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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 April 7, 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.

A North American Network of Bison Resources

From the NBA Blog

I'm currently returning from an excellent bison conference hosted by the Minnesota Bison Association in Alexandria, MN. The two-day event featured an array of expert speakers who addressed everything from the benefits of late weaning of bison calves, to how to prepare and smoke bison brisket with delicious results, and so much more. Over 150 bison producers and enthusiasts from well beyond Minnesota attended the event, with ample networking opportunities abound throughout the weekend.

The Minnesota Bison Association is just one of 13 active state or regional bison associations across the U.S. in addition to the National Bison Association. Each of these regional associations is largely volunteer-run, wholly unique, and has been around for decades. The Minnesota association was in fact celebrating its 30th anniversary this weekend, with just about every founding board member present this year, including a 90-year-old bison producer who started raising bison in 1950! The collective knowledge of these founding members alone was incredible, and the fact that they're still sharing their knowledge with yet another generation of bison growers was amazing to witness.

There's also the Canadian Bison Association to the north and their half a dozen provincial associations. Our friends and trade partners to the north have a slightly different structure of their nation's bison associations as they are technically affiliated with the national organization, ensuring collaboration across Canada. U.S. associations, by contrast, are all independent of one another and also collaborate extensively sharing resources, newsletters and participating in the NBA's state/regional association committee, chaired by Rocky Mountain Bison Association president, John Graves.

Lately there has been discussion of the concept to merge the U.S. associations to form a larger, more unified National Bison Association, which the state/regional committee will be discussing later this month. While I certainly see the benefits of a larger, national association, I also see the great benefit of maintaining our collective independence and preserving each organizations unique character and history. Lots of folks don't realize that these regional associations were initially developed for the purpose of hosting a judged bison show as to qualify for the 43 year old NBA Gold Trophy Show and Sale. As our bison shows and sales evolved over the years to accommodate the bison marketplace, so did the state/regional associations with each now offering distinct, regional-specific products and services.

In the past 11 months since becoming NBA's executive director, I have managed to personally attend more than half of these association's gatherings with my colleagues, Lydia Whitman and Karen Conley, attending a few more. In total, we have attended and presented at 10 of the 13 regional association conferences and bison auctions. I have come away from these visits with a new appreciation for the individuality of each bison association, their work and the amazing bison communities that they grow and foster among their membership.

While the NBA relies on its membership dues to keep the lights on and continue our day-to-day work with bison (with membership as low as \$100/year I will remind you...), please also support your regional associations. All bison associations are not for profit organizations that operate on very slim budgets, and the benefits you'll receive as a bison producer in terms of legislative and regulatory representation, education, and networking opportunities is both a wise business investment and a drop in the bucket compared to your annual operating budget. As the bison herd grows, so too does competition in the marketplace and membership in both your national and regional bison association are effective means to staying competitive while supporting our collective good-bison work.

Whether our nation's bison associations remain independent or evolve into a larger, more organized structure, we'll continue to work together for the betterment of the bison and its stewards. This summer and fall alone, the NBA will work with various bison associations as we pursue our six regional conferences that will bring our seasonal outreach closer to members and offering more region-specific education and updates. And thank you to all who are currently support the NBA and their respective state/regional friends through membership, we simply could not do it without you!

I invite you to see a full [directory](#) of bison associations, and if you're not a NBA member already, please consider [joining](#).

Jim Matheson
Executive Director, National Bison Association

LPP Bison Commodity Purchase Summary FY 2023

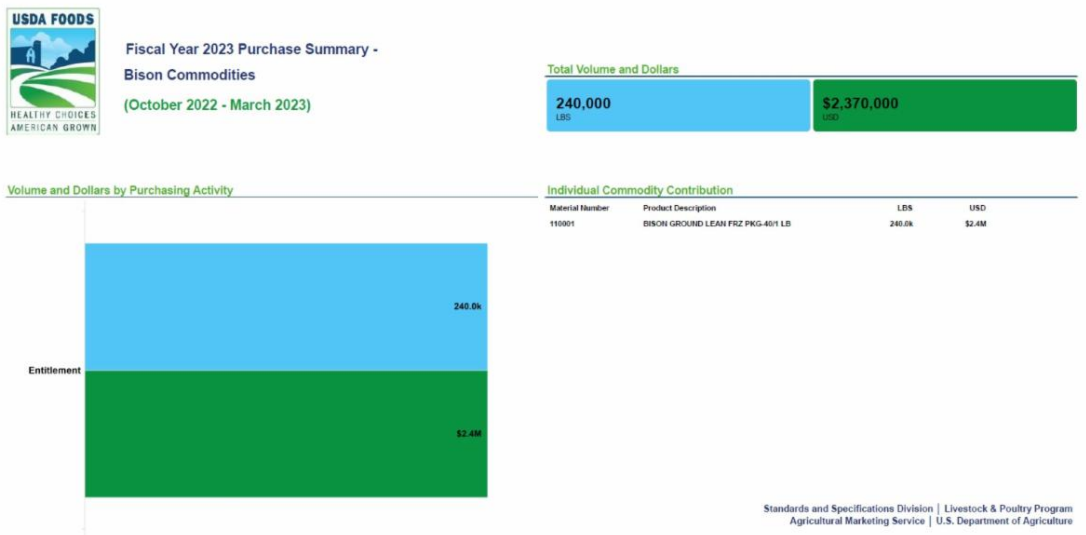
USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) purchases a variety of domestically produced and processed commodity food products, through a competitive process among approved vendors. These purchases made by the AMS Commodity Procurement Program (CP) support American agriculture by encouraging the consumption of domestic foods. AMS-CP manages the Web-Based Supply Chain Management (WBSCM), the fully integrated, web-based ordering and procurement system used for the purchase of USDA Foods.

The wholesome, high quality products, collectively called USDA Foods, are delivered to schools, food banks, and households in communities across the country and are a vital component of our nation's food safety net.

Programs administered by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) play an increasingly important role in the growth and stability of the commercial bison business.

AMS has been soliciting various bison commodities since 2015. Current open purchase requests can be found by clicking [here](#).

Below is a summary of LPP Bison Commodity Purchases for FY 2023. The National Bison Association encourages participation among bison vendors, and is working closely with AMS to ensure specifications match the needs and capacity of the bison industry.



Bison Events Calendar

Do you have an upcoming buffalo-related event that you would like to include on our Bison Events Calendar on www.bisoncentral.com and at in the Weekly Update?

Click [here](#) to submit your event information!

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 2023 Farm Bill Priorities

By Ag Information Network/ Lorrie Boyer

National Bison Association program manager Lydia Whitman says that they, along with the Intertribal Buffalo Council shared their farm bill priorities with members of Congress...

Whitman says they also talked to members of Congress to make sure that bison producers are included in future disaster relief programs, they support young rancher and farmer programs, and the National Bison Association would like to make sure that bison is included in any land restoration funding discussions.

[Read More.](#)

MN Bison Turns 30

From Red River Farm Network

The Minnesota Bison Association celebrated 30 years this weekend in Alexandria at their annual Spring Conference. Demand for Bison has been holding strong and keeping markets moving this year.

Minnesota Bison Association Executive Director Adam Ulbricht says the industry continues to see record output. "On one hand we're processing more animals than we ever have. On the other hand, the one big thing that's holding everyone back is feed costs," says Ulbricht. In addition to drought pressure, input costs for bison production in general remain high.

"If we could get some feed costs to just come down a bit and meet an equilibrium where the crop guys and livestock guys can do well, that would be preferable."

[Read more.](#)

With More Than 60 Novels & Numerous Best-Sellers, The Gears Are Wyoming's Literary Power Couple

From Cowboy State Daily

As Kathy and Mike Gear walk into the Chamberlin Inn in Cody, two things stand out. First, Kathy is stunning – a wide, quick smile, sparkling eyes and long, straight hair with striking streaks of white. You instantly feel at ease with Kathy.

Mike, with his bushy gray beard, a Native amulet hanging around his collar and his forthright manner has an intensity about him. And it's instantly apparent that he is deeply in love with his partner of more than forty years.

"She showed up at a Wyoming Association of Professional Archaeologists meeting in Laramie, and she just walked in the door and was like, radiant. I mean, just look at her," Mike told Cowboy State daily, smiling at Kathy while recalling the first time he laid eyes on her. "The woman only has one small fault, which is a low bar when it comes to men.

"I mean, 41, 42 years (of marriage) and she hasn't left? I don't know what that says. It's worrisome, though."

When the anthropologist (Mike) and archaeologist (Kathy) met that day in 1981, they began a love story and partnership that has evolved into a literary juggernaut.

With more than 60 novels and scores of published scientific articles between them (most co-authored), the Cody-based writers are remarkably prolific, crossing genres and creating entire worlds into which thousands of readers have found themselves drawn to again and again.

[Read more.](#)

Mass Yellowstone Hunt Kills 1,150 Bison

From The New York Times

HELENA, Mont. — An unusually harsh winter that buried Yellowstone National Park under a heavy blanket of snow and ice this year pushed a large portion of the park's bison herd down to lower elevations and out of the park in search of milder climes and food. Many were stopped from migrating even farther.

For four months, state and federal officials have sanctioned a hunt of the shaggy, humped animals that delight millions of tourists and are a centerpiece of Native American culture and history.

Officials said they had no choice but to approve the lengthy culling of the roughly 6,000-member herd as the animals instinctually cross the park boundary onto other public land primarily to the north in Montana's Paradise Valley, but also west of the park. It is part of a strategy to prevent them from getting near livestock, because some 60 percent of the bison herd carries a disease, brucellosis, that could infect cattle and cause cows to abort their calves.

But in the last several weeks, the scope of the hunt, conducted mainly by members of eight Indigenous tribes, along with other park control measures, has generated more criticism than previous hunts. As the culling winds down, the record-breaking number of bison removed from Yellowstone's herd has climbed to more than 1,530 — including hundreds of pregnant females that would have soon been giving birth. Hundreds more were sent out of the park — some to slaughterhouses and about 285 to a quarantine site

where they will be held to determine if they are disease-free. The healthy ones will be sent to homes on Native American lands elsewhere.

Yet another estimated 800 have been captured and held to protect them from the hunt.

Government officials and conservation groups have wrestled with ways to manage the annual migration for decades.

"It's probably the single-most challenging wildlife issue in Yellowstone," Cam Sholly, the park superintendent, said in an interview. "The bison is the only species we constrain to a boundary."

[Read more.](#)

Senate passes bipartisan resolution to overturn WOTUS rule

From MeatingPlace

The U.S. Senate passed a joint resolution of disapproval to overturn President Biden's Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule, according to a release.

The bipartisan resolution, which was introduced by Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.), passed with a vote of 53-43.

The Biden administration in December announced the WOTUS rule, which repeals the Navigable Waters Protection Rule and changes the definition of Waters of the United States, expanding federal regulatory authority.

The measure caused concerns among farmers and ranchers, landowners, builders and energy and infrastructure workers.

"By voting to overturn President Biden's waters rule, we are sending a clear, bipartisan message that Congress, even a divided one, will defend working Americans in the face of executive overreach," Capito said. "I'm proud to lead my colleagues in standing up for millions of Americans and urge President Biden not to overrule the will of a bipartisan majority in Congress, and instead draft a new rule."

The House of Representatives approved the measure last month.

The resolution will now be sent to the president's desk for approval but is widely expected to be met with a veto.

In March, a federal judge halted the WOTUS rule in Texas and Idaho a day before the ruling went into effect.

[Read more here.](#)

Bison Calf Born at Custer State Park

From KELO

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (KELO) — Despite the lingering wintering and about 21 inches of snow that fell yesterday into this morning, a new bison calf has arrived at Custer State Park.

Park officials posted on Facebook this afternoon that a herd superintendent found the calf after the storm.

The bison herd is about 1,400 animals at the state park, according to the South Dakota Game Fish and Parks(GFP) department.

According to the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), bison calves are typically born in late April and May. Bison calves can weigh about 30 to 70 pounds at birth. The gestation period for the mother is 9 to 9½ months.

[Read more here.](#)

EXTREME HEAT MAY LIMIT BISON MOVEMENT

From Wildlife.org

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*) 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.

[Read more.](#)

Estimated growth of Aishihik bison herd in southwest Yukon exceeded expectation

From Yukon News

A summer 2022 survey of a south-Yukon bison herd shows a sizable population and indications that the number of animals may have boomed since the last full survey.

The Yukon government's department of environment recently made the results of its survey of the Aishihik Bison herd public. The aerial survey conducted last June and July is the first since 2016 to result in a complete population estimate for the herd. Less thorough counts to ensure the bison population was above certain thresholds to inform management decisions were undertaken in 2020 and 2021.

Government biologists estimate the size of the herd at roughly 1,951 animals. This is a significant increase over the 2016 population estimate of approximately 1,325 bison. This would amount to a 47 per cent population increase in six years but the report on the bison population suggested the possibility of an overestimate. It noted that a standard forecast based on the 2016 estimate would only have led to an expected 1,701 animals in 2022. Another full survey this summer or next year is being recommended to confirm the accuracy of the 2022 numbers.

Last summer's survey concluded there were at least 857 adult bison and 135 calves alive in the sizable survey area in the southwest corner of the territory.

Focusing on areas where bison fitted with GPS tracking collars were known to be and other areas the herd is known to use during the warm months, the government biologists conducted a "mark-resight survey."

This consisted of marking bison using a paintball gun from a helicopter and then conducting later surveys to count the number of marked and unmarked bison. Marking efforts tagged 122 bison and then three surveys were flown to locate them.

[Read more.](#)

ARS Battles Brucellosis in Wildlife to Protect Domestic Livestock

From Beef Magazine

"It's a veterinary issue, but it's also a public health issue," Olsen said. "Our research data has suggested that we need to tailor vaccines to specific species due to dramatic differences in immunologic responses between species."

He and his team are collaborating with regulatory officials in areas around Yellowstone National Park, where wildlife – mainly elk but potentially bison as well – may come into contact with domestic livestock herds. They developed an effective two-dose vaccine strategy for immunizing bison, but administering two separate inoculations to free ranging wild bison is a challenge. The wild elk population in this area is much larger than bison, and because of their unique immunologic responses, requires a completely different vaccination strategy.

[Read more here.](#)

Notice of Request for Extension of Approval of an Information Collection; Brucellosis and Bovine Tuberculosis: Importation of Cattle and Bison

From The Federal Register

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Docket No. APHIS-2023-0025

Notice of Request for Extension of Approval of an Information Collection; Brucellosis and Bovine Tuberculosis: Importation of Cattle and Bison

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Extension of approval of an information collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's intention to request an extension of approval of an information collection associated with the regulations governing importation of cattle and bison, specifically with regard to classification of regions at designated status levels for bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis, and establishing conditions for the importation of cattle and bison from regions with the various classifications.

DATES: We will consider all comments that we receive on or before May 30, 2023.

Full text: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2023-03-31/html/2023-06720.htm>

Dung Beetles Aid in Pasture Health

From Ag Info Network

Montana State University Professor and Extension Forage Specialist, Hayes Goosey says that there are a whole host of insects that are beneficial to cropping systems, including dung beetles.

"I always call them the free farm workers because their job is to process manure and there's different species. There's three different types of these, there's those that actually live in the dung pat, there's those that tunnel below the dung pat and bring the manure with it into the soil. And then there's another as that are called rollers which carve off a ball of manure and they'll roll that away and then bury that underground."

When dung beetles movement or below the soil surface he says there's a lot of benefits for grazing ground how it moves manure below the soil surface what goes with that is a lot of NP and K that's in the manure itself sulfur, and organic matter and you also reduce pat smother on the fields and on the range pat smother being a product or a manure path that sits grasses don't grow."

Goosey says the average time for a manure pad to sit on the field is three years, dung beetles can reduce that time to about a year and a half- thus keeping those areas of the pasture producing again quicker Goosey made note that he and other extension specialists at Montana State are recommending that livestock producers do their cattle deworming during the winter so that it is processed and out of the animals by spring when a dung beetles start to become active.

[Read more.](#)

Wild hogs leave Minnesota farmers concerned about ASF

From Meatingplace

Pork producers and regulators in Minnesota are concerned about a pack of wild hogs roaming in Manitoba, within 40 miles of the state's border. The animals, they contend,

may bring destruction and disease, especially African swine fever, to the second largest pork-producing state in the country.

The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service estimates that feral hogs cause up to \$2.5 billion in damages nationwide per year. Feral hogs can contract and spread all of the diseases of domestic swine, including African swine fever and other viruses. They also consume crops, destroy fencing and contaminate water.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has no dedicated fund for wild hog monitoring programs, according to reporting by Investigate Midwest, and federal money from USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Wildlife Services dedicated to preventing the spread of feral hogs in Minnesota has decreased 63% to just \$25,000 in the past six years.

In response to increased concern, the Minnesota House of Representatives introduced a bill — House File 2387 — that would make it illegal to possess wild boars in captivity. It also would require the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to prepare a report for the legislature outlining recommendations for management of feral swine.

[Read more.](#)

Food Brand Boot Camp, Scenario Planning, Workshops, and more!

From Edible-Alpha Learning Center/ Food Finance Institute University of Wisconsin System

FFI has several workshops and trainings coming up that we are excited to share with you!

MVP Series Workshops: Marketing Execution Management

Join us April 27 from 9am-12pm Central for this live virtual workshop. This workshop will help you develop your marketing strategies and tactics that align and deliver against your business growth and net margin objectives.

Learn more and register for the Marketing Execution Management workshop [here](#).

MVP Series Workshops: Operations Process and Supply Chain Optimization

Join us on April 27 from 9am-12pm Central for this live virtual workshop. This workshop will help you optimize your operations / production processes and supply chain to produce the lowest cost possible, with the best quality, within food safety guidelines.

Learn more and register for the Operations Process & Supply Chain Optimization workshop [here](#).

Food Brand Boot Camp: Financial Management

Led by [Peter Robertson](#), founder of RP's Pasta and co-founder of Tribe 9 Foods, Food Brand Boot Camp will equip you with the tools, knowledge, and assistance you need to profitably grow your business and raise money. During this 4-day immersive training, you'll receive one-on-one coaching, financial tools, resources, and valuable opportunities to develop your business model and financial plan. Training dates are May 2, 3, 23, & 24.

Enrollment is limited to only 10 spots, so don't delay! Learn more and register for Food Brand Boot Camp [here](#).

Immersion Training: Scenario Planning

If your business is considering a significant transition or needs to address new or altered markets, this is the training for you! Join us for this 4-day virtual training to explore possible futures for your business and identify what it will take to be successful in each of them. Training dates are May 8, 11, 17, & 18.

Learn more and register for Scenario Planning [here](#).

MVP Series Workshops: Dedicated Facility Vs. Co-Packer

Join us on May 18 from 9am-12pm Central for this live virtual workshop. In this workshop, you will learn how to develop your own dedicated production facility and/or work with a co-packer to produce the lowest cost possible, with the best quality, within food safety guidelines.

Learn more and register for the Dedicated Facility vs. Co-Packer workshop [here](#).

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!

- 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
- 9/30/2023 - NBA Regenerative Ranching Field Day - Baldwin, WI
- 10/7/2023 - NBA Regional Conference - Terra Alta, WV

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 and the NBA will post the event on its website at no charge.

Click Here for NBA Calendar of Events

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