BAITING *is* LEGAL
but hunters should understand the rules

BY **JOHN N. FELSHER**

Thanks to SB66, a new law passed in 2019 by the Alabama Legislature, hunters in the Cotton State can now legally hunt over bait for both white-tailed deer and feral hogs on private lands.

"Hunters can hunt feral hogs and white-tailed deer over bait on privately owned or leased land if they purchase a baiting license," confirmed Chuck Sykes, director of the Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division. "All hunters wishing to hunt over bait must purchase the license. There are no exemptions for the bait privilege license. This includes even hunters historically exempt from purchasing a hunting license, such as residents 65 years old or older, those under 16 years old and people hunting on their own property."

The new baiting license costs $15 for residents and $51 for non-residents. People can buy a baiting license wherever they usually buy their Alabama hunting and fishing licenses. The annual baiting licenses expire at midnight on Aug. 31 each year along with all the other Alabama hunting and fishing licenses.

The baiting law passed by the legislature only applies to private property. State and federal public lands still prohibit baiting for all game species. Before hunting any private property as a guest, sportsmen will need to know if they must buy a baiting privilege license for that property or not.

"Baiting on public lands remains illegal for both deer and hogs," Sykes empha-

Photo by John N. Felsher

Daniel Felsher looks for more game while examining the wild hog he shot.

sized. "Also, it is still illegal to hunt any other wildlife other than deer or feral hogs with the aid of bait."

People can still choose not to buy the baiting license if they wish. For people who refuse to buy the baiting license, the law remains the same as during the 2018-19 hunting season. People without baiting licenses can put out supplemental food for deer and hogs on private land, but they can't hunt within 100 yards of it. In