

# MISSOURI BISON ASSOCIATION

in conjunction with Lolli Brothers Livestock Market



## JULY BISON AUCTION

Thursday, **July 9, 2020** - 9:00 am CDT

Lolli Brothers Livestock Market

Macon, MO

To Consign, Call:

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### *NBA Weekly Update for June 26, 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.*

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### **New Data Shows Significant COVID-19 Impact on Bison Marketplace**

Economic disruption impacting nearly all sectors of the U.S. bison business far exceeds the threshold required to qualify bison producers for assistance being offered to agriculture through USDA's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP), according to formal [comments](#) that the National Bison Association filed with the U.S. Department of

Bison were among the agricultural products excluded from USDA's first round of CFAP relief in May. At the time, the agency said that insufficient market information existed to demonstrate that bison producers had suffered at least a five percent drop in price and income from the period between mid-January and mid-April.

However, producers excluded from the first round of assistance have until today to submit information documenting losses exceeding five percent. USDA will use that information to determine which agricultural commodities will be eligible for an additional \$637 million in assistance.

Based on information compiled from a series of surveys conducted by the bison association over the past month, prices for live bison weighing between 400 – 800 lbs. dropped 37 percent for bulls and 25 percent for heifers in the period between mid-January and mid-April. Producers responding to one on-line survey indicated that feeding costs have increased by 12 percent per animal per day during that same period.

In a separate survey, farm-direct marketers from 24 states echoed the impact cited by the ranchers selling into larger commercial markets. The farm-direct marketers reporting live animal sales as at least 10 percent of their business reported that prices have dropped significantly. Thirty eight percent reported declines between 20-49 percent, while 24 percent of the respondents reported price drops exceeding 50 percent.

The bottleneck in processing capacity is creating significant economic havoc for farm-direct marketers. Even though the survey did not ask about difficulties in getting animals scheduled for processing, nearly one-third of the respondents cited that as a critical factor harming their business.

Farm-direct marketers selling to restaurants and other foodservice outlets reported a sharp drop in sales, with half reporting sales declines exceeding 50 percent. And, 63 percent of the producers participating in farmers' markets said that they anticipate 2020 sales to be down by more than 20 percent.

The association noted that the criteria established by USDA for determining eligibility for assistance was challenging because most economic activity in the bison business occurs outside the January-April time frame each year. While the producer surveys did provide information documenting a strong impact, "That information also serves as a type of canary in the coal mine, exposing the explosive impacts felt beyond mid-April," the association's comments note.

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## **Week of Learning Provides Wealth of Information**

National Bison Association members may not have been able to gather as planned in Cheyenne, WY as planned for the association's summer conference this week, but they still had an opportunity to pick up valuable information about market developments, soil management, conservation and other topics through the Week of Virtual Learning on-line webinars.

Monday's session, sponsored by Turner Bison Exchange, analyzed changes transpiring in the consumer marketplace as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Carlotta Mast of New Hope Network and Nick McCoy of Whipstitch Capital unveiled new market research indicating that many consumers tried bison meat for the first time during the initial retail store rush in March, and that most of those customers will continue to purchase bison meat.

Mast noted that consumers' concern about personal health and environmental sustainability has sharply increased during the COVID disruption. She recommended that the bison business focus on marketing the regenerative aspects of bison meat.

A second panel on Monday featured commercial marketers Bob Dineen of Rocky Mountain Natural meats, Rex Moore of Rock River Ranches, and Bruce Anderson of

Western Buffalo Co. Each of the companies had a different marketplace focus prior to March, and the three related their experiences in pivoting their businesses to adapt.

The farm direct marketers wrapped up Monday's session. Carie Starr of Cherokee Valley Bison in Ohio, Jennifer Karnes of Red Frazier Bison in Indiana, and Candy Westre of Bitterroot Bison Co. in Montana related their initiatives to offset the sales losses they experienced with local restaurants closed, farmers' markets reduced operations, and agritourism opportunities vanished for the season. Their efforts ranged from initiating call ahead ordering with curbside pick-up to expanding their on-line sales.

Monday's on-line presentations are available here.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/1Y9QJKrw9mdLeJXutXD5VKstQdXCaaa80ykfrPUEmR6Fj5PrvSj6cslmpt3VQuZ>.

Follow the link and use the password, 8y=!!=IK

On Wednesday, Ray Archuleta of Understanding Ag L.L.C. provided the keynote presentation, which focused upon bio dynamic strategies that are restoring soil health and biodiversity, even in areas suffering extreme desertification.

Ken Klemm of Beaver Creek Ranch in Kansas, NBA Region IV director and chair of the NBA Conservation Committee, then officially launched the association's new conservation management plan. That plan, which has been under development for the past three years, will help ranchers improve their ongoing conservation practices.

Finishing Wednesday's sessions was a discussion on selecting Breeders and Eaters. Tim Goodnight of the Turner McMurtry Ranch in Nebraska and Kevin Leier of Heart Land Bison in North Dakota reviewed factors that producers can use to select animals that will improve their herds, and that will provide maximum profitability in the food marketplace.

Wednesday's sessions, where were sponsored by 777 Ranch in South Dakota, are available here. [https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/-pJxNejbzjNLSaPG-EuPAZY8HY7rX6a81ygYqPsJnU\\_8FjfGgbFUEiXXEUgr6Nh3](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/-pJxNejbzjNLSaPG-EuPAZY8HY7rX6a81ygYqPsJnU_8FjfGgbFUEiXXEUgr6Nh3).

Use the password, 5d%2\$.Cs

Today, AgriPrime is sponsoring the final series of webinars, which are centered on helping newcomers get a successful start in the bison business.

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## Turning on a Dime

*(From the NBA blog)*

One aspect of bison that never ceases to amaze me is their ability to turn on a dime. A bison running full speed will plant a front hoof in the ground, spin, and run full speed in another direction. Mother Nature perfected that ability to equip them to escape threats when able, and to face danger head-on when necessary.

Mother Nature instilled some of that same ability into bison ranchers and marketers. At least, that's what occurred to me on Monday as I listened to the opening day of our Week of Virtual Learning, the on-line webinars scheduled as a replacement for our cancelled Summer Conference.

We've been severely rattled by the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic during the past three months. As noted in the comments that the National Bison Association submitted to USDA urging that bison producers be provided with access to federal support on par with our neighbors in the cattle business, bison ranchers, finishers and marketers alike have been hit hard since March. Live bison prices have dropped, scheduling animals for processing is a nightmare, the farmers' markets opening this season are doing so on a limited basis, and agritourism...let's not even get into that one.

On Monday, though, six NBA member-marketers shared how they have pivoted during the past 90 days to face the market disruption head-on. Three commercial marketer panelists shared how they transitioned business to focus more on retail or direct-to-consumer



markets at restaurants shut down in March. One — Western Buffalo Co.— even processed hogs for a brief time to weather the storm.

The three farm-direct marketers have initiated call-ahead ordering with curbside pickup to offset the loss of their farmers' market business, and are expanding their on-line stores. And all noted that customers are becoming more interested in knowing where food comes from, and how it was produced.

Growing interest in transparency and accountability is not an isolated phenomenon.

Carlotta Mast of New Hope Network and Nick McCoy of Whipstitch Capital unveiled results of new consumer research they conducted for the National Bison Association. That research indicates that the interwoven story of bison's role in regenerating healthy ecosystems may resonate with our potential customers more than our longstanding emphasis on low-fat/high-iron meat content.

I ended Monday's session with a big smile on my face. Once again, unforeseen forces threaten our business and our ability to restore herds across North America. Yet, once again, we demonstrate the ability to firmly plant that hoof, pivot, and charge toward a sustainable future.

[Source.](#)

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***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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## **Potato, Bison Producers Appeal For CFAP**

*(From AgriPulse)*

Monday was the deadline for producers of commodities that are ineligible for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program to make their case to USDA that they should share in the \$16 billion in direct payments. The National Potato Council and National Bison Association were among the groups that filed appeals Monday.

The potato council [told USDA](#) the industry faces an “unprecedented crisis” due to the shutdown of food service, and the impact on growers could last well into 2021 “if aggressive actions aren’t taken.”

Some 1.5 billion pounds of fresh potatoes that were intended for processing “are trapped in the supply chain with no likely customers,” the council says. The council says it doesn’t appear USDA properly assessed the price impact on potatoes.

The National Bison Association told USDA prices dropped 37% for bison bulls and 25% for

heifers during the January-April period USDA used to determine eligibility for CFAP.

Keep in mind: Producers that are currently eligible for CFAP payments are only receiving 80% of what they are due in part because USDA wanted to see how many additional commodities might be added to the program.

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## **Silver Lining for Bison**

(From AgInfo.net)

Bison producers were scheduled to have their summer conference this week. It was cancelled due to the coronavirus.

So the National Bison Association based in Westminster, CO decided to host a series of virtual learning sessions for members instead. Executive Director Dave Carter in Westminster:

Dave Carter: “We were fortunate to have some folks who did some market research present some information to us. And one of the things that we are very encouraged about is that people are trying bison for the first time through this COVID-19 issue, particularly when everyone ran to the grocery store to stock up. And for us that’s good news because we know that when people try bison, they’re going to come back for a second helping.

Carter says six NBA member-marketers shared how they faced the market disruption head-on. Three explained how they transitioned business to focus more on retail or direct-to-consumer markets when restaurants shut down. One even processed hogs for a brief time to weather the storm.

The National Bison Association recently submitted documents to the USDA arguing that bison producers should also be provided with access to federal support on par with the cattle ranchers. Carter says bison ranchers, finishers and marketers alike have been hit hard since March. Live bison prices have dropped, scheduling animals for processing is a nightmare, the farmers’ markets opening this season are doing so on a limited basis.

Carter: “Long term we think we’re a resilient business but we don’t want to see producers get tossed aside here as we work our way through this situation.”

Read [more](#).

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## **COVID-19 Is Affecting Bison Marketplace**

(From MT Ag Network)

As farmers and ranchers continue to cope with market disruptions caused by COVID-19, the National Bison Association says the economic disruption impacting nearly all sectors of the U.S. bison business far exceeds the threshold required to qualify bison producers for assistance being offered through USDA’s Coronavirus Food Assistance Program or CFAP.

Bison were among the agricultural products excluded from USDA’s first round of CFAP relief in May. At the time, the agency said that insufficient market information existed to demonstrate that bison producers had suffered at least a five percent drop in price and income from the period between mid-January and mid-April.

Dave Carter with the National Bison Association says there’s no question that U.S. bison producers suffered economic damage caused by COVID-19 like higher feed costs. “Holy cow, we found that the weighted average of a bulls was down about 37 percent, heifers down 25 percent” said Carter. “At the same time, their feed costs were going up about 12 percent.”

The bottleneck in processing capacity is also creating significant economic havoc. “One of the big impacts we’re having, particularly for our smaller producers is that that just

because of the disruption in the supply chain is that the processors are now out until March 2021 before a producer can get animals in to be processed” said Carter. “So, if you have that animal, you have higher feed costs and you can't get it in to be processed; you're really behind the eight ball.”

He says they're hopeful that the USDA will take their freshly submitted comments seriously and agree U.S. bison producers should be eligible for some of the remaining \$637 million in assistance.

Read [more](#).

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## **Bison Transferred To Fort Peck Quarantine Facility**

*(From Montana Public Radio)*

Eleven bull bison quarantined in a federal facility near Yellowstone National Park were transferred to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation on June 24. There, they'll complete the final phase of a program to make sure they are disease free before being sent out to start or boost herds across the U.S.

This is the fourth relocation of Yellowstone bison to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation since February 2019 under the current, interagency quarantine program.

The 11 bull bison transferred Wednesday will spend the next year in the tribes' \$600,000 quarantine facility where they'll be tested every six months for brucellosis, a bacterial disease that can spread between bison, elk and cattle if they come into contact with afterbirth tissues and fluids.

The disease can cause infertility and miscarriages, which are financial threats to cattle ranchers.

In 1995, the state of Montana sued the U.S. Park Service for allowing bison to leave Yellowstone and enter state land. An interagency team developed several management strategies to keep the herds from getting too large, including hunting bison that migrate out of the park and capturing them to ship to slaughter.

The quarantine program provides an alternative ending for the U.S.'s national mammal. The facility at Fort Peck increases the capacity to get more bison through the program.

A Yellowstone spokesperson told YPR Wednesday that the relocation of the 11 bull bison was coordinated between the State of Montana, the Fort Peck tribes and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, an agency under the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The 11 bull bison were quarantined at the facility managed by APHIS near Corwin Springs.

Read [more](#).

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## **Super Chill Bison Couldn't Care Less About Exploding Yellowstone Geyser, Video Shows**

*(From the Idaho Statesman)*

A stoic bison didn't care at all that an iconic geyser was exploding behind him, video shows.

A man visiting Yellowstone National Park on Wednesday captured a [beautiful video of a bison](#) interrupting the view of the famous Old Faithful geyser, Storyful reported.

Watching the [Old Faithful Geyser erupt](#) is a tradition that people from all over the country travel to see. On Wednesday, Joey Krastel captured a stunning view of that eruption with an extra guest.

Thousands of [bison roam the land in Yellowstone National Park](#), according to the National Park Service. Last August the park counted more than 4,800 bison.

In the summer, bison are typically found in grasslands. It's more common to see bison in the hydrothermal areas in the winter, according to the park.

Krastel, however, told Storyful a bison was rolling around in dirt nearby before it walked toward the geyser.

See the video here:

<https://www.idahostatesman.com/outdoors/article243797957.html#storylink=cpy>

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## **Project To Transfer Hundreds Of Bison To Rosebud Indian Reservation**

*(From KOTA-TV)*

Rosebud Indian Reservation is expecting hundreds of bison from a variety of places to be transferred to tribal land.

Twenty-eight thousand acres of land, formerly used for cattle, was leased out to the Wolakota Regenerative Buffalo Range project for a span of 15 years to have a total of 1,500 bison roam.

It costs more than a quarter of a million dollars per year to lease out the range, according to the project manager, Aaron Epps.

But he said they received a \$1 million social impact starter loan to get the project started. Now, they are working on attaining partnerships to help continue the project, with organizations like World Wildlife Fund already on board.

Currently, the first phase of the project is in motion where 18 miles of fencing is being installed. They are also determining the water accessibility for the herd.

The bison will be used to provide meat to institutions like schools and hospitals on the reservation.

But there is also a strong sacred and historical meaning behind the bison transfer for the Lakota people.

"As Lakota were living a nomadic lifestyle on the plains and kind of following the bison, they provided food, shelter, ceremonial and sacred objects. So, to be able to return that to the people here at this type of scale is something that's truly historic," Epps said.

He said the plan is to bring in 300 to 400 bison per year in a span of five years to fill the range.

The first transfer of about 200 bison should be arriving in mid-October but Epps does not know at this time where the bison will be originating from. However, he said the bison will come from around the nation.

To learn more about the project that aims to be the world's largest Native-owned and managed buffalo herd you can visit the Wolakota buffalo range [website](#).

Read [more](#).

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## **Man Photographed Walking Toward Bison Herd With Kids**

*(From NBC Montana)*

A viewer sent us a photo of a family approaching a herd of bison at Yellowstone National Park.

We see a man with a baby on his back, child on each side, walking out to the bison. Yellowstone issues warnings every year telling people to stay away from the 1,000 to 2,000-pound mammals.

most 5,000 bison were spotted around Yellowstone last year, and the national park's website says they can be aggressive.

Bison are agile and can run up to 30 mph.

Just last week a woman was knocked to the ground for approaching a bison.

We will follow up to see if any fines have been issued to this man.

Read [more](#).

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## **Skull Dug-Uppery: Skull Of Prehistoric Bison Found In Warsaw Metro**

*(From First News, Warsaw, Poland)*

The skull of a prehistoric steppe bison has been found at a metro construction site in Warsaw.

The ancient remains consisting of the front part of the skull and both horns measuring 90cm were found 15 metres down near a block of flats by workers on the future Bródno metro.

Karolina Gałęcka from Warsaw City Hall said: "The maximum horn span of a modern European bison is 70-80 cm while an ancient steppe bison had an average span of 100 to 120 cm, meaning the discovered skull fragment belonged to a relatively young specimen."

Resembling the modern bison species, the steppe bison was over two metres tall and reached 900 kg (2,000 lb) in weight.

Read [more](#).

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## **Baby Bison Born At Nature Reserve In Western Romania**

*(From Romania-Insider.com)*

A bison calf was born at the Hațeg – Slivuț Bison Reserve, located in western Romania's Hunedoara county, national forest administrator Romsilva announced in a Facebook post.

The eleven-day old baby bison is named Romică and is "the pride and joy of the protected area." He is lovingly cared for by his mother, Spider Woman, and protected by all the members of the herd, Romsilva said.

The Bison Reserve in Hațeg was established in 1958, when two bison, called Podarec and Polonka, were brought to the country from Poland. The reserve spreads on 50 hectares, covered with hornbeam, oak, and fir tree forests, Romsilva explained.

Read [more](#).

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## **'No Hormone' Disclaimer On Pork 'No Longer Accurate,' Says USDA**

*(From Sustainable Food News)*

The USDA said companies making "no hormone" claims on pork products no longer need to add a previously required disclaimer statement because it is "no longer accurate."

The agency's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) said its previous animal raising labeling claim guidance stated that hormones were not approved for use in swine.



Examples of “no hormone” claims include: Raised Without Added Hormones, No Added Hormones Administered, Raised Without Steroids, No Growth Promotants.

The FSIS has routinely only approved “no hormone” claims on pork with the following disclaimer statement: “Federal Regulations prohibit the use of hormones in pork. There are no hormones approved for use in swine by Federal Regulations.”

However, the FSIS now says that because there are hormones approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in swine during gestation, “the disclaimer statement is no longer accurate.”

To that end, the agency said it now wants companies to remove the disclaimer statements on labels with “no hormone” claims.

“If establishments submit such labels with a disclaimer statement, FSIS will remove the disclaimer from the claim to approve the claim, provided the application contains adequate documentation to justify the claim,” the FSIS said.

If a label bears a claim about hormone use in swine relating to pork products, the label application (for new approvals) and label record (for existing approvals) must include adequate documentation to support the claim, the FSIS said.

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## **USDA Role Critical To Viability Of Ag Carbon Markets, Senators Told**

*(From AgriPulse)*

The Agriculture Department has a crucial role to play in developing agricultural carbon markets by ensuring the credits are legitimate and making it as easy as possible for farmers to participate, senators were told Wednesday.

“Any discussion around agriculture and climate change” must involve USDA, Zippy Duvall, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, said at a Senate Agriculture Committee hearing on a landmark ag carbon bill, the [Growing Climate Solutions Act](#).

The bill is designed to accelerate the growth of ag carbon credit trading by authorizing USDA to certify third-party verifiers and technical service providers. The third-party verifiers will in turn certify the validity of credit-generating farm practices.

“USDA is the one that understands agriculture. Our farmers and ranchers trust USDA ... For farmers to participate in any voluntary program they have to have that trust. It’s essential that all of that happen through USDA,” Duvall said.

The bill was introduced in the Senate earlier this month by the top Democrat on the Ag committee, Debbie Stabenow, and GOP member Mike Braun of Indiana. On Wednesday, Democratic Rep. Abigail Spanberger of Virginia and Republican Rep. Don Bacon of Nebraska announced that they would be introducing a companion measure in the House.

Stabenow said the USDA program “will jump-start climate-smart projects on farms, ranches, and private forests all across the country.”

Individual companies as well as a group called the Ecosystem Services Market Consortium are developing protocols for calculating the reductions in carbon emissions provided by agricultural practices ranging from no-till farming to methane capture. Multinational corporations are expected to increase their demand for the credits as they try to meet commitments for reducing their carbon footprint.

Rob Larew, president of the National Farmers Union, said the legislation “lays a foundation that will allow the private sector and government to build market-based solutions to climate change that appropriately work with and compensate farmers and ranchers.”

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- 7/09/2020 - Missouri Bison Association July Bison Auction - MO
- 1/20 - 1/23/2021 - National Bison Winter Conference - Denver, CO
- 1/23/2021 - NBA Gold Trophy Show and Sale - Denver, CO

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.

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