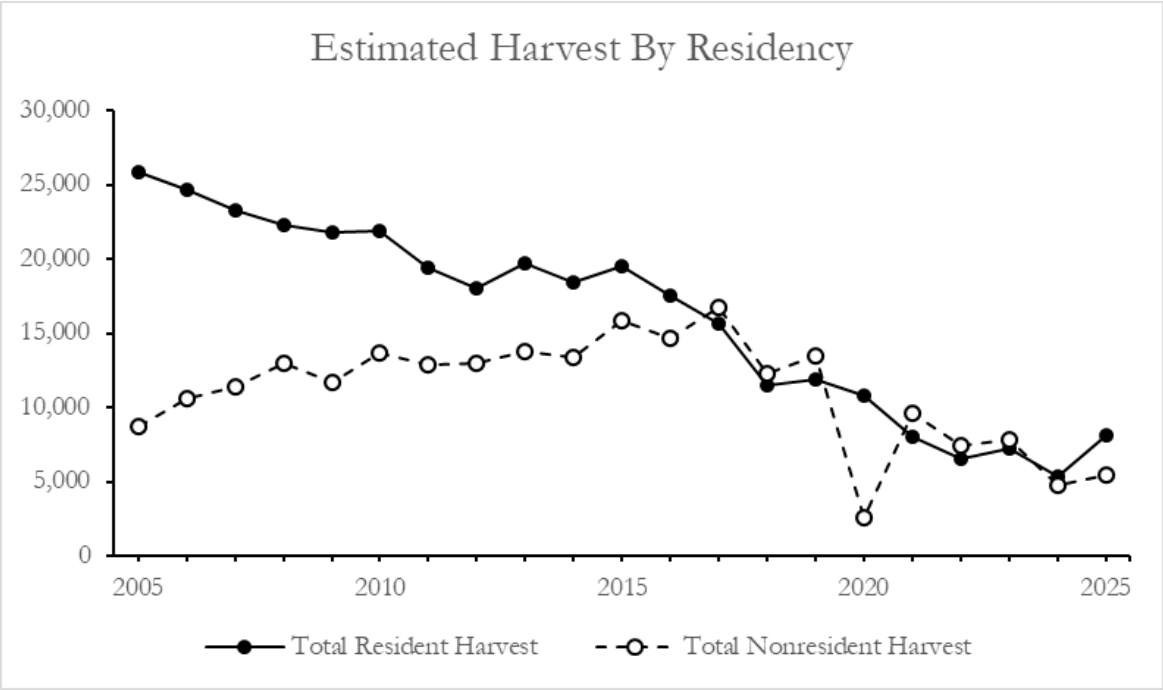


Figure 4. Total Kansas Spring Turkey harvest.

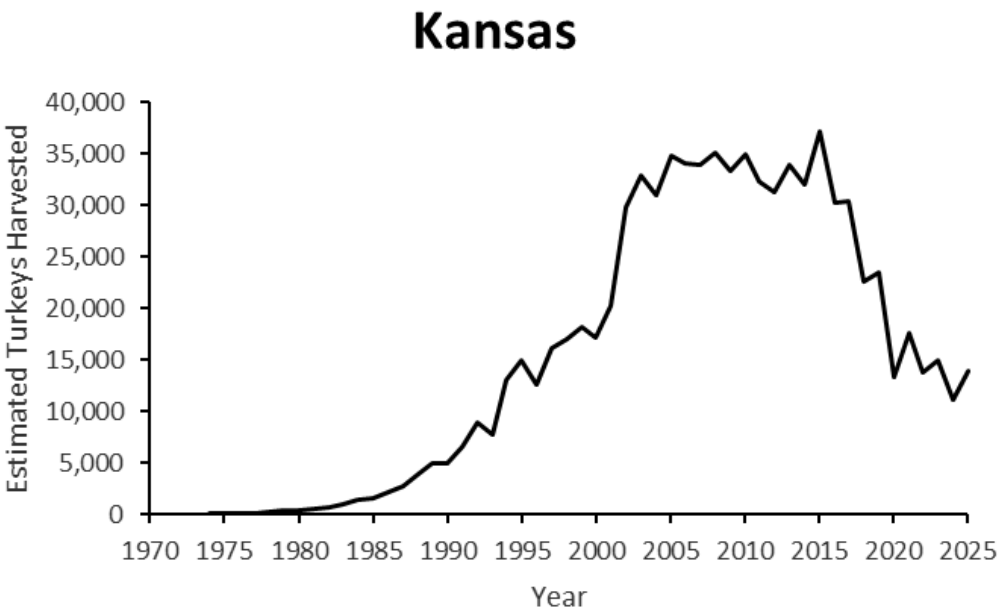


Figure 5. Daily and cumulative harvest distribution during the 2025 spring wild turkey seasons in Kansas.

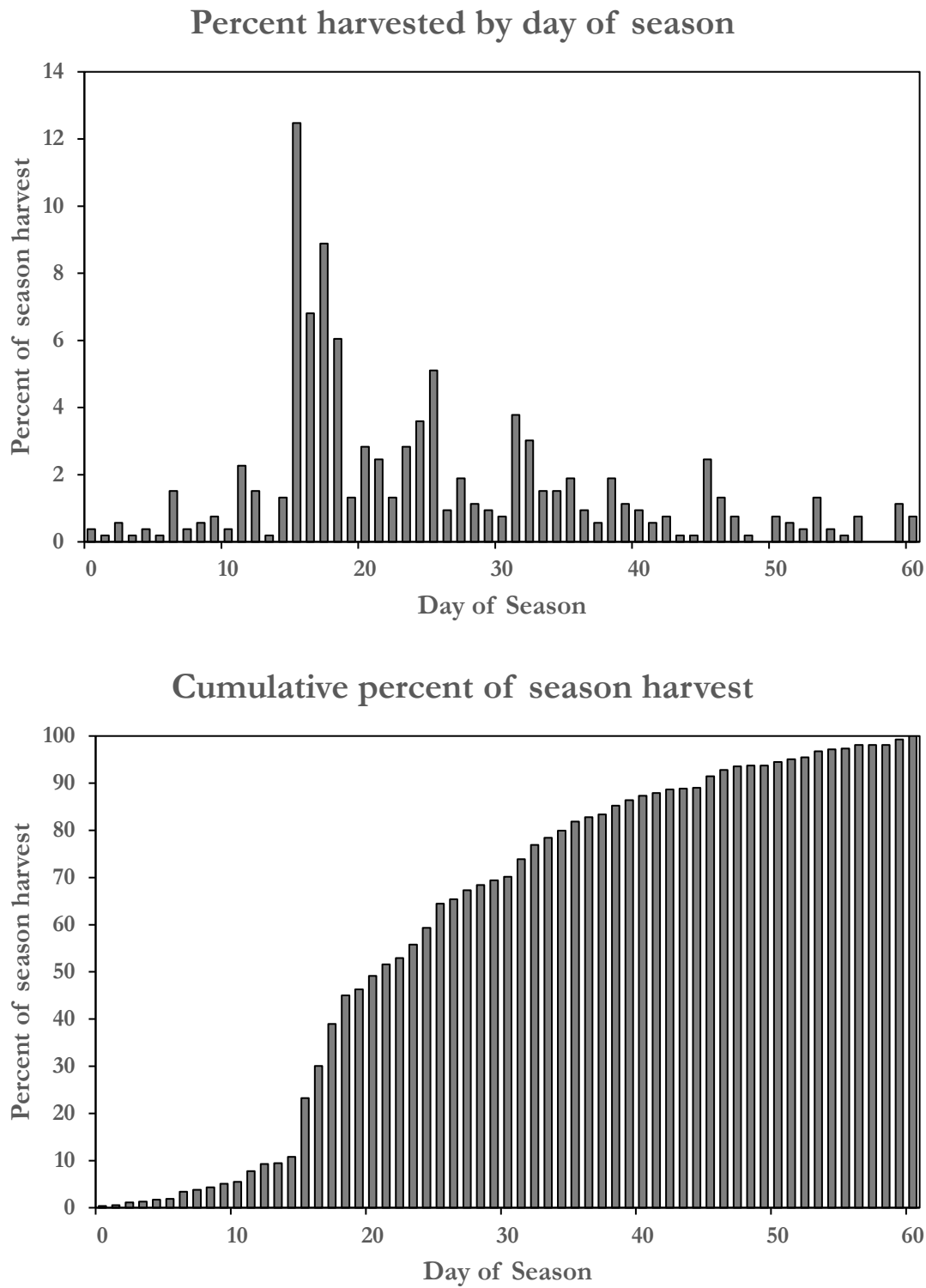


Figure 6. Estimated turkey hunters and harvest by unit for 2025 Kansas Spring Turkey season

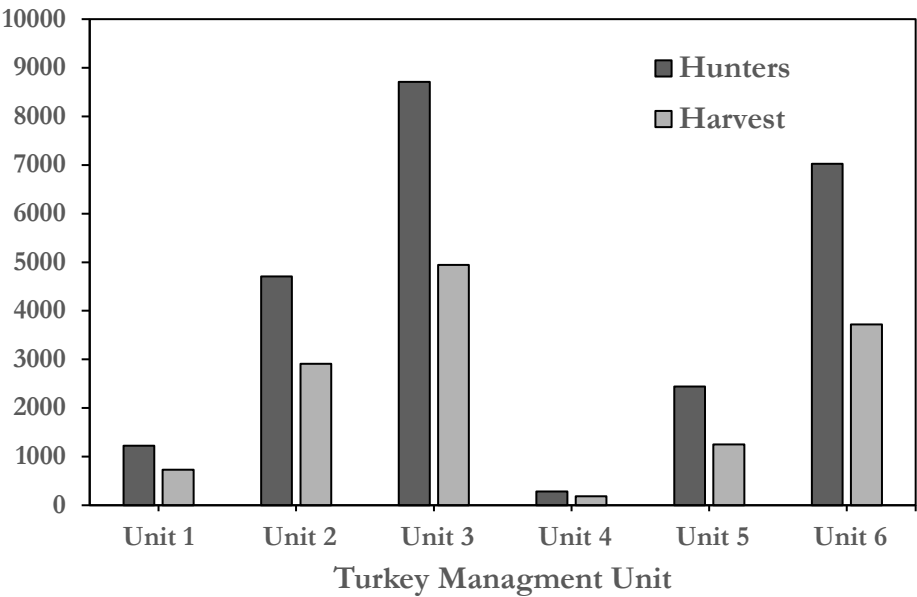


Figure 7. Estimated overall turkey hunter success rate by unit for 2025 Kansas Spring Turkey season

