# ASSEMBLY, No. 5688

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

## 222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 19, 2026

**Sponsored by:**
**Assemblyman MICHAEL INGANAMORT**
**District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Allows deer depredation permit holders to harvest antlers, venison, and hide from deer.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.

**AN ACT** concerning deer depredation permits and harvesting of deer and amending R.S.23:4-42.

**BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. R.S.23:4-42 is amended to read as follows:

23:4-42. a. Except as provided in subsection b. of this section, no person shall hunt for, pursue, shoot at, take, kill, wound or attempt to take, kill or wound a deer of any description prohibited by the provisions of the State Fish and Game Code, or hunt for, pursue, shoot at, take, kill, wound or attempt to take, kill or wound any wild deer at any time except during the period permitted by the State Fish and Game Code, or kill in any one year more than the number of deer permitted by the State Fish and Game Code.

b. The owner or lessee of any land, a portion of which is under cultivation, or the authorized agents of the owner or lessee having on their person a written permit issued by the division and countersigned by the owner or lessee may kill any deer that may be found on that land during the period covered by the permit. If requested by the owner or lessee of the land, the period covered by the permit issued to the owner or lessee, or authorized agent thereof, shall also include the entire months of February and March. The <u>owner or lessee of the land, or authorized agent thereof, may harvest antlers, venison, and hides from deer taken pursuant to the permit. If an owner or lessee of the land, or authorized agent thereof, does not harvest a deer hunted pursuant to the permit the</u> carcass of a deer killed under such permit shall become the property of the division and may be removed and disposed of in the manner it directs. For the purpose of this section, "land under cultivation" shall mean (1) pasture fields that are seeded with cultivated grass or that have been so seeded within the prior 12 months, or (2) land on which planted crops are growing or were growing within the prior 12 months. The division may require the owner or lessee of the land to provide evidence of deer damage within the prior 12 months as a condition of issuing a permit pursuant to this subsection.
(cf: P.L.1999, c.327, s.1)

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill allows for the owner or lessee of any land under cultivation, or the authorized agents of the owner or lessee, to

**EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.**

**Matter underlined <u>thus</u> is new matter.**

harvest antlers, hides, and venison from deer hunted pursuant to a deer depredation permit. This legislation aims to encourage greater hunter participation with owners or lessees of land under cultivation that possess deer depredation permits. Through participation, the bill aims to eliminate the waste of deer carcasses decaying on properties and to help New Jersey farmers mitigate ongoing annual crop damage caused by deer.