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NBA Weekly Update for January 14, 2022

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.

No Hair Dryers or Clippers Needed: Bison Are Coming to Stock Show

(NBA News Release)

Put away the hair dryers, clippers and brushes: the bison are coming to the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) this week.

Roughly 100 head of North America's top bison will be arriving at the Stock Show on Wednesday (also known as Bison Hump Day), for the National Bison Association's 40th Anniversary Gold Trophy Show. Those entries will be auctioned at the association's Gold Trophy Sale at the new NWSS Sale Arena on Saturday. [See a full sale catalog here.](#)

Unlike most livestock exhibited at the Stock Show, the bison will be judged while wearing their "working clothes." That's the phrase that bison ranchers use to emphasize that these undomesticated animals will not be groomed prior to judging, nor led by halters in the competition.

"Many of the strongest traits that make for a top-quality bison are the same traits that keep



this species undomesticated,” said Dave Carter, executive director of the National Bison Association. “Our judges focus on selecting bison that will continue to produce deliciously healthy meat without compromising the animal’s ability to thrive in their native environments across North America.”

Consignors will be bringing their animals on Wednesday to the new NWSS bison handling facilities, which will be dedicated on Friday in honor of Del Hensel, one of the early pioneers of the commercial bison business. The entries will be judged on Thursday, with the top honors awarded during ceremonies in the NWSS sale arena Friday afternoon.

Beginning at 10 a.m. on Saturday, the bison will be auctioned in the new NWSS sale arena. Bid live in person, or online at <https://cci.auction/orgs/93/auctions/2239>. If bidding online, please pre-register as a bidder and practice bidding at the [CCI website](#).

On Friday morning, the NBA will also welcome students from across the region to participate in the Larry Higgins Junior Judging competition. That competition helps introduce students into the factors that make top-quality bison. On Friday afternoon, bison handlers at the Stock Show will provide a demonstration on techniques they use to manage the animals in a low-stress environment.

“We’re proud that the bison Gold Trophy Show and Sale is the capstone of the National Western Stock Show each year,” Carter said. “After all, what better way to conclude the Stock Show than to showcase our National Mammal?”

Thank You 2022 Gold Trophy Show & Sale Sponsors!



American Indian Chef to Share Culinary Traditions with Bison

(NBA News Release)

Bison ranchers still have a thing or two to learn about the culinary traditions behind the meat their animals’ produce.

Who better to teach them than one the region’s top American Indian chefs?

That’s what will happen next Thursday as Matt Chandra of [Tocabe: An American Indian Eatery](#) provides a culinary demonstration for the roughly 300 ranchers gathering for the National Bison Association’s winter conference at the Renaissance Central Park Hotel in Denver.

The demonstration, set for 11 a.m. on Thursday, will focus on ways that Native Americans prepared bison meat using native herds, berries and other seasonings.

“Matt and his partner, Ben Jacobs, are helping the dining public to discover the rich culinary traditions handed down through generations in Native American cultures,” said

Dave Carter, executive director of the National Bison Association. “Bison meat was at the center many of these traditions, and we’re thrilled to have Matt share some of his knowledge with the ranchers who are dedicated to restoring bison herds to their native rangelands across North America.

“As we reconnect these animals with the land, we’re also wanting to reconnect with the ways that bison nourished and sustained native peoples throughout the centuries,” he added.

Chandra and Jacobs, members of the Osage nation, are among a generation of emerging indigenous chefs pioneering new culinary experiences steeped in centuries-old traditions.

The Denver duo opened their first Tocabe location in Denver in 2008, and added a second location in 2015, and a food truck in 2016. Tocabe is currently the only American Indian owned and operated restaurant in Metro Denver specializing in Native American cuisine.

Although the National Bison Association’s membership is comprised largely of ranchers managing privately-owned herds, the association works with Tribal ranchers and public land managers in a collaborative effort to promote the culinary, cultural and ecological benefits of bison. The bison association, the InterTribal Buffalo Association and the Wildlife Conservation Society worked together in a four-year campaign that resulted in the passage of legislation in 2016 designating bison as the national Mammal of the United States.

Deadwood Discussion Provides Insights into 2022 Market Outlook

The ongoing drought, and the increase in Mycoplasma-related deaths—will reduce the supply of animals available for the meat marketplace in the latter half of 2022.

That was the consensus of roughly a dozen bison marketers, finishers and cow-calf producers meeting in Deadwood, SD last Saturday. The informal discussion group was convened by the national Bison Association as a means to develop some ideas for the association’s efforts for the coming year.

“This was a very helpful discussion. The participants were very open with their thoughts and insights and contributed a lot of ideas on how we can continue to build the marketplace for bison meat,” said NBA President Donnis Baggett, who participated in the discussion.

Among some of the ideas emerging during the discussion was establishing a more focused consumer outreach campaign centered upon the health and ecological benefits of bison, and a campaign to target the growing segment of hunters and other outdoors enthusiasts. Participants also agreed that drought and Mycoplasma are taking a toll on bison herds and will cut the supply of market-ready animals after this year.

Baggett noted, “This wasn’t a meeting to develop formal recommendations, but rather to gather some ideas that we can take to our Commercial marketers Committee and our Board of Directors. It also helps set the stage for the board’s strategic planning session, scheduled this spring.

Registration Still Open for NBA Conference Virtual Option.

With many NBA members concerned about rising COVID cases and extended mask mandates in Denver, the National Bison Association is now adding the option for members to participate virtually in the NBA winter conference sessions scheduled for Thursday, January 20th.

Earth Coast Productions will be providing livestreaming of all of the sessions planned during Thursday’s conference program, including the mentors’ sessions, the culinary demonstration, presentations on managing for Mycoplasma and engaging in science, and

the annual marketers' panel discussion.

"We had been looking forward to having everyone gather in person for this year's conference, but the rapidly-changing developments with COVID have prompted us to make adjustments so that everyone can participate, even if they can't join us in Denver," said Jim Matheson, assistant director of the NBA.

Registration for the virtual option participation will be \$50. Members who have paid full registration but want to participate virtually, may do so at no extra charge. Register at <https://bisoncentral.com/2022-nba-winter-conference-registration-form/> by Monday, January 17th.



NBA introduces Denver students to bison; Students' paintings will benefit NBA and local kids

The National Bison Association Winter Conference Committee introduced bison to students of a Denver school for special-needs children, and the students put their artistic talent to work in return. The school selected, Tennyson Center for Children, has served Colorado's neglected, abused and traumatized children since 1904.

NBA volunteers organized a September field trip for Tennyson Center students to see the bison at the Denver Mountain Parks Genesee Herd. The students then painted 40 bison pictures as a donation to the 2022 NBA Winter Conference. Proceeds from the sale of the paintings will be split between the Tennyson Center and the NBA for educational purposes.

"We really enjoyed sharing the history of the bison with the kids," said committee chair Beverly Brown. "We explained how the bison provided food, clothing, shelter, tools and spiritual inspiration for Native Americans. It was wonderful to see their reaction to the animals, and we were blown away by the artwork they gave us. Now NBA members attending Winter Conference will get a chance to purchase those paintings."

NBA members who organized and conducted the field trip were Pam Fromhertz, Jessi Deardorf, Deb Thieman, Sue Carter and Brown. NBA members John and Becky Roller provided content for activity books, and members Ron and Teresa Miskin provided the printing.

Staff members of the Tennyson Center sent a warm thank-you note to the NBA volunteers:

"Thank you so much for yesterday! The kids who were able to attend at the park loved getting to go on a field trip, see the bison, and the park ranger's presentation. The kids who were able to join back on campus had so much fun painting the bison. The past couple of weeks have been quite rough around here, so seeing so many of the kiddos have such great behavior and be so involved with the bison painting was so encouraging for staff!"

Brown said the committee hopes to share the bison story with students in other regions in the future.

"Very few children know that the bison is our national mammal, and they're fascinated to

learn about this wonderful animal," she said. "We have an opportunity and an obligation to share this uniquely American story with them."

Fromhertz, who lives near the Genesee Herd, said it was gratifying to introduce the children to bison. "This was truly an opportunity to give back. It's great to see the NBA engage with the local community," she said.

Editor's note - Special thanks to NBA member Pam Fromhertz for leading this project, and the many volunteers that made it a success.

Thank You 2022 NBA Winter Conference Sponsors!



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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28 Yellowstone bison transferred to Montana Indian reservation (From Buckrail.com)

MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS, Wyo. — Twenty-eight Yellowstone bison found a new home on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation in Poplar, Montana as part of the Bison Conservation Transfer Program Jan. 12.

The program is a partnership between the National Park Service, State of Montana, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes. Its goal is to save brucellosis-free bison from the slaughter by giving them a new home on the Reservation.

All 28 bison transferred yesterday complete Phases I and II of the brucellosis quarantine protocol and will finish assurance testing at Fort Peck.

The program has led to the largest transfer of live Yellowstone bison among Native American Tribes in history. Since 2019, 182 bison have gone to the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Indian Reservation. Of those, 82 animals were transferred to the InterTribal Buffalo Council who distributed them to 18 Tribes in 10 states.

The bison transferred this week were captured at Stephens Creek in the northwest corner of Yellowstone National Park in March 2020. Twenty males completed quarantine in the park and a small family group of eight (one male, four females, three calves) completed quarantine in the nearby APHIS-leased facility at Corwin Springs. Currently, 67 animals are still in the Bison Conservation Transfer Program and the park and APHIS intend to enter 80-120 new animals into the program this winter.

To expand the program, Yellowstone has partnered with Yellowstone Forever and the Greater Yellowstone Coalition to increase the capacity of the facility within the park from holding 80 animals to 200 animals. Improvements will be completed this winter. These improvements and continued coordination with APHIS will result in transferring about 100 animals a year to Tribal Nations as an alternative to slaughter.

Read more [here](#).

Judge orders do-over on Yellowstone bison protection

(From EEnews.net)

A federal judge yesterday ordered the Fish and Wildlife Service to take yet another look at whether Yellowstone-area bison require Endangered Species Act protections.

Rewarding the persistence of the Buffalo Field Campaign and Western Watersheds Project, Judge Randolph Moss of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia [concluded](#) that FWS fumbled its 2019 determination that the bison did not merit ESA listing.

"The question before the Court is not whether the Yellowstone bison should be listed as endangered or threatened or even whether listing 'may be warranted,' and the Court has no view on those questions," Moss wrote.

Instead, Moss noted, his opinion "merely holds that the Service applied the wrong standard, failed to address a significant aspect of the question before it, and failed adequately to explain its decision. "

Moss, an Obama appointee, did not give FWS a deadline for completing its reassessment, though he stressed that "in light of the lengthy delay to date," he wanted to "ensure that the Service moves as quickly as 'practicable.'"

FWS declined to comment today.

"The decision to protect and recover the buffalo in Yellowstone now belongs to President Biden's administration, [Interior] Secretary Deb Haaland, and Martha Williams, who has been nominated as director of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service," Darrell Geist, habitat coordinator with the Buffalo Field Campaign, told E&E News today.

The Interagency Bison Management Plan for Montana and Yellowstone National Park currently guides officials.

Conservation groups contend the Yellowstone-area bison is at risk of extinction due to climate change, loss of habitat, and the federal and state policies targeting the migratory herds in some locales for removal and hunting.

The federal government in 2007 rejected a handwritten petition — filed in 1999 — to protect the Yellowstone-area bison under the ESA.

In 2014, the Western Watersheds Project and Buffalo Field Campaign likewise petitioned FWS to list plains bison in and around Yellowstone National Park as an endangered or threatened distinct population segment.

Read more [here](#).

New Loan Fund Incentivizes Farmers to Adopt Regenerative Practices

(From AgriPulse)

A new farm operating loan will come with a lower interest rate to producers who achieve certain climate change and water quality benchmarks, the Environmental Defense Fund and Farmers Business Network announced.

The [FBN Regenerative Agriculture Finance Fund](#) will offer a 0.5% interest payment rebate “to reward farmers who meet soil health and nitrogen efficiency standards,” FBN and EDF said.

“FBN’s \$25 million pilot fund is currently enrolling 30-40 farmers growing corn, soybeans or wheat,” [said Maggie Monast, EDF’s Senior Director of Climate-Smart Agriculture, Finance & Markets](#), in a blog post. “The pilot will allow FBN to connect farm environmental performance with the financial performance of the fund and create new insights into the relationship between regenerative practices and farm risk and creditworthiness.”

“FBN plans to scale the fund to \$500 million over three years and access public markets to securitize and sell these loans to investors seeking liquid, environmentally friendly investments,” Monast said.

On at least 70% of farmed acres, the farmer has to use one or more of the following practices:

- Ground is minimally disturbed (strip till, no-till – [as defined by the NRCS](#))
- Crop rotation has live roots (cash crop, cover crop, perennials) in the soil for at least 70% of the year
- other regionally appropriate soil conservation practices outlined by the NRCS (e.g., riparian buffers, wind breaks) and approved by the program.

Editor’s Note: Farmers’ Business Network is a sponsor for the 2022 National Bison Association Winter Conference and will have an exhibit booth on sites next week.



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Save the Date!

- 1/19/2022 – 1/22/2022 – National Bison Association Winter Conference - CO
- 1/21/2022 - NBA/RMBA Junior Judging Event - National Western Stock Show - CO
- 1/22/2022 - NBA Gold Trophy Show and Sale - National Western Stock Show - CO
- 2/3/2022 - Jack Auction Group Video Bison Auction - Online
- 2/12/2022 - Dakota Dynamite Buffalo Simulcast Sale - SD
- 2/19/2022 - Dakota Territory Buffalo Association Simulcast Auction - SD
- 2/26/2022 - Beltway Bison Consignment Live Bison Auction - PA
- 2/26/2022 - Jack Auction Group Video Bison Auction - Online
- 3/05/2022 - Rocky Mountain Bison Association's Spring Conference - CO
- 3/10/2022 - Eastern Bison Association Annual Conference - PA
- 3/12/2022 - Jack Auction Group Video Bison Auction - Online
- 3/18/2022 - Minnesota Bison Association Spring Meeting - MN
- 4/21/2022 - Jack Auction Group Video Bison Auction - Online
- 5/26/2022 - Jack Auction Group Video Bison Auction - Online
- 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 and the NBA will post the event on its website at no charge.

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

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