



# Weekly Update



bisoncentral.com

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## ***NBA Weekly Update for August 27, 2021***

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### **NBA Submits Formal Recommendations for \$500 Million Meat Infrastructure Investment**

The National Bison Association today file extensive comments in response to the USDA's recent Request for Information on Investments in Opportunities for Meat and Poultry Processing infrastructure.

USDA had requested public input following Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack's July announcement that \$500 million of the American Rescue Act would be allocated to improving the infrastructure for the meat and poultry processing sector. In the Request for Information published in the Federal Register in July, USDA posed a series of questions regarding the priorities for the \$500 million investment.

In general, the NBA recommended that USDA:

- Provide new subcategories within the current classification of "small" processors.
- Assistance be directed to facilities with fewer than 250 employees;
- Resources first be allocated to existing facilities to assist in expansion and upgrades; and
- Make all resources available to processing facilities conducting voluntary inspection.

The recommendation for developing new subcategories regarding the size classification of meat facilities was directed at the current criteria that defines a "small" meat processing facility as a plant that employs more than 10 employees and fewer than 500 employees.

"The definition of small meat plants is simply too broad. A facility employing 50 workers faces significantly different challenges than a facility with 450 workers. We recommend three subcategories for facilities currently classified as 'small':

- 10 – 100 employees
- 101 – 249 employees; and
- 250 – 499 employees."

The complete copy of the NBA's submitted comments is available [here](#).

Individual NBA members may submit comments before 11:59 p.m. EDT on Monday by clicking here. <https://www.regulations.gov/commenton/AMS-TM-21-0058-0002>

## Wholesale Carcass Prices Down in July

Prices paid for dressed bison bull and heifer carcasses slipped in July, according to the latest monthly wholesale bison prices report released by USDA's Livestock and Grain Market News Service.

According to the latest report, dressed young bulls averaged \$381.61/Cwt. in July, which was \$8.23/Cwt. lower than in June and \$17.43/Cwt. lower than the previous July. Dressed heifer carcasses averaged \$358.35/Cwt. which was \$0.27/Cwt. lower than in July and \$24.17/Cwt. lower than the previous July.

Older bulls were lower or the month, but prices for older cows were higher.

Year-to-date, 38,760 bison have been processed under federal inspection, which is 1,450 more than the same period in 2020, and the highest year-to-date number since USDA began recording slaughter data.

According to the July Wholesale Price Report, 1.9 million lbs. of fresh chilled bison meat has been exported to Mexico year-to date this year.

The latest wholesale price report can be accessed here.

[https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/ams\\_2827.pdf](https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/ams_2827.pdf). The NBA five-year tracking report is available in the members' section of [bisoncentral.com](http://bisoncentral.com), or by clicking [here](#).

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## NBA Develops Guide to USDA Drought Resources

As drought conditions worsen across many of the bison-producing areas across the country, the National Bison Association has developed a handout providing information on how ranchers can access USDA drought-assistance resources.

The two-page flyer provides an overview of Livestock Forage Disaster Program, Livestock Indemnity Program, and other resources.

NBA members can download the flyer [here](#).

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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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**Alaska biologists say wood bison reintroduced to the wild are**

## **thriving**

*(From KTOO)*

State biologists completed an annual survey of the Innoko-Yukon River wood bison population earlier this summer, and they say the results show the animals are doing well six years after a seed group of bison was released in the area.

Biologists counted 103 wood bison this summer — an increase of more than 10% from last year's herd size. Twenty-six calves joined the herd this year — the most the herd has produced since it was established in 2015. The survey also showed that the animals are in better physical condition than in previous years.

Darren Bruning, a regional wildlife conservation supervisor for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, said the survey shows the bison are succeeding in the wild.

Bruning flew along in the plane that took photos for the count. He said seeing a thriving herd of wood bison in the Innoko-Yukon River area is a testament to members of the public who advocated for the reintroduction and Fish and Game.

"So to see them in the wild is almost indescribable. It's extremely rewarding, and I feel good for everyone, knowing the bison are there," he said.

Read [more](#).

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## **45K people applied to cull bison at Grand Canyon. 12 were chosen. Here's what's next**

*(From the Arizona Republic)*

The first controlled bison hunt inside Grand Canyon National Park will happen this fall at the North Rim.

A pool of 45,040 applicants from around the country has been whittled down to 12 skilled hunters who will go through more training to participate. The goal of the operation, which is being managed by the National Park Service and the Arizona Game and Fish Department, is to reduce the size of the bison herd at the North Rim.

A 2017 environmental assessment conducted by the National Park Service noted that the more than 300 bison in the park are damaging vegetation, archaeological sites and water sources. It set a target of reducing the herd to 200 animals.

The park service calls the operation a "lethal removal." It will take place over four weeks in late September and late October. Here's how the participants were chosen and how the process will work.

Read [more](#).

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## **Red River Zoo Announces A Fitting New Exhibit: Bison**

*(From InForum.com)*

FARGO — This is Fargo, after all.

That's how Red River Zoo Executive Director Sally Jacobson describes why they are adding bison, along with other animals of the prairie, to their exhibits.

"We should have bison," she said.

Fargo is, of course, home to the North Dakota State University Bison, and the majestic animals once roamed the area's prairies.

Work has already started on the exhibit, called Scheels Pride of the Prairie, on four acres

in the southeast corner of the 34-acre zoo in southwest Fargo.

In addition to two female and one male bison, the exhibit will add two pronghorn antelope and two sandhill cranes to the zoo. The zoo's colony of prairie dogs and black-footed ferrets, also creatures of the prairie, will be relocated to the new \$1.2 million exhibit.

Jacobson can't reveal yet where the bison are coming from, but she expects to announce that in the coming weeks. She said they are expected to be genetically pure bison and will be younger so visitors will be able to see them grow.

The exhibit, with its eight-foot-high fences, will feature an indoor structure to provide better views in the colder months as the zoo is open year-round.

There will also be an outdoor plaza for viewing.

Read more [here](#).

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## **For \$32 Million, Own Where The Bison Roam On Kauai's North Shore**

*(From Forbes)*

If miles of green grass dotted with grazing bison are your idea of paradise, this property in the heart of Kauai's North Shore is for you.

Called the [Hanalei Bison Ranch](#), the 228-acre fruit farm, bison ranch and tilapia fishery is the largest property on the coveted North Shore. It's now for sale at \$32 million, according to the listing provided by [Hawaii Life](#) top producer [Neal Norman](#).

Ranch living isn't the property's only attribute. Set high on a bluff overlooking Hanalei Valley, the bison ranch takes in sweeping views of the mountains and ocean. Three residences lie on the higher elevation and take in west-facing views of the ocean and sunset. The trio of living structures combines to offer nine bedrooms, seven bathrooms and nearly 7,000 square feet of living space.

Read more [here](#).

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## **Calf born to bison pair at zoo**

*(From The Minot Daily News)*

Ole and Lena have a new baby.

The bison calf was born on Monday to the adult bison pair at Roosevelt Park Zoo in Minot.

Jennifer Kleen, executive director of the Greater Minot Zoological Society, said this is Lena's eighth calf. She said some zoo visitors observed the birth.

Earlier this month, the zoo staff mourned the loss of Laura, a prairie dog who had visited many schools as a zoo animal ambassador.

Kleen said Laura, who was eight years old, had some elder ailments and died Aug. 11.

Read [more](#).

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## **FDA warns people should stop using animal worm medication to treat COVID**

*(From KSDK.com)*

WASHINGTON - "You are not a horse. You are not a cow. Seriously, y'all. Stop it."

The U.S. Food and Drug administration has issued a warning after health officials learned some people have been using drugs for livestock to try and treat COVID-19. This time, the administration is advising against the use of ivermectin, a drug commonly used to treat parasites in animals.

It's become a problem in Mississippi, where coronavirus cases from the delta variant have skyrocketed over the last few weeks. The Mississippi State Department of Health issued a warning Friday, saying that the state's poison control center, "has received an increasing number of calls from individuals with potential ivermectin exposure taken to treat or prevent COVID-19 infection."

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## **Western Lawmakers Call On Biden, FEMA To Declare Drought Disaster**

*(From NBC News)*

Congressional leaders are calling on President Joe Biden to declare a drought disaster in the West as [record temperatures](#) and [historic wildfires](#) batter multiple states.

In a letter, Reps. Joe Neguse of Colorado and Jared Huffman of California, Democrats whose districts have been ravaged by drought and wildfires, joined 31 other lawmakers in asking Biden and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to release additional resources to aid Western communities faced with water cuts as supplies rapidly dwindle.

"There is little to no livestock feed available in the West, farmers are considering selling their livestock or land, and many species of wildlife are suffering from wildfires and lack of water," Neguse and Huffman wrote in the letter, which was sent Wednesday. "This drought could have long-term impacts on the food supply, wildlife, and livelihoods of Americans in the West as these conditions persist."

The letter supports a request this month from the governors of California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, Utah and Washington. [In their letter](#), the governors asked the Biden administration to declare a drought disaster in their states that would allow "agriculture communities to access funding beyond what is available through existing emergency programs."

"Historic drought levels threaten to eliminate entire crops, depress yields and harbor extreme levels of pests and disease that add to the cumulative loss," they wrote.

The federal government [declared an unprecedented water shortage](#) this month for the Colorado River and Lake Mead, triggering mandatory water cuts and opening a new chapter in the worsening struggle with drought in the West.

Read more [here](#).

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## **USDA Okes 2.8M Acres For Conservation Reserve Program, Short Of Biden Goal**

*(From AgriPulse)*

The Agriculture Department is accepting 2.8 million acres into the land-idling Conservation Reserve Program, an enrollment far short of the 4 million acres the Biden administration was aiming for as part of its effort to use farmers to help reduce U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

[About 1.9 million acres will be enrolled as part of the general signup](#) that ended in July, and another 897,000 acres were accepted under the continuous signup rules, USDA's Farm Service Agency said Monday.

Additional acreage is expected to be enrolled through the continuous signup process and through the CRP Grasslands signup, which closed last week.

But the program will likely remain well below the cap of 25.5 million acres set by the 2018 farm bill for fiscal 2022, which starts Oct. 1. **About 20.6 million acres are currently enrolled** in the program, and contracts on 3 million acres are scheduled to expire on Sept. 30.

In conjunction with a White House climate summit this spring, **Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced a series of financial incentives to help attract more CRP acreage.** USDA offered a 10% “inflationary” adjustment to the county payment rates and also set a minimum payment rate for CRP grasslands of \$15 an acre.

The top Republican on the Senate Agriculture Committee, **John Boozman of Arkansas, alleged last month that the Biden administration improperly increased the payment rates** and the resulting contracts may turn out to be invalid.

USDA also offered a “climate-smart practice” Incentive that provides a 3%, 5% or 10% incentive payment based on the predominate vegetation type for the practices enrolled in the program.

FSA Administrator Zach Ducheneaux on Monday acknowledged the enrollment was well short of the gap but noted that CRP enrollment had been shrinking for the past two years. “The changes we made this spring have put us on the path to reverse this trend,” he said.

The average payment rate for the 1.9 million acres accepted into the program through the general sign-up will be \$53 per acre.

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## **Farmers, Ranchers Back Trump 'Waters' Rule At Online Meeting**

*(From AgriPulse)*

Representatives of state farm bureaus, as well as individual farmers and ranchers, spoke out in favor of keeping the Trump administration’s Navigable Waters Protection Rule in place at an online meeting today.

However, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers have already said they are concerned about the damaging effects of the 2020 rule on the nation's waters and are working towards developing a replacement.

In particular, “the agencies are concerned that the NWPR did not look closely enough at the effect ephemeral waters have on traditional navigable waters when the agencies decided to categorically exclude all ephemeral waters,” Radhika Fox, assistant administrator for water at EPA, said in a June declaration filed in a court case challenging that Trump-era rule, which at this time is still the law of the land.

State farm bureaus were well represented in Monday’s online meeting, one of several the agencies are holding to gather feedback on the direction they should take.

“Our nation’s producers should not be required to get permits for common and essential farming practices,” said Tiffany Rivera, director of governmental affairs for the New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau.

The NWPR, she and other ag representatives said, “very clearly protected the waters it should have, like lakes, rivers and streams,” she said.

Rivera was not alone among numerous representatives of state farm bureaus who urged the agencies not to write the word “navigable” out of the Clean Water Act.

The CWA establishes jurisdiction over “navigable waters,” which it defines as “waters of the U.S.,” a term left to the federal government to further define. The 2020 rule excluded ephemeral streams — those that flow as a result of precipitation — and narrowed conditions under which “adjacent wetlands” can be considered jurisdictional. It also largely exempts ditches.



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### **Save the Date!**

- 9/11/2021 - RMBA Fall Ranch Tour of Prairie Ridge Buffalo - CO
- 9/23/2021 – Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup & Arts Festival - SD
- 9/25/2021 – BisonFest Music Festival, TX
- 10/15/2021 - Wisconsin Bison Producers Association Fall Meeting - WI
- 10/23/2021 - Custer State Park Roundup and Arts Festival - SD
- 10/30/2021 - Texas Bison Association Fall Ranch Tour - TX
- 11/6/2021 - Custer State Park Annual Bison Auction - SD
- 11/8/2021 - Antelope Island State Park Production Auction - UT
- 11/13/2021 - Oklahoma Bison Association Fall Auction - OK
- 11/15/2021 - TNC Tallgrass Prairie Preserve Fall Bison Auction - OK
- 11/26/2021 - Minn. Bison Association's Bison Fundamentals Workshop - MN
- 11/27/2021 - Minn. Bison Association's Legends of the Fall Bison Auction - MN
- 12/4/2021 – Kansas Bison Association Sale - KS
- 12/4/2021 - Western Bison Association Wild West Buffalo Stampede Auction - UT
- 12/7/2021 - Northern Range Buffalo Simulcast Auction - SD
- 1/1/2022 - Prairie Legends Bison Auction - Online
- 1/8/2022 - Turner Bison Exchange Prairie Performance Bison Auction - SD
- 1/19/2022 – 1/22/2022 – National Bison Association Winter Conference - CO
- 1/22/2022 - NBA Gold Trophy Show and Sale - National Western Stock Show - CO
- 2/12/2022 - Dakota Dynamite Buffalo Sale - SD
- 2/19/2022 – Dakota Territory Buffalo Association Sale - SD
- 3/04/2022 - Rocky Mountain Bison Association's Spring Conference - Location TBD
- 7/12/2022 - International Bison Conference - Saskatoon - SK

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.

**Click Here for NBA Calendar of Events**

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