

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

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### NBA Weekly Update for January 27, 2023

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.

### Over 500 Attend NBA Winter Conference

Thanks to all who gathered last week for the National Bison Association Winter Conference, as well as our consignors who brought about 100 head of live bison to the National Western Stock show to participate in the Gold Trophy Show and Sale. We had



a great week and we're still digging out, but thank you for an amazing week! More to come...



### NBA Hosts High Grossing 2023 Gold Trophy Show and Sale

The mission of the Gold Trophy Show and Sale is to create an environment where producers can compete to establish the value of their bison in the current marketplace. Thank you to all of our consignors and buyers that made the 2023 Gold Trophy Show and Sale a huge success! Thanks too to our great volunteer handling team, the "Buffaleros", as well as Karen Conley for organizing a great show and sale. Finally, thank you to our GTSS award sponsors, and Rocky Mountain Natural Meats for sponsoring the banquet dinner.

All of the bison growers bring with them a commitment to continue building the market for bison meat based upon the quality of the meat and a dedication to sustainable ranching practices. John Graves, Yard Supervisor for the Gold Trophy Show and Sale, commented, "The GTSS animals were some of the highest quality we have had, making judging them quite a challenge."

Wolverine Bison Company brought the Grand Champion Male. Buffalo Run Ranch had the Reserve Grand Champion Male. Snyder Land and Development brought the Grand and Reserve Grand Champion Females; and also received the high honors of Producer of the Year. Wrapping up the recognitions was Miller Bison, LLC, landing the Rookie of the Year award.

On Saturday, January 21st, at the National Western Stock Show, the award winning animals were sold by live animal. "Previous winning entries at the Gold Trophy Show and Sale have served as foundation seed stock for most of the top buffalo herds throughout the United States. We expect great things from these animals, and the prices reflected the quality charging through these pens today," Lydia Whitman, Program Manager with the National Bison Association.

The Gold Trophy Show and Sale is held annually at the National Western Stock Show by the National Bison Association and the Rocky Mountain Bison Association, which collectively represent nearly 2,000 members in 48 states and 10 foreign countries.

### THANK YOU GOLD TROPHY SHOW & SALE SPONSORS











We appreciate your support for the bison industry!



### Nearly 30 Students Compete in 2023 Larry Higgins Junior Judging Event

Thirty students wandered around the pens of bison late last week at the National Western Stock Show in Denver, peering intently at the animals, and jotting down notes, before standing before a panel of seasoned bison ranchers to defend their reasons for favoring one animal over another. They were competing in the annual Larry Higgins Bison Judging Contest, hosted by the National Bison Association.

When the dust settled and the competition ended, Regan Allen of Laramie County 4-H, won the top senior high competition, and Spencer Bohenkamp of Mountain Grove Elementary, walked away with the top junior individual honors, while the top team honors went to the Laramie County 4-H group of Blair Sanchez, Cooper Sanchez, Regan Allen, and Gavin Masters.

The second-place winter in the senior competition was Garrett Greene of Eastern Wyoming, and the third-place honor went to Gavin Masters, of Jefferson County, CO 4-H. Allen was awarded a \$1,500 scholarship from the National Buffalo Foundation, Greene received a \$1,200 scholarship sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Bison Association, and Masters received a \$900 scholarship sponsored by Rocky Mountain Natural Meats.

John Graves, President of the Rocky Mountain Bison Association, and organizer of the event stated, "This year's Junior Judging event was fantastic, and the participants had a wonderful time despite the cold and the snow. After a two year hiatus of the event, having 26 kids come out for the event was great to see. The GTSS animals were some of the highest quality we have had, making judging them quite a challenge, but it was a challenge the kids worked hard for. GTSS Judge Dr. Gerald Parsons helped to pick the classes for Junior Judging and threw in a couple challenging animals to really test the kids. Overall the kids performed well in the live animal placings. The kids gave oral reasons for the Two Year Old Bred Heifer class. Over the years participants have continued to improve the oral reasons, this year was no exception with very throughout and convincing reasons being given. We look forward to the 2024 Junior Judging event and hope to grow participation levels back up to where they we pre-covid."

### KS Rancher Dick Gehring Named Bison Assn. Member of the Year

DENVER, CO (January 26, 2023) - Kansas bison producer Dick Gehring was recently honored as the National Bison Association's (NBA) 2022 Member of the Year.

Awarded each year during the association's Winter Conference, the Member of the Year is presented to a member who goes above and beyond. In the months leading up to the award, the NBA Past Presidents' Council receives member of the year nominations from fellow NBA members and then votes on the recipient.

Gehring, who operates Black Kettle Buffalo near Moundridge, KS, is a long-time member, current Chair of the NBA



Commercial Marketers Committee, and past president of the NBA. Nominees noted his commitment to the organization through service on the Board of Directors as well as numerous committees and his work with the Gold Trophy Show and sale.

On the home front, Gehring has been involved with the Kansas Buffalo Association (KBA) for many years and spearheads the group's annual auction each December. He also does consulting and is always available to answer questions and lend his support to producers both new and established. One nominee noted his strong work ethic and his mentorship, noting they could only hope to have Gehring's grit and determination.

Gehring's tireless dedication to all things bison garnered him accolades from many in the bison community. As part of his service to the NBA, Gehring still serves on the Past Presidents' Council, making the voting on nominations a little tricky for the rest of the group. Past Presidents' Council Chair, Gail Griffin, who did the honors of presenting the award, noted that there was some evasive maneuvering done to keep Gehring in the dark about being this year's recipient.

Gehring received the award during the association's annual fundraiser dinner, in which 500 of his friends and colleagues in the bison community celebrated the recognition. The group went on to raise nearly \$70,000 that evening for the NBA and its partner foundations, the National Buffalo Foundation and the Throlson American Bison Foundation.

The National Bison Association represents nearly 1,200 bison ranchers, marketers and enthusiasts. The vision of the NBA is a community bound by the heritage of the American Bison. The mission of the National Bison Association is to bring together stakeholders to celebrate the heritage of American bison, to educate, and to create a sustainable future for our industry. More information on the association can be found at <a href="https://www.bisoncentral.com">www.bisoncentral.com</a>.

### ITBC and NBA Renew Commitment to Collaboration in MOA Signing

The InterTribal Buffalo Council (ITBC), a federally chartered Indian organization, with 79 Member Tribes, and the National Bison Association (NBA), representing nearly 1,200 private bison producers, have renewed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines specific areas in which the two organizations collaborate to continue to restore bison herds across North America, and in the diets of the American people.

Discussion on developing an agreement began in 2013, with the board of directors of both organizations finalizing the initial MOU in the summer of 2014, thereby allowing the two to work on a host of collaborative bison projects, particularly the passing of the Bison Legacy Act, establishing bison as the national mammal of the United States in 2016.

NBA President Chad Kremer noted, "We have a lot of strength being here together. Buffalo are what brings us all together. We appreciate the collaboration and understanding between our groups as we continue to collectively restore the bison species from its near extinction."

The MOU notes that, "the Inter Tribal Buffalo Council and the National Bison Association

have mutual interests to restore bison to the American landscape in an economically and ecologically sustainable manner." The agreement also details their shared commitment to including bison in school lunch and federal nutrition programs, as well as keeping at bay any genetic alterations to bison/buffalo, and to work together on joint advocacy on various legislative and regulatory matters at the national and state levels might benefit the respective organizations.

The MOU outlines a set of specific areas in which the two organizations will work together over the coming years. Longtime partner and ITBC representative Mike Faith commented, "As I look around, I see the buffalo nation coming back strong. Unified for the industry there is strength. If we don't stay together it's going to hurt the market, going to hurt the industry, everybody. There's times we have to put differences aside and look farther into the future. Our grandchildren, their grandchildren, they have the right to raise buffalo also. This organization, NBA and ITBC are trying to get that path open for future generations so they can make a way for the tatanka, the buffalo."



### Please Help Us Find Co-Sponsors for the Truth in Buffalo Labeling Act

NBA members can help build support for the Truth in Buffalo Labeling Act by recruiting additional co-sponsors in the U.S. Senate. See the proposed legislation here.

This legislation would prevent water buffalo products from being deceptively labeled as buffalo, which misleads consumers and negatively impacts the U.S. bison industry. The bipartisan bill provides the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) with the authority to ensure that products with water buffalo are marketed as "water buffalo" so consumers aren't misled to believe the product contains bison. Bison products would continue to be labeled as "bison" or "buffalo".

The need for legislation is prompted by the importation of water buffalo meat into the United States, which in the past has been labeled and marketed in a manner that leads consumers to believe they are buying North American bison.

The proposed legislation will be reintroduced in the 118th Congress next week by sponsors U.S. Sens. John Hoeven (R-ND) and Michael Bennet (D-CO). We need to recruit additional co-sponsors for this legislation. Also, we are specifically targeting these Senators, who were co-sponsors of the bill in 2021, the last time this bill was introduced, should you be a constituent:

- Mike Braun (R-IN)
- Tina Smith (D-MN) and
- John Thune (R-SD)
- Kevin Cramer (R-ND)
- Jacky Rosen (D-NV)

- John Tester(D-MT)
- Jerry Moran (R-KS)
- Martin Heinrich (D-NM)

Click here to find the appropriate contact information for your Senators, and if you cannot find it, please email NBA executive director, Jim Matheson, at jim@bisoncentral.com, and he will provide it.

Sample Communication to your Senator:
Dear Senator,
I am writing to request that you co-sponsor the Truth in Buffalo Labeling Act, sponsored by Sens. John Hoeven and Michael Bennet, to be introduced to the 118th Congress next week.
I am a bison producer from (your city/statebriefly describe your operation). Bison producers have worked hard over the past two decades to connect with customers across the country focusing on the quality of bison meat, and the ecological attributes of American bison. Now, the integrity of our marketplace is being undermined by deceptively labeled water buffalo products coming into the U.S. marketplace.
The proposed legislation would require that any water buffalo food products in the U.S. marketplace be properly labeled as "water buffalo." This simple change will stop these deceptive practices, and still provide consumers with the confidence that they are getting what they pay for.
If you are willing to sign on as a co-sponsor, please reach out to Aaron Weber in Sen. Hoeven's office at aaron_weber@hoeven.senate.gov.
If you need additional information on this issue, please reach out to Jim Matheson, executive director of the National Bison Association, at jim@bisoncentral.com.
Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely, (Your Name)

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.



https://bisoncentral.com/eat-bison-to-restore-bison/

# Bayesian latent-class modelling of quarantine testing procedures for American Bison (*Bison Bison*) in the Greater Yellowstone Area to determine *Brucella abortus* freedom

*American Veterinary Medical Association Journal* January 27, 2023

To manage this quarantine program, the USDA Veterinary Services works with the National Park Service, the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, and Montana Department of Livestock. The Screening and Quarantine Phases occur at federally operated facilities at the northern border of Yellowstone National Park; the Assurance Phase occurs at the Fort Peck Reservation in Montana. After the Assurance Phase, the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes and InterTribal Buffalo Council coordinate the transfer of animals to Native American tribes. To date, the program has been highly successful; there have been no positive brucellosis serological reactors detected during the Quarantine or Assurance Phases, nor spillover events following distribution of bison to Native American tribes. Using principles of adaptive management, a program and data assessment was recommended to decrease the duration of the quarantine and burden of testing for bison.

Our findings support decreasing Yellowstone National Park bison brucellosis quarantine to 300 days to seasonally manage wild bison populations and provide more brucellosis-free bison to Native American tribes. USDA Veterinary Services, the National Park Service, the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes, Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, and Montana Department of Livestock have successfully implemented a quarantine program to safely quarantine and monitor this national resource. The continued distribution of American bison, the national mammal of the United States, has profound cultural, economic, and genetic benefits.

Read more.

Earth Notes: Arizona Bison

From KNAU News Talk - Arizona Public Radio

Bison are among the most emblematic animals of the American West. Many Indigenous peoples relied on them for survival. Some, such as the Zuni, have oral histories of hunting them and performing a Buffalo Dance ceremony.

Bison are known primarily as Plains animals, but historically they did extend into the Southwest. Now wildlife managers are taking steps to bring them back to the region. Arizona hosts herds in three separate locations—Raymond Wildlife Area east of Flagstaff, the Kaibab Plateau on the North Rim of Grand Canyon, and in House Rock Valley at the foot of the Kaibab.

In House Rock, the present herd dates to 2017 when the Arizona Game and Fish Department brought in 15 yearlings from the American Prairie Reserve in Montana. Game and Fish program manager Rob Nelson says young bison were chosen because they are more "naïve" and flexible, and likely to stay faithful to the site.

Equally important is that these newcomers are a pure genetic strain. In the past, at places like House Rock, bison were crossbred with cattle. Today wildlife managers focus bison conservation efforts on true wild heritage.

The House Rock herd is fenced inside a 4,000-acre pasture. There are about 30 bison now, and the goal is to reach about a hundred. Game and Fish manages the area in partnership with the neighboring Kaibab National Forest, and they're looking to expand the fenced area. Hunting the bison is permitted in season, and the public can visit and view these iconic animals throughout the year.

Click for more.

## Research by moonlight: Study shows bison alter 'landscape of fear' for rodents in grasslands

From Northern Illinois University

DeKalb, IL – When it comes to when and where rodents eat, no decision is subtle. The consequences of those decisions can ripple across food webs. That's what makes a recently published study so important.

The study looked at how bison reintroduction at Nachusa Grasslands — a 3,800-acre nature preserve in Franklin Grove, Illinois — has impacted the way small mammals respond to moonlight.

"What happens when bison are reintroduced is they alter the 'landscape of fear' for small mammals," said Professor Holly Jones, a co-author of the study carried out by her Evidence-based Restoration Lab. Jones holds a joint appointment at NIU in biological sciences and environmental studies.

What is the 'landscape of fear'? Put simply, it means some geographic areas are scarier than others for small mammals.

While dining by moonlight might seem appealing to some, many rodents would rather avoid it. For them, high moonlight means a higher likelihood of being spotted as prey. So what happens when a bunch of 1,000-pound bison are rolling around and eating plants? Well, the habitat becomes more open than it would be without them. Goodbye nice thick plant canopy. Hello bright moonlight.

Click for more.

### Groups comment on APHIS proposal to require electronic tags From *TSLN*

The US Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service published a proposed rule, Jan. 18, 2023, on the use of electronic identification eartags as official identification in cattle and bison.

The rule would require that tags be both visually and electronically readable in order to be

recognized for use as official eartags for interstate movement of cattle and bison covered under the regulations.

APHIS is accepting public comment through March 22.

The US Cattlemen's Association said the biggest change if the rule were enforced would be that official USDA tags will now be defined as those that are both visually and electronically readable.

USCA believes about 11 percent of the US cattle herd would be affected. This would include cattle crossing state lines that meet any of the following conditions:

- sexually intact and 18 months of age or older;
- all female dairy cattle of any age and male dairy animals born after March 11, 2013;
- cattle and bison of any age used for rodeo or recreational events; and
- cattle or bison of any age used for shows or exhibitions.

Click for more.

### Proposed \$10M Tenn. meat plant clears another hurdle

From *Meatingplace* 

Commissioners for Washington County, Tenn., gave final approval to a plan to provide \$2 million to support a new meat processing center in Telford that will cost an estimated \$10 million to build.

The formal vote this week follows a move toward using part of money allotted under the American Recovery Plan Act and codifies an agreement with the Appalachian Producers Cooperative, which proposed the plant last fall.

The county board earlier this month approved a memorandum of understanding providing details on the \$2-million financing agreement. The funding program includes a 10-year term for paying back the money and gives the county ?the right of refusal in the event of any liquidation scenario,? according to a report in the Johnson City Press.

The Appalachian Producers Cooperative already has an agreement to buy nearly seven acres of land in Telford, Tenn., and plans to close on the \$375,000 contract this spring, according to WJHL-TV. Construction on the plant, which is designed to process locally sourced cattle, pigs and sheep and create 26 jobs, could begin in late summer and the facility may be fully operational by late 2024, the report added.

Source.

### Iowa Governor Announces Funding for ISU Veterinary Diagnostic Lab

By Jennifer Shike *Drovers.com* January 18, 2023

Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds announced \$40 million in funding from American Rescue Plan Act dollars to help complete Phase 2 of Iowa State University's Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (VDL). She has also proposed an additional \$20M in her budget from the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund (RIIF)-\$10M in FY24 and \$10M in FY25-to total \$60M in state support for the VDL project in a release from her office.

Construction of the front end of a new VDL in Ames is scheduled to be finished this year. The \$75-million Phase 1 of the project does not cover the majority of the lab's operations, Iowa Pork Producers Association noted in a statement. Phase 2, which is expected to cost \$62.5 million, would provide an additional 70,000 square feet for laboratory testing, research and support functions.

"Pig farmers and cattle producers across Iowa are extremely grateful Governor Kim Reynolds is providing significant financial support to upgrade Iowa State University's Veterinary Diagnostic Lab and we hope the Iowa legislature will join her in providing additional funding, as she has proposed," said Iowa Pork Producers Association President Kevin Rasmussen, a farmer from Goldfield, in a joint statement with Iowa Cattlemen's Association President Bob Noble of Riceville.

Read more.

#### Ag groups sue EPA over new WOTUS rule

From Meatingplace

The National Cattlemen?s Beef Association, National Pork Producers Council and U.S. Poultry & Egg Association have joined a coalition of agricultural groups in filing a lawsuit against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency over its new Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule.

The lawsuit, filed in federal court in Texas? southern district, challenges the legality of the rule, which strips exclusions for small and isolated water features like ephemeral streams on farms and ranches.

The complaint seeks declaratory and injunctive relief from a law the plaintiffs consider an overreach of the federal government?s authority and what it includes as waters of the U.S. under the Clean Water Act (CWA), putting farmers at risk of criminal and civil penalties.

"Instead of providing much-needed clarity to the regulated community, all the Rule makes clear is that the Agencies are determined to exert CWA jurisdiction over a staggering range of dry land and water features-whether large or small; permanent, intermittent, or ephemeral; flowing or stagnant; natural or manmade; interstate or intrastate; and no matter how remote from or lacking in a physical connection to actual navigable waters," the lawsuit states.

The new final rule provides the sixth definition of WOTUS in the last decade. It restores water protections in place prior to 2015, overturning Obama and Trump policies that have been the subject of years of court debate.

Plaintiffs have also expressed disappointment that the new final rule came before the Supreme Court's pending decision on Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency. The case doesn't directly involve agricultural interests but assesses the same critical question affecting farmers and ranchers: whether the waters that flow across or under the plot affect any "navigable" body of water, and whether that navigable body of water is important to interstate commerce.

"The Biden administration's WOTUS definition is an attack on farmers and ranchers, and NCBA will be fighting back in court," NCBA Chief Counsel Mary-Thomas Hart said in a news release, "We look forward to challenging this rule in court and ensuring that cattle producers are treated fairly under the law."

Source.

### Your response is due by February 6, 2023

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently mailed you a form for the 2022 Census of Agriculture. Everyone who receives a Census form is required by law to respond (Title 7 USC 2204(g) Public Law 105-113). If you are not farming or ranching, please call us toll free at 1-888-424-7828 and enter 0 to speak with a representative so we can update our records.

If you have already responded, thank you! If not, please respond by February 6, 2023, in one of the following ways:

\* Online at www.agcounts.usda.gov and enter your unique survey code found on the

front of the Census of Agriculture form mailed to you.

\* Mail your completed Census form back using the prepaid envelope. Questions: Please see the Frequently Asked Questions for Completing the Census of Agriculture. If you need other assistance completing your Census form, please call toll free 1-888-424-7828. Please do not reply to this email as this email box is not currently monitored.

All information you provide is confidential and protected by federal law. For more information, visit www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus.

Thank you for responding and for your support of U.S. agriculture. The 2022 Census of Agriculture is Your Voice, Your Future, Your Opportunity.

#### Request for Proposals for Farmers for Soil Health

The submission deadline for full proposals is February 28, 2023.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, in partnership with the Farmers for Soil Health collaboration, anticipates awarding competitive grants to accelerate the voluntary adoption of cover crops on corn and soybean farms in 20 states.

NCAT is a partner in this project. The program is expected to award approximately \$15 million in grants in 2023. Applicants should propose state-level or multi-state programs to support Farmers for Soil Health in one or more of the 20 eligible states.

Grantees are limited to state corn, soy, or pork commodity affiliate organizations or their designated partners.

Learn more.

# farm crisis center

Even in the best of times, farming can be an incredibly highstress occupation. Unpredictable weather, crop disease, volatile markets, heavy workloads, and social isolation are just a handful of the challenges that farmers may face.

These conditions force many family farmers and ranchers to make tough financial decisions that will impact their families, communities, and the entire country.

National Farmers Union compiled resources to help farmers through stressful times. Find them at:

https://farmcrisis.nfu.org/

National Suicide Hotline - 800-273-TALK (8255)



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#### Save the Date!

- 1/30/2023 TNC Smoky Valley Ranch Webcast Auction Online
- 1/31/2023 Gehl's Buffalo Hill Ranch & Guest Webcast Auction Online
- 2/02/2023 Dakota Territory Buffalo Assn. Winter Conference SD
- 2/04/2023 Dakota Territory Buffalo Assn. Simulcast Auction SD
- 2/11/2023 Jack Auction Group Video Auction, Grande Prairie, AB Online
- 2/24/2023 Beltway Bison Consignment Auction PA
- 2/25/2023 MBA Great Spirit Brandon, MB
- 3/04/2023 RMBA Spring Conference Fort Collins, CO
- 3/09/2023 Eastern Bison Association Winter Conference and Auction PA
- 3/10/2023 BPA Wildrose Camrose, AB
- 3/11/2023 Missouri Bison Assn. & Oklahoma Bison Assn. Show & Sale MO
- 3/11/2023 Jack Auction Group Video Auction, Camrose, AB online
- 3/11/2023 Irish Creek Bull Sale Camrose, AB
- 3/25/2023 SBA Cream of the Crop Yorkton, SK
- 3/30/2023 Jack Auction Group Video Auction Online
- 4/27/2023 Jack Auction Group Video Auction Online

Please visit <a href="https://bisoncentral.com/calendar/">https://bisoncentral.com/calendar/</a> 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 <a href="mailto:jim@bisoncentral.com">jim@bisoncentral.com</a> and the NBA will post the event on its website at no charge.

Click Here for NBA Calendar of Events

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