



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

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NBA Weekly Update for April 9, 2021

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.

Matheson to Present at MN Bison Assn. Meeting

Members of the Minnesota Bison Association are gathering at the Round Lake Winery & Vineyard in Round Lake, MN this weekend for the association's Spring Educational Conference. The conference is themed: "Bridge the Gap – Past, Present, Future."

National Bison Association Assistant Director Jim Matheson will provide an update on national issues at the conference. Other presentations will include:

- Jim Mead – Ice Age Mammoths & Bison of SD and MN
- Scott Ellenbecker of the Round Lake Winery & Vineyards & Rod Sather of Mosquito Park Enterprises
- Adam Ulbricht - Minnesota Bison Association
- Chef Brendan and Chef Scott - Challenges of restaurants that serve Bison
- Nick Ward - Ward Laboratories

Evolve® Pet Food is Newest Partner in Bison Restoration

The National Bison Association is happy to welcome Evolve® Pet Food as the newest Partner in Bison restoration. Evolve® just launched their new line of Deboned Beef, Barley & Bison Recipe Super Premium Dog Food, which will be hitting store shelves and on-line retailers soon. Evolve® has been making real meat first, natural pet foods, treats, & biscuits in their family owned and operated USA facilities for over 50 years.

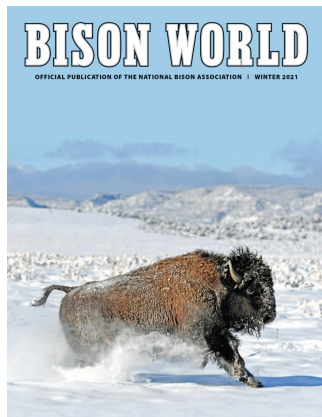
“We are pleased to have another partner helping to inform the public that anyone purchasing products containing bison meat is helping to restore bison to the pastures and rangelands of North America,” said Dave Carter, NBA executive director.

The new Evolve Deboned Beef, Barley and Bison recipe carries the Partner in Bison Restoration logo on the front display panel. The back panel contains the following message:

“Roughly 135 years ago, only about 750 bison remained from herds that once numbered as high as 40 million. Nearly 400,000 bison have been restored. Ranchers, tribal leaders and conservationists have set a goal of restoring 1 million bison to North America. Bison helped shape the North American ecosystem, so bison restoration is helping to reclaim vibrant grasslands that contribute to a healthy climate. Evolve® Pet Food and You—as a bison customer—are vital partners in this endeavor.”

The Partner in Bison Restoration logo contains a line to www.bison1million.com, which directs consumers to a special landing page with links to a variety of stories explaining how bison are restoring healthy grasslands, healthy diets, and healthy communities.

Watch the company’s promotional video announcing their partnership [here](#).



Winter Bison World Magazine Available Online

One of the perks of NBA membership is access to the Bison World magazine before the printed copies arrive in the mail! Production on the Winter issue has wrapped up and it is now available on the website at:

<https://bisoncentral.com/publication/bison-world-magazine/>.

You will need to log in to the member area to access the magazine.

The annual membership directory will be mailing with this issue.

The flipbook version of the magazine can be viewed right on your computer. Handy links allow you to open it into a new window, make it larger, magnify certain features and even print pages if desired. The realistic page-turning sounds make it feel like you are reading the printed version of the magazine.

The hard copy magazine is currently being printed and will mail shortly.

Spring Issue Bison World Advertising Now Available

Production is now underway on the Spring issue of the Bison World magazine.

There are a variety of advertising options available, from 1/8 page all the way to full page. Lifetime and Active NBA members will enjoy discounted rates as part of their membership perks. Karen can work with you to tailor an advertising campaign that fits your budget and

targets your message!

The advertising deadline is April 15. Editorial submissions and suggestions are welcome at any time but will also be subjected to the April 15 deadline for the Spring issue.

For more information about editorial submissions or advertising your ranch, business or events, contact Karen@bisoncentral.com or call (605) 381-3738.

What are Your Plans for Earth Day?

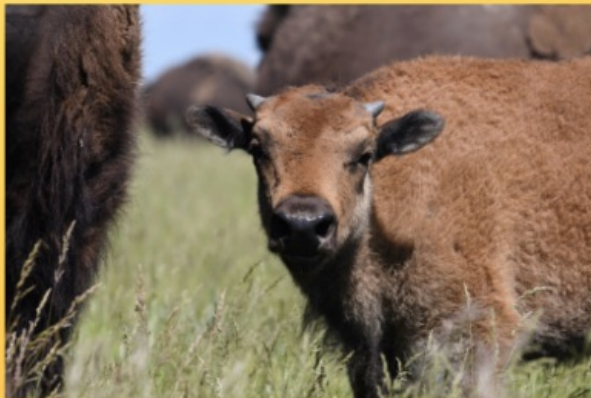
As Earth Day continues to grow as a day of awareness of the importance of environmental stewardship, bison producers have an opportunity to educate the public on the powerful role America's National Mammal is playing in restoring ecological health to North America.

Earth day this year is April 22, so members have three weeks remaining to help spread that word.

What story do you have to tell? Share it with the NBA and we'll incorporate it as a part of our Earth Day Social Media blitz surrounding Earth Day 2021.



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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Webinar Recording Available on How Yellowstone Bison Shape the Park Ecosystem

The Draper natural History Museum has posted last week's presentation by Yellowstone National Park's Lead Biologist, Chris Geremia, exploring the ways in which bison change the way spring happens across Yellowstone National Park's vast grasslands.

According to Geremia, without several thousands of bison moving freely on the landscape in sync, the springtime season of plant growth would be shorter, the land would not be as green, and the plants would not be as nutritious. On a typical June day in Yellowstone, it's not unusual to see thousands of bison grazing in the Lamar Valley. The groups appear

aimlessly roaming back and forth.

Geremia offered a more complete overview of the animals' impact on Yellowstone during a Draper Natural History Museum Lunchtime Expedition titled, "Migrating Bison Engineer a Better Yellowstone."

The Zoom presentation can be viewed [here](#).

Senate Proposal Would Reform Rules for Livestock Haulers

Commercial haulers of livestock and other agricultural commodities would get a regulatory break under recently proposed legislation.

Reintroduced by Senators John Hoeven (R-N.D.) and Michael Bennet (D-Colo.), the Modernizing Agricultural Transportation Act would require reforms of Hours of Service (HOS) and Electronic Logging Device (ELD) rules. The bi-partisan bill would also delay their enforcement until the mandated reforms are proposed by U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg.

"It is important that we maintain safe roads while also recognizing the unique flexibility needed to move Colorado's agricultural products to markets," Bennet stated in a news release. "I look forward to working with Senator Hoeven and our colleagues to give farmers and ranchers a seat at the table as we push for more sensible rules around the transportation of agricultural goods."

The Hoeven-Bennet bill would set up a working group at the Department of Transportation that includes representatives from the agriculture, transportation and transportation safety industries. The group would review the impact of existing HOS and ELD rules on the commercial transport of livestock and other agricultural products and develop guidelines to improve them. The transportation secretary would then have 120 days to propose regulatory changes.

The measure has widespread industry support, including by the National Pork Producers Council and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. It's also cosponsored by Senators Steve Daines (R-Mont.), Tina Smith (D-Minn.), Mike Rounds (R-S.D.), Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), James Risch (R-Idaho), Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), Mike Braun (R-Ind.) and Roger Marshall (R-Kans.).

USDA Reopens CFAP-2 Sign-Up

(From Agri-Pulse)

Producers can once again sign up to receive funding from the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program after a freeze on the program from the early days of the Biden administration and the recent rollout of additional funds for pandemic relief.

According to USDA, signup begins today and will be open for "at least 60 days." The initial signup for the program ended in December. In announcing the reopened signup, USDA also announced the availability of \$2 million to "establish partnerships with organizations to provide outreach and technical assistance to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers."

"USDA is committed to making financial assistance available to a broader set of producers, including to socially disadvantaged communities, and we know that we need partners to help make that happen," Zach Ducheneaux, administrator of USDA's Farm Service Agency, said in a statement.

"This funding will support grassroots organizations and public institutions as we support their producers," he added. "I am excited to see their innovative, results-driven proposals to help us reach our producers, especially those who have not taken full advantage of the available assistance."

Awards will range from \$20,000 to \$99,999 for a duration of six months to one year, USDA noted.

CFAP was originally rolled out by the Trump administration in April 2020 and was expanded in September to include additional commodities. In March, the Biden administration announced another \$6 billion in pandemic relief as well as the tweaking of previous CFAP formulas.

Have You Herd? Sayre Bison Farmers Work with Tribe to Process Meat

(From the Daily Oklahoman)

SAYRE – With thick, heavy coats of brown fur, hundreds of bison roam the vast, sweeping prairie near this western Oklahoma town, grazing on the waving grass in their native land. Bison like these once numbered in the millions and covered the Midwest, providing food and resources to Native American tribes. But as settlers pushed westward in the 1800s, they killed the animals in droves.

Now, a company here is working to grow the herd.

Kyle Benjamin Reynolds and Austin Lee Puckett co-founded the Benjamin Lee Bison company in 2017 when they purchased land in the Sayre area and bought bison of their own. They added to a herd Puckett's family started a few years earlier.

They're hoping to provide customers with high-quality, healthy meat, they say. And they say they also want to educate people about the nation's national mammal, one as rich in history as it is in nutrients.

"It's exciting to be a part of something that's bringing back a creature that was almost extinct," Reynolds said.

Bison are the largest land mammals in North America, and millions of them once roamed what is now the United States.

But then came the idea of manifest destiny and, eventually, westward expansion. Bison were nearly driven to the point of extinction in the 1800s by buffalo hunters, allowing European settlers to eventually stake land claims across the American West. From 1820 to 1880, up to 60 million bison roamed the United States, the National Park Service estimates. By the 1890s, fewer than 1,000 remained.

"Railways, rifles, and an international market for buffalo hides led to 'the Great Slaughter,'" according to the National Park Service. "Other factors including the military's directive to destroy buffalo as a way to control American Indians, the introduction of diseases from cattle, drought, and competition from domestic livestock (horses, cattle, sheep) contributed to the reduction in bison numbers as well."

For the Benjamin Lee Bison company's herd, being in western Oklahoma is natural.

Read more [here](#).

Editorial: Bison on a Bridge? A Quad Cities Dream

(From the Chicago Tribune)

Many of us have sung of the dream of getting a home where the buffalo roam. Alas, the buffalo no longer range across most of the expanses of America that they once populated. But if some visionaries have their way, they may roam in a place they never did before — a bridge in the Quad Cities spanning the Mississippi River.

If you think it sounds crazy, you might have a point. But the idea is too charming and creative to reject out of hand. The mile-long Fred Schwengel Memorial Bridge, part of

Interstate 80, is due to be taken out of service and demolished, with a new span being built to handle the 42,000 cars and trucks that cross each day. The Bison Bridge Foundation, however, wants to preserve the old bridge and incorporate it into [a preserve](#) for the creatures commonly known as buffalo.

Bison once thrived in this part of the country, munching away on the tallgrass prairies that covered Illinois before settlers plowed them to grow crops. Of course, the animals once thrived over much of the continent, numbering more than 20 million, until relentless hunting came very close to wiping them out. Now, anyone who wants to see them up close may be advised to visit national parks like Yellowstone, which has more bison than any other site in the country.

Out west, you can even get too close — as tourists sometimes learn too late when one of these mild-looking bovines becomes agitated and suddenly charges. Bison can weigh up to 2,000 pounds and run at 35 mph. When they get peeved, it's wise to be far away.

The **Bison Bridge** would avoid that danger. The westbound lanes of the existing highway would be converted into a corridor where a small herd could graze and wander back and forth between Illinois and Iowa, where they would occupy a preserve covering some 100 acres. The eastbound lanes would become a park for visitors, who could stroll, bike, picnic and get a close-up view of some formidable animals — with a sturdy fence to keep people and beasts safely apart. The foundation says it would be the longest wildlife bridge in the world.

Read more [here](#).

The Bison's Tale

(From High Plains Journal)

Photographer Audrey Hall uses her camera lens to capture the quiet strength of America's national mammal, the bison. Her words, along with several quotes, essays and poems from contributors, lend weight and wonder to her subject matter.

When it comes to bison the weight of the matter is terribly apparent. A species whose numbers were once an estimated herd 60 million strong dwindled to less than a thousand in just two decades.

Those massive herds were made up of descendants of European steppe bison with their 7-foot horn spans. It is believed they made their way to North America by crossing the Bering Land Bridge. In the early days of the western expansion, bison had evolved into what they look like today—dark brown, weighing 2,000 pounds or less and horns that reach about 3 feet.

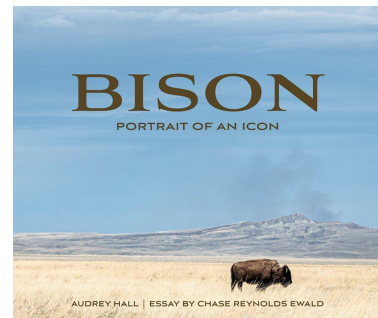
When James Earl Fraser was asked to design a coin for the United States Mint in 1912, he had a very specific goal in mind. As Fraser is quoted in "Bison," "When I was asked to do a nickel, I felt I wanted to do something totally American—a coin that could not be mistaken for any other country's coin. It occurred to me that the buffalo, as part of our western background, was 100% American."

The buffalo nickel was minted from 1913 to 1938, so Fraser's inspiration was drawn from a uniquely American icon whose numbers in 1912 had dropped to 2,000 animals.

Read more [here](#).

Yellowstone Bison Migration Minimal; Hunter Kills Down, Trapping Paused

(From the Billings Gazette)



BILLINGS – Fewer bison migrated out of Yellowstone National Park this winter, reducing the hunter harvest to almost 170 animals, according to numbers compiled by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

Last year, hunters killed more than 200 bison with another 260 shipped to slaughter. Because so few bison were available to hunters this season, the park's staff decided not to capture any for its Bison Conservation Transfer or slaughter programs, despite agreeing to a recommended culling quota of 500 to 700 animals last year. As a result, the herd could grow to 5,100 to 5,200 animals by the end of the summer, close to the 10-year average, the park's bison biologist, Chris Geremia, predicted.

"This has been an interesting year to see what happens if we only rely on hunting" as a means to control the bison population, said Cam Sholly, superintendent of Yellowstone, during a Thursday online meeting of the Interagency Bison Management Plan. "It kind of proves the point that we may not be able to rely on any single mechanism from a population management standpoint."

The park and its partners are discussing how best to fulfill tribal treaty rights for bison while also reducing Yellowstone's publicly unpopular capture and slaughter program – an outgrowth of a lawsuit settlement with the state of Montana to reduce the bison population – in favor of more capture for quarantine and eventual transfer of live bison to tribes.

It's a difficult process Sholly referred to as "threading the needle."
"Ultimately, I would like us to get to the point where we substantially reduced or eliminated how many bison get consigned to slaughter each year," he said.

Read more [here](#).

High Meat Prices Prompt Menu Changes

(From Meatingplace.com)

The foodservice machine is grinding back into operation nationwide but with the runup in meat prices in the last few months, some cuts seem destined to be left behind.

The reasons are varied: Processing plants have been operating at capacity since mid-2020 but have recalibrated to focus on cuts popular at retail. In addition, feed costs are running 25% to 30% higher than a year ago and export demand is healthy, [according to a report in Restaurant Business](#).

Some of the cuts destined for restaurants "have to find their home again" as dining out resumes, the foodservice publication quoted Will Sawyer, lead economist in animal protein at CoBank in Atlanta, as saying.

Restaurant Business quoted New Jersey chef Nick DeRosa as saying his cost for meat for his protein-centric gastropub are up 12% to 15% over pre-pandemic levels, and that "sometimes, the wholesale price can skyrocket \$5 in a week."

The price levels for meat are expected to remain elevated through 2021. In response, restaurateurs are implementing a number of tactics to cope, including changing the menu weekly to feature different cuts in order to maintain flexibility in sourcing; venturing into less expensive cuts such as lamb necks, which DeRosa described as perfect for braising, then pulling the meat off for dishes such as shepherd's pie, or rib or tenderloin tips as ingredients in a dish; aging a cut such as top sirloin to look and cook like a more expensive option, such as filet mignon; and stretching the restaurant's meat stores with a "flight" of small beef or pork cuts as an entrée.

Cargill: Consumers Willing to Make Food Choices to Curb Climate Change

(From Meatingplace.com)

A large majority (80%) of consumers reported a willingness to make a change in the type of food they purchase or eat if it would help reduce climate change, according to a new survey from Cargill.

Almost half (47%) said they are willing to pay a premium for a product promising a low-carbon footprint. And 42% said they believe livestock can reduce methane emission. Among participants in Cargill's Feed4Thought survey, those who indicated climate change is important to them also rated livestock and agriculture lowest in negative impact compared with other industries generally regarded as significant contributors, the company said in a news release.

The survey, conducted in January, included responses from 2,510 consumers in the U.S., France, South Korea and Brazil. Participants ranked transportation and deforestation as the greatest contributors to climate change.

Regarding whom is most responsible for accelerating change, 59% said federal and national governments bear the highest responsibility for addressing climate change, while 57% saw companies involved in beef production and 50% saw cattle farmers as responsible for reducing the impact of livestock.

About 14.5% of global human-originated emissions can be attributed to agriculture, and about 3% of U.S. emissions are attributed to methane emitted as a result of the digestive process in ruminant animals, Cargill said.

Of those surveyed, one-fourth said they would purchase more beef if cattle were fed an additive or used other technology to reduce methane emissions.

Meat Grocery Sales Likely to Slow As Restaurants Reopen: Research

(From Meatingplace.com)

Market research suggests meat is 50% more likely than the average grocery category to see sales decline when restaurants reopen, according to Numerator's new [Grocery Vulnerability Index](#).

Meat topped the list of food categories expected to be most vulnerable to a decrease in sales, followed by herbs and spices (46%), condiments (19%), packaged bakery (13%) and dairy (8%). Frozen foods and the baking and cooking categories were categorized as "wait and see," while candy, shelf stable meals and breakfast were considered not as vulnerable to a sales pullback.

The index was created by correlating consumer spending on restaurants, the grocery sector and individual categories in four-week rolling periods during the COVID-19 pandemic.

While some surveys have shown consumers are growing weary of cooking at home and are eager to dine out more frequently again, others point to the staying power of the cooking-at-home trend. A study by food marketing consultancy Hunter in January found 71% of respondents who are cooking more intend to continue doing so after the pandemic ends.

WY Elk Feed Ground Law Signed


(From Jackson Hole Radio News)

Governor Mark Gordon yesterday took action on 32 bills, including the Elk feed ground closings-requirements legislation. The change approved for the elk feed ground law effectively strips the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission of the authority to close any of Wyoming's 22 winter elk feed grounds, giving that power to the governor, and now also requires the state livestock board to convene when necessary, for the purpose of

considering the recommended closure of any elk feed ground.

The governor also is afforded the power to close an elk feed ground for "emergency circumstances" such as its proximity to wildlife infected with such serious and readily transmissible diseases as chronic wasting disease.

[Source:](#)



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Save the Date!

- 4/09/2021 - Minnesota Bison Association's Annual Education Conference - MN
- 6/11/2021 - Montana/Western Bison Association Summer Conference - MT
- 6/27 - 29/2021 - 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.

[Click Here for NBA Calendar of Events](#)

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