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

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NBA Weekly Update for February 5, 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.



Thank You, 2021 Winter Conference Sponsors!



Solicitation Announced for First Round of Section 32 Purchases

USDA's Agricultural marketing Service this week issued its solicitation to purchase up to 1.2 million lbs. of lean ground bison meat under the first of two rounds of purchases under the Section 32 surplus removal program that was authorized at the request of the National Bison Association last year.

Agency officials held a conference call with bison marketers and with the National Bison Association this week to discuss the requirements for bidding on the program. The product to be delivered into the program will need to be at least 90 percent lean and packed in 1 lb. or 2lb. bricks or chubs. Processors can label the product with their already-approved retail labeling. All meat used in the program must be source from animals born and raised in the united states. And all bids must be for truckload (40,000 lb.) quantities.

Approved vendors must submit their bids by February 9th, and the awards will be announced by February 16th. AMS can award contracts to multiple bidders.

Product delivered to USDA will be utilized in the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) and the Temporary Food Assistance program (TFAP). TEFAP is the program that has administered the Farm to Family Food Box Program initiated shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

"We are encouraged by this initial solicitation," said Dave Carter, National Bison Association executive director. "This program "We appreciate the work that USDA is doing to make sure as many of our marketers as possible can participate."

Meat Processing Bottleneck a Topic for Conference Discussion

With meat processing bottlenecks continuing to hamper the ability for bison producers to get their animals to market, three experts on this topic will dissect the issue during a virtual panel presentation scheduled during the joint National Bison Association and Dakota Territory Buffalo Association winter conference February 19th at the Ramkota Hotel in Rapid City, SD.

Participants in the panel will include:

- Rebecca Thistlethwaite, director of the Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network at Oregon State University. Thistlethwaite is a national expert on issues facing small meat processors.
- Chris Roper, Roper Ag Services. Roper has overseen the construction and operation of two Oklahoma Processing plants in the past six years. In 21015, he managed the construction of a multi-species plant for the Quapaw nation in Northwestern Oklahoma. Late year, he assisted the Osage Nation in Oklahoma is constructing a similar plant.
- Kristopher Kelly, NBA Region VIII Director and manager of Memphis Meat Processing. Kelly represents the NBA on the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's Small Meat Processors Roundtable.

Science & Research Committee Prepares for Proposal Review

As the NBA Science and research Committee prepares to review up to 16 research proposals scheduled to arrive at the Center of Excellence for Bison Studies in March, four new members have been added to the committee roster to provide additional expertise and insight.

New NBA members on the Committee include Corissa Busse of South Dakota, Jeremy Ruhter of Illinois, Joe Graham of Texas and Dr. Margaret Parker of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service office in Colorado.

The committee met yesterday to prepare to review the proposals due to be submitted by

March 15th. A total of 36 letters of intent were submitted to the Center in December. The Center's Board of Directors conducted an initial evaluation on the proposals and identified 16 to be invited to submit full proposals.

70 Head Consigned to Gold Trophy Show and Sale

The 2021 Gold Trophy Show and Sale (GTSS) will offer 70 head of quality breeding stock at its first show and sale to take place outside of Denver, as the sale has moved to Rapid City, SD for 2021. The Dakota Territory Buffalo Association will have an additional 48 yearling heifers for sale as well from their Girlz Going, Wild class. The sale will be held at the Rapid City Ramkota Hotel on Saturday, February 20, 2021.

Consignments as of today – 70 head:

- Two-Year-Old Bulls - 10
- Yearling Bulls - 20
- Bull Calves - 12
- Two Year Old Bred Heifers - 2
- Pen of 2 – Two Year Old Bred Heifers - 3 pens
- Heifer Calves - 5
- Pen of 5 Heifer Calves - 3 pens

Cost-effective [sale catalog](#) advertising is available, contact Karen@bisoncentral.com to inquire about advertising availability.

And a special thank you to our 2021 GTSS trophy sponsors!

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We Are Joining Forces to Bring Your Message to Our Audience!

We will be offering a limited amount of advertising in the combined 2021 National Bison Association/Dakota Territory Buffalo Association Live Auction sale catalog. Ads will be sold on a first come, first serve basis with consignors receiving first pick and then we will open it up for anyone else who is interested in advertising in the catalog.

This is an excellent opportunity to get the message out about your breeding program or even animals for sale. The catalog is released prior to the auction and is available in print, online at www.bisoncentral.com, www.dakotabuffalo.com and various other online sites. It is also mailed out to interested parties.

DEADLINE FOR AD PLACEMENT: Reserve space by and have artwork ready by February 5, 2021. Please e-mail artwork files to buffheard@gmail.com and confirm receipt.

Advertising is reserved on a first come, first served basis. **Advertising rates do not include ad design.**

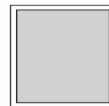
AD SPECIFICATIONS: 300 dpi (266 min.), 150 line screen. Full bleeds on cover (inside and out) advertising (8 1/2" x 11" plus 1/4" gripper). Interior pages, no bleeds; please use dimensions above. Camera-ready electronic files only in PDF format (fonts embedded).

Ads are available in full color or black and white. Price is the same for either format.

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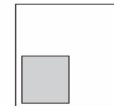
OUTSIDE BACK COVER	\$450
INSIDE FRONT COVER	\$350
INSIDE BACK COVER	\$350
FULL PAGE	\$300
1/2 PAGE HORIZONTAL	\$200
1/4 PAGE	\$150
BUSINESS CARD (3.5"x2")	\$75



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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.

MISSOURI BISON ASSOCIATION



22ND ANNUAL SPRING SHOW & SALE

Saturday, March 20, 2021 – 11:00 AM

Mo-Kan Livestock Market, Butler, MO

Dinner & Business Meeting:

Friday, March 19th, Sale Barn Cafe, 6:30pm

To Consign, Call:

Carol Morris: 660-998-0990

or Peter Kohl: 816-585-4779



EU Reaches Out to Biden Seeking Stronger Trade Ties

(From AgriPulse)

The European Union is reaching out to the Biden administration, hoping it will usher in a new era of cooperation in the World Trade Organization and stronger trade ties.

“Over the last four years, this bond was weakened,” said European Commission Executive Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis, who spoke Monday at an event hosted by the German Marshall Fund. “But with a new administration in Washington, the European Union is hopeful that the door is opening for a new chapter in the transatlantic story.”

Rare White Bison Now Resides in A Missouri Canyon

(From Fox 2)

LAMPE, Mo.- A rare white American bison can now be seen at Dogwood Canyon. The bison's name is Takoda. The release from Dogwood Canyon says the white bison is a

sacred animal in traditional Native American teachings.

“Welcoming a remarkable white bison like this to Dogwood Canyon Nature Park allows us to expand on the important message that Native Americans live out an unwavering conservation ethic,” said Bob Ziehmer, Senior Director of Conservation for Bass Pro Shops.

See the video [here](#).

10-Year Truce Declared in Phillips County Bison Brouhaha

(From the Billings Gazette)

A temporary truce has been negotiated in a long-running battle over the presence of bison on the north central Montana prairie.

On Jan. 21, a three-member board unanimously approved an agreement negotiated by attorneys representing the Phillips County Conservation District and the American Prairie Reserve.

The agreement grants APR a 10-year variance from the Phillips County Bison Grazing Ordinance. In return, the Reserve will provide a disease identification and management plan, disease testing for 325 bison in the first five years, scaling back to 150 bison in the next five years. All of the tested bison will be tagged. APR also agreed to a brucellosis vaccination commitment, a treatment plan for escaped bison and annual meetings providing the opportunity for wide-ranging discussions related to bison and grazing.

“As a whole, this laid out a really good framework for a testing and monitoring program,” said Dale Krause, one of the three Board of Adjustment members. “I really like ... the transparency aspect.”

“Although these additional grazing and disease management practices come at a significant operational cost to us, we agreed to them because we want to do our part to be good neighbors in the communities bordering the Reserve,” said Alison Fox, the reserve’s CEO, in a statement.

Read more [here](#).

Agriculture Nominee Gets Warm Welcome at Senate Hearing

(From Courthouse News Service)

WASHINGTON (CN) - Former Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack is on his way to bipartisan confirmation returning him to America's top agricultural job.

Vilsack, who served as former President Barack Obama's secretary of agriculture for all eight years, went before the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee for a confirmation hearing Tuesday. Despite the tough situation Vilsack faces if confirmed, the atmosphere was mostly chummy as senators lobbed questions at him.

President Joe Biden's nominee for agriculture secretary repeatedly pointed to the opening of opportunities within the nation's food and farm supply. With the president's embrace of addressing climate change, Vilsack said he hoped to link environmental concerns with business opportunities to address them.

Read more [here](#).

Next-Generation Sequencing to Be Used to Detect Bovine Diseases

(From Southwest Farm Press)

Transboundary and emerging diseases are constant threats to the livestock industry. Even as biosafety measures have evolved, there is always the lingering threat of highly contagious or newly discovered diseases impacting animal health.

Through a newly funded project, researchers from Cornell University's Animal Health Diagnostic Center, AHDC, and the Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory, TVMDL, aim to mitigate risks certain diseases pose to the cattle industry by developing technology to detect diseases before outbreaks occur or become widespread.

Diego Diel, DVM, associate professor at the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, will serve as project director, and Kiril Dimitrov, DVM, TVMDL virology diagnostics section head, will co-lead this \$1 million project. The project will be implemented in collaboration with the National Animal Health Laboratory Network, NAHLN, and the Plum Island Animal Disease Center. It is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, NIFA.

Using next-generation sequencing, NGS, the project's goal is to develop new methods of early detection for transboundary and emerging diseases within the cattle industry. For this project, research will target the viruses responsible for foot-and-mouth-disease and those within the bovine respiratory disease complex - bovine viral diarrhea virus, bovine coronavirus, bovine respiratory syncytial virus and bovine parainfluenza virus Type 3.

Read more [here](#).

Webinar on Livestock Traceability to Look at Impact, Costs for Producers

(From Fremont Tribune)

A Nebraska Extension webinar at noon on Feb. 4 will look at the amount that livestock producers are willing to pay for traceability programs.

The Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has recently closed its comment period on a potential new policy on animal identification and traceability. The webinar will review this policy, how it impacts producers, how much buyers are willing to pay and how much sellers require to be compensated for a voluntary traceability program

Presenters will include Elliott Dennis, assistant professor of livestock marketing at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln; James Mitchell, assistant professor of livestock marketing and management, University of Arkansas; and Brian Vander Ley, assistant professor and veterinary epidemiologist, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

The Extension Farm and Ranch Management team is based in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Department of Agricultural Economics. Webinars in the series are hosted every Thursday at noon and aim to assist producers and other agricultural professionals in their decision-making.

Registration is free at farm.unl.edu/webinars.

[Source:](#)

Senate Ag Adds Five Members Spanning the Ideological Spectrum

(From Agri-Pulse)

The Senate Agriculture Committee will have five new members this year, including Democrats who will bring their social justice concerns to the panel.

The committee will be chaired by Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., expanded to 22 members, and evenly split — 11-11 — between parties. Republicans controlled the committee 11-9 during the last Congress.

Democrats are adding three new members — Cory Booker of New Jersey, Ben Ray Lujan of New Mexico and Raphael Warnock of Georgia. Republicans are adding two members, Roger Marshall of Kansas and Tommy Tuberville of Alabama. All but Booker are newly elected.

One Democrat is leaving the committee, Bob Casey of Pennsylvania.

Marshall, a physician who served on the House Agriculture Committee, and Tuberville, a former college football coach who is holding public office for the first time, have been staunch supporters of former President Donald Trump. Tuberville defeated former Sen. Doug Jones, D-Ala.; Marshall replaced the Senate committee's last chairman, Pat Roberts, who retired.

"Agriculture is the largest industry for the Kansas economy, and this assignment will give Kansas a voice at the table to help ensure our farmers, ranchers, and producers remain profitable and our rural communities prosperous," Marshall said. [In the GOP primary, he defeated a populist rival](#), Kris Kobach, who campaigned on imposing restrictions on meatpacker procurement practices and mandating country of origin labeling for meat.

Read more [here](#).

New House Ag Republican Members Represent Top Ag Districts

(From Agri-Pulse)

The House Agriculture Committee is getting seven new Republican members, who represent some of the most productive farming regions in the country.

Democrats have yet to release their full roster of committee members, but House Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced late Tuesday that Rep. Jimmy Panetta, D-Calif., would be on the panel again for this Congress. Panetta also serves on the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, which handles trade and tax policy.

The committee has new leadership with Rep. David Scott, D-Ga., as chairman and Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson of Pennsylvania as the ranking Republican. New members will be coming into a committee that likely will focus on boosting nutrition programs and prioritizing how farmers can help ameliorate climate change through conservation practices.

Rep. Randy Feenstra, R-Iowa, represents Iowa's 4th District, which ranks second nationally in terms of ag production, according to the [2017 Census of Agriculture](#). The district sprawls across northwestern and north-central Iowa, one of the most fertile regions of the country. According to his [website](#), Feenstra says he'll work on agricultural market price transparency, protecting the Renewable Fuel Standard, expanding broadband access and boosting Iowa's relationship with top trading partners. A seat on the Ag Committee is a big gain for the northwest Iowa district after former Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, was [stripped of his seat](#) in January 2019 because of his controversial comments. [Feenstra beat King](#) in the Republican primary in June.

Rep. Tracey Mann, R-Kan., serves Kansas' 1st District, which covers about two-thirds of the state, running from the Colorado border to Manhattan, home of Kansas State University. Mann replaces now Sen. Roger Marshall, R-Kan., who ran for the Senate seat vacated by the retirement of former Senate Ag Committee Chair Pat Roberts, R-Kan. Mann is a former Kansas lieutenant governor and holds a degree in agricultural economics. In an interview with Agri-Pulse, he listed three top priorities on the committee: protect crop insurance, stop over-regulation of agriculture, and promote "free and fair trade" around the world. "In my view, the distance from farm to fork has never been farther and we have to have people who stand up to an urban Congress and advocate for agriculture," Mann said. His district ranks third for ag production.

Read more [here](#).

Impossible Foods Cuts Grocery Store Prices 20%, To 'Compete with The Cow': President

(From Yahoo Finance News)

The price of an Impossible Burger just got a little easier to swallow. For the first time, Impossible Foods is cutting prices of its plant-based meat at the grocery store by 20%.

The suggested retail price for an Impossible Burger will drop to \$5.49 for patties and \$6.99 for a 12 oz. package in about 17,000 U.S. grocery stores including Walmart ([WMT](#)), Kroger ([KR](#)), Safeway and Target ([TGT](#)). Similar price reductions are planned in Canada, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Impossible Foods President Dennis Woodside told Yahoo Finance Live the company wants to eventually undercut ground beef prices, which currently retail for \$2 to \$3 a patty.

"That's the goal," said Woodside, "compete with the cow, and to do that we have to price like the cow."

This is the third price cut for privately-held Impossible Foods in less than a year. The Redwood City California-based company has already [cut prices twice for food distributors](#).

"Our production is up nine times in the past two years," said Woodside. "We've been able to get economies of scale out of the business and efficiencies in our production footprint, and we're just passing those along to the consumer."

Woodside is already hinting of more price cuts to come. "As demand grows, we'll reinvest that efficiency back into our prices."

Read more [here](#).

Grants Available for Value-Added Ag Projects

(From the Daily Journal Online)

The Value Added Producer Grant program, one of the few U.S. Department of Agriculture grant programs available directly to farmers and ranchers, is now open. The grants help farmers and ranchers offset costs of developing or expanding their added-value products.

USDA Rural Development is accepting applications for the Value-Added program, which offers two types of grants, through March 22.

Planning grants of up to \$75,000 help pay for feasibility studies and business plans that support future financing and business development. Working Capital grants of up to \$250,000 can cover marketing and product development costs. Projects more than \$50,000 require a previous feasibility study and business plan to document viability of the product.

Individual farm businesses, as well as groups of farmers and ranchers, may apply for funds to develop new or existing products. Applicants must own at least 50 percent of the agricultural commodity being addressed. Matching funds (in-kind and/or cash) of 50 percent of the project are required.

Registration with USDA as a business is required; this free process is not immediate, so register early.

Contact your local USDA Rural Development office for application materials and advice on a successful proposal. Wyatt Fraas at the Center for Rural Affairs also can advise you on your project ideas. Contact him at wyattf@cfra.org or 402.254.6893.

[Source](#).

USDA Suspends Debt Collections, Foreclosures for Ranchers, Farmers

(From Meatingplace.com)

USDA has temporarily suspended past-due debt collections and foreclosures for distressed borrowers due to the national public health emergency caused by COVID-19.

The agency announced that it is suspending non-judicial foreclosures, debt offsets or wage garnishments under the Farm Storage Facility Loan and the Direct Farm Loan programs administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

USDA also noted that it will refer foreclosures to the Department of Justice and will work with the U.S. Attorney's Office to stop judicial foreclosures and evictions on accounts that were previously referred to the Department of Justice.

USDA has extended deadlines for ranchers and producers to respond to loan servicing actions, including loan deferral consideration for financially distressed and delinquent borrowers.

USDA Forest Service Announces 2021 Grazing Fee

(From USDA)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service is announcing that federal grazing fees on national forests and grasslands will remain at \$1.35 per head month for 2021.

A head month is a unit the Forest Service uses to define a month's use of the range by a cow/calf pair, by five goats or sheep, or by a single bull, steer, heifer, horse, burro, or mule. The grazing fee is calculated by considering the average annual change in beef cattle prices, leasing rates for grazing on private land in the western states, and the costs of livestock production.

The fee applies to approximately 6,000 grazing permits administered by the Forest Service on national forests and grasslands in 17 Western states. The states are Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. Permit holders may contact their local [Forest Service office](#) for additional information.

The formula used for calculating the grazing fee was established by Congress in the 1976 Federal Land Policy and Management Act and as amended in the 1978 Public Rangelands Improvement Act and has continued under a presidential Executive Order issued in 1986. Under that Order, the grazing fee cannot fall below \$1.35 per head month and any increase or decrease cannot exceed 25% of the previous year's level. The grazing fees apply to rangelands managed by both the USDA Forest Service and the Department of Interior's Bureau of Land Management.

The USDA Forest Service manages approximately 193 million acres of Federal lands in 44 states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

Congress to Probe Meatpackers' COVID Actions

(From Meatingplace.com)

The Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis has sent letters to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Tyson Foods, Smithfield Foods and JBS USA informing them of an investigation into coronavirus outbreaks at meatpacking plants nationwide, [the committee said in a news release posted on its website](#).

"Public reports indicate that under the Trump Administration, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) failed to adequately carry out its responsibility for enforcing worker safety laws at meatpacking plants across the country, resulting in preventable infections and deaths," committee Chairman Rep. James E. Clyburn [wrote in the letter to](#)

OSHA. “[I]n the last year, OSHA failed to issue enforceable rules, respond in a timely manner to complaints, and issue meaningful fines when a company’s unsafe practices led to the deaths of employees.”

The investigation by the subcommittee, which was created in April 2020, follows reports that nearly 54,000 workers at 569 meatpacking plants in the United States have tested positive for the coronavirus, and at least 270 have died.

The three meatpacking companies have had a combined total of at least 41 major outbreaks in meatpacking facilities in 20 states, including multiple outbreaks in the same facilities, the committee's release pointed out.

Chairman Clyburn wrote to these companies: “Public reports indicate that meatpacking companies ... have refused to take basic precautions to protect their workers, many of whom earn extremely low wages and lack adequate paid leave and have shown a callous disregard for workers’ health. These actions appear to have resulted in thousands of meatpacking workers getting infected with the virus and hundreds dying. Outbreaks at meatpacking plants have also spread to surrounding communities, killing many more Americans.”

The Select Subcommittee is seeking documents from OSHA and from each company related to coronavirus infections and deaths at meatpacking plants and the enforcement of worker protections under the previous administration.



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- 2/19/2021 - NBA - DTBA Joint Winter Conference - Rapid City, SD/Online
- 2/20/2021 - NBA GTSS & DTBA Girlz Going Wild Auction - Rapid City, SD/Online
- 2/22/2021 - TNC Smoky Valley & Tallgrass Prairie Online Auctions - KS
- 2/27/2021 - Beltway Bison Consignment Auction - PA
- 3/11/2021 - Eastern Bison Association Annual Winter Conference & Sale - PA
- 3/20/2021 - Missouri Bison Association Spring Sale - MO
- 4/09/2021 - Minnesota Bison Association's Annual Education Conference - MN
- 6/27/2021 - 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.

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