

FAMILY OPERATION CASHES IN WITH IMPERIAL CLOVER

Michael Manley and his family own a 1,900-plus-acre chunk of land and lease another 200-plus-acre parcel from a neighbor in upper Northeast New York. The land consists of many fields and all types of cover that ranges from hardwoods, pines, sections filled with apple trees, blueberry patches, and any other possible scenario you can come up with.

The following is his story about the great success that he, his family and his friends have enjoyed with Imperial Whitetail Clover.

We started using Imperial Whitetail products around nine or ten years ago. Our family started using Imperial products because of the overwhelming results people we knew were getting. We run a private hunting camp that during a busy year can become 20 family and friends all hunting for a big buck. This camp takes no strangers, and requires the trust and fellowship that friends have earned over the past several years.

The terrain has rolling hills, and some of it stays fairly damp year round. There is a small stream that runs through the property, which is fed by a large pond that has great fishing (big northern pike and some nice largemouth). Other structures include 14 other ponds, which are all stocked and mostly all spring-fed. The fields that aren't Imperial Clover, are mostly hay fields, and some are year-round brush (switchgrass). The soil might not be best for growing Imperial Clover but it isn't that bad. The size of the deer did increase. We had thought over the years that the average deer size was decreasing in New York state, but with a quality food source we have found a median that can reach up to 185 to 200 pounds when a buck hits its peak growing size.

We have also noticed with good buck management and a good food source that antler size of our deer has greatly increased. About six years ago my father implemented a 6-point rule, which has been followed fairly well besides an occasional "mistake." Since we have gone to that rule we feel that we have tagged more mature bucks on average per year. For instance, three years ago we tagged 22 bucks, which means

Joe Siemetowski displays a fine 10-pointer taken on the Manley farm.



■ **Tomas Manley Farm Provides Great Deer Hunt** >>>>

By Styles Bridges

I had been in the area for almost a week bow hunting with a few friends passing the time before gun season opened up. I spent the last two days before opening day putting up some portables and helping my son, Styles, find a spot. I took care of the small stuff so I could concentrate on the big one. I was going to hunt in my honey hole which was located in the hardwoods on top of a large hill. The area was open and a haven for big bucks in the past. I have taken plenty of 120- and even a few 130-class bucks out of this spot.

I awoke two hours before daylight and went to my tree stand. The 2005 deer season brought some changes. It was the first-ever Saturday opener in the southern zone. I also was carrying my rifle, which felt out of place since I had always had a shotgun in my hand opening day. The laws changed for the county and opened up for rifle hunting this year.

The weather was ideal for deer hunting. The temperatures hovered around 30 degrees; the wind was still, and the leaves crisp on the floor of the woods. I can remember years when I've sat through winds that would make my tree stand rival a carnival fair roller coaster ride. In other years, snow and freezing rain have prevailed.

As the sun brightened the eastern sky, I could hear movement coming my way. A doe quickly came into view, stopping frequently and looking back. I immediately lost composure as I knew a buck had to follow. The second deer had horns extending well above and beyond his ears. Both deer quickly marched by my stand sensing something was not right. I steadied my gun and whistled in an attempt to stop the buck. Instead of stopping, the buck turned directly toward me and was mostly hidden by a large maple tree. I thought for sure I had lost my chance for an easy shot.

He started marching like a German soldier tentatively toward me. I shot as he presented his shoulder from behind the tree. At the ring of the shot, both deer spun and ran directly away from me. Because so much of the buck was covered by the maple tree, I did not get to appreciate his body language at the time of the shot. Within milliseconds I thought I had missed.

Both deer disappeared into the distance. I sat in my stand for what seemed like hours but probably only moments wondering whether I had blown a great opportunity for an easy shot on a good buck. After what I had thought had been 20 minutes, I decided to get down out of my stand and look for blood. As I approached the maple tree, the only evidence was torn-up maple leaves with nothing but mud on top. I followed the disturbed leaves for about 70 to 100 yards and decided I had better start moving in stealth mode. As I covered approximately another 100 yards, I saw no evidence of any kind of a wounded deer. Disappointment began to overcome me. As I turned to go back toward the maple tree and start again, I saw a patch of white 100 yards to my left. My disappointment turned to elation. It had to be the buck. He had run all that distance without ever showing any evidence of being hit by a high-caliber rifle bullet.

The Thomas Manley Farm has been a haven for big bucks in the last 15 years. Our group of hunters has always endeavored to let the first-year bucks go unharmed. In more recent years we have aspired only to shoot bucks that have three points on one side. This, combined with Mother Nature diminishing the population, has left a crop of deer that are bigger and of more trophy class. I am already looking forward to next year heading out to my opening day perch.



Left to right: Styles Bridges IV, Styles Bridges Sr., and Joe Siemetowski show off the results of a successful hunt.

every single hunter filled a tag with a deer 6 points or better. A majority of the bucks were 8-pointers and four were 10-point bucks. Last year we tagged only eight bucks, all of which were 7 points or better. In 2005 we tagged 13 bucks and only three of these bucks were less than 7 points. In all we bagged three 10-pointers, two of which were trophies in any state,

one big 9-point bruiser, a big 8-point buck and many other respectable deer that any hunter in the area would pull the trigger on.

In fact, as I write this story one of our neighbors has just killed an 8-pointer with a 20" spread. Three years back the third biggest buck in the state was taken by a neighbor. It scored an impressive 168 inches of

antler. My father is good friends with the gentlemen, and he has also implemented the 6-point rule.

As for the Imperial Whitetail Clover, it has attracted a ton of deer. It is a great attractant. I personally have seen some amazing deer just off the food plots. For instance, the year we took 22 deer, my youngest brother and I made frequent trips to a certain rectangular food plot in the early fall/late summer time period. We would park our bike several hundred yards away and stalk our way to the field. With the wind perfect most every time we would go undetected in full camouflage to the edge of the field, binoculars in hand. It never failed; a buck was there almost every night. A trophy 10-point buck and a mountable 8-pointer were frequently spotted. We studied the 10-point buck distinctively, and got to know it fairly well. My brother noticed one of the dog horns was shoveled, or had a flatness to it that was noticeable.

We told the guys, and everyone was excited. My uncle hunted the plot hard. He harvested a nice 8-pointer. The third day of the season the 10-pointer was harvested and it was the same deer we had studied earlier that year.

Behind our house we have three or four food plots that are anywhere from one to three acres. They are all in Imperial Clover. Most of them are in the open and are rarely hunted. The one that is hunted has produced three 8-pointers in the last five years. There are four clover fields across the road that are a little bit smaller. Two of them have a stand or a blind nearby. Otherwise all of the hunting takes place off of the plots on trails in the woods. Most of the larger bucks this year were never seen during the pre-season. All of the bucks killed this year were chasing does.

Absolute attraction by the gallon

Putting out the welcome mat for deer is as easy as pouring from a jug. Deer are so attracted by the smell and drawn to the taste of Magnet Mix that they will come from miles around – and keep coming back. Just shake and pour (no mixing required) and wait for the deer to show up. Just seconds of preparation provides gallons of attraction.

Because of Magnet Mix's incredible attractiveness, some states may consider it bait. Remember to check your local game laws before hunting over Magnet Mix.



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