



2025 Dove Hunter Season Structure Survey

INTRODUCTION

LDWF conducted a statewide survey to examine the views and opinions of Louisiana dove hunters regarding hunting season structure and preferences. In January of 2025, a survey link was emailed to 19,937 hunters over the age of 17 that were registered in the Harvest Information Program (HIP) with a follow up email one week later to non-respondents. There were 19,366 valid email addresses. The sampling frame included only registrants who indicated that they hunted doves during the 2024-25 hunting season. The survey response rate was 15.3% (2,966 responses).

GENERAL PARTICIPATION

- 97% of survey respondents were male. 42% of respondents were 60+ years of age and 8% were 18-30 years of age.
- Seventeen percent of respondents did not hunt doves during the last five seasons.
- Of those respondents that hunted during the 2024-25 season, 79.5% hunted less than 6 days and 62% harvested less than 16 birds.
- 96% of hunters only hunted one zone for doves while the remaining 4% hunted both zones.
- When asked to identify the areas they hunted the most over the last 5 years the majority, 49%, hunted on private property owned by them or a hunting partner and 4% of dove hunters indicated they hunted LDWF Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's).
- 41% indicated that most of their dove hunting occurs on harvested agricultural fields while 26% indicated that most of their dove hunting occurs on fields specifically planted for doves.
- 44% of hunters indicated that the overall quality of dove hunting in Louisiana has gotten worse since they began hunting while 39% indicated that it has stayed the same or gotten a little better.

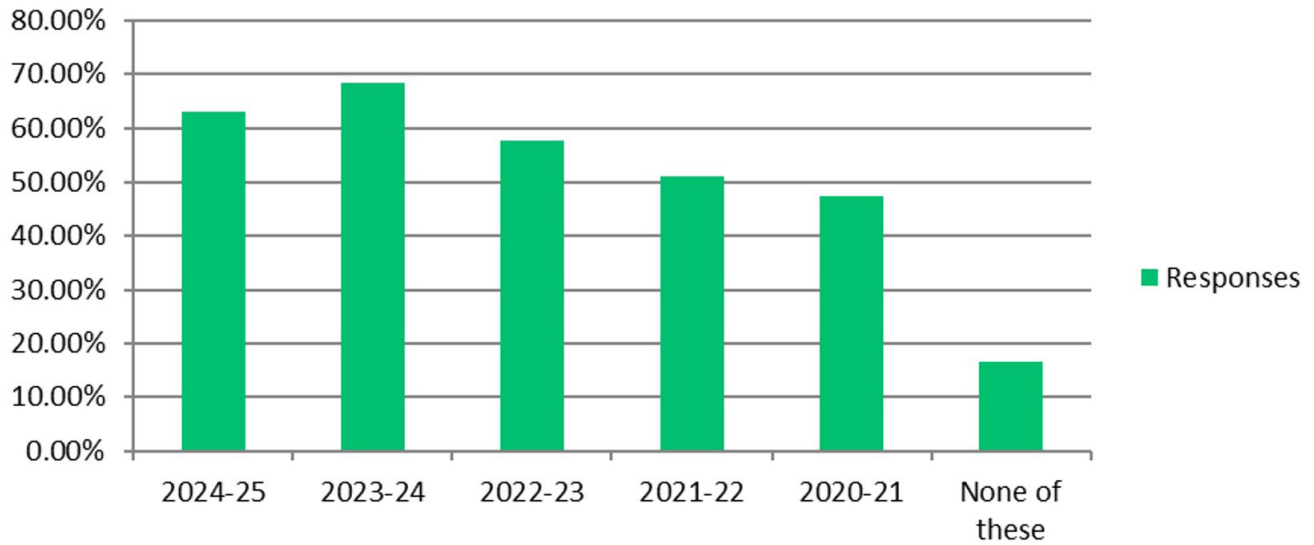
SOUTH ZONE

- 29% of respondents hunted in the south zone.
- Of those hunters that hunted the South zone during the first segment of the 2024-25 season, 93% indicated they hunted less than 7 days in the first segment and 46% indicated that most of their dove hunting occurred during the first week of the first segment.
- 48% and 68% of dove hunters did not hunt in either the second or third segments of the 2024-25 dove season, respectively.
- 30% of hunters felt the first segment should open on the first Saturday in September regardless of whether or not it is Labor Day weekend while 39% had no preference for opening day.
- Although there was no consensus concerning season openers for the second and third segments, hunters tended to show more support for opening the second segment the 2nd full weekend in October and opening the third segment the 1st full weekend in December.
- When asked what option hunters preferred if the goal was to have a later dove season hunters were evenly divided between a shorter 1st segment (23%) and later 3rd segment (23%). However, 30% of hunters would not prefer to have a later dove season.

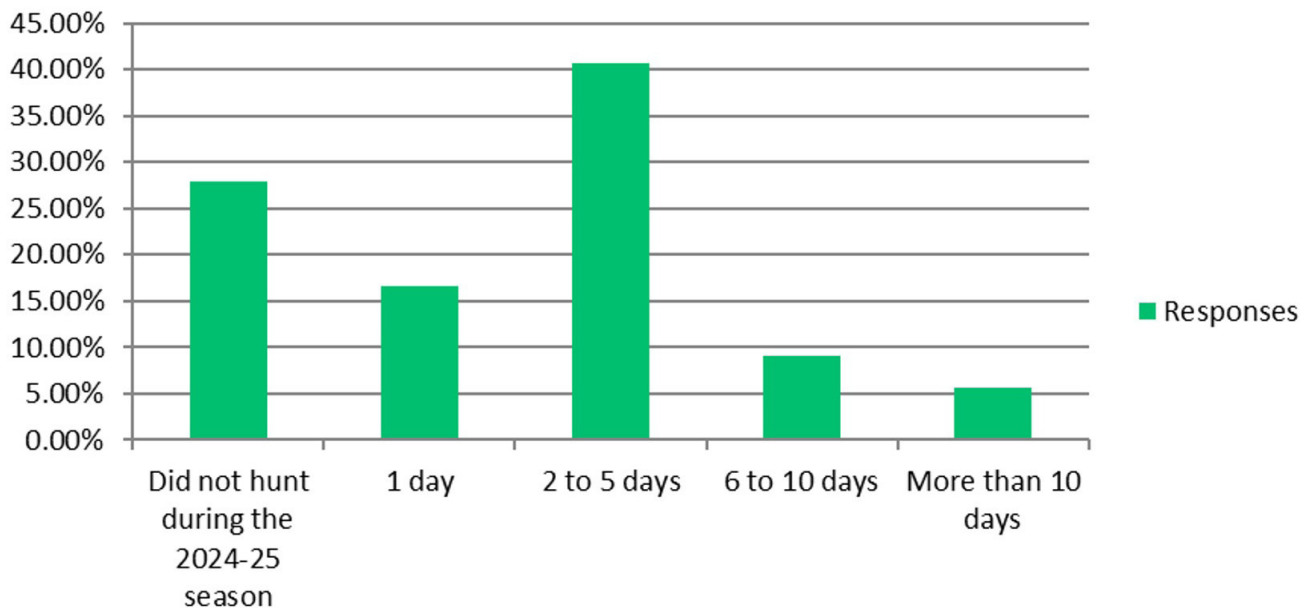
NORTH ZONE

- 63% of respondents hunted in the north zone
- Of those hunters that hunted the North zone during the first segment of the 2024-25 season, 92% indicated they hunted less than 7 days in the first segment and 60% indicated that most of their dove hunting occurred during the first week of the first segment.
- 74% and 85% of dove hunters did not hunt in either the second or third segments of the 2024-25 dove season.
- 43% of hunters felt the first segment should open on the first Saturday in September regardless of whether or not it is Labor Day weekend while 23% had no preference for opening day.
- Although there was no consensus concerning season openers for the second and third segments, hunters tended to show more support for opening the second segment the 1st full weekend in October and opening the third segment the 1st full weekend in December.
- When asked what option hunters preferred if the goal was to have a later dove season 43% of hunters stated they would not prefer to have a later season while 20% stated they preferred a later 3rd segment.

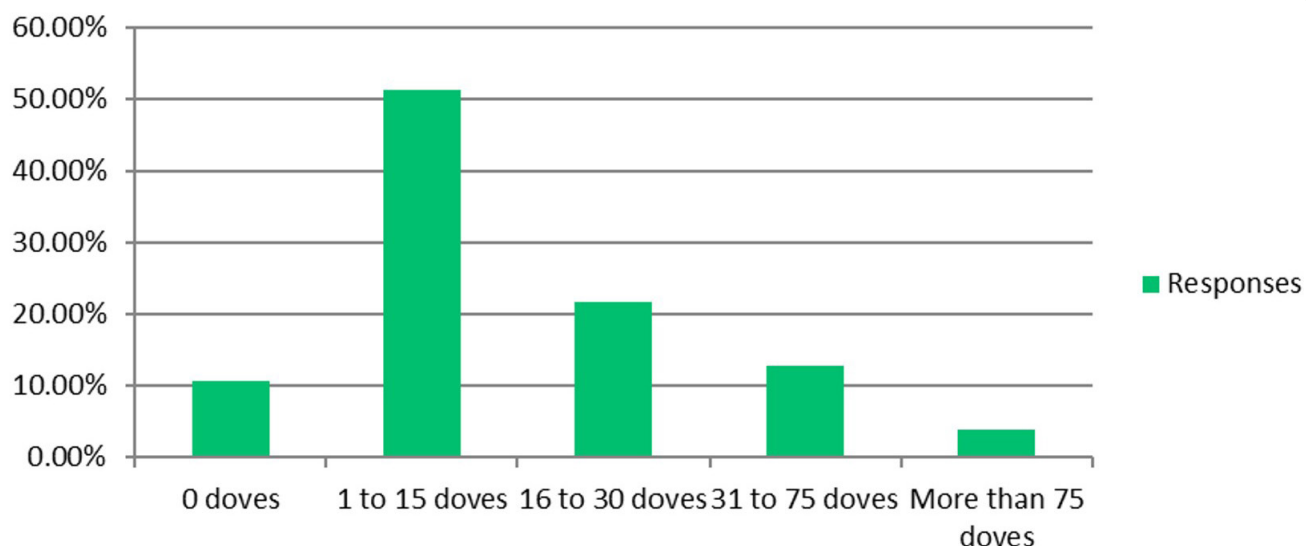
During which of the last 5 hunting seasons did you hunt doves in Louisiana? Select all that apply.



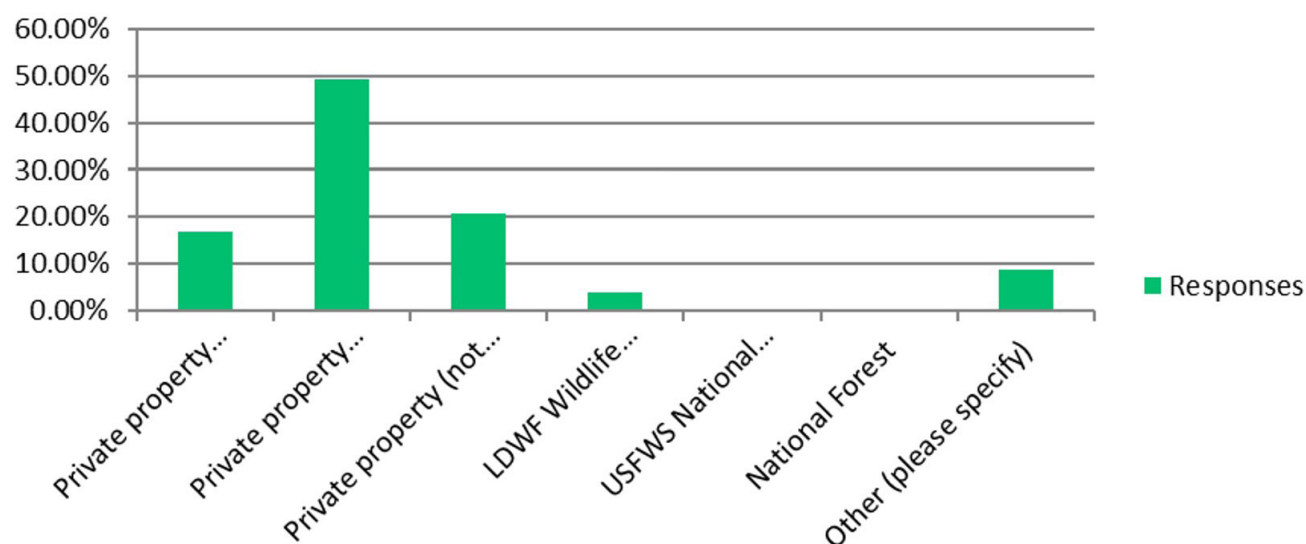
How many days did you hunt doves during the 2024-25 season in Louisiana?



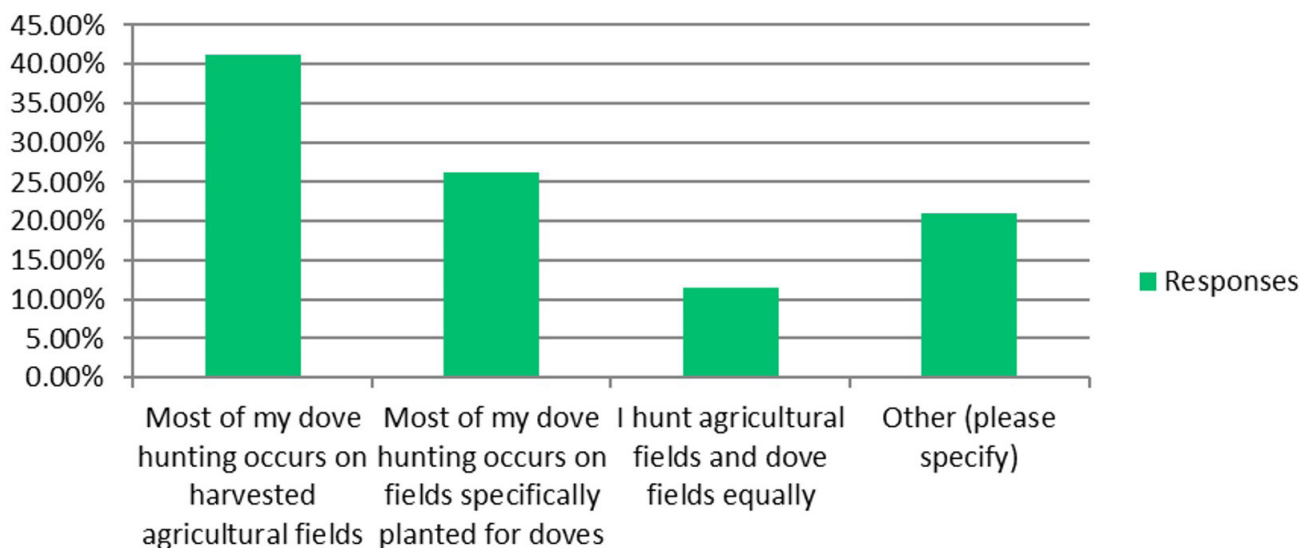
How many doves did you personally harvest during the 2024-25 season in Louisiana.



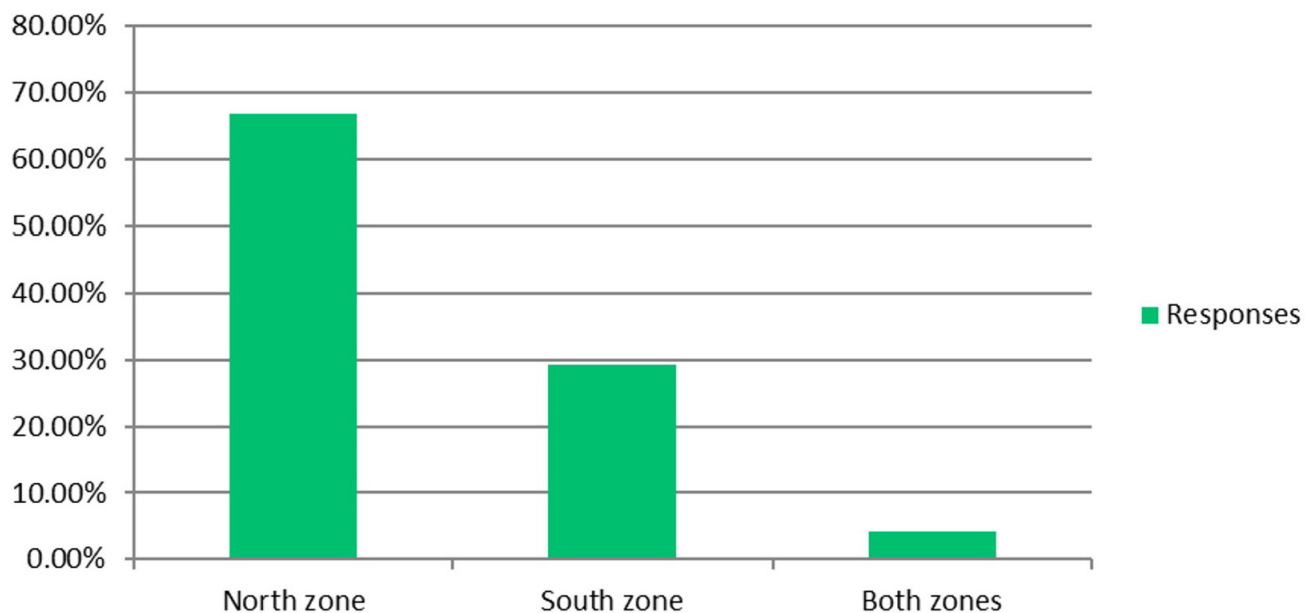
Please indicate the areas where you hunted doves the most in Louisiana in the past 5 years.



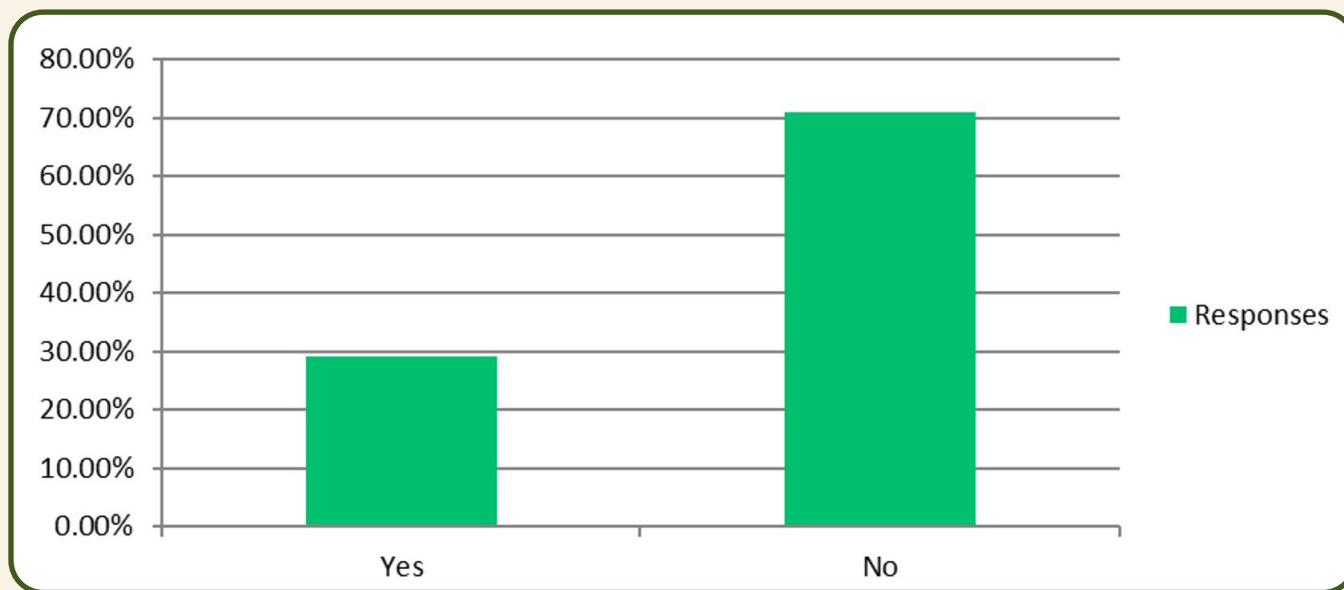
Which of the following best reflects the field crop type for areas you dove hunt the most?



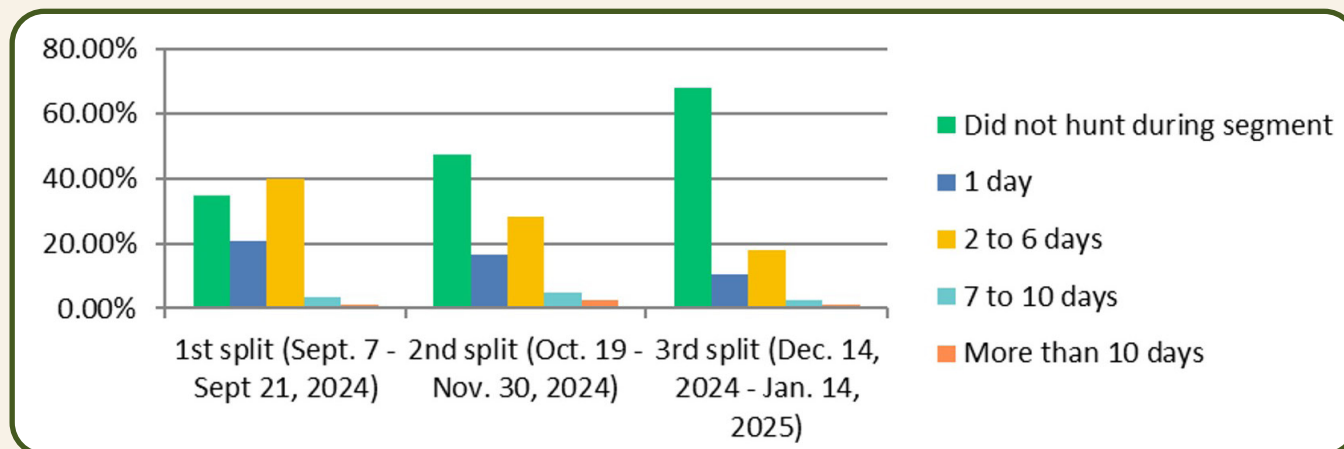
What best describes where you hunt doves? Dove Zones



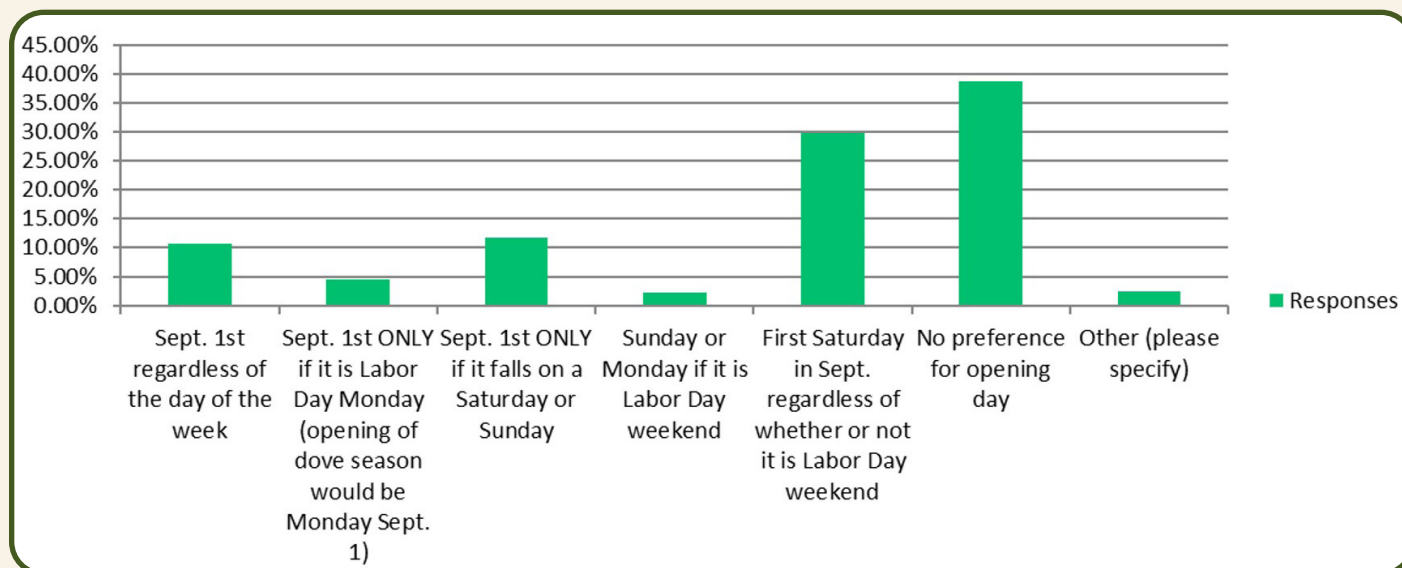
Did you hunt doves in the SOUTH zone during any of the past 5 hunting seasons?



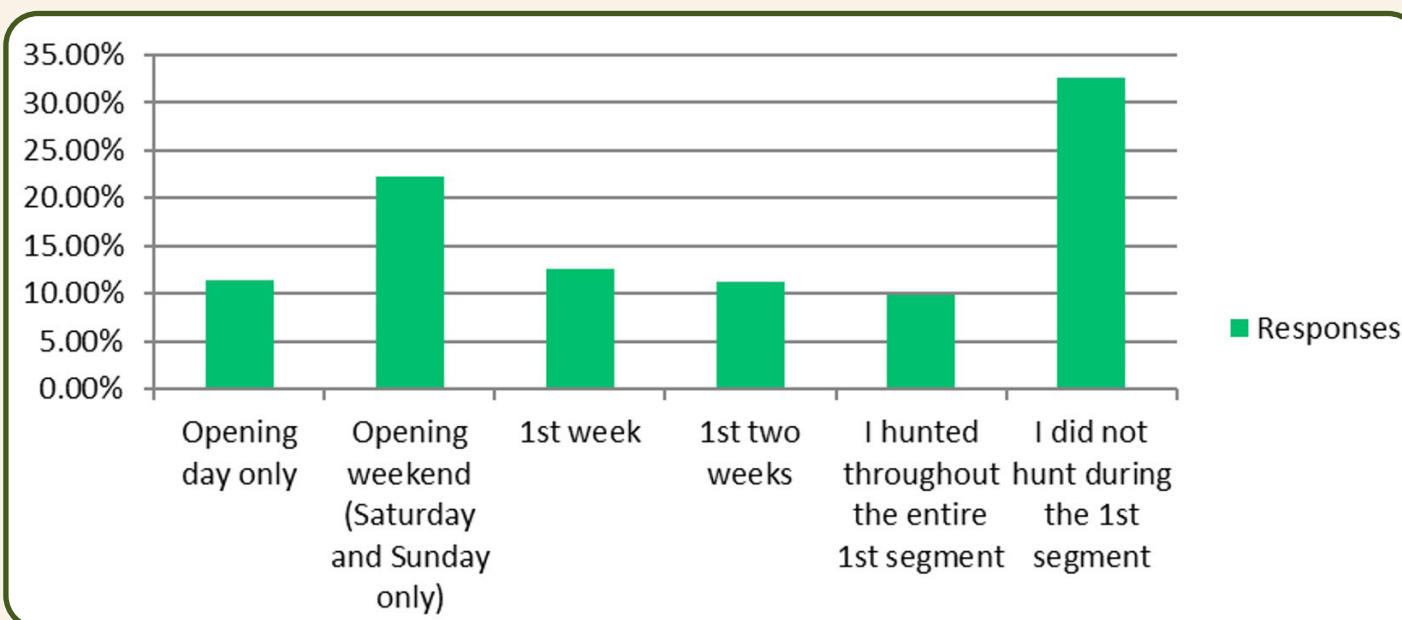
From the season described above, about how many days did you hunt doves in each segment during the 2024-25 season in Louisiana? Check one for each segment. (South Zone)



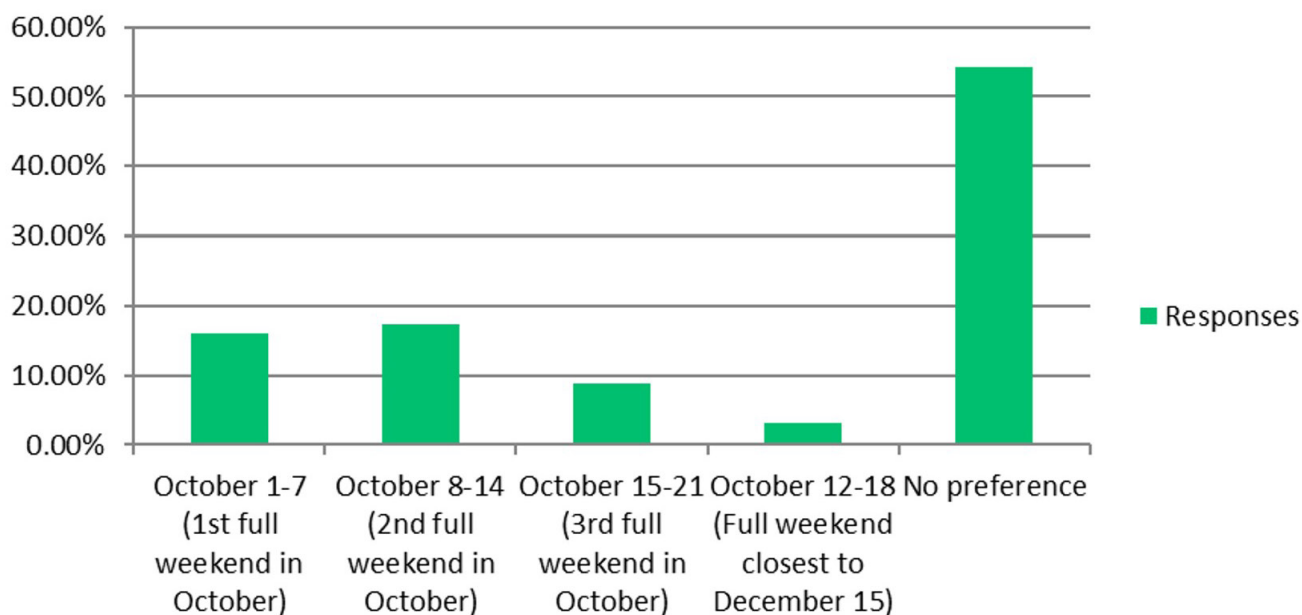
The south zone season should open:



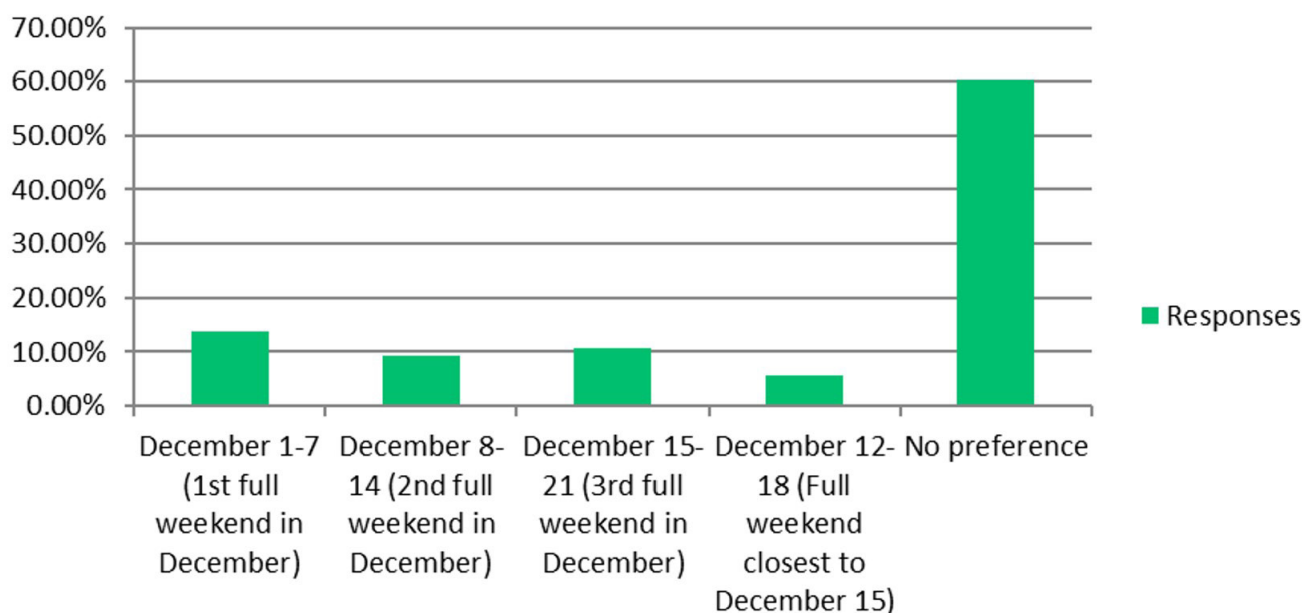
During the 1st segment of the 2024-25 dove season, when did most of your dove hunting occur? (South Zone)



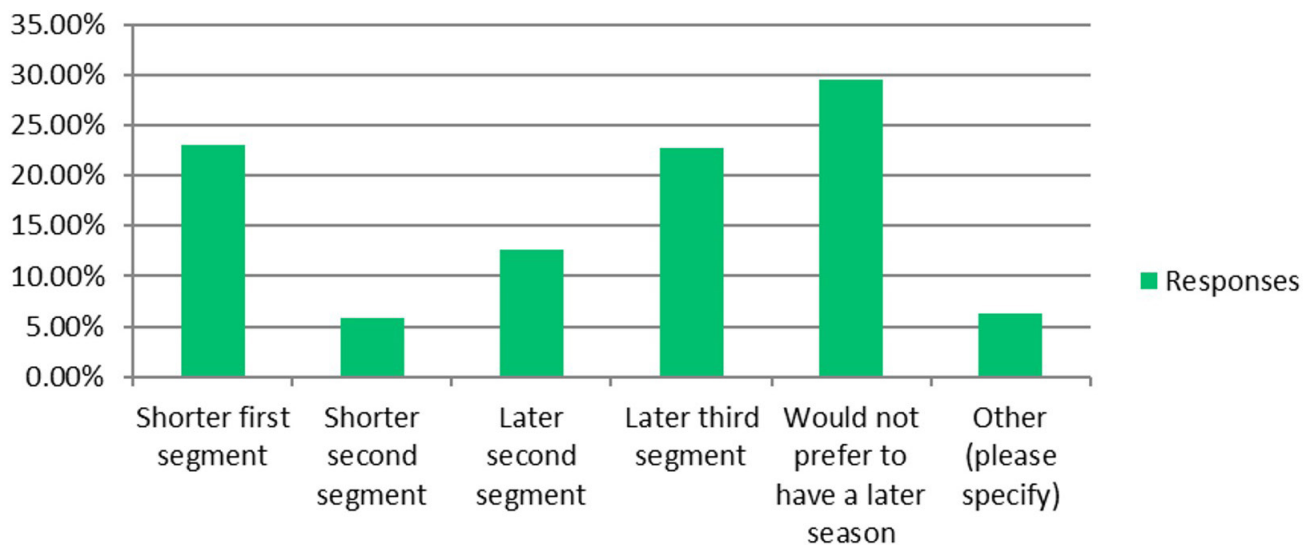
When should the 2nd segment begin in the south zone?



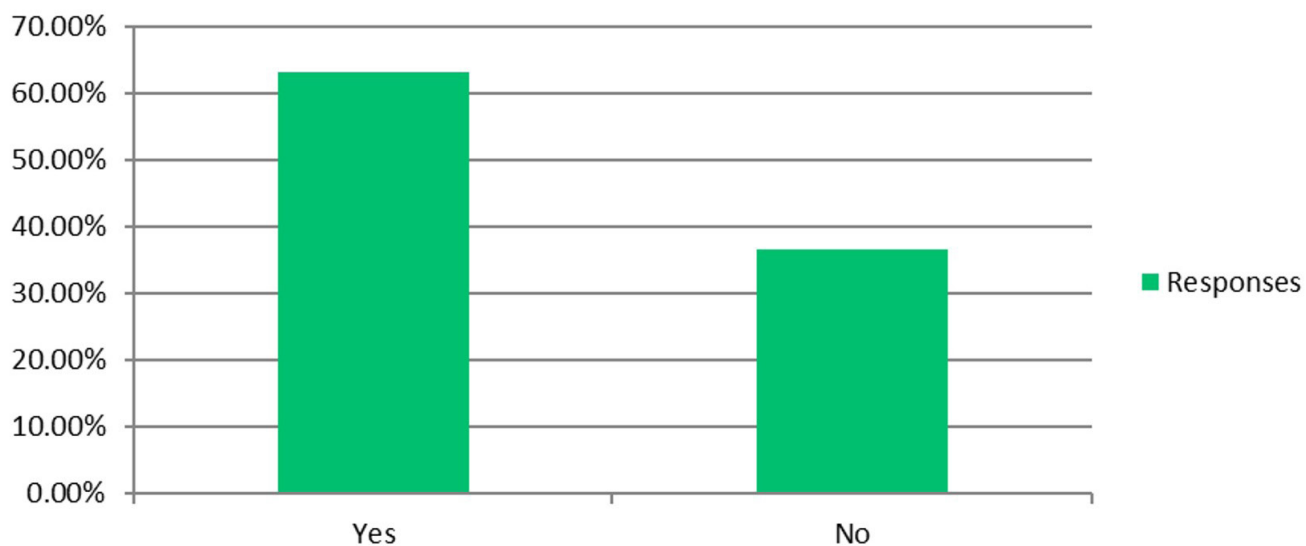
When should the 3rd segment begin in the south zone?



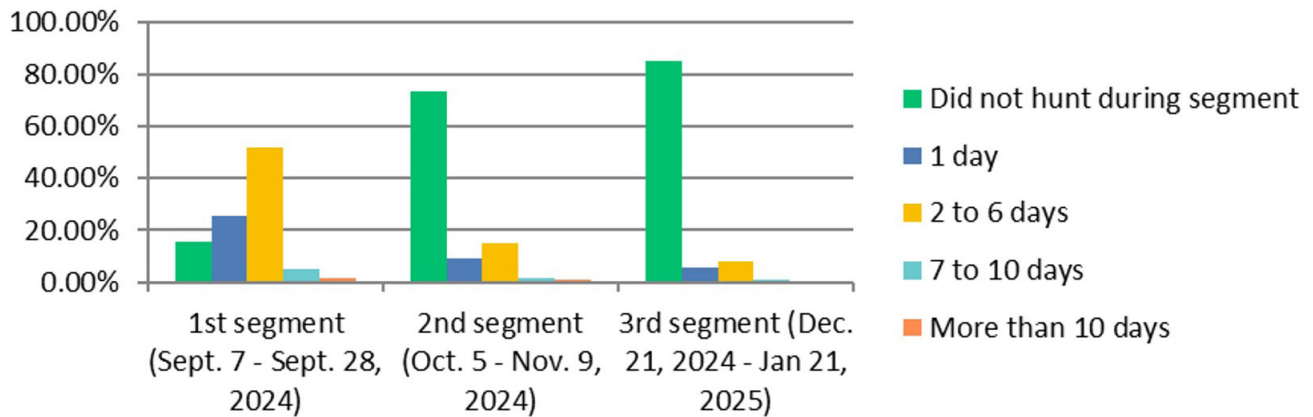
Which option do you prefer if the goal is to have a later dove season in the south zone?



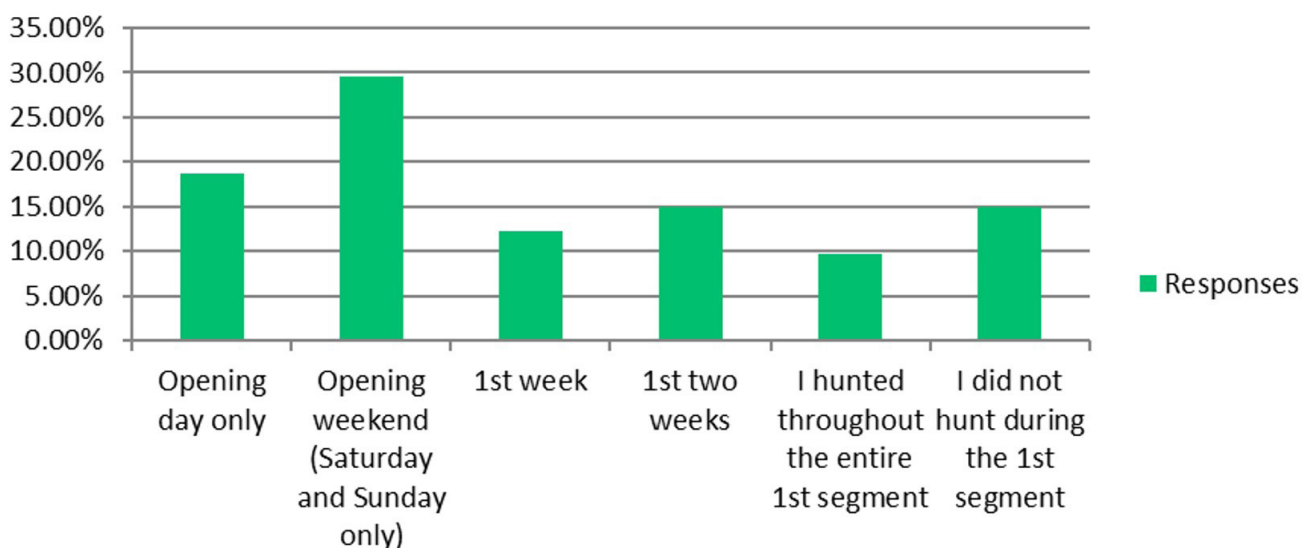
Did you hunt doves in the NORTH zone during any of the past 5 hunting seasons?



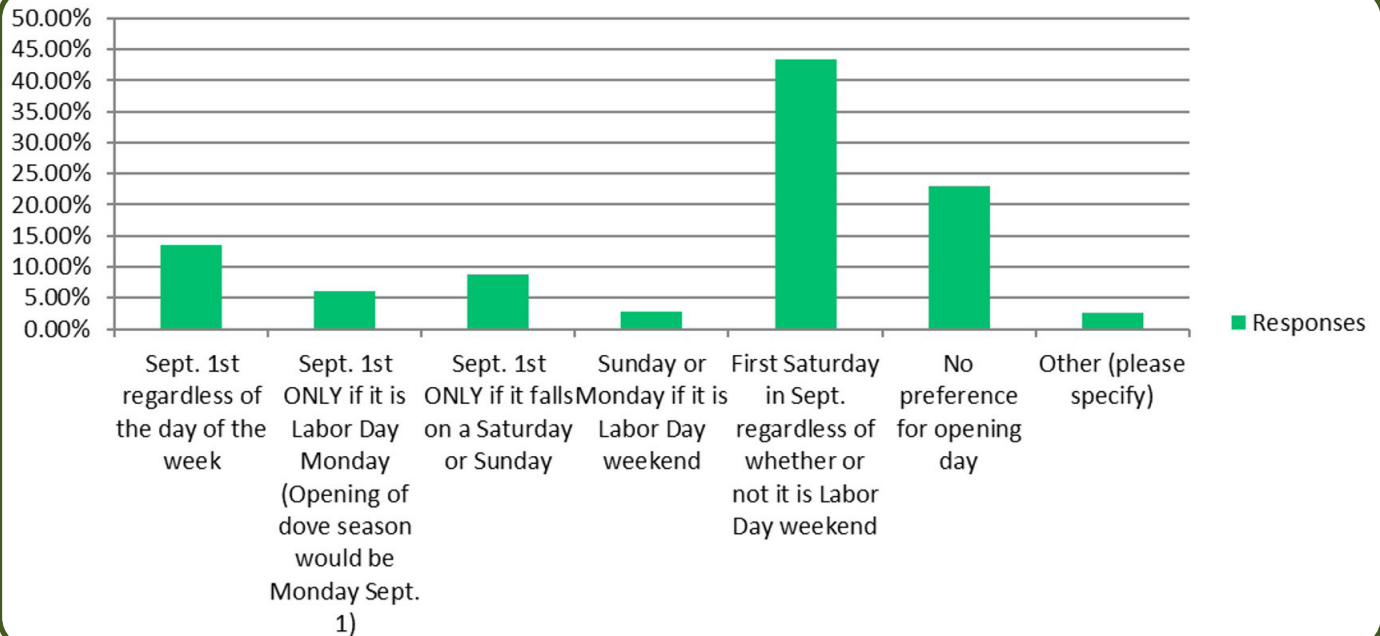
From the season described above, about how many days did you hunt doves in each segment during the 2024-25 season in Louisiana? Check one for each segment. (North Zone)



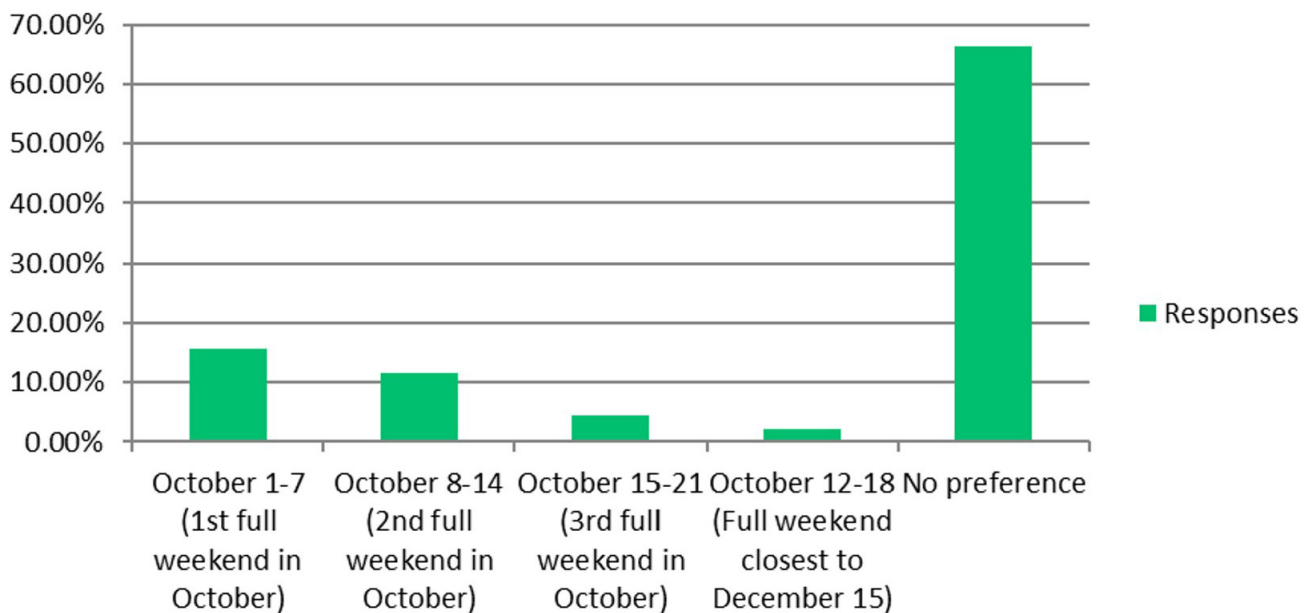
During the 1st segment of the 2024-25 dove season, when did most of your dove hunting occur? (North Zone)



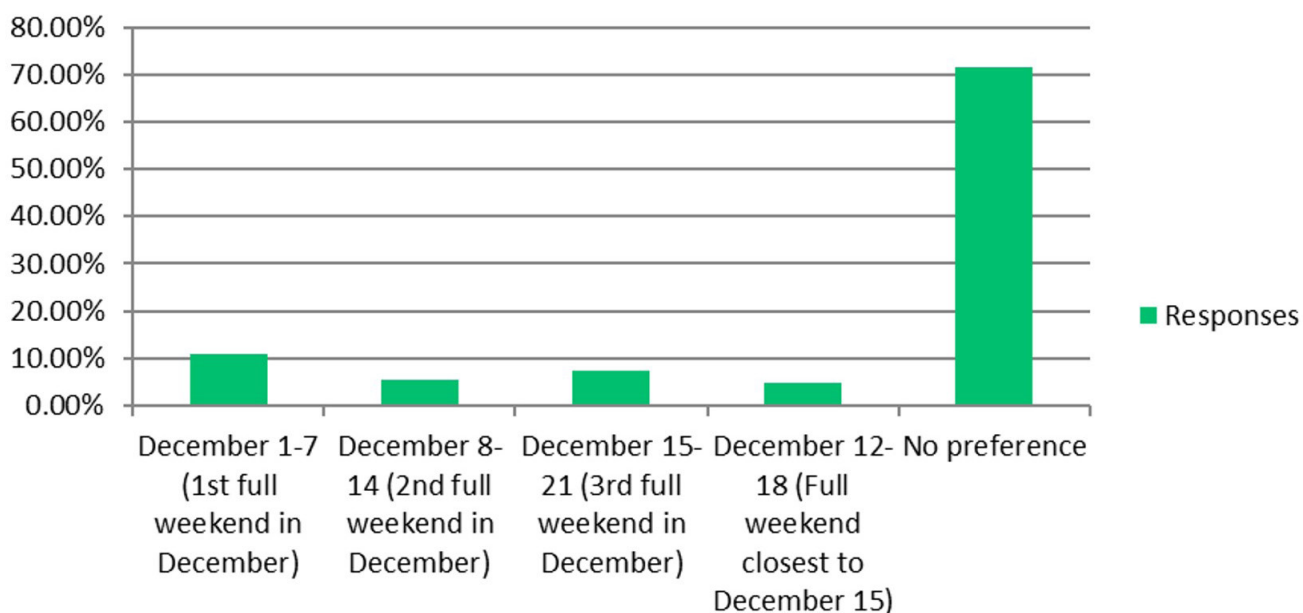
The north zone season should open:



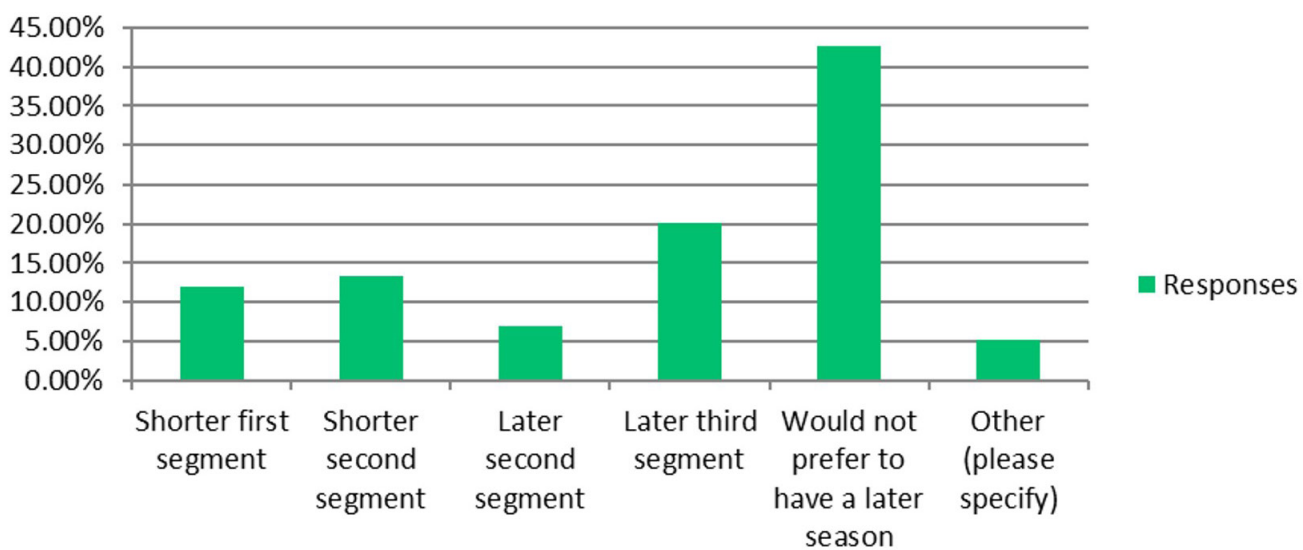
When should the 2nd segment begin in the north zone?



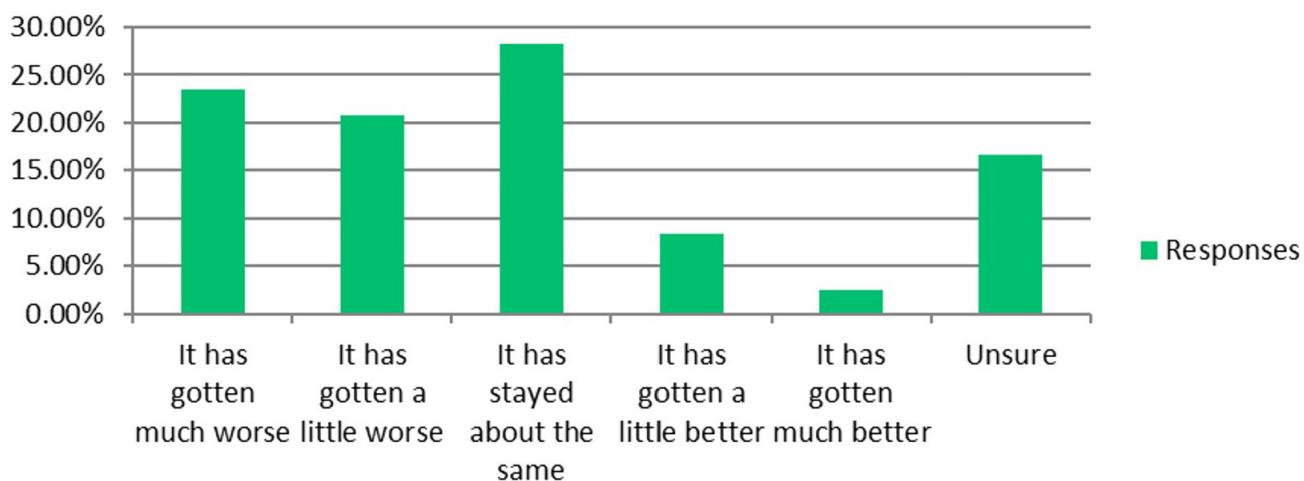
When should the 3rd segment begin in the north zone?



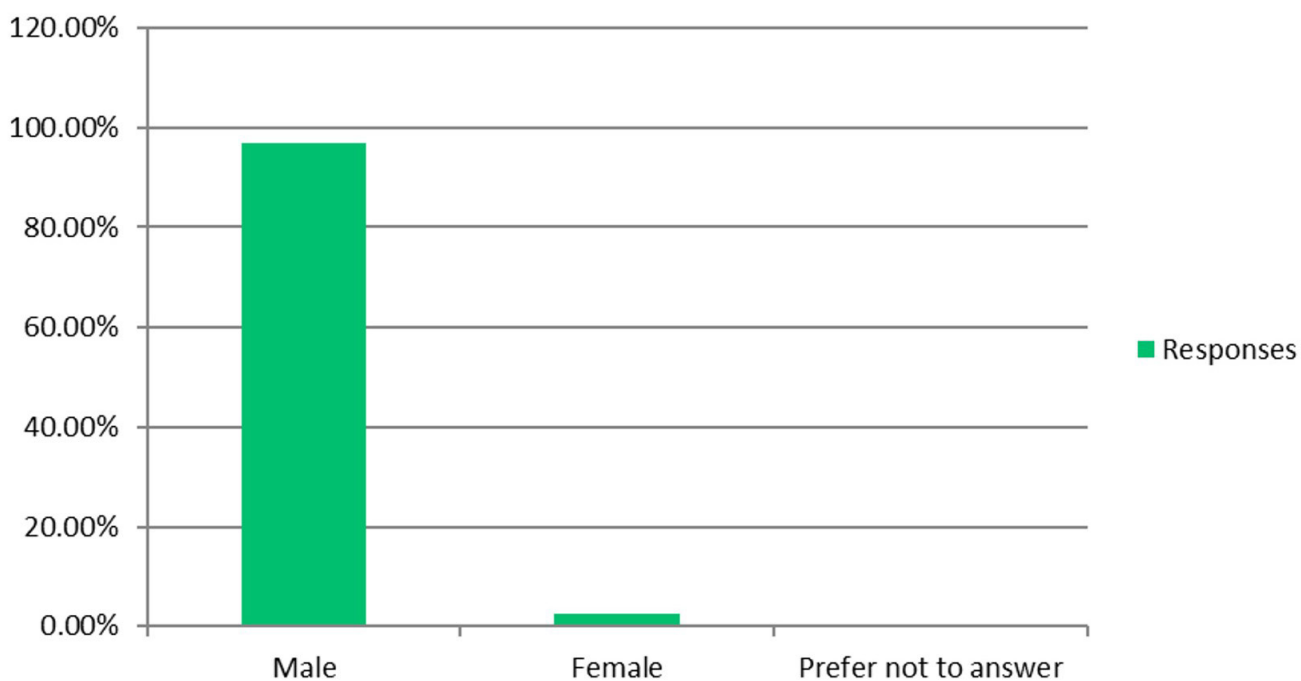
Which option do you prefer if the goal is to have a later dove season in the north zone?



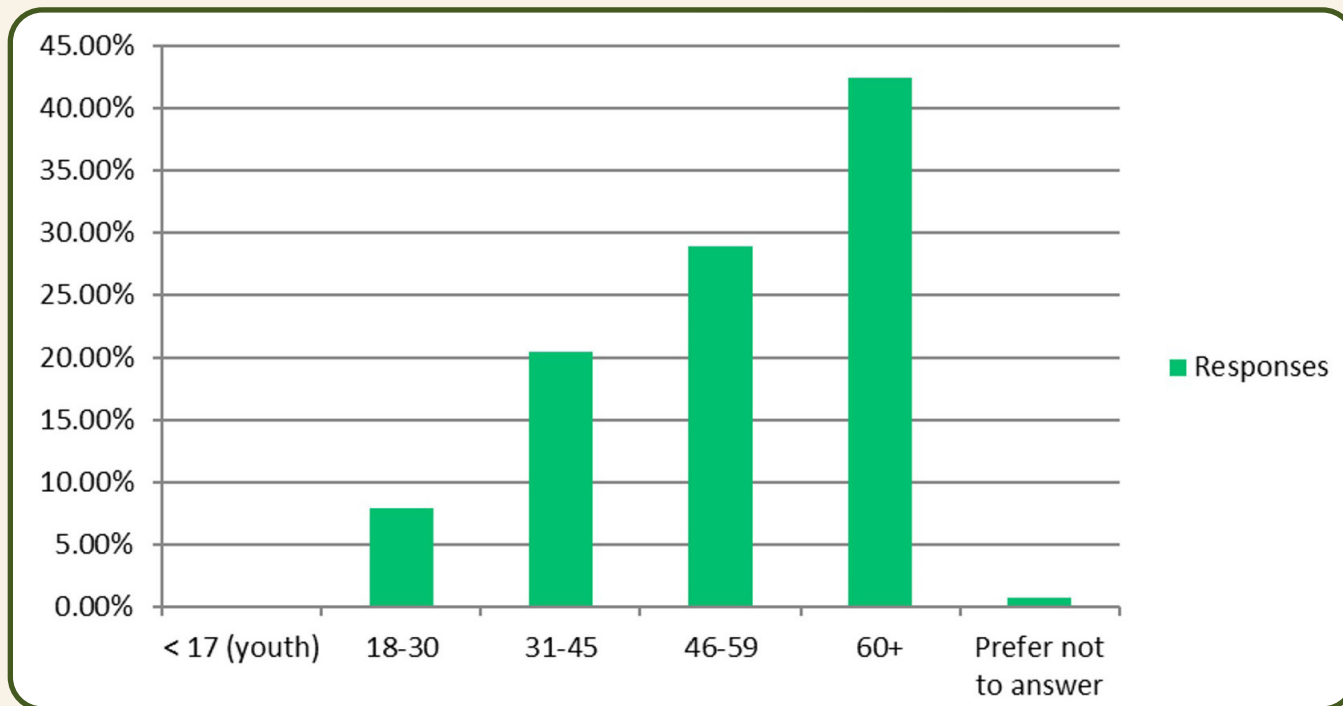
Since you began dove hunting in Louisiana, what changes have you seen in the overall quality of your dove hunting in Louisiana?



Are you male or female?



Please indicate your age group



Appendix 1. Dove Hunter Season Structure Survey



1. During which of the last 5 hunting seasons did you hunt doves in Louisiana? (*Check all that apply*)

- ☐ 2023-24
- ☐ 2022-23
- ☐ 2021-22
- ☐ 2020-21
- ☐ 2019-20

2. How many days did you hunt doves during the 2024-25 season in Louisiana? (*Check only one*)

- ☐ Did not hunt during 2023-24 season
- ☐ 1 day
- ☐ 2 to 5 days
- ☐ 6 to 10 days
- ☐ More than 10 days

3. How many doves did you personally harvest during the 2024-25 hunting season in Louisiana? (*Check only one*)

- ☐ 0 doves
- ☐ 1 to 15 doves
- ☐ 16 to 30 doves
- ☐ 31 to 75 doves
- ☐ More than 75 doves

4. Please indicate the areas where you hunted doves in Louisiana in the past 5 years.

- ☐ Private property (leased or rented by me or a hunting partner)
- ☐ Private property (owned by me or a hunting partner)
- ☐ Private property (not owned or leased by me or a hunting partner)
- ☐ LDWF Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs)
- ☐ USFWS National Wildlife Refuge
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

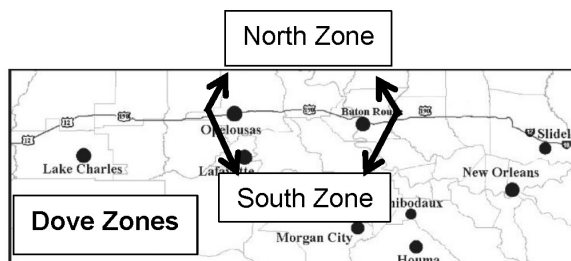
5. Which of the following best reflects the field crop type for areas you dove hunt. (*Check only one*)

- ☐ Most of my dove hunting occurs on harvested agricultural fields
- ☐ Most of my dove hunting occurs on fields specifically planted for doves
- ☐ I hunt agricultural fields and dove fields equally
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Season Preferences and Satisfaction

6. What best describes where you hunt doves?

- ☐ North zone
- ☐ South zone
- ☐ Both zones



7. Did you hunt doves in the South zone during any of the past 5 hunting seasons?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Appendix 1. Dove Hunter Season Structure Survey



Current federal guidelines allow for a 90 day dove season that may be split into 3 segments. The season can open no earlier than September 1st and must end no later than January 31st. Currently in the south zone the first segment runs Sept. 7 (first full weekend)-21, the second segment runs Oct. 19 – Nov. 30, and the third segment runs Dec. 14 – Jan 14.

8. From the season described above, about how many days did you hunt doves in each segment during the 2024-25 season in Louisiana?

(Check one for each segment)

	Did not hunt during segment	1 day	2 to 6 days	7 to 10 days	More than 10 days
1st split (September 7 to September 21, 2024)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2nd split (October 19 to November 30, 2024)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3rd split (December 14 to January 14, 2024)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. During the 1st segment of the 2024-25 dove season, when did *most* of your dove hunting occur?

(Check only one)

- ☐ Opening day only
☐ Opening weekend (Saturday and Sunday only)
☐ 1st week
☐ 1st two weeks
☐ I hunted throughout the entire 1st segment
☐ I did not hunt during the 1st segment

10. The South Zone season should open: *(Check only one)*

- ☐ Sept. 1st regardless of the day of week
☐ Sept. 1st ONLY if its is Labor Day Monday (opening of dove season would be Monday Sept. 1)
☐ Sept. 1st ONLY if it falls on a Saturday or Sunday
☐ Sunday or Monday if it is Labor Day weekend
☐ No preference for opening day
☐ Other (please specify): _____

11. When should the 2nd segment begin?

- ☐ October 1-7 (1st full weekend in October)
☐ October 8-14 (2nd full weekend in October)
☐ October 15-21 (3rd full weekend in October)
☐ October 12-18 (Full weekend closest to October 15)

12. When should the 3rd segment begin?

- ☐ December 1-7 (1st full weekend in December)
☐ December 8-14 (2nd full weekend in December)
☐ December 15-21 (3rd full weekend in December)
☐ December 12-18 (Full weekend closest to December 15)

Appendix 1. Dove Hunter Season Structure Survey



13. Which option do you prefer if the goal is to have a later dove season in the south zone?

- ☐ Shorter first segment
- ☐ Shorter second segment
- ☐ Later third segment
- ☐ Later second segment
- ☐ Would prefer not to have a later season
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

14. Did you hunt doves in the North zone during any of the past 5 hunting seasons?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Current federal guidelines allow for a 90 day dove season that may be split into 3 segments. The season can open no earlier than September 1st and must end no later than January 31st. Currently in the north zone the first segment runs Sept. 7 (first full weekend)-28, the second segment runs Oct. 5 – Nov. 9, and the third segment runs Dec. 21 – Jan 21.

15. From the season described above, about how many days did you hunt doves in each segment during the 2024-25 season in Louisiana?

(Check one for each segment)

	Did not hunt during segment	1 day	2 to 6 days	7 to 10 days	More than 10 days
1st segment (September 7 to September 28, 2024)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2nd segment (October 5 to November 9, 2024)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3rd segment (December 21 to January 21, 2024)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. During the 1st segment of the 2024-25 dove season, when did **most** of your dove hunting occur?

(Check only one)

- ☐ Opening day only
- ☐ Opening weekend (Saturday and Sunday only)
- ☐ 1st week
- ☐ 1st two weeks
- ☐ I hunted throughout the entire 1st segment
- ☐ I did not hunt during the 1st segment

17. The North Zone season should open: *(Check only one)*

- ☐ Sept. 1st regardless of the day of week
- ☐ Sept. 1st ONLY if it is Labor Day Monday (opening of dove season would be Monday Sept. 1)
- ☐ Sept. 1st ONLY if it falls on a Saturday or Sunday
- ☐ First Saturday in Sept. regardless of whether or not it is Labor Day weekend
- ☐ No preference for opening day
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Appendix 1. Dove Hunter Season Structure Survey



18. When should the 2nd segment begin?

- ☐ October 1-7 (1st full weekend in October)
- ☐ October 8-14 (2nd full weekend in October)
- ☐ October 15-21 (3rd full weekend in October)
- ☐ October 12-18 (Full weekend closest to October 15)

19. When should the 3rd segment begin?

- ☐ December 1-7 (1st full weekend in December)
- ☐ December 8-14 (2nd full weekend in December)
- ☐ December 15-21 (3rd full weekend in December)
- ☐ December 12-18 (Full weekend closest to December 15)

20. Which option do you prefer if the goal is to have a later dove season in the north zone?

- ☐ Shorter first segment
- ☐ Shorter second segment
- ☐ Later third segment
- ☐ Later second segment
- ☐ Would prefer not to have a later season
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

21. Since you began dove hunting, what changes have you seen in the overall quality of your dove hunting in Louisiana? (*Check only one*)

- ☐ it has gotten much worse
- ☐ it has gotten a little worse
- ☐ it has stayed about the same
- ☐ it has gotten a little better
- ☐ it has gotten much better
- ☐ Unsure

Background Information

22. Are you male or female?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

23. Please indicate your age group:

- ☐ ≤ 17 (youth)
- ☐ 18-30
- ☐ 31-45
- ☐ 46-59
- ☐ 60+ (senior)

24. Please provide any additional information you would like us to be aware of.

Thank you for your participation!
Take someone hunting and enjoy your Sportsman's Paradise!