

GUIDE TARGET LIVE WEIGHTS



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Information about target live weights provides farmers with an ability to compare the performance and progress of their own deer with information about performance that should reasonably be expected as determined from various research programs. Patterns of growth for each species reflect the influence of season and the time to reach mature weight.

Live weight, growth rate, stage of production and length of seasons are all important considerations used to estimate an animal's feed requirements that will allow it to meet production and growth targets. Information from this chapter is used to help estimate nutritional (energy) requirements for deer discussed in the chapter on nutrition.

Guide live weight targets are estimated from research undertaken in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Scotland and other countries.

Variations to Targets

Target live weight information provided below should only be considered a guide and weights suggested are for pure bred animals of each species. Targets may change for strains of each species that have a mature live weight different to those indicated and hybrid animals are likely to achieve higher weight gains than purebred species.

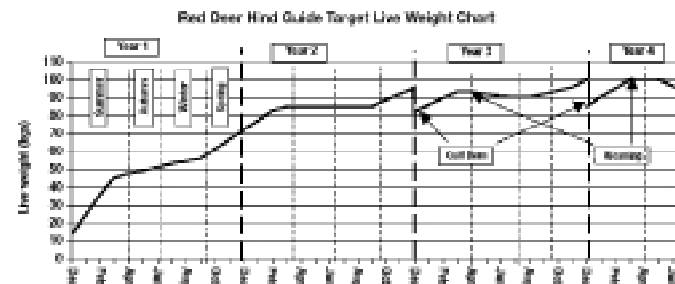
Target weights for deer can also vary between districts that experience different climatic conditions and also between seasons in the same district (for example growth rates are likely to be slower than normal in unseasonably cold springs). However the patterns of live weight gain will be similar to the patterns shown below.

Target Live Weights for Breeding Females

If breeding seasons on particular farms are managed differently than described here, the patterns of live weight gain can be moved along the X-axis of the appropriate graph to better reflect the situation for in individual farm.

Red Deer Hinds

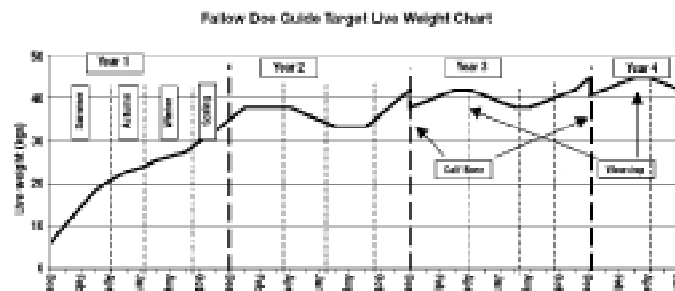
Guide live weight targets for Red deer hinds assume a mature live weight of 100 kgs at joining in April, birth occurs at the end of November and weaning occurs 15 weeks after birth at the end of February.



Graph 17: Guide live weight targets for a Red hind - 100 kg mature weight

Fallow Deer Does

Guide live weight targets for Fallow deer does assume a mature live weight of 45 kgs at joining in April, birth occurs at the end of November and weaning occurs 15 weeks after birth at the end of February.

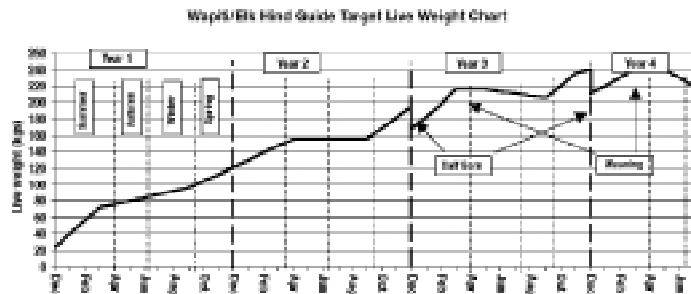


Graph 18: Guide live weight targets for a Fallow doe - 45 kg mature weight

Wapiti/Elk Hinds

Guide live weight targets for Wapiti/Elk hinds assume a mature live weight of 204 kgs at joining in mid March, birth occurs at the end of November and weaning occurs 15 weeks after birth at the end of February.

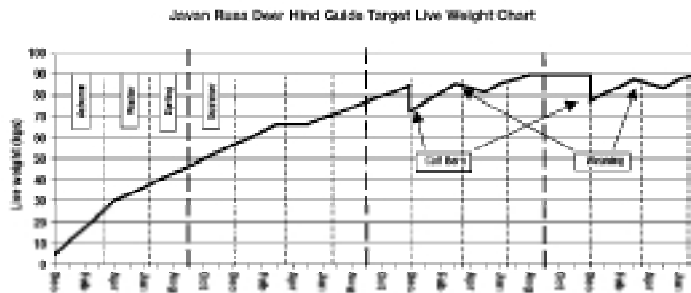
The mature live weight used is significantly less than mature live weights described for these animals in Canada [38]. However it reflects live weights achieved by elite breeders in Australia.



Graph 19: Guide live weight targets for a Wapiti/Elk hind - 240 kg mature weight

Rusa Deer Hinds

Guide live weight targets for Rusa hinds assume a mature live weight of 90 kgs at joining in late June, birth occurs at the beginning of March and weaning occurs 15 weeks after birth at the end of May. Target weights are estimated from data provided by Dryden [23] and include interpolations from data for Red deer and Wapiti/Elk provided by Fennessy [29] and Hudson [45]. The information is also based on an assumption that pattern of growth for Rusa hinds is similar to that for Red deer and Wapiti/Elk but that breeding season is as described above.



Graph 20: Guide live weight targets for a Rusa hind - 90 kg mature weight

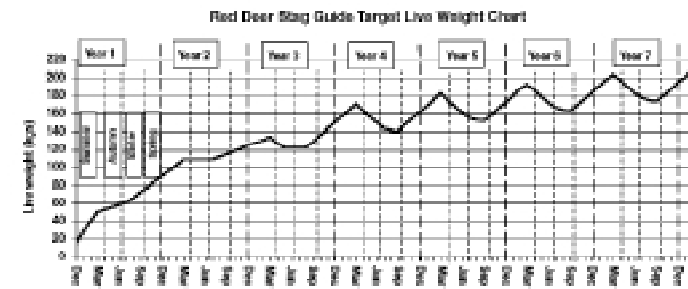
Target Live Weights for Breeding Males

It is reasonable that target live weights for different strains of within each species of deer (i.e. Mesopotamian compared with European Fallow and

Eastern European compared with Scottish Red deer), and hybrid deer (ie Wapiti x Red deer) may vary from the targets described here.

Red Deer Stags

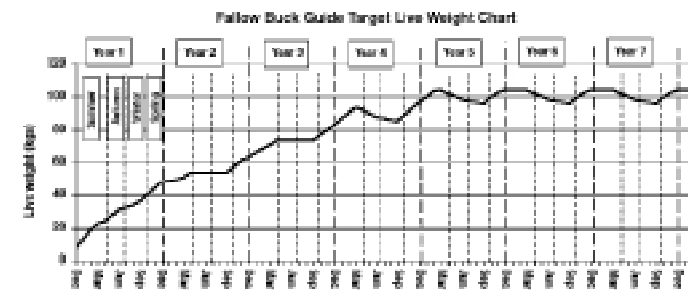
Guide live weight targets for Red stags assume that stags are born at the end of November and their mature live weight is 220 kgs at the beginning of Autumn.



Graph 21: Guide live weight targets for a Red stag - 220 kg mature weight

Fallow Deer Bucks

Guide live weight targets for Fallow bucks assume that bucks are born at the end of November and their mature live weight is about 105 kgs at the beginning of Autumn.



Graph 22: Guide live weight targets for a Fallow buck - 105kg mature weight

Wapiti/Elk Stags

Guide live weight targets for Wapiti/Elk stags assume that bucks are born at the end of November and their mature live weight is about 105 kgs at the beginning of autumn. The mature live weight used is significantly less than mature live weights described for these animals in Canada [38]. However it reflects live weights achieved by elite breeders in Australia.



Graph 23: Guide live weight targets for a Wapiti/Elk stag - 420kg mature weight

Rusa Deer Stags

Guide live weight targets for Rusa stags assume that they are born at the beginning of March and their mature live weight is about 140 kgs. Target weights are estimated from data provided by Dryden [25] and include interpolations from data for Red deer and Wapiti/Elk provided by Fennessy [29] and Hudson [45]. The information is also based on an assumption that pattern of growth for Rusa stags is similar to that for Red deer and Wapiti/Elk but that peak seasonal body weight for Rusa stags occurs in mid June (beginning of the rut) rather than in March.



Graph 24: Guide live weight targets for a Rusa stag - 140kg mature weight

Target Live Weights from Weaning to 18 Months

The target live weights shown represent reasonable growth rates observed in research in Australia, New Zealand and Canada. As indicated elsewhere, growth rates and subsequently target live weights for weaner stock may vary between and within species and hybrid animals are likely to grow more quickly and so be heavier at given ages than shown in the targets below.

Red Deer Weaners

Guide live weight targets for Red deer weaners assume that their weaning live weight is 45 to 55 kgs (depending on sex) and that they are weaned at 15 weeks of age at the beginning of autumn.



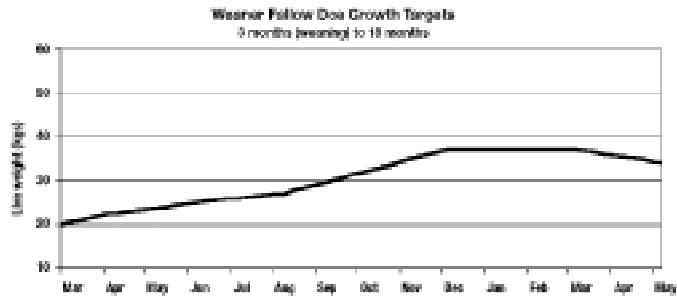
Graph 25: Guide live weight targets for female Red deer weaners



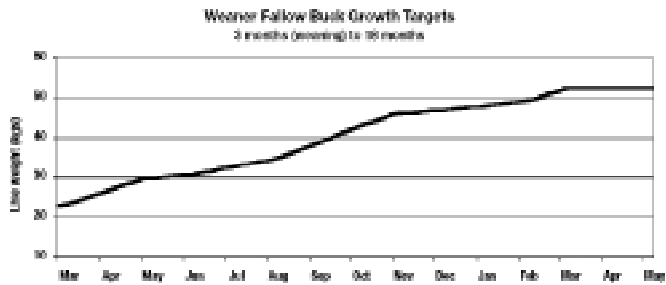
Graph 26: Guide live weight targets for male Red deer weaners

Fallow Deer Weaners

Guide live weight targets for Fallow deer weaners assume that their weaning live weight is 20 to 23 kgs (depending on sex) and that they are weaned at 15 weeks of age at the beginning of autumn.



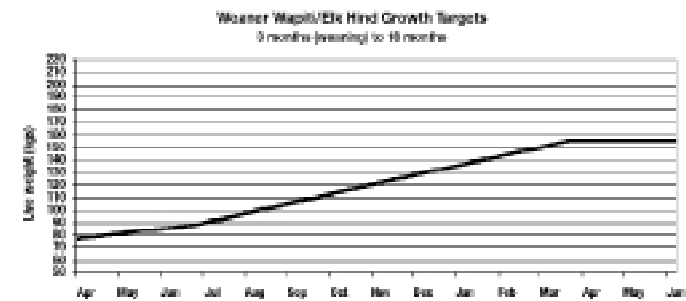
Graph 27: Guide live weight targets for female Fallow deer weaners



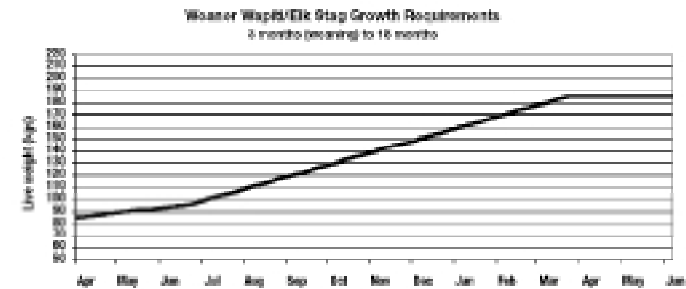
Graph 28: Guide live weight targets for male Fallow deer weaners

Wapiti/Elk Weaners

Guide live weight targets for Wapiti/Elk weaners assume that their weaning live weight is 75 to 85 kgs (depending on sex) and that they are weaned at 15 weeks of age at the beginning of autumn.



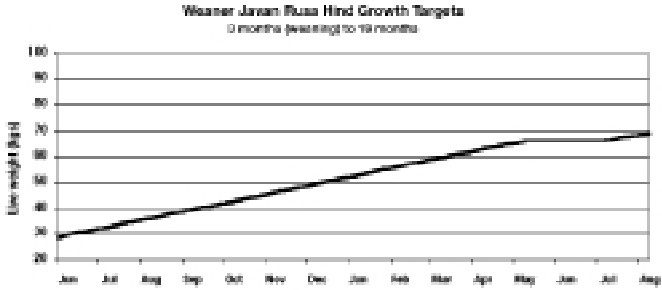
Graph 29: Guide live weight targets for Wapiti/Elk female weaners



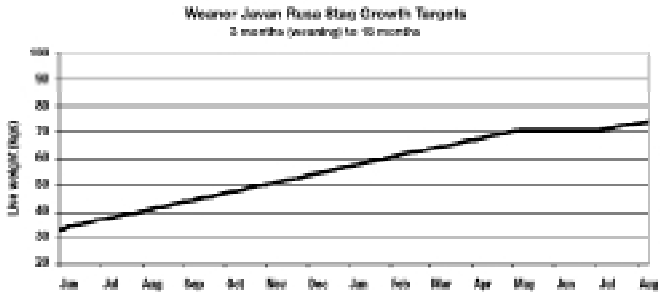
Graph 30: Guide live weight targets for Wapiti/Elk male weaners

Rusa Weaners

Guide live weight targets for Wapiti/Elk weaners assume that their weaning live weight is 28 to 33 kgs (depending on sex) and that they are weaned at 15 weeks of age at the beginning of May.



Graph 31: Guide live weight targets for Rusa deer female weaners



Graph 32: Guide live weight targets for Rusa deer male weaners