

Copies to Messrs. Grange  
Errington

March 20, 1931

Dr. J. Curtis Lyter  
Frisco Building  
St. Louis, Missouri

Dear Dr. Lyter:

I have no convincing evidence for choosing between corn, kaffir and soy beans for quail food patches.

The attached reprint of a paper by our quail fellowship here indicates that quail learn to open corn husks even when they are not opened by farmers, stock, or rabbits, although they do not learn this until pretty hard pinched. If your food patches are wholly detached from farming operations, this matter of opening would cause me to prefer kaffir or cane. If, however, they are on going farms where the farmer might open and take part of the grain, I would think that corn is as good as any.

Another question enters here, on which I would like the results of your experience. A detached food patch is expensive to cultivate. The ideal grain for it would be one requiring a minimum of cultivation. I have always supposed that this gave the canes and kaffirs an advantage in such situations. Can you give me any light on the extent of this advantage in your experience?

If you use corn and if your land produces a good growth of the small species of ragweed, it might be wise to omit the last cultivation in order to enhance the crop of ragweed seed. There is no longer much doubt that quail prefer ragweed seed to any grain.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

ALDO LEOPOLD  
In Charge, Game Survey