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Bison available for inspection at 6738 South State Highway 27 on the south edge of GORDON, NE. Auction held at 108 East Second Street, GORDON NE, watch for signs.

- Selling: 25 Long Yearling Bulls - Approx. 675-700 #
- 50 Yearling Bulls - Approx. 486 # Ave.
- 86 Long Yearling Heifers - Approx. 650-685 #
- 86 Yearling Heifers - Approx. 435 # Ave.

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Weekly Update



bisoncentral.com

303-292-2833

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

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NBA Weekly Update for April 24, 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.

USDA Announces Farm Assistance, Push Still on For Including Bison

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue announced last Friday that USDA will be issuing \$19 billion in assistance for agricultural producers by mid-May, but has not yet the details of that assistance.

Because the Secretary did not share any details about the structure of that assistance, NBA Executive Director Dave Carter encouraged NBA members to continue working to help assure that bison products are included in the package.

"While the Secretary announced the total amount of the assistance, the lack of specifics indicate that the details are still being hammered out," Carter said. "Last week, North Dakota Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring delivered [specific recommendations](#) to the Secretary on our behalf regarding the types of assistance needed. NBA members need to continue contacting their Congressional delegation to urge the Secretary to include those recommendations."

Carter noted that USDA will be offering additional assistance beyond the \$19 billion announced last week.

“The President today will be signing the \$414 billion COVID-19 relief bill that includes additional assistance for farmers and ranchers,” Carter said “And, more than 30 Democratic and Republican members of the U.S. House of Representatives today introduced legislation allocating an additional \$50 in assistance to farmers and ranchers.

“Because we are a small segment of agriculture, we often get overlooked. We have to make sure our small wheel squeaks very loudly,” Carter said.

NBA To Launch Digital Bison Promotion Campaign

The National Bison Association on May 1st will launch a two month promotional campaign in the digital platforms of some of the nation’s major consumer publications, including Food & Wine, Health, Shape, Eating Well, All Recipes, Midwest Living, Southern Living, and Martha Stewart.

The advertising campaign will specifically promote the [BuySome Bison app](#), which allows consumers to connect with bison producers to source meat and other bison products. The advertising campaign, and the BuySome Bison app are both underwritten through funding from USDA’s Farmers’ Market Promotion Program.

Jim Matheson, NBA assistant director, stressed that producers wanting to be included in the app simply need to enter their information into the Buyers’ Guide on the NBA website at www.bisoncentral.com. Earlier this week, Matheson sent an email to the NBA membership with step-by-step instructions for entering information in the Buyers’ Guide.

Dave Carter, NBA executive director, noted, “While the ads will mention the BuySome Bison App, the over-arching message will be for consumers to enjoy some delicious bison as we head into the summer grilling season. We will be particularly focusing on steaks and higher-end cuts in this campaign.

The digital advertising campaign will kick off May 1st and will run through June 30th.

Wholesale Prices Slightly Stronger in March

Wholesale prices paid for dressed bison carcasses were up in March, according to the latest monthly wholesale price report issued today for USDA’s Livestock and Grain Market News Service.

In the report, which captured data recorded largely before the impact of foodservice closures hit the marketplace, dress young bull carcasses averaged \$408.09/cwt. which was \$0.88 higher than in February, but \$56.71/cwt. lower than in March 2019. Dressed heifer carcasses averaged \$403.90/cwt, which was \$5.74/cwt. higher than in February, but \$19.49 lower than in March 2019. Older bulls and cows were both higher for the month as well.

Year-to-date, 16,452 bison have been processed under federal inspection. That is 14 percent higher than the same period in 2019, and the highest year-to-date figure since USDA began tracking bison processing in 2000.

The USDA price report can be found here.
https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/nw_ls526.txt.

The NBA’s Five-Year Tracking Report can be found in the members’ section [here](#).

Earth Day: Enjoy a Glimpse; Appreciate the Big Picture

(From The NBA Blog, By Dave Carter)

On Saturday, I was fortunate to capture some video clips of a bison mom helping her newborn calf learn to cross a deep ravine as I was helping move the animals to a new pasture at the ranch where we keep our herd. I posted the clips on Facebook, mentioning how privileged I was to glimpse this small sliver in the circle of life, and was overwhelmed by the warm response that post received.

Bison ranchers are indeed privileged to see this sliver of the circle of life each spring.

Producers across North America are enjoying similar scenes as newborn red calves test their wobbly legs in pastures turning green with fresh grass. As we smile at that sliver, Earth Day is a time for us to think about the entire circle.

That baby calf was able to cross a ravine within an hour of birth because bison have survived through the ages in a delicate balance with predators. Being able to keep pace with a constantly moving herd was vital for survival.

Bison calves arrive just as the grass is greening because bison evolved in concert with the grassland ecosystems over thousands of years. Fresh grass provides the high quality nutrition that mom needs as she nurses her newborn. And, she will start to regain the weight she lost through the winter, which will help her to be in optimal condition for the breeding season in a few months.

Bison mom and calf definitely benefit from a healthy earth.

The earth, too, benefits from the bison. Managed properly, bison grazing stimulates new plant growth. Manure and urine provide the soil with vital nutrients, hoof action stirs soil and buries seeds. Wallowing creates depressions that will capture precious rainfall in a climate that normally receives less than 18 inches of moisture each year.

These healthy grasslands capture carbon from the atmosphere and return it to the soil. The grasslands, in a sense, are the rainforests of North America's semi-arid regions. Meanwhile, this ecosystem provides habitat for an abundance of wildlife.

Predators are an important part of that circle as well. The grasses and plants in these ecosystems evolved as bison and other grazers moved across the landscape in tightly-bunched herds as a defense against the predators. The predators kept the bison population in check, preserving the balance between animals and the land.

Humans have always been the keystone predator. After all, bison transform the cellulose of the grasses and other plants into a nutrient-dense, delicious protein. A couple years from now, many of these new calves will be headed to market, and ultimately to our dinner plates. That's kind of tough to think about as we see new calves hit the ground, but the market for bison meat provides the economic sustainability that is helping ranchers restore bison to native habitat across North America.

Earth Day is a time for us to think about—and appreciate—the entire circle of life...even when we glimpse only a sliver.

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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Rewilding bison in the Carpathians to preserve wilderness strongholds and migration routes

(From Phys.org)

Nature is significantly degraded across much of Europe, impacted by factors such as infrastructure construction, intensive agriculture and forestry, and the disappearance of naturally occurring, large-bodied animals such as large carnivores and bison. This is the finding of new research published today by a coalition of NGOs and research institutes, consisting of a series of maps and policy papers which provide policy-makers with critical and effective new tools to decide why, where and how to restore nature using rewilding principles. The policy papers demonstrate the urgent need for European politicians to prioritize nature restoration in the upcoming EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2030. Using ecological integrity as a baseline, the tools can help identify EU-level priority areas and corridors that need to be protected and restored to improve the overall coherence and connectivity of the Natura 2000 network.

The highlight of the papers is a series of new maps which, by helping to identify priority areas for landscape-scale nature restoration across the EU, can deliver critical new connectivity between Europe's Natura 2000 sites. Integrating a range of different data sets, the maps can be used in conjunction with local data to inform and guide policy makers as they plan and deliver nature restoration. These maps come at an opportune moment—the European Commission is due to announce its 2030 Biodiversity Strategy by the end of April, 2020.

"The European Commission should propose, in the upcoming 2030 Biodiversity Strategy, new legislation that drives large-scale restoration and ensures the connectivity of ecosystems vital for biodiversity and climate," said Sabien Leemans, Senior Policy Officer for Biodiversity, WWF European Policy Office. "Such legislation must have legally-binding targets to restore ecosystems expressed in square kilometers. Existing policies that undermine nature restoration—such as EU incentives to grow bioenergy crops or harvest forest biomass for energy—need to be revised."

Rewilding bison in the Carpathians will help maintain ecological connectivity and keep ecological corridors open.

Read [more](#).

House clears \$484B relief bill, including aid for farms, hospitals

(From Agri-Pulse)

The House on Thursday cleared a \$484 billion COVID-19 relief bill that will replenish the Paycheck Protection Program with an additional \$320 billion and make farms eligible for a separate disaster loan program for small businesses.

President Donald Trump is expected to quickly sign the bill into law, which will provide \$75 billion to health care providers.

The bill passed 388-5 in what was the chamber's first session since the last economic relief bill passed March 27; the House is not expected to return to action until May 4. Everything in the bill "is in the interest of job retention ... and to address the key issue of health: Testing, testing, testing," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.

The Paycheck Protection Program, which is designed to compensate small businesses, including farms, for two months of their wage costs, [had been out of money](#) for a week. The new funding includes \$60 billion targeted to small lenders and minorities.

Some \$4.4 billion of the PPP's initial round of funding went to businesses involved in agriculture, forestry and hunting and fishing, according to Small Business Administration data.

Aid Package May Fall Well Short Of Offsetting COVID-19 Losses *(From Agri-Pulse)*

USDA's \$19 billion COVID-19 aid package for farmers easily eclipses any of the Trump administration's previous trade assistance programs, but the plan may fall well short of compensating producers from the estimated damage of the pandemic.

The package, which includes \$3 billion in USDA purchases of meat, produce and dairy products as well as \$16 billion in direct payments to producers, will test the department's ability to follow through on a novel plan to distribute those USDA-purchased commodities to needy people while sidestepping the staffing and refrigeration challenges facing food banks.

The commodity purchasing plan will rely on distributors who can package household-size boxes of meat, chicken, fresh milk, dairy products and produce and take them by truck to food banks and other nonprofits where the food will be handed directly to recipients.

Many key details of the overall aid package aren't known yet or haven't been confirmed by the department, which will release a rule for the payment program later.

USDA, for example, hasn't released rates for the payments that will be going to growers and livestock producers. The American Farm Bureau Federation also noted that it isn't clear what price series will be used for some commodities.

There is also too little known about the ultimate impact of the COVID-19 crisis to know the extent that the aid package will offset the damage to producers. In developing the package, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue said USDA relied in part on an analysis done by the Food and Policy Agriculture Research Institute at the University of Missouri.

Read [more](#).

Will There be Enough Grass for Grazing Livestock this Summer? **This Tool Can Help**

(From USDA Press Release)

Predicting grassland productivity is a major challenge for ranchers and other land managers with grazing livestock. This productivity is key each spring when they are trying to decide how many cattle to turn out to pasture, how long to graze an area, or where forage might be abundant.

An online tool designed to help make such decisions is once again available this spring—with some new upgrades to ensure that it serves a wider audience and provides more helpful and detailed information.

The Grassland Productivity Forecast or "Grass-Cast" was developed in 2018 by scientists at the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS), along with other Federal agencies and

several universities. It was originally designed for ranchers and grassland managers in the Northern Plains and was expanded in 2019 to cover the Southern Plains. Later this spring it will be expanded again to cover much of New Mexico and Arizona. Grass-Cast also will now be providing forecasts for individual 6-mile x 6-mile areas, rather than the county-by-county results available in previous years.

"It's increasingly popular with ranchers and other land managers, who are hearing about it from our partners with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Forest Service, Farm Service Agency, and University Extension. Still, we are always looking for ways to make it more useful, so we welcome any suggestions," says ARS economist Dannele Peck, who oversees Grass-Cast as director of the USDA Northern Plains Climate Hub.

During the 2019 season, the Grass-Cast website was visited nearly 3,000 times by over 1,800 different users.

Grass-Cast uses over 30 years of historical data about weather and vegetation growth—combined with seasonal precipitation forecasts—to indicate whether grasslands are likely to produce above-normal, near-normal, or below-normal amounts of vegetation. It is the result of a partnership between ARS, NRCS, Colorado State University, University of Arizona, and the National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Read [more](#).

Lawmakers Launch Push For \$50B In Additional Farm Aid

(From AgriPulse)

More than 30 Republican and Democratic House members are proposing to include an additional \$50 billion in aid to farmers in the next COVID-19 economic relief bill. The money would supplement the \$23.5 billion in farm aid that was authorized by the \$2 trillion CARES Act enacted in late March.

[Legislative language](#) introduced by the House members, many of whom are members of the House Agriculture Committee, would also prevent the Agriculture Department from imposing limits on individual payments to farmers.

"The COVID-19 outbreak has only exacerbated challenges farmers and producers faced from the harmful effects of the trade war and devastating weather and has sent futures prices tumbling," said Rep. Cindy Axne, D-Iowa. "It is more important than ever to ensure food security by providing our producers the resources they need."

USDA is tapping \$9.5 billion from the CARES Act to make \$16 billion in direct payments that are expected to be distributed to farmers in May. An additional \$14 billion, which was earmarked for replenishing USDA's Commodity Credit Corp. account, will be available to the department to send in July.

According to information released by Sen. John Hoeven, R-N.D., USDA plans to cap the direct payments under the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program that a farmer can receive at \$125,000 per commodity and \$250,000 for all commodities.

Changes In Snowmelt Threaten Farmers In Western U.S.

(From Ohio State University Press Release)

Farmers in parts of the western United States who rely on snowmelt to help irrigate their crops will be among the hardest hit in the world by climate change, a new study reveals.

In an article published today in *Nature Climate Change*, an interdisciplinary team of researchers analyzed monthly irrigation water demand together with snowmelt runoff across global basins from 1985 to 2015. The goal was to determine where irrigated agriculture has depended on snowmelt runoff in the past and how that might change with a warming climate.

They then projected changes in snowmelt and rainfall runoff if the Earth warms by 2 or 4 degrees Celsius (about 3 ½ or 7 degrees Fahrenheit), which will potentially put snow-dependent basins at risk.

The findings pinpointed basins globally most at risk of not having enough water available at the right times for irrigation because of changes in snowmelt patterns. Two of those high-risk areas are the San Joaquin and Colorado river basins in the western United States.

“In many areas of the world, agriculture depends on snowmelt runoff happening at certain times and at certain magnitudes,” said Yue Qin, assistant professor of geography and a core faculty of the Sustainability Institute at The Ohio State University.

“But climate change is going to cause less snow and early melting in some basins, which could have profound effects on food production.”

Qin, lead author of the study, designed the research with Nathaniel Mueller, assistant professor at Colorado State University, and Steven Davis, associate professor at the University of California, Irvine.

Under the 4-degree Celsius warming scenario, the researchers project that the share of irrigation water demand met by snowmelt in the San Joaquin Basin decreases from 33 percent to 18 percent. In the Colorado Basin, the share of water demand met by snowmelt decreases from 38 percent to 23 percent.

Read [more](#).

Mn Department Of Agriculture Providing Assistance To Livestock Farmers

(From KSNi Radio)

A number of major meat processing facilities have [closed down](#) due to the COVID-19 pandemic, causing major disruptions to the Minnesota meat supply chain.

Farmers with small herds or flocks are feeling the biggest strain with dwindling numbers of facilities to sell to.

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is providing several forms of support for these farmers and also incentives for processing facilities to remain open and increase capacity. The MDA is providing matchmaking services to help smaller farms find processing facilities that they can sell to and identifying marketing opportunities for them.

Additionally, the MDA is providing financial assistance to the industry in the form of \$345,000 in grants to processors to make facility improvements to increase capacity and storage space.

Farmers with smaller herds or flocks who need new processors can contact Jim Ostile (320-842-6910) or Courtney VanderMey (651-201-6135) at the MDA to begin the matchmaking process.

Processors interested in expanding capacity can contact Jennifer Stepes at 651-248-2566 for more information.

[Source](#).

On this Earth Day, let's think about agriculture

(From High Country News)

As we celebrate Earth Day's 50th anniversary, the environmental movement finds itself at

a critical point in time to reflect upon its record. When have we, as environmentalists, fostered collaboration with the food and farming sectors, and when have we pushed those potential partners away and generated conflict in our rural communities?

When I worked at the headquarters of the very first Earth Day in 1970, it operated as a network of grassroots environmental organizers, and there was little focus on the overall environmental benefits or consequences of farming and ranching.

Our little newsletter, Environmental Action, covered how toxins were appearing on the lands and in our food, even though terms like “environmental justice” and “food justice” had yet to be coined. Nevertheless, very little of our “environmental action” was directed to ensuring the health of the soil, the diversity of the crops planted on it, the preservation of food-producing or the viability of livelihoods for farmers and ranchers.

Francis Moore Lappé’s Diet for a Small Planet had recently hit the stands, and all the talk was about abandoning meat to eat low on the food chain. For a while, many of us tried to boil up soybeans or pintos to plop down on a heap of brown rice or corn mush. To my amusement, the results did not always sit well with our GI tracts or our taste buds.

As Wendell Berry — farmer, poet and natural historian — has pointed out in his many books, including *The Unsettling of America*, few environmentalists had any notion of how important it might be to support small-scale, diversified farming, with or without livestock. There was little dialogue about how to help reduce the kinds of collateral damage that food production caused to the environment and to the farm workforce. Berry wrote: “At the time of the first Earth Day, conservation was dealing with wilderness preservation and environmental emergencies,” not regenerative agriculture.

Read [more](#).

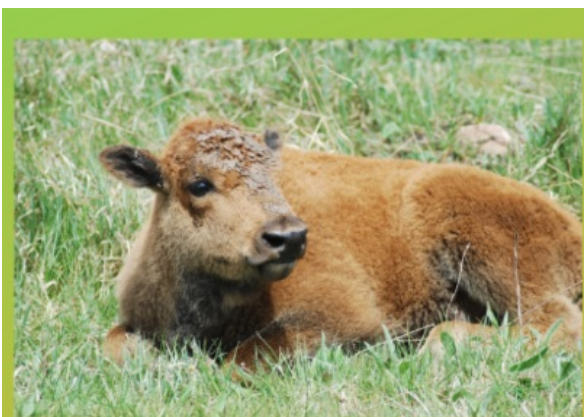
Final WOTUS Rule Published; Lawsuits To Follow

(From Meatingplace.com)

The Federal Register this week published the final rule defining what are considered the Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) for the purpose of protection under the Clean Water Act. Although the rule was laid out in January, its implementation was dependent on FR publication.

With its official publication, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers define the scope of what streams and wetlands are covered by the law. The definition has been controversial since the Obama administration passed regulation in 2015 that broadened the scope of the rule; the Trump administration's version removes protection from most wetlands and a substantial portion of streams.

With the final rule's publication, lawsuits are expected to follow fast and furious from all corners, from states to environmental groups. Such lawsuits could not be filed until the rule was finalized.



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- 1/20 - 1/23/2021 - National Bison Winter Conference - Denver, CO
- 1/23/2021 - NBA Gold Trophy Show and Sale - Denver, CO

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