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NBA Weekly Update for August 21, 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.

***Corrected* NBA to Pursue Section 32 Bison Purchase Program**

The National Bison Association Board of Directors voted unanimously yesterday to direct the association to formally petition the U.S. Department of Agriculture to purchase between \$17 million and \$20 million in bison meat under the Section 32 Commodity Purchase Program.

Section 32, which was first authorized under the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1935, authorizes USDA to support prices of commodities in surplus by purchasing them in the marketplace, and also authorizes USDA to distribute commodities domestically. Funds used under section 32 are designed to support agricultural markets.

Following USDA's failure last week to include bison producers as eligible recipients of aid under the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program, the NBA board discussed other approaches that would help mitigate the COVID-19 related economic turbulence for the bison business. Discussion was held regarding filing for a Section 32 purchase, but the board wanted to query U.S. commercial bison processors and marketers before making a final decision.

The NBA on Friday sent a survey to representatives of 14 bison processors and marketers. Eleven processors responded, with 100 percent recommending that the association move forward with the request to USDA. The board met yesterday to assess

the results of the survey, and to initiate the process.

The NBA was previously awarded a Section 32 purchase program by USDA in 2003.

“We are continuing to work with key Senators to get bison included in any future round of COVID-19 assistance for ag, but Section 32 provides an alternative avenue to work with USDA to stabilize and strengthen our market condition,” said Dave Carter, NBA executive director. “If granted, the Section 32 will help balance our supply-demand equation, which will strengthen prices for everyone in the business.”

Register Now for Direct Marketing Virtual Roundtable

Anyone involved in direct marketing of bison meat and related producers is encouraged to register now to the two-day Bison Direct Marketers’ Roundtable scheduled August 31 and September 1 will feature insights from some of the nation’s leading experts in farm-direct marketing.

Ari Adams, CEO of Shiftcon Media, the largest annual gathering of eco-wellness social influencers in the U.S., will conduct a session on Monday, August 31 on how bison marketers can partner with bloggers and other social media outlets to promote the attributes of deliciously healthy bison. Participants in Shiftcon’s annual gathering include many of the top bloggers and social media experts with the field of health and wellness.

Prior to Adams’ presentation, Chris Wayne and Erik Hasset of GrowNYC Farmer Assistance will present tools that vendors can use at farmers’ marketers to increase customer traffic and sales.

Monday’s session will run from 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. To register, click [here](#).

On Tuesday, September 1, Sean Lenihan of The Honest Bison, will cover steps and strategies to developing a successful on-line store. Lenihan has developed a successful on-line bison marketing company over the past eight years. Drawing upon his experience as a marketing director for some of America’s largest companies, he has developed an on-line store that continues to grow each month.

Then, National Farmers Market Coalition Executive Director Ben Feldman will facilitate a discussion regarding priorities and needs of farm-direct marketers. The day will conclude with an open discussion regarding lessons learned under the past four years of the farmers’ market promotional activities funded through USDA’s Farmers’ Market Promotion Program.

The Tuesday session will run from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. To register, click [here](#).

NBA Participates in Mexico Bison Restoration Webinar

National Bison Association assistant director, Jim Matheson, participated in a Zoom webinar with various Mexican non-governmental organizations, agency employees, ranchers, and other stakeholders involved in restoring bison to its native habitat in Northern Mexico.

Matheson gave a presentation on the National Bison Association and the bison industry, and the recent opening of Mexico to U.S. bison meat imports. The group discussed the feasibility of developing a meaningful conservation effort of plains bison in part through a greater bison meat market. Matheson encouraged the stakeholders to take advantage of the opening of bison meat imports to build a market, and in turn educate the public to build support for their conservation efforts.

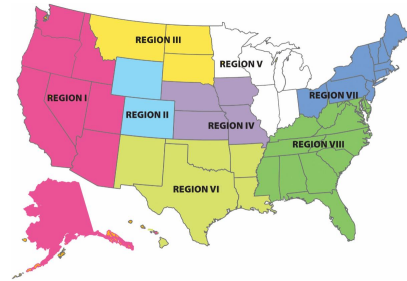
Wildlife Conservation Society’s, and NBA member, Laura Paulson organized the meeting in coordination with Profauna, a Mexican conservation organization involved in bison restoration efforts. The group is currently working in a census of bison, with over 1,500

head already counted, which is done in person, or via telephone, due to lack of internet. Their hope is to convince the Mexican government that bison are not endangered, as bison are currently deemed by the government there, and in turn gain support and eased regulations for reintroduction.

Matheson worked with many of these groups in 2016 and presented to governmental agencies in Mexico City in a trip coordinated by The Nature Conservancy and the Wildlife Conservation Society. Said Matheson, "It was great to see some progress over the last few years in bison conservation in northern Mexico. And the interest in supporting conservation through a small commercial bison sector there was very strong among all parties, which was good to see bison ranching as part of their blueprint. Among the participants was a father and son who have been raising a herd for the last 45 years. I think they have a lot of potential and it's great to work with them."

Board Nominations Due Sept. 4

Friday, September 4 is the deadline for NBA members interested in running for election in Regions I, III, V and VII to submit nominations to the NBA office. The elections will be conducted from September 11 – 30.



According to the NBA bylaws, regional directors "shall be elected by a mail-in, or electronic ballot during September of each year prior to the expiration of the regions' directors' terms. If after the initial ballot, no one person in any region has more than 50% of the ballots cast, then a run-off election will occur during November, involving the two persons having the most votes cast in the September balloting. In case of a tie, a coin will be tossed to determine the winner. Only active and lifetime members residing within a region may vote in each region's election." Regional directors are eligible to serve two two-year terms.

The directors elected in September will begin serving in January 2021.

In this election cycle, directors will be elected for two-year terms from Regions I, III, V and VII.

The regions up for election for, and the states included are:

- Region I, representing AK, AZ, CA, ID, NV, OR, UT, WA. Mary Adams, the current director is eligible for re-election.
- Region III, representing MT, ND, SD. Mimi Hillenbrand of South Dakota is the current director but is term-limited and cannot seek re-election. Kevin Leier of Rugby, ND, and Corissa Busse of Rapid City, SD have been nominated as candidates for that position.
- Region V, representing IL, IN, MI, MN, WI, Jeremy Allemann of Wisconsin, the current director, is eligible for re-election.
- Region VII, CT, MA, ME, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT. Brian Grubb is the current director but is term-limited and cannot seek re-election. Carrie Starr of Thornville, OH has been nominated as a candidate for the position.

Nominations for candidates to serve as regional director can be submitted to the NBA at dcarter@bisoncentral.com.

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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Cherokee Nation welcomes two Yellowstone bison to herd in Delaware County

(From The Tahlequah Daily Press)

The Cherokee Nation recently welcomed two bison bulls from Yellowstone to its herd in Delaware County.

The InterTribal Buffalo Council awarded the Cherokee Nation the surplus bison in July. The new additions traveled over 1,000 miles from Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming to the tribe's bison ranch in Northeast Oklahoma, where they arrived this week.

"This partnership with the InterTribal Buffalo Council continues to benefit the Cherokee Nation by allowing the tribe to grow a healthy bison population over the last five years," said Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. "Historically, bison provided an essential food source for tribes. Every part of the bison was used for food, clothing, shelter, tools and ceremonial purposes. These newly acquired bison will help revive some ancient cultural traditions, as well as provide expanded economic opportunities for future generations of Cherokees."

The InterTribal Buffalo Council, headquartered in Rapid City, South Dakota, awards its member tribes surplus bison from national parks each year. This year, Cherokee Nation is one of 16 tribes across the country to receive bison from Yellowstone National Park.

The bison from Yellowstone are genetically significant, as remnants of the buffalo that once roamed free more than 100 years ago. These bison are expected to help boost the long-term health of buffalo herds across tribal lands due to their unique genetics and lineage.

"It's a great day to welcome these two young buffalo bulls to our bison herd. Yellowstone buffalo are significant to tribes because they descend from the buffalo that our ancient ancestors actually lived among and this is just one more way we can keep our culture and heritage and history alive," Deputy Chief Bryan Warner said. "By adding these new bulls, we can create diversity within the herd so we can grow it and look at a long-term plan as well as preservation efforts for years to come."

Read [more](#).

'Screaming' Bison Stops Traffic In Yellowstone National Park

(From KTVB)

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, Wyo. — These days, stay-cations have taken on a new meaning, as we're encouraged to seek adventure inside our own borders. Just outside state lines to the east is Yellowstone National Park.

Heather Parker, a mom of three from Boise, made the trip to Lamar Valley, Wyoming earlier this week with her children. While driving, they were stopped along the highway by

a male bison with a lot to say.

In a message to KTVB, Parker said the male bison slowly approached their car and began, as she called it, "screaming."

You can see the male with his mouth open and tongue out as he passes their car before walking away.

It is mating season for bison, meaning they're pretty aggressive this time of year. So, if you're headed to the park anytime soon, be very careful and don't get too close.

See the video [here](#).

USDA announces changes to emergency haying and grazing provisions

(From Agriculture.com)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) today announced changes for emergency haying and grazing of acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). This includes changes outlined in the 2018 Farm Bill that streamlines the authorization process for farmers and ranchers.

"FSA authorizes emergency haying and grazing of Conservation Reserve Program acres under certain conditions to provide emergency relief to livestock producers in times of severe drought or similar natural disasters," said FSA Administrator Richard Fordyce. "These program changes will simplify the authorization process with an automatic trigger by severe drought designation, allowing livestock producers to quickly access much-needed forage."

Previously emergency haying and grazing requests originated with FSA at the county level and required state and national level approval. Now approval will be based on drought severity as determined by the [U.S. Drought Monitor](#).

To date, 500 counties nationwide have triggered eligibility for emergency haying and grazing on CRP acres. A [list by state](#) and [map](#) of eligible counties is updated weekly and available on FSA's website.

Producers located in a county that is designated as severe drought (D2) or greater on or after the last day of the primary nesting season are eligible for emergency haying and grazing on all eligible acres. Additionally, producers located in counties that were in a severe drought (D2) status any single week during the last eight weeks of the primary nesting season may also be eligible for emergency haying and grazing unless the FSA County Committee determines that forage conditions no longer warrant emergency haying and grazing.

Read [more](#).

Senate GOP Mulls Skinny Aid Package Without Ag Funding

(From AgriPulse)

Senate Republicans are circulating a trimmed down coronavirus aid package that leaves out additional aid for farmers as well as the \$1,200-per-person stimulus checks included in their earlier, \$1 trillion HEALS Act.

The new proposal includes business liability protections that are a top priority for GOP leaders and also would authorize a second round of Paycheck Protection Program loans with more favorable terms for farmers based on their Schedule F income.

The GOP proposal comes as the House is preparing to vote on a bill that would provide \$25 billion to the Postal Service.

Democrats have previously rejected Republican suggestions to pass a series of COVID-19 aid bills on a piecemeal basis, and there is no sign either the House or the Senate bill has a chance of passing the other chamber.

The Senate GOP's HEALS Act is a package of bills that included authorization for \$20 billion to the Agriculture Department to compensate producers and processors for coronavirus-related losses.

A key Senate Republican who was involved in crafting the HEALS Act provisions for agriculture, John Hoeven of North Dakota, said he has talked to Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue as recently as this week about how to spend \$14 billion that USDA already has in its Commodity Credit Corp. for additional coronavirus relief.

Hoeven, who chairs the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, indicated that he is still working on getting additional money included in a new aid package. "As far as the \$20 billion in new funding included in the HEALS Act, we continue working with our colleagues in Congress to come to an agreement for additional agriculture assistance," he said in a statement to *Agri-Pulse*.

The HEALS Act also included PPP provisions for farmers similar to what is in the new GOP draft. The new bill includes one key change on eligibility for new PPP loans: The HEALS Act would require applicants to show a 50% drop in gross income between a quarter in 2019 and a quarter in 2020. The draft bill would lower that threshold to 35%.

Walmart Works Toward Sustainable Beef Supply Chain

(From Meatingplace.com)

Walmart officials said the company aims to source fresh beef products "more sustainably" by 2025.

As part of a new push to meet 2025 objectives on a number of commodities, the Springdale, Ark.-based retail giant is prioritizing soil health, animal welfare and responsible use of antibiotics in beef production, executives said.

The effort will include working with suppliers to improve grain sourcing and grazing practices. Moreover, Walmart is pushing suppliers to better understand the entire beef production cycle, using a science-driven process help from the Nature Conservancy to improve sustainability efforts.

"With this in place, we aspire to source from fresh beef suppliers who have a tech-enabled supply chain to measure sustainability impact at scale," Walmart officials said. "The infusion of modern technology may help beef suppliers measure the benefits of grazing and grain best practices, adaptively manage and offer a more accurate way to trace impact. It can also help support beef suppliers' efforts to better understand the environmental footprint of their supply chains, for instance using geographic and greenhouse gas indicators."

In order to measure, track and understand which efforts work, Walmart is asking suppliers to participate in annual reporting initiatives like its "Project Gigaton" initiative and "Thesis" performance assessments.

Walmart is partnering with the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef, the Midwest Row Crop Collaborative, and Field to Market in the supply chain effort.

"Overall, we see an opportunity for a whole-system transformation and continued progress across the beef supply chain," Walmart said. "That is why we focus on sustainability in our sourcing decisions and work to drive action in policy, advocacy and philanthropy both globally and domestically."

Farming Releases Carbon From The Earth's Soil Into The Air. Can We Put It Back?

(From NPR)

Traditional farming depletes the soil and releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. But decades ago, a scientist named Rattan Lal helped start a movement based on the idea that carbon could be put back into the soil — a practice known today as "regenerative agriculture."

[NPR food and agriculture correspondent Dan Charles](#) explains how it works and why the idea is having a moment.

Email the show at shortwave@npr.org.

This episode was produced by Brent Baughman, fact-checked by Emily Kwong, and

Listen to this episode [here](#).

(Editor's note: This podcast stresses that pastures and permaculture can help return carbon to the soil, but makes no mention of the role that grazing animals play in maintaining those healthy pastures.)

NCBA Commends DOT & FMCSA For Extension Of HOS Exemption

(From NCBA)

WASHINGTON — The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) today released the following statement in response to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (DOT-FMCSA) announcement of a 30 day extension to the Hours of Service (HOS) exemption for livestock and feed haulers:

"Livestock haulers are crucial to keeping beef moving through the supply chain and on to grocery store shelves. We thank DOT and FMCSA for extending this exemption and giving crucial relief to critical infrastructure," said NCBA Executive Director of Government Affairs, Allison Rivera. "While this is a win for the cattle industry, more still needs to be done. NCBA will continue to work with Congress and the Trump Administration, to find a permanent fix for Hour of Service regulations.

FMCSA issued an emergency declaration at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic to exempt livestock haulers from burdensome Hours of Service regulations. The most recent 30 day extension to that declaration was set to expire on August 14, 2020. Now the exemption runs through September 14, 2020.

[Source](#).

Saved By Suburbs: Food Trucks Hit By Virus Find New Foodie

(From Associated Press)

LYNNWOOD, Wash. (AP) — On a warm summer night, two food trucks pulled onto a tree-lined street in a hilltop neighborhood outside Seattle. The smell of grilled meat filled the air, and neighbors slurped on boba tea drinks. Toddlers, teens, their parents and dogs sat in the grass, chatting behind masks, laughing and mimicking imaginary hugs to stay socially distant while they waited for their food orders.

Long seen as an urban treasure, food trucks are now being saved by the suburbs during the coronavirus pandemic. No longer able to depend on bustling city centers, these small businesses on wheels are venturing out to where people are working and spending most of their time — home.

As food trucks hunt for customers that used to flock to them, they're finding a captive audience thrilled to skip cooking dinner, sample new kinds of cuisines and mingle with neighbors on what feels like a night out while safely staying close to home.

“This is festival season, fun season. All the stuff we typically do as humans, we can’t do anymore,” said Matt Geller, president of the National Food Truck Association. “Walking out to a food truck is a taste of normalcy, and it feels really good.”

YS Street Food Group owner Yuli Shen discovered the hilltop Seattle-area neighborhood through Facebook, and she and a friend who runs the Dreamy Drinks boba tea truck went out together recently and served customers for three hours.

Read more [here](#).



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Save the Date!

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- 09/12/2020 - South Dakota Ranch Tours - Vivian, Wood & Mission, SD
- 10/17/2020 - Texas Bison Association Fall Meeting/Ranch Tour - Bryan, TX
- 11/07/2020 - 55th Annual Custer State Park Fall Classic Bison Auction - Custer, SD
- 11/21/2020 - Coyote Trail Buffalo Annual Production Auction - Onaka, SD
- 12/04/2020 - Western Bison Association Meeting and Show/Sale - Ogden, UT
- 12/8/2020 - Northern Range Buffalo Simulcast Consignment Auction - Sturgis, SD
- 12/19/2020 - North Dakota Buffalo Assn. Simulcast Auction - Mandan, ND
- 1/08/2021 - Montana Bison Assn. Winter Conference - Great Falls, MT
- 1/9/2021 - Turner Bison Exchange Prairie Performance Auction - Rapid City, SD
- 1/20/2021 - National Bison Association Winter Conference - Denver, CO
- 1/23/2021 - National Bison Association Gold Trophy Show/Sale - Denver, CO
- 2/6/2020 - DTBA Black Hills Buffalo Classic Simulcast Auction - Rapid City, SD
- 6/27/2021 - National Bison Assn. Summer Conference - Cheyenne, WY

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