



Ray Matejcek's trophy deer and elk roam free on 155 fenced-in acres. He supplements their diet with vitamins and minerals.

HUNTERS PAY EXTRA FOR BIG SPREAD OF ANTLERS

"Trophy" Size Deer, Elk Bring Premium Prices

By Mike Oldenburg

Ray Matejcek has raised white-tailed deer and elk on his farm east of Medford, Minn., for the past nine years. He specializes in trophy-size animals with big horn spreads that sell for a premium to private hunting preserves.

Matejcek got the idea of raising deer from a newspaper article telling of a man who raises deer in a nearby town. The two met and Matejcek says, "I just went home and started building fences."

In the first few years, he bought about a dozen deer and six elk, and has added to the herd through natural reproduction since then. He gets a 100% calf crop with elk and the deer almost always have twins. Currently he has 26 elk and more than 50 deer.

Last year he sold four trophy bull elk and 21 deer, some of which were trophy animals and some were fawns to be raised by other people.

"I like watching them grow and watching them get big antlers," Matejcek says. "They're beautiful animals and you never get tired of their beauty. All summer long they're growing antlers, and it's interesting to see how big they will go."

Matejcek has fenced in 155 acres of his land for the deer and elk to roam. "There's always chores to do and fences to check. It's not a full-time job. It's more or less my hobby," Matejcek says.

The shooting preserves Matejcek sells to

are in Missouri, Montana and Colorado. The preserves generally range in size from 3,000 to 5,000 acres. They're looking for the type of trophy animals hunters want to hang on the wall, Matejcek points out.

A trophy deer must have a rack measuring 18 or more inches in width between the farthest part of its inner rack. "If it's 17 1/2 in., it will drop the value in half," he says. A good trophy deer can be worth from \$1,000 to \$3,000.

On a bull elk's rack, it's the length of the beam and number of points on the rack that determine its value. A trophy rack has a beam of at least 45 in. and six points on both sides is average.

Matejcek supplements the deer and elk diets by putting vitamins and minerals in feed. But a majority of their food is natural. "They don't depend on me to feed them. Natural food is probably 80% of their diet," he says. "The biggest thing is to give them enough land."

Matejcek sells many deer as breeding stock and as pets. He walks freely among the animals but says there is some danger during rutting season.

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An average trophy-size bull elk's rack has a beam of at least 45 in. and 6 points on either side.

TOOK 60 LBS. OF FLOUR TO MAKE

This Cow's Made Out Of Papier-Mache

"I made it because my sons' 4-H leader wanted a cow to put on a float in the local June Dairy Month parade. I'd constructed some smaller animals such as cats, so I decided to give it a try," says Janelle Humphrey, Barron, Wis., about "Country Girl"—a 6-ft. long, 4-ft. tall, 150-lb. Guernsey cow that she built out of papier mache.

"I've been told that papier mache, which uses newspaper, flour and water to form an object, is becoming a lost art. But I'm not so sure that it's not just as well being lost," laughs Humphrey, recalling the huge mess that the 2 1/2 week project made.

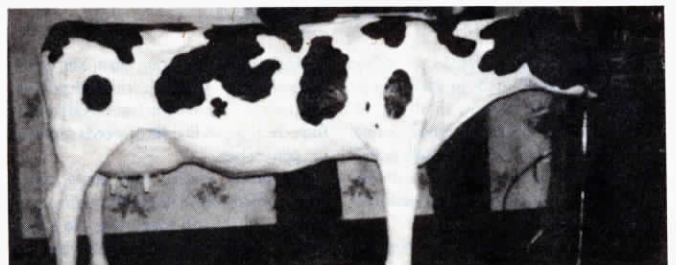
"It took about 60 lbs. of flour to make the cow. I mixed the flour with warm water to

make the paste to put on the paper and form the animal. My husband helped make the 2 by 2-in. wooden frame for the cow's body and I put a small roll of chicken wire in the stomach area."

Once Humphrey started on the cow, she went "whole hog" to make sure it was complete with udder, tail, ears and even eyelashes which she fashioned out of twine..

Since the animal turned out a little smaller than expected, the Humphrey's painted it Guernsey colors—reddish brown and white—despite the fact that they have a Holstein herd.

Humphrey even went so far as to draw up



Flour and water paste was applied to a chicken-wired wood frame.

registration papers for Country Girl. In them she names the Country Today, a St. Paul, Minn. daily newspaper as the sire. Wisconsin agricultural newspaper as the