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## Weekly Update



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The National Bison Association (NBA) Weekly Update is an exclusive service for NBA members.

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### *NBA Weekly Update for March 31, 2023*

*The Weekly Update is a service designed to provide National Bison Association members with news and information affecting bison production and marketing. Many items in the Weekly Update are reprinted from outside sources. The content of those articles does not necessarily reflect the policy position of the National Bison Association. The articles are reproduced here only as a means to keep our membership informed as much as possible of all information and opinions relating to bison that is circulating publicly.*

### **NBA Heads to Minnesota Bison Association Spring Education Conference**

The NBA will be well represented at the Minnesota Bison Association's (MnBA) 30th anniversary Spring Education Conference in Alexandria, MN this weekend.

NBA executive director, Jim Matheson, program manager, Lydia Whitman, President, Chad Kremer, International Director, Robert Johnson, and Region V Director, Adam Ulbricht - who is also the executive director of the Minnesota Association, will all be attending.

Matheson will be interviewed by Ulbricht on Friday evening on the state of the industry and NBA focus areas, and Johnson will present on improving bison herd management. See a full agenda at <https://mnbison.org/events/30th-annual-spring-education-conference>

The education conference is an annual offering from the MnBA and has educated thousands of producers from Minnesota and well beyond over its thirty-year history. The

conference also includes a ranch tour from host, Hidden Bison Ranch, great bison meals and more.

## **NBA Begins Finalizing Summer Conference Events**

NBA members can expect a shorter journey to the NBA's summer get-togethers, as we finalize six separate events that will span from Idaho to West Virginia. Each event will feature a unique agenda.

Said NBA executive director, Jim Matheson, "We've long heard from members that while they would love to join the NBA for its summer conference, it's typically too far from home during the busy farming and ranching season. So, we are bringing the summer conference closer to you, and making the content more region-specific and, thus, more pertinent to you as a producer. This summer and fall alone, we'll be reaching five of our nine NBA member regions, and we're on track to hold events in the remaining regions next year."

The events will feature local speakers and will collaborate with the local state/regional bison association to provide our collective membership with top-notch learning and networking opportunities. Three of the events include the 2nd year of our Regenerative Ranching Field Day series, which features one-day workshops on working bison operations with a focus on regenerative agriculture, as well as other pertinent topics that help ensure a profitable bison business.

See a list of events below and keep an eye on <https://bisoncentral.com/nba-conferences/> for updated agendas and registration information.



# NBA

## 2023 REGIONAL EVENTS

**JUNE**

6.17.23 REGION 3: 777 RANCH

6.24.23 REGION 7: CHEROKEE VALLEY RANCH

**JULY**

7.9.23 REGION 5: SLEEPY BISON RANCH

7.15.23 REGION 1: SHOEMAKER BISON RANCH

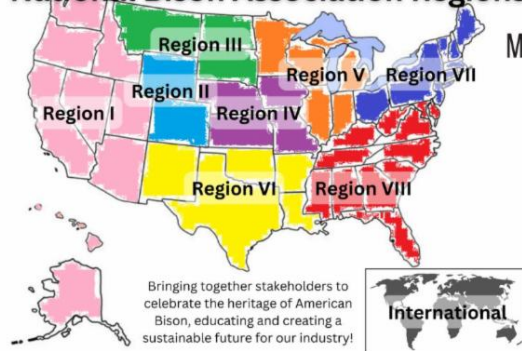
**SEPTEMBER**

9.30.23 REGION 5: DOUBLE J BISON RANCH

**OCTOBER**

10.7.23 REGION 8: RIFFLE FARMS

### National Bison Association Regions



Bringing together stakeholders to celebrate the heritage of American Bison, educating and creating a sustainable future for our industry!

MORE INFORMATION & REGISTRATION:

[WWW.BISONCENTRAL.COM/NBA-](http://WWW.BISONCENTRAL.COM/NBA-)

[CONFERENCES/](http://WWW.BISONCENTRAL.COM/NBA-)



### Center of Excellence for Bison Studies Producer Resources

The Center of Excellence for Bison Studies, at South Dakota State University, offers an array of bison resources to producers.

The Resource Library includes various papers, analyses, historic data and practical tips on bison management. It also includes abstracts on ten NBA-supported bison research projects currently underway, which cover a range of bison-topics including parasite and mineral management, herd health topics including *M. bovis* virulence in bison, carcass quality studies, and more.

The COE resource center also includes economic tools that allow you to track USDA's wholesale bison pricing, for example, for over ten years with the ability to customize dates and price data.

See it at <https://www.sdstate.edu/center-excellence-bison-studies>

Of course, none of this crucial research and work comes for free, and the National Buffalo Foundation has taken the lead in funding the near-dozen studies currently underway. Please consider supporting ongoing bison research at <https://www.nationalbuffalofoundation.org/donate/>.

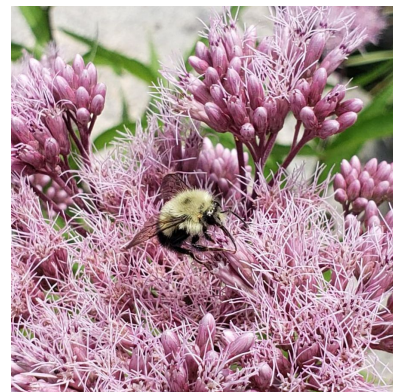


## Buzzing Trading Board

As winter sales wrap up, the trading board has really started buzzing with folks seeking and selling bison.

Don't miss the great opportunities- go to:  
<https://bisoncentral.com/trading-board-listings/>

The Trading Board is where rancher's find animals for sale, advertise auctions, and post wanted ads. Members receive a discount for advertising, and also receive advanced notice of new ads via email and the Members Only NBA Facebook Group.



The National Bison Association connects with producers and consumers alike across multiple social media platforms. Check us out at <https://www.facebook.com/nationalbison>! Make sure you "like" the NBA and share the great content across your feeds.

**Instagram:** @nationalbison

**LinkedIn:** National Bison Association

**YouTube:** @nationalbisonassociation3992

**Facebook:** @nationalbison



Join the Official National Bison Association Members Group- just Facebook message Lydia Whitman or Jim Matheson to get added.



***Editor's Note: The following news stories were distributed by organizations not affiliated with the National Bison Association. They may not reflect the opinions or the positions held by the NBA on matters such as genetic integrity, animal management, and other issues.***

## **National Bison Association Research and Market Development Priorities**

From Lorri Boyer  
Ag Info Net

"On research, really excited that there's live vaccine trials going on for M. Bovis and for MCF, malignant Catarrhal Fever, both really rough diseases, that's occurring through the USDA-ARS service. We are really hopeful to hear results as they move through those live vaccine trials."

Another priority, according to Whitman is working on opening up new international markets for bison meat.

[Read more.](#)

## **North American Bison Invests in X-ray Safety Technology**

From Sue Roesler  
Ag Update

North American Bison, LLC, with headquarters in Fargo and a processing plant in New Rockford, was one of the North Dakota companies recently granted an Agricultural Products Utilization Commission (APUC) award.

The company was awarded \$250,000 to implement X-ray technology at their plant to align with the requirements of large retailers in the U.S. and abroad.

"The marketplace is in higher demand, making sure consumers are safe and the product quality is maintained. The funding was for a quality and safety piece of equipment that was required of large retailers," said Jim Wells, president and CEO of North American Bison.

Wells explained as the meat is processed, it is run through the X-ray technology machine to make sure there is no foreign material in it.

"It's just an added safety requirement. Typical processing equipment companies and manufacturers use metal detectors and some visual-type preventative measures," Wells said. "X-ray technology is the next step, and in essence, it looks at every single piece that's being handled and processed to make sure there's no foreign material in it."

[Read more here.](#)

## **What the Heck is Cattalo?**

By Texas Highways

Charles Goodnight first encountered bison in late 1845. Moving from Illinois to Texas, his family stopped to camp in Dallas, which at the time consisted of one log cabin and a Trinity River ferry boat. The Goodnights traveled with two wagons, and 9-year-old Charles rode bareback on a mare. After crossing the river, the family continued south to the area now known as Oak Cliff. There, Goodnight watched as hunters used hounds to corner a group of about 10 bison—commonly known by the misnomer buffalo—and shot them for meat and hides.

Goodnight saw similar scenes throughout his childhood in Milam County. When he rode out of the Cross Timbers region in 1876 and settled in Palo Duro Canyon to build a ranch, he came upon piles of skinned bison carcasses left behind by buffalo hunters. "I would hardly ever be out of the sound of guns from sun-up to sun-down," he later wrote of those days in *My Remembrance of and What I Know about Buffalo*, now archived at the Haley Memorial Library & History Center in Midland.

As a teen, Goodnight worked as a farmhand and, with the help of his relatives, pieced together his own cattle herd. His ranching pursuits were disrupted by clashes with Native Americans and the Civil War, during which he served as a guide for the Texas Rangers and in a frontier regiment of the Confederate army. Goodnight returned to the cattle business in the mid-1860s. In the ensuing years, he would forge the Goodnight-Loving Trail on cattle drives from Texas to Wyoming with his business partner, Oliver Loving. He would also become a pioneering cattleman in the Texas Panhandle as the founder of the JA Ranch. By 1888, the Rand, McNally & Co. travel guide described Goodnight as a "baron" who owned every building in Armstrong and Donley counties.

[Read More.](#)

## **Baker's Bison is Landmark, Producer of Lean Meat**

From Cory Angell  
Bradford Era

Heading west along Route 6 out of Port Allegany in Upper Grimes there is a site to see. It wasn't built to attract the general public, but Shawn Baker's farm with 30 head of bison is popular nonetheless.

"When people give directions they use my farm," said Baker. "It's popular and people will pull over and take photos."

Baker noted the novelty of the bison and said it's what drew him to the endeavor in 2010. "We grew up with a family beef farm here and I just thought to myself, let's do something different," said Baker. "I guess I got the idea from a farm near Edinboro, the Wooden-Nickel Farm. That farmer helped me when I got started. He has always been very helpful."

Baker spent a good deal of time researching and reading and talking with farmers who were raising the animals.

"They are not too far off of what it is like to raise beef," he said. "They do have differences, so I had to teach myself and talk with others doing it."

The National Bison Association website prepares people for the contrary nature of the large animals, saying, "You can get a bison to go anywhere it wants to go."

They mention that bison are much more nervous and excitable in close quarters and say farmers should, "work bison slower, calmer and more quietly than you would other livestock."

[Read more here.](#)

## **Issued Solicitation for Bison Products**

From Agricultural Marketing Service

The Agricultural Marketing Service has issued Solicitation 2000009194, 12-3J14-23-B-0288 for the procurement of Bison Products.

This comes out of requests from tribal groups to update spec revisions to include 2 lb. diced bison meat. This hopefully is received by commercial marketers with interest so bison gets to the table through this solicitation program.

[Read more here.](#)

## **Here's Where to See a Hidden Herd of Bison in Illinois**

From Joe Dredge  
WROK News Talk

I recently had the pleasure of visiting the Nachusa Grasslands Bison Sanctuary in Illinois, and it was an experience that I won't soon forget. Many people don't know about this incredible sanctuary in the north central Illinois area, and I feel that it's important to share my experience with others. Here's what I learned about the sanctuary during my visit.

The Nachusa Grasslands Bison Sanctuary is a 3,500-acre preserve that is home to 700 native plant species and 180 species of birds. Blanding's turtles and many other rare or uncommon animals also call this sanctuary home. In October 2014, the preserve reintroduced 30 bison to the land. These bison came from three preserves owned by The Nature Conservancy (TNC): Lame Johnny Creek Preserve in South Dakota, the Broken Kettle Preserve in Iowa, and the Dunn Ranch in Missouri. Originally part of the herd from Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota, these bison have been tested and show no traces of cattle genes.

[Read more.](#)

## **Bison Mainstays Sent off in Style**

From Manitoba Cooperator

Len Koop has done a lot of volunteering in his life.

In the early 2000s, he and a neighbour in his home community of Kola noticed that local kids had only an outdoor rink. Given the province's frigid winters, that seemed like a problem, and one that Koop figured they could fix.

Within a few years the kids of Kola were skating in a canvass-covered structure that Koop helped build.

That's only one example of his largesse. Koop spent 13 years volunteering in the Elkhorn Fire Department. He helped get a gymnasium added to his church. And those at the Manitoba Bison Association's Great Spirit Show and Sale at any time in the last few decades have likely seen him and his wife, Lori, among those helping pull the event together.

Steady volunteerism earned Len and Lori Koop this year's Bill Lenton Memorial Award from the provincial bison organization.

The Bill Lenton Award recognizes leaders in the bison sector.

[Read More.](#)

## **Bison Market Searches for Traction**

From Manitoba Cooperator

It's the worst of both worlds for Manitoba's bison sector.

Bison have yet to see the same best-in-decade prices as the cattle market, but bison producers deal with most of the same input cost surges, according to the Manitoba Bison Association.

CanFax, the service that analyzes Canadian livestock markets, has cited continued tight cattle supplies in North America as a major driver for the strong market. The sector has recently seen some of the best prices since peaks in 2015.

Bison prices haven't shown the same surge.

According to a January market report from the Canadian Bison Association, fall 2022 prices ranged from \$1.30 to \$2.25 per pound for the previous year's bulls and \$1.30 to \$1.82 per pound for 2021 heifers. Calf prices ranged from \$1.05 to \$1.21 a pound.

In January 2020, the association reported previous fall calf prices at \$2.47 to \$2.58 a pound for bulls and \$2.05 to \$2.27 for heifers.

Why it matters: Bison is more accessible to consumers than it was 20 years ago, but producers say the sector needs more exposure to the average grocery shopper if it wants to move past its niche.

[Read more here.](#)

## **Extreme Heat May Limit Bison Movement**

The Wildlife Society

Temperature affects the extent that bison may roam.



The bison herd in the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma is one of the first herds to be reintroduced in the U.S. Fifteen animals were first transported there from New York in 1907. That small herd grew to roughly 650 animals today—"the largest bison refuge managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service," according to the National Park Service.

Nic McMillan, an assistant professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, had been studying the interaction between bison (*Bison bison bison*) and plants for some time. He wondered how climate change may affect plains bison movement.

He led a study published recently in *Ecology and Evolution*, in which he and his colleagues combined GPS tracking data from 2008 to 2012 of a dozen bison in the Wichita Mountains in southwestern Oklahoma and The Nature Conservancy's Tallgrass Prairie Preserve in the northeast of the state. Combining this data with weather information in the areas at the times they were studying, they analyzed the way that bison moved under different conditions.

They found that bison don't move much when temperatures are colder than freezing. Between -20 degrees Celsius and 0, the bison only moved roughly 30-35 meters every 12 minutes.

The large mammals begin to move more as it warmed up, reaching a peak at 28 degrees Celsius, when they moved 72 meters every 12 minutes. They then began to decrease their movement as it got warmer than that, dropping back down to about 62 meters per 12 minutes at 44 degrees Celsius—the maximum recorded temperature in the study areas during this period.

"Air temperature was really important in describing how far they move," McMillan said.

McMillan said the study results are similar to those of another study that researchers conducted on wood bison (*B. b. athabasca*) in Canada. It's possible that this type of research is revealing the way that bison respond physiologically to air temperatures.

[Read more here.](#)

## **Chickasaw National Recreation Area Bison Herd Moving to New Pasture**

From KXII

SULPHUR, Okla. (KXII) - The Chickasaw National Recreation Area bison herd is moving to greener pastures.

According to the National Park Service, the move is tentatively planned for mid-morning on Thursday, April 6, 2023. Fence construction was recently completed on an additional pasture for the bison.

Relocation of the ten-animal herd may be rescheduled if weather conditions are not favorable.

According to a press release, the park bison herd was first established in February 1920, when three bison were brought to the park from Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge. They were originally housed in a small pasture near Pavilion Springs. In 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps began work on an 84-acre bison pasture, which was completed in 1934. The herd has been on exhibit in that location ever since.

The new bison pasture is 42 acres, and although smaller in size than the older pasture, has more grazeland available, the press release adds. Once the bison are relocated to the new pasture, park staff will be able to perform much needed prairie restoration work in the current enclosure.

"Having a second pasture will allow us to rotate the bison back and forth," said Resource Management Specialist Steve Burrough. "This will benefit both the land and the bison."

[Read More.](#)

## farm crisis center

Even in the best of times, farming can be an incredibly high-stress occupation. Unpredictable weather, crop disease, volatile markets, heavy workloads, and social isolation are just a handful of the challenges that farmers may face.

These conditions force many family farmers and ranchers to make tough financial decisions that will impact their families, communities, and the entire country.

National Farmers Union compiled resources to help farmers through stressful times. Find them at:

<https://farmcrisis.nfu.org/>

**National Suicide Hotline - 800-273-TALK (8255)**



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**Save the Date!**

- 3/31/2023 - Minnesota Bison Association Spring Education Conference - MN
- 3/30/2023 - Jack Auction Group Video Auction - Online
- 4/27/2023 - Jack Auction Group Video Auction - Online
- 6/10/2023 - Texas Bison Assn. Spring Conference - Waco, TX
- 6/17/2023 - Montana Bison Association Summer Meeting - MT
- 6/17/2023 - NBA Regional Conference - Rapid City, SD
- 6/24/2023 - NBA Regenerative Ranching Field Day - Thornville, OH
- 7/09/2023 - NBA Regenerative Ranching Field Day - Sleepy Eye, MN
- 7/15/2023 - NBA Regional Conference - New Plymouth, ID

Please visit <https://bisoncentral.com/calendar/> for details and more up-to-date events. If you have a bison event coming up that's not listed, please send the details to [jim@bisoncentral.com](mailto:jim@bisoncentral.com) and the NBA will post the event on its website at no charge.

[Click Here for NBA Calendar of Events](#)

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