

Mr. Erington

New Soils Building
January 8, 1935

Mr. Frederic Leopold
The Leopold Company
Burlington, Iowa

Dear Fritz:

I have your letter asking about the advisability of artificial propagation of quail at Crystal Lake.

If you consider this question in terms of the actual cost of production rather than the prospectuses of dealers who have stock to sell, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that artificially raised quail cost from \$2 to \$5 per bird. Even Mr. Coleman of Virginia, who is universally acknowledged as the most successful quail breeder on the continent, has never gotten below these figures for any term of years.

Your food patches, as I understand it, cost about \$5 each. It would, therefore, be fair to say that a food patch costs about the same as a pair of artificially propagated quail.

I think your experience this year has shown clearly that each new food patch adds to your stock a whole covey of quail, whereas the same money invested in artificial propagation would only add a pair. There still remains the question of whether that pair, if released without additional food patches, would stay on your grounds. I do not think they would.

Accordingly it seems very clear to me that a dollar invested in additional food patches is about 5 to 10 times as profitable as a dollar invested in artificial propagation. This conclusion will remain true up to the point of saturation. If your acreage is 1,000 acres, this means 1,000 quail. Beyond this point it is impossible to add to the quail population either by food patches or artificial propagation unless you build a quail-tight fence around the premises, which of course would be impossible. If you now have 10 coveys at 15 birds each, or 150 quail, it means that you can still further increase them by the food patch method 500 or 600 per cent. Beyond that you cannot increase them by any method now known.

If you build your quail up to saturation, you could safely kill 300 per year on your grounds. I do not know how many members you have but you can figure out how many birds this would mean per member.

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I strongly advise the club to continue its present policy of building up its upland birds by the food patch method. For the reasons above cited, I am strongly convinced that it is the cheapest and best way, and the results this year have proven its workability.

I look forward to receiving your paper on the food patch system and also the new photograph.

Yours as ever,

vh

A.L.