



Whitetail Institute

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A MESSAGE FROM RAY SCOTT

Founder and President Whitetail Institute of North America

Desserts for Deer

Jim Casada's article on soft mast (pg. 10) made my mouth water with all his comparisons of deep-dish berry cobblers, cakes and other goodies to the glories of lush ripe persimmons, pears, apples, muscadine grapes and other soft mast deer enjoy in the wild.

A confirmed sugar addict myself, it's not hard to understand why deer love such treats.

It reminds me of one of the first lessons we learned at the Institute many years ago. You can have a great, well-researched, nutritious product, but if the deer won't eat it, it's essentially worthless. So along with top-quality nutrition, we make sure all our products are palatable (that's scientific talk for good to eat) so that they can draw the deer as well as hold and grow them.

Jim's article about deer's weakness for sweets really got me to thinking about human diets as well as deer diets. It seems we share some things in common, and serious deer managers realized long ago that the Institute was well ahead of the curve. Today's headlines scream about the effects of salt, sugar and empty calories and what they're doing to the health of our society. We've been concerned about the same thing for the

past 20 years, referring to the empty-calorie, low quality supplements and products available for deer for so many years. Junk food for deer.

The end result of junk food and empty calories is tragic. As a nation we deal with obesity and chronic illness such as diabetes and heart disease. We see the effects even more quickly in the deer population with scrawny bodies, pathetic, misshapen antlers and weak, undernourished fawns. In other words, a sub-optimal deer herd with virtually no chance of producing trophy-class bucks.

We are indeed fortunate as hunters and managers to be able to influence deer diet and environment through management and good nutrition. And, we can appreciate even more the role the Whitetail Institute has played over the last 20 years to improve the quality of whitetail across the country.

Wouldn't it be great if there was a Whitetail Institute for humans?



Ray Scott

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"Deer Nutrition Is All We Do!"