

Conservation clubs across Wisconsin have until March 5 to apply to receive day-old rooster pheasant chicks to raise and release to provide local hunting opportunities.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources State Game Farm has been operating the Cooperative Day-old Chick program since 1936 to improve localized pheasant hunting opportunities across the state.

Cooperating conservation clubs are provided day-old rooster pheasant chicks by the department at no cost. In return, the clubs agree to cover all expenses related to rearing, feeding, maintaining and properly caring for the pheasant chicks. When the birds mature, the clubs release the pheasants on private and state-owned lands near the club that are open to public pheasant hunting.

“This program is an excellent opportunity for clubs to experience the the fun of raising pheasants and making thir home turf a better pheasant hunting ground,” states Bob Nack, State Game Farm manager.

The Day-old Chick program includes a “cost-share” option that allows cooperating clubs to keep a high percentage of the pheasants they raise for their own use, while returning a lower percentage of the birds back to the department. The State Game Farm also provides adult roosters for mentored youth and novice hunting programs at no charge. The DNR provides two roosters per student, with a maximum of 50 roosters per event.

A list of application materials and information on the 2012 Day-old Chick Program is available on the State Game Farm page of the DNR website or by calling the State Game Farm office at 608-635-8120. Completed applications should be sent to the local wildlife biologist by March 5, 2012. To find a local biologist, visit the “find and employee by subject” page of the DNR website and click on “subject” and search for wildlife biologist and then select by county.