

# Managing pest birds



Lee Humberg  
 State Director  
 USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services  
 Smith Hall, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN

# Things to consider

- Extent of damage
- Size of fields
- Proximity to other habitats
- Duration of activities
- Proximity to urban areas
- Legal protection of offending species
- Regulations associated with tools/products
- Availability of staff and/or product
- Cost

# Lethal vs. Nonlethal

- Lethal
  - More regulations
  - Active involvement
  - Short duration
- Nonlethal
  - Less regulations
  - Active or passive
  - Longer duration

# Nonlethal Options

- Auditory harassment
  - Propane Cannons
  - Pyrotechnics
  - Distress calls
  - Predatory calls
- Visual harassment
  - Lasers
  - Reflective devices
  - High intensity lights
  - Inflatables (motorized and static)

# Nonlethal Options

- Habitat Modification
  - Prune or remove roost trees
- Field rotation
  - Use fields not adjacent to roosts
- Exclusion
  - Netting
- Taste Aversion (pesticide)
  - Applied to seed or foliar application

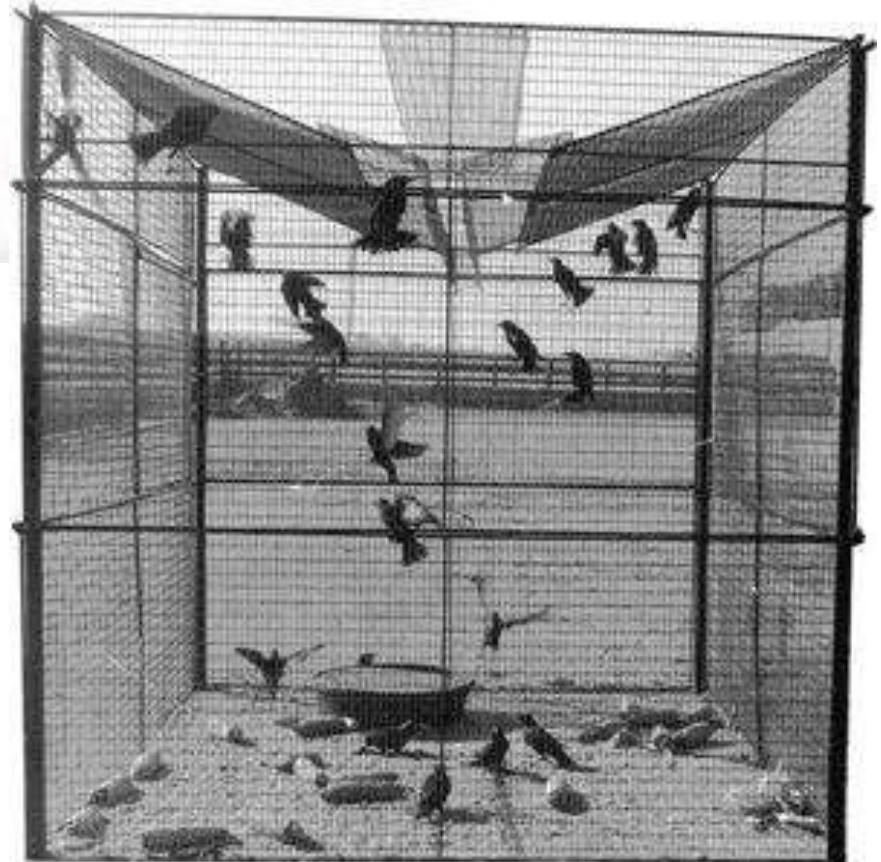
# Nonlethal Options



# Lethal Options

- Shooting
  - Shotgun
- Trapping
  - Variety depending on the application
- Pesticides
  - Taste aversion
  - Toxicants

# Lethal Options





# Regulations

- Pesticides or Shooting
  - Local ordinances
  - Licenses
- Protection of species
  - MBTA
    - Exotics excluded
  - Blackbird Depredation Order

# Bird Mgmt Regulations

- MBTA
  - Requires permit to lethally take individuals and nests of migratory species (USFWS and DNR permit)
  - Starts with contacting USDA WS for consultation
  - Exotic spp. not protected: European Starlings, Pigeons, and House Sparrows

# Bird Mgmt Regulations

- Depredation Order
  - 50 CFR 21.43
  - Allows for control of certain species of blackbirds, cowbirds, grackles, crows and magpies.
  - To mitigate for serious injuries to agricultural or horticultural crops or livestock feed

# Depredation Order

- Species Covered
  - Blackbirds: Brewers, Red-winged, and Yellow-headed
  - Cowbirds: Bronzed, Brown-headed, and Shiny
  - Crows: American, Fish, and Northwestern
  - Grackles: Boat-tailed, Common, Great-tailed, and Greater Antillean
  - Magpies: Black-billed

**\*\*\*Rusty Blackbirds NOT covered\*\*\***

# Depredation Order

- Activities Covered
  - Shooting: Use non-toxic shot, obey local and state ordinances
  - Trapping: Use of any traps legally allowed in the state
  - You may NOT sell or barter birds and/or parts of birds

# Depredation Order

- Reporting requirements
  - Annual report submitted to FWS including;
    - Species
    - Number taken
    - Method of take
    - Disposition

# Final Thoughts

- Know your target species...proper identification
- Try non-lethal alternatives first
- Mix it up...integrated strategy
- Share your findings and results