

The Nature
Conservancy



Joseph H. Williams Tallgrass Prairie Preserve
Pawhuska, OK

ONLINE ONLY BISON AUCTION

November 9, 2020 • 10 am CST

(130) Yearling Bulls • (60) Two Year Old Bulls • (40) 6 to 8 YO Mature Bulls
(70) Two Year Old Bred Heifers • (100) 11 to 14 YO Mature Cows

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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 October 16, 2020

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.



GTSS, Winter Conference Rescheduled, Relocated

Meeting in special session last night, the National Bison Association Board of Directors approved committee recommendations to reschedule both the Gold Trophy Show & Sale, and the association's Winter Conference until February 19 - 20, 2021, with both events being held in conjunction with the Dakota Territory Buffalo Association's annual meeting

and sale in Rapid City, SD.

In a unanimous vote, the board determined that the annual GTSS would be held at the Rapid City fairgrounds, in conjunction with DTBA's performance tested yearling heifer auction. Under the agreement developed by the NBA and DTBA, GTSS animals would be transported to the fairgrounds on February 18th, and judged on February 19th. The NBA event will not include any yearling female entries in order not to conflict with DTBA's performance-tested Girlz Going Wild yearling heifer sale. Animals from the NBA and DTBA will be housed at the Rapid City fairgrounds, but will be sold through a virtual, live-streamed video auction event.

The NBA board also agreed to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the DTBA to hold a two-day conference on February 19 and 20 at the Ramkota hotel in Rapid City. The abbreviated conference will include virtual streaming for members who want to participate, but who do not want to attend in person. The MOU specifies how each organization will share in the expenses and revenue from that meeting. The MOU had been recommended for approval by the NBA Winter Conference Planning Committee.

Following discussion on the issue, the board adopted a motion "to move forward with the Winter Conference Committees recommendation, and approve the Memorandum of Understanding, and that the NBA and its leadership implement appropriate steps to protect the health and safety of attendees."

Look for details on both events to be announced in the coming weeks.



Bison: Regenerative by Nature Logo Now Available, Webpage Created

The National Bison Association has developed a logo for its newly trademarked term, "Bison: Regenerative by Nature". The logo is available for NBA members to download and use in their own promotions to highlight the regenerative qualities of bison in their products. Simply check the use-agreement, and download the logo to save and utilize. Find the logo here - <https://bisoncentral.com/marketing-resource/marketing-materials/>

The NBA also created a webpage to tell the Regenerative story a bit more. The site provides an overview of the regenerative agriculture concept, and how it applies to bison production. The new page also features a couple of NBA members who are practicing regenerative agriculture and participating in a verified labeling program to recognize their efforts.

As the webpage states, "The bison, North America's largest land mammal, once roamed the continent freely, helping sustain plains and prairie ecosystems as a keystone species through grazing, fertilization, trampling and other natural behavior. Bison shaped the vegetation and landscape as they fed on and dispersed the seeds of grasses, sedges, and forbs. Several bird species adapted to or co-evolved with the types of grasses and vegetation structures that had been, for millennia, grazed by millions of free-ranging bison. This natural behavior is today mimicked by bison stewards, and other livestock producers, seeking to regenerate their soil in part by utilizing the bison's instincts, which remain intact as bison were never domesticated."

Check it out at <https://bisoncentral.com/perfected-item/bison-regenerative-by-nature/>

USDA Bison Meat Purchases Top \$20 million In Past Four Years

USDA's annual purchase of ground bison meat for utilization in the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations has topped \$20 million, according to information provided to the National Bison Association this week by the agency's Agricultural Marketing Service.



A purchasing summary emailed to the NBA this week documents that the agency has purchase 2.5 million lbs. of ground bison for a total of \$21.4 million from fiscal year 2017 through fiscal year 2020.

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.

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Preparing for the Custer State Park buffalo sale

(From News Center 1)

CUSTER, S.D. — Custer State Park has the largest publicly owned buffalo herd, and this week, they're busy prepping bison ahead of the park's upcoming public sale.

For the next week, visitors can see staff at Custer State Park working and sorting the park's bison herd. This will include, branding calves, pregnancy checks, weighing, and sorting animals for public sale. Of the 1,450 bison in the park, a number of them will remain to continue the herd and will be used for breeding.

"Our over-winner number, or what we're going to keep into next season is around the 960 mark," said bison herd manager, Chad Kremer. "And we're gonna be right in that range about 960 to 1,000."

The herd replacement selection begins at two and a half years old, and from there, officials decide what the breeding cow herd numbers should be.

"So that determines how many bred heifers that we keep back each year, coming up to three years old, which will be their first calf that year," said Kremer. "And then on the bulls, we pick about 10 head of bulls to go back out as breeding replacements,"

Along with pregnancy and weight checks, there was opportunity for health and wellness

checks, before the bison are released into the park or sold. Kramer said that it allowed for any treatment bison may have needed.

"We did have a little bit of hoof issues, or foot rot issues this summer. So there are some out there that are a little lame, and we've treated over the course of the season now." Custer State Park will hold an online sale on November 7.

Read [more](#).

USDA Issues Draft Select Agent Policy Statement on Studying Brucella Species in Large Animal Outdoor Containment

(From USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Bulletin)

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is issuing a draft policy statement through the Federal Select Agent Program (FSAP) on research with Brucella species in outdoor settings. The policy statement will allow researchers to conduct brucellosis studies in large animals that cannot be easily housed or studied indoors. The ability to conduct outdoor host animal studies involving swine, elk, bison, and cattle will help APHIS gain important tools and information to continue with brucellosis eradication.

"At the request of Senator Daines of Montana, animal health experts, and livestock industry stakeholders, we have worked closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of Homeland Security, and other leaders in the Greater Yellowstone area to ensure we can safely conduct the kinds of outdoor research studies we need in order to advance our ability to control and eradicate brucellosis," said USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Greg Ibach. "I'm happy to share this draft policy today, as it will help us continue eradication efforts in key wildlife areas."

USDA's Cooperative State Federal Brucellosis Eradication Program made huge progress in eliminating this disease from most of the country. Production losses due to brucellosis dropped from more than \$400 million in 1952 to less than \$1 million today. But continued advances are still needed - endemic Brucella abortus is expanding its range in the Greater Yellowstone Area and Brucella suis is being found in more feral swine populations throughout various areas of the United States. This expansion emphasizes a critical need for both improved diagnostics and vaccine development related to wildlife. Traditional studies will not work for wildlife species, but this draft policy statement provides an outline for how to safely conduct outdoor studies. The information gathered from these types of studies will help both wildlife managers and livestock producers across the country, while still addressing the need to handle Brucella according to select agent requirements.

Read [more](#).

New Bison to Join Catalina Island Herd

(Press Release from Catalina Island Conservatory)

Bison have played a significant role in the cultural heritage of Catalina Island for nearly 100 years and will be roaming Catalina Island far into the future. Catalina Island Conservancy is working with the Laramie Foothills Bison Conservation Herd to bring two pregnant female bison to Catalina Island. The new additions will arrive in early December and supplement the genetic diversity of the current bison herd on Catalina Island with the valuable genetics of heritage bison.

The herd – managed by Colorado State University, the City of Fort Collins, Colorado, and Larimer County – was established with nine adult females and one male calf in November 2015. It has now grown to over 100 bison, which has made it possible to share bison with tribal and conservation herds across the country. The bison have valuable genetics from the Yellowstone National Park Herd and, thanks to science implemented at CSU by Assistant Professor Jennifer Barfield and her team, the animals are also disease-free.

"We are proud to continue our mission of collaborating with conservationists through this new partnership with Catalina Island Conservancy," said Barfield, a reproductive physiologist. "We look forward to watching our animals find a new home with the herd on Catalina Island, where they can contribute to the growth of a truly unique and iconic herd."

Bison have freely roamed Catalina Island since 1924. Fourteen bison were brought to the Island for the filming of an adaptation of a Zane Grey novel, believed to be "The Vanishing American." There are currently approximately 100 bison on Catalina Island. The new animals will integrate into Catalina Island's free-ranging bison herd in December and are expected to give birth in the spring.

"With goals of maintaining the health of the land and providing public benefit, Catalina Island Conservancy maintains its three-part mission of conservation, education and recreation. The bison population is a key example of this delicate balance," said Catalina Island Conservancy President & CEO Tony Budrovich. "The unique opportunity to see American bison on Catalina Island brings wildlife lovers from around the world to learn about a species they might otherwise not have a chance to see roam. While here, they also learn about Catalina's endemic species, special Mediterranean climate and importance of conservation."

With its location close to urban areas, Catalina provides a gateway to nature for a diverse population to experience and learn about wildlife and nature just steps away from home. The best way to view bison is through a Conservancy Eco Tour. Bison are wild animals. People should stay at least 125 feet away from bison at all times.

For additional information, please visit www.catalinaconservancy.org.

U of I receives funding to create, expand mental health resource network for farmers

(From univ. of Illinois Press Release)

URBANA, Ill. – Even without the added stress of the COVID-19 pandemic, agricultural producers experience high levels of anxiety, depression, substance use, and death by suicide. Researchers at the University of Illinois and Illinois Extension are working to ensure producers and their families have the resources and access to services to manage their stress and mental health.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), through the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN) grant program, awarded nearly \$7.2 million in investment funding for the North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center (NCFRSAC), a 12-state collaborative that will create and expand stress management and mental health resources and services to agricultural producers and stakeholders in the North Central region.

The project is led by [Josie Rudolphi](#), assistant professor in agricultural and biological engineering, and [Courtney Cuthbertson](#), assistant professor in human development and family studies, both in the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences at U of I, and both specialists with Illinois Extension.

"We know the agricultural community is under tremendous stress, which can negatively affect mental health," Rudolphi says. "While producers experience a number of barriers to formal mental health care, we realize agricultural producers are nestled within families and social groups, the agricultural industry, and larger communities. These community connection points provide opportunity for resources and service intervention."

The NCFRSAC network will expand programs that provide professional agricultural behavioral health interventions, support farm telephone hotlines and websites, and provide needed training and resources for producers and those in agriculture-related occupations. "Our goal is to ensure agricultural producers have access to resources and services where and when they need them," Rudolphi says.

Read [more](#).

Rule Change Helps Producers Implement More Conservation Activities

(From USDA FSA Press Release)

WASHINGTON, October 08, 2020 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today released the [final rule](#) for its [Conservation Stewardship Program \(CSP\)](#). The rule makes updates to the popular conservation program as directed by the 2018 Farm Bill and integrates feedback from agricultural producers and others.

CSP is offered in all 50 states and the Pacific and Caribbean areas through continuous signups. The program provides many benefits, including increased crop yields, decreased inputs, wildlife habitat improvements, and increased resilience to adverse weather. CSP is for working lands, including cropland, pastureland, rangeland, nonindustrial private forest land, and agricultural land under Indian tribe jurisdiction.

“NRCS has prioritized the implementation of the 2018 Farm Bill, including important changes to the Conservation Stewardship Program, which is designed to help farmers put more robust conservation activities in place,” said Kevin Norton, acting Chief of USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The final rule better aligns CSP with NRCS’s Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) through common applications, contracting operations, conservation planning, conservation practices, and related administrative procedures. EQIP is a voluntary conservation program that helps promote agricultural production and environmental quality by providing producers financial and technical assistance to implement structural and management conservation practices on working agricultural lands.

NRCS received more than 600 comments on an interim final rule that was published in November 2019.

Read [more](#).

USDA Announces Oct. 30 Deadline to Submit Wildfire, Hurricane Disaster Assistance Applications

(From USDA FSA Press Release)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced Friday, Oct. 30, 2020, as the deadline to submit applications for the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program – Plus (WHIP+) for 2018 and 2019 losses. USDA did not originally specify a deadline when the program was announced.

“The physical and financial loss experienced by farmers and ranchers impacted by natural disaster events in 2018 and 2019 was widespread and catastrophic,” said Richard Fordyce, Administrator of USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA). “Fortunately, in addition to our already extensive suite of disaster assistance programs for crop and livestock producers, we were able to provide additional support through WHIP+. If you have not yet submitted your application for assistance, please don’t miss your chance.”

WHIP+ compensates producers for losses due to hurricanes, floods, snowstorms, tornadoes, typhoons, volcanic activity, drought, excessive moisture, and wildfires occurring in calendar years 2018 and 2019. Drought and excessive moisture were added as eligible losses for the program in March 2020. To date, FSA has received more than 133,000 applications for WHIP+ disaster assistance and paid out nearly \$1.4 billion in WHIP+ benefits.

Next week, FSA will launch a new tool on the [farmers.gov WHIP+ webpage](#) to help producers understand eligibility for the program and whether they had possible losses in 2018 and 2019. The tool will also allow producers an opportunity to provide information for FSA staff to reach out to them.

National Cattlemen's Organizations Split On RFID For Traceability

(From Food Safety News)

Cattlemen and ranchers have three national organizations vying for their loyalty and support, and they don't always agree on policy.

That's apparently going to be true for something as simple as whether the interstate movement of cattle should require the use of radio-frequency ear-tags for traceability purposes. Commonly referred to as RFID, electronic ear-tags are used in Europe to track animals from birth to market and even on to the meat counters of retail outlets.

In comments filed last week that expressed some concerns, but overall support for going to an RFID system, the U.S. Cattlemen's Association said "knowing where diseased and at-risk exposed animals are, as well as where they have been and when, is indispensable to emergency response and ongoing disease control and eradication programs."

Read [more](#).

USDA Raises Meat, Poultry Production Forecast

(From Feedstuffs)

In the latest "World Agricultural Supply & Demand Estimates" report, the U.S. Department of Agriculture raised its total 2020 red meat and poultry production forecast from last month. USDA is now forecasting 2020 production to be 106.40 billion lb., up from 106.30 billion lb. in September.

Beef production was raised from the previous month to 27.14 billion lb. on expectations for increased second-half cattle slaughter. The pork production forecast, on the other hand, was reduced to 28.16 billion lb. based on lower second-half commercial hog slaughter and lighter carcass weights. USDA raised both the broiler and turkey production forecasts to 44.60 billion lb. and 5.74 billion lb., respectively, on production data to date. The egg production forecast was raised slightly from last month to 9.25 billion doz. eggs.

For 2021, USDA raised the total red meat and poultry forecast from the previous month to 107.46 billion lb. based on expectations for increased beef, pork and broiler production. USDA raised its 2021 beef production forecast from last month to 27.37 billion lb. due to projections for higher steer and heifer slaughter. Pork production also was raised to 28.51 billion lb. on increased commercial hog slaughter. The broiler production forecast was raised from last month to 45.06 billion lb. based on slightly more rapid production growth, but the turkey production forecast was left unchanged at 5.77 billion lb. Egg production was left nearly unchanged at 9.39 billion doz. eggs.

USDA lowered the beef export forecast because of expectations for slower global demand. The 2020 and 2021 pork export forecasts were also lowered from last month on weakness in global import demand.

Read [more](#).

Cherokee Nation Announces Meat Processing Plant Coming To Tahlequah

(From Public Radio Tulsa)

Cherokee Nation announced Friday its plans to open a meat processing facility in Tahlequah funded at least partially with federal coronavirus relief money.

"During the COVID-19 pandemic, beef and other meat sources were harder to supply to

elders through emergency food distributions, and opening a meat processing facility will help sustain foods for Cherokee citizens and bring in jobs and agricultural opportunities for the tribe," the tribe said in a written statement.

Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. said he expects the plant, projected to cost about \$1 million, will provide a number of benefits.

"It'll help address some food security needs for the Cherokee people, but it's broader than that," Hoskin said. "We also have to think about sustainability. Part of sustainability means employment for our people."

The tribe predicts the plant will create seven jobs.

Hoskin also said the tribe has discussed such a plant for years, and that investing in a new industry may make good financial sense.

"We also have an opportunity, I think, to get into a sector of the economy that we haven't gotten into a great deal, and that's agriculture," Hoskin said.

At an interim study at the state capitol in September, Oklahoma meat industry insiders predicted that small-scale processors may see the most growth following the pandemic.

Read [more](#).

Muscogee (Creek) Nation To Build \$10 Million Meat Processing Facility In Okmulgee County

(From Tulsa World.com)

GLENPOOL — Muscogee (Creek) Nation officials broke ground Friday on roughly a \$10 million meat processing facility.

Called the Looped Square Meat Co., it will encompass 25,000 square feet just south of the tribe's Duck Creek Casino a few miles south of Glenpool on U.S. 75.

"We're doing our best to put a lot of equipment in," said Trenton Kisse, the tribe's director of agriculture and natural resources. "It's going to set us apart and make us unique from other processing facilities in the area or in the region."

The facility's name, Looped Square, refers to the tribe's brand for its cattle and ranch operations. CARES Act money — the Trump administration \$8 billion in CARES Act funding to tribes in late March — is being used for the project, which is part of the Creek Nation's vision to promote long-term stability in food sovereignty and security.

Offering meat processing and retail meats to the public, as well as the tribe, the facility is expected to employ up to 25 people and be completed by early 2021.

Besides making available fresh cuts of beef and pork, it will have a dry-aging room and a large smoking capability for items such as brisket, pork shoulder ham and jerky.

The facility also will be inspected by the United States Department of Agriculture. "Having that U.S.D.A inspection really maintains that quality and that safety approach," Kisse said. "There are a ton of safeguards to make sure we're doing things the right way."

The retail space will feature items such as smokers, grills and local honeys and salsas. A wildlife wing will allow customers to bring in animals such as deer for processing. "The thing about separating that from our beef and pork side is that we're not going to have to worry about cross-contamination," Kisse said. "We can keep rolling with our beef and pork side while we're bringing in those wildlife animals."

A study released last year indicated that the Okmulgee-headquartered Creek Nation had an economic impact of \$866 million in Oklahoma in 2017, supporting 8,700 jobs that paid \$303 million in wages and benefits to workers.

Read [more](#).

Consumers Are Buying Less Meat To Save Money: Report

(From [Meatingplace.com](#))

U.S. consumers are making food shopping adjustments at the grocery store as the coronavirus pandemic shows few signs of abating, according to a new study. Cutting back on meat and poultry purchases are among the most often-cited ways consumers are looking to adjust to higher grocery prices.

While Americans say they have been paying more for groceries since COVID-19 — with meat prices climbing by 69% — 88% of the respondents to the survey by C+R Research are concerned that grocery bills will continue to become more expensive. The survey of more than 2,000 U.S. consumers also found that 85% are worried that grocery shortages will continue and that 65% have cut back on their food budgets since the pandemic spread across the United States earlier this year.

To save money, respondents reported that overall, they are eating less meat (43%), eating less poultry (33%) and avoiding buying organic items (31%), C+R Research reported.

Regarding a potential new coronavirus wave as the weather sends more people indoors, 87% of the respondents are concerned that a second wave will lead to grocery shortages and 86% are worried the situation will lead to even higher food prices. In the long term, 77% of survey respondents believe that their grocery shopping will change permanently because of COVID-19 and 75% feel “uncomfortable” shopping at a grocery store. Nearly 70% also admitted using grocery delivery or pick-up for the first time this year because of COVID-19 concerns.

The survey included 55% male respondents, 45% female with an average age of 39. The majority of those surveyed earned between \$20,000 to \$80,000 per year, C+R Research reported.



Hartman Documents Surge in Home Cooking

Forced to shelter in place by COVID-19, Americans are spending significantly more time at home – and in their kitchens – than usual.

When asked in April 2020 how the pandemic had changed habits at home, among consumers aware of COVID-19, 66% said they were cooking more at home as well as looking more for new recipes, baking treats, learning new cooking techniques and

watching cooking shows more than prior to the pandemic.



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Save the Date!

- 10/17/2020 - Texas Bison Association Virtual Fall Meeting - Online
- 11/02/2020 - Konza Prairie Biological Station Sealed Bid Auction Opens
- 11/07/2020 - 55th Annual Custer State Park Fall Classic Bison Auction - SD
- 11/09/2020 - TNC Tallgrass Prairie Preserve Online Only Auction - OK
- 11/15/2020 - Oklahoma Bison Association Fall Sale, Payne County Stockyards - OK
- 11/16/2020 - Brownotter Buffalo Ranch Annual Production Sale - SD
- 11/16/2020 - Antelope Island State Park Bison Auction - UT
- 11/17/2020 - Bison on the Bear Annual Production Auction - ID
- 11/21/2020 - Coyote Trail Buffalo Annual Production Auction - SD
- 11/28/2020 - Minnesota Bison Association's Legends of the Fall Show/Sale - MN
- 11/29/2020 - Rocking P Ranch Production Auction - SD
- 12/05/2020 - Kansas Buffalo Association Annual Production Sale - KS
- 12/05/2020 - Western Bison Association Meeting and Show/Sale - UT
- 12/8/2020 - Northern Range Buffalo Simulcast Consignment Auction - SD
- 12/19/2020 - North Dakota Buffalo Assn. Meeting/Simulcast Auction - ND
- 1/02/2020 - Prairie Legends Bison Auction - NE
- 1/08/2021 - Montana Bison Assn. Winter Conference - MT
- 1/9/2021 - Turner Bison Exchange Prairie Performance Auction - SD
- 2/19/2021 - NBA - DTBA Joint Winter Conference - Rapid City, SD/Online
- 2/20/2021 - NBA GTSS & DTBA Girlz Going Wild Auction - Rapid City, SD/Online
- 6/27/2021 - National Bison Assn. Summer Conference - Cheyenne, WY

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.

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