



Weekly Update



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NBA Weekly Update for July 30, 2021

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NBA Notes Bison Herd Health Priorities during USDA Update

In a video meeting with the leadership of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) yesterday, NBA Executive Director Dave Carter and Assistant Director Jim Matheson reviewed some of the key herd health priorities that should be included in the Bison 2022 epidemiological study now being conducted by the agency's National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS)

Carter and Matheson's comments came during a regularly scheduled Cattle Industry Stakeholder Update session hosted by APHIS officials.

The NAHMS study is a follow-up from Bison 2014, which was the first-ever comprehensive analysis of the bison industry conducted by USDA. The new study is intended to identify key priorities for targeting USDA resources to improve the health of the U.S. bison sector.

Carter noted that the new study is very important, in part because it can provide direction for research projects to be conducted through the new Center of Excellence for Bison Studies at South Dakota State University.

Matheson also provided comments to support biological testing for producers that would be funded by USDA APHIS as part of the study. The tests, which were determined through a survey of bison producers last fall, would include fecal parasite testing, pasture forage quality testing, and enteric microbe testing for those who choose to participate in the study.

Summer Issue Bison World Advertising Now Available

Production is now underway on the Summer issue of the Bison World magazine. There are a variety of advertising options available, from 1/8 page all the way to full page. Lifetime and Active NBA members will enjoy discounted rates as part of their membership perks.

Space reservation for advertising will be Friday, August 6 with materials due no later than Monday, August 9. Editorial submissions and suggestions are welcome at any time. For more information about editorial submissions or advertising your ranch, business or

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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At Home on The Range

(From Meat and Poultry)

More than 200 years ago, bison meat was a staple in the American diet. There was plenty of availability and it was a high-quality meat that many enjoyed. At one point, it was estimated that up to 60 million bison lived on the North American continent – but thanks to land development and industrialization, by 1890, less than 1,000 bison were left.

In the '50s and '60s there was an increased interest in the meat, and many ranchers saw the opportunity to raise the animals to meet some of the growing demand. Private ranches started to pop up in the Dakotas, and slowly the bison population grew. By 1990, the population of bison had grown to 250,000. Today, it's estimated that there are 500,000 head of bison in North America. Only 10% of that herd roams freely in conservation environments like Yellowstone National Park – the rest are raised by ranchers for consumption.

"It's one of the biggest conservation stories out there," said Bob Dineen, founder and president of Rocky Mountain Natural Meats LLC. "That's one of those stories we like to tell our consumers – that by purchasing bison, by voting for bison with your dollars, you're becoming part of that conservation story of more animals on the North American landscape. The more people eat bison, the more they become part of that conservation story."

Read [more](#).

TenderBison to Sponsor Zane Smith at Knoxville Raceway

(From NAB, LLC Press Release)

STATESVILLE, N.C. (June 21, 2021) - GMS Racing officials announced today that TenderBison will sponsor Zane Smith for the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series race at Knoxville Raceway on July 9.



"I'm excited to have TenderBison on board for Knoxville," said Smith. "I love cooking out

and grilling. Bison is such a healthy choice and is some of my favorite meat to prepare. It's a partnership that makes sense. Knoxville is going to be a special race and I'm going to do my best to put the 'TenderBison Bison Beat' in victory lane."

Jim Wells, the President and CEO at North American Bison, LLC stated, "Here at NAB, LLC with our brand TenderBison, we are elated to be associated with both GMS Racing and Zane (Smith). The impact of bringing new awareness to the regeneration of the Bison herds and reconnecting with the land, animals and mother earth is what we are all about. We work with our Independent Ranchers to ensure the highest quality of bison products are made available to consumers so our efforts can continue.

With July being National Bison month, we welcome the opportunity to celebrate by bringing the 'TenderBison Bison Beast' to life with NASCAR at the Knoxville, IA race."

TenderBison, an internationally recognized brand of bison steaks and ground products, provides a wide array of all-natural bison products and can be found in restaurants, online at www.TenderBison.com, and retailers across the U.S.A.

"We are blessed to continue to bring new partners into our sport," said Mike Beam, president of GMS Racing. "We're thankful to have TenderBison on board with Zane (Smith) for Knoxville and look forward to the trucks first race at that facility."

The No. 21 TenderBison Chevrolet Silverado will make its debut at Knoxville Raceway on July 9. The race will air live on FS1 and MRN at 9pm ET.

What To Do When You Encounter Bison in Custer State Park

(From KEVN TV)

Last year a woman was thrown by a bison in Custer State Park. It happened during the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. While she wasn't seriously injured, the incident could have had a whole different ending.

From the northern to the southern hills, Rally-goers are making their way to all the popular spots and catching some of Black Hill's most iconic sites, and that includes bison herds in Custer State Park. And some of those herds are growing.

"It's breeding season so you're going to see a lot of those bigger bulls join the main group of the herd of the cows and the younger calves," said Kobee Stalder, visitor service program manager at Custer State Park.

With the increase of bison and visitors... it's always a sight when their paths cross but during the breeding season, known as the bison rut, the bulls are more temperamental, meaning people should keep their distance.

Stalder says if you see bison on the side of the road, to stay in your car. He also advises staying 100 yards away from the buffalo if you encounter some while on foot.

"You can actually take your thumb and you can hold it up against your eye and if your thumb covers the entire animal then that means you're at a safe distance but if there's any part of the animal that's sticking out on either side of your thumb, that means you're too close and you should back away and just give that animal a lot of space," said Stalder.

While observing the bison safely is key, it is also a fun experience.

Rad more [here](#).

Bison Herd Could Mean Food Sovereignty Is on The Horizon for Red Lake Nation

(From Park Rapids Enterprise)

Ten miles north of Gonvick, Minn., Cheryl Spears looked around at a space that had been mere grassland two years ago.

"This is called the Red Lake Buffalo Ranch," she said, on a windy, hot day at the end of June.

The area is now home to a starter herd of 11 "mashkode-bizhikiwag," or bison in Ojibwemowin -- which are part of a multifaceted food sovereignty initiative Red Lake Nation.

Currently, these bison roam in 86 acres of pasture, but one day, project leaders hope this will be thousands. As the bison herd grows, the animals will be able to serve as food, a source of education, a part of cultural ceremonies or maybe even protein bars.

Spears, who serves as a project coordinator for the Red Lake Economic Development and Planning Department, oversees the ranch, along with Buffalo Farm Manager Fred Auginash.

She hopes the ranch will function as a cog in the larger food sovereignty movement underway in Red Lake with a goal of cascading cultural, economic and health benefits for the band and its members.

Read [more](#).

Bison To Graze in Dakota County Park by Fall 2022

(From Twincities.com)

Dakota County was once covered in prairie wildflowers, and bison grazed through the tall grasses. Today the giant beasts of the west are few and far between.

Dakota County officials are planning to bring a herd of about 15 bison to the Spring Lake Park Reserve by fall 2022. The park, located along the Mississippi River northwest of Hastings, would join a handful of locations in Minnesota, such as [Blue Mounds State Park near Luverne](#), [Minneopa State Park in Mankato](#) and the [Belwin Conservancy outside Afton, in](#) hosting a bison herd.

"It's going to be really exciting to watch them, learn about them and see the impact they have on the 160 acres of prairie that's in the park," said Tom Lewanski, natural resources manager for Dakota County.

The bison reintroduction is part of a plan to naturalize the park's landscape by restoring the oak savanna and prairie landscape of the past.

Read [more](#).

Grillin' with News 4: Bison Kabobs

(From KTIV-NBC)

The end of July is fast approaching, but there's still plenty of time to get out and do some grillin'.

Up here on Signal Hill, Rachel Bollmeyer of Hinton, Iowa taught us how to make some delicious Bison Kabobs.

Ingredients

-
- 2 lbs. of Bison Ribeye, or New York Strip, or Sirloin, or Tenderloin cut into 1-inch pieces.
- 2 green peppers
- 2 red peppers

- 2 yellow peppers
- 1 large yellow onion
- 1/3 cup soy sauce
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsp minced garlic
- 1/2 tbsp Italian seasoning
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 tsp onion powder

Directions

1. Place all the marinade ingredients in a bowl, or in a resealable gallon-sized freezer bag.
2. Mix to combine.
3. Add steak pieces to the marinade.
4. Marinade for at least 1 hour, or up to 24 hours.
5. Season the onions and peppers with salt and pepper.
6. Thread the beef peppers and onions onto skewers.
7. Heat a grill or indoor grill pan to medium-high heat.
8. Place the kabobs onto the grill and cook for 4-5 minutes each side.
9. Sprinkle with parsley, then serve.

See the full video at <https://ktiv.com/2021/07/22/grillin-with-news-4-bison-kabobs/>

Bison Make the Rules in Yellowstone

(From the Bozeman Daily Chronicle)

Standing on a bluff above Slough Creek, my wife and I watched trout rise, showing their whole bodies each time they slurped a bug from the surface. They were big, and they were hungry.

This was exactly what we wanted to see. It was late June in Yellowstone National Park. Sunshine, blue skies and cutthroat trout that appeared catchable. A recipe for perfection. Only problem was the bison sitting in the grass next to the trail. Reaching the fish would mean walking way too close to it, and it wasn't moving.

The message was clear: *Leave.*

So, it goes when you fish in Yellowstone. The Park is a vast playground for fly anglers, with abundant opportunities for piscatorial amusement. But you listen when a bison tells you what to do.

That means our national mammal disrupts fishing plans from time to time. It's nothing to be annoyed about — it's just the way it is. In some ways the park is more for them than it is for you, so they get to make the rules. Especially in a flat, wide open space like the lower meadow of Slough Creek.

I like this dynamic. Bison are nice to look at, and if them living their life is my biggest problem, that's a pretty good day. Besides, there's always somewhere else to go.

Read [more](#).

European Bison Rangers Chosen for Kent Woodland Herd

(From the BBC)

A herd of four European bison will live in Blean Woods near Canterbury, Kent, as part of a £1.5m project, led by Kent Wildlife Trust and the Wildwood Trust.

The breed is the closest living relative to ancient steppe bison, which once roamed Britain.

Tom Gibbs and Donovan Wright are starting work ahead of the bison arriving at the area in 2022.

Mr. Gibbs, who previously worked as conservation officer for Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, said he was thrilled to have been chosen.

"Wilding and using species like bison offer a sustainable approach where nature can take the lead and restore degraded ecosystems and lost species," he said.

His new colleague, Mr. Wright, has more than 20 years' experience conducting walking safaris and drives in some of Africa's most prestigious reserves.

Mr. Wright said: "As well as dealing with the 'Big 5' - lion, leopard, rhino, elephant and Cape buffalo - I have experience working in some extremely remote locations and thinking on my feet.

"I can't wait to use these skills to help visitors to the Blean experience wild European bison on foot in the UK."

Read [more](#).

Inventory Report: Shrinking Cattle Supplies Confirmed

(From Drovers.com)

USDA's semi-annual Cattle Inventory report on Friday confirms the U.S. inventories of beef cows, replacement heifers, feeder cattle and calf supplies are declining. The ongoing drought in the West and Northern Plains will accelerate the trend.

USDA's survey indicated all cattle and calves totaled 101 million head on July 1, about 1% below the 102 million head counted in the mid-year report last year.

USDA's July 1 count of beef cows was 31.4 million head, down 2% from a year ago. Analysts expect the drought to further reduce those numbers throughout 2021. Given the smaller cow herd, USDA's preliminary calf crop estimate was 35.1 million head, down slightly from last year. Calves born during the first half of 2021 were estimated at 25.8 million head, up slightly from the first half of 2020. An additional 9.3 million calves are expected to be born during the second half of this year.

Full [text](#).

Police Respond to Loose Bison in Ohio Township

(From UPI)

Police in Ohio responded to an unusual situation when an escaped bison was spotted wandering around a community.

The German Township Police Department said multiple calls came in reporting a bison on the loose in the community, and officers were concerned about the potential risk to drivers, pedestrians, children and nearby farmers.

"The danger is not hitting the animal and what you may do to the animal, it's what they may do to you," neighbor Darrell Weller [told WHIO-TV](#). "And if you hit one, it'll come right back at you and come up the hood."

Police said they were able to contact the animal's owner, a farmer who keeps bison on his property about 4 miles from where the loose buffalo was spotted. The farmer was able to locate the animal.

A beefalo, a hybrid of a bison and a domestic cow, [made headlines earlier this year](#) when it was captured after 250 days on the loose in Connecticut.

The animal, nicknamed Buddy, escaped from outside a slaughterhouse in Plymouth and was captured after months of failed attempts. He was given a new home at the Critter Creek Farm Sanctuary in Gainesville, Fla.

Read [more](#).

Senators, White House Finalize Deal On \$550B In New Infrastructure Spending

(From AgriPulse)

Senate negotiators reached agreement with the White House Wednesday on details of a bipartisan infrastructure package that would provide \$550 billion in new spending for roads and bridges, waterways, rural broadband and other needs.

Wednesday evening, the Senate voted 67-32 to begin debate on the legislation. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said that the Senate would finish work on the bill before the August recess while also passing a budget resolution for other Democratic spending priorities.

The legislation includes \$110 billion in new funding for roads and budgets and \$65 billion for broadband expansion. Also, in the legislation is \$73 billion for clean power transmission as well as additional funding for ports and waterways and \$66 billion for passenger and freight rail improvements.

Some \$9.6 billion is designated for Army Corps of Engineers priorities, including \$5.2 billion set aside for new construction, and another \$8.3 billion is provided for Western water needs. The Western water funding includes \$3.2 billion for aging infrastructure and \$1.2 billion for water storage, groundwater storage and conveyance projects.

The bill also would provide \$618 million over five years for the Agriculture Department's watershed programs.

Also included is \$10 million for a byproduct pilot program at USDA that would study the benefits of using materials derived from farm commodities in construction and consumer products.

"This deal signals to the world that our democracy can function, deliver, and do big things. As we did with the transcontinental railroad and the interstate highway, we will once again transform America and propel us into the future," said President Joe Biden. "This deal makes key investments to put people to work all across the country—in cities, small towns, rural communities, and across our coastlines and plains."

A summary of the bill's broadband section says \$40 billion would be routed through states, territories and the District of Columbia. Projects that are funded would have to provide speeds of 100 megabits per second download and 20 Mbps upload. There would be a 10% set-aside for "high-cost" areas.

Restaurants Looking to Simplify Menus

(From Meatingplace.com)

Foodservice operators are looking to streamline the meat ingredients and menu components they use, according to new research from Technomic commissioned by Tyson Foods.

The survey of 150 chefs and other menu decision-makers found that while beef is considered a high demand menu component, many operators view it as less profitable than other menu items due to calculating profitability based on percentage of total food cost. However, the higher menu price associated with beef generally translates to higher profit per plate than other items, Tyson said.

The report also found:

- Fresh, all-natural and no antibiotics are attributes that restaurants find to be most important when evaluating fresh beef and pork.
- Operators are no longer able to store slow-moving products and are seeking to simplify menus across meals and dayparts.
- Positioning a new menu idea as a limited time offering (LTO) is a favorable proposition for the operator and can provide a better chance of being added to the menu permanently.

The study, "Fresh Meat Purchasing, Menuing and Influences Among Restaurant Operators," included independent operators, small chains and larger restaurant groups. Restaurants included fast-casual operations, as well as midscale, casual-dining and fine-dining operations within the full-service segment.

"We sincerely appreciate our foodservice partners' transparency and look forward to further supporting them by sharing the profit potential we believe to be associated with beef and continuing to co-develop creative pork-based menu solutions to boost consumer demand for pork," Ozlem Worpel, director of marketing for Tyson Fresh Meats, said in a news release.

Industry professionals who are interested in more information from the study can contact Tyson at <https://tysonfreshmeats.com/get-in-touch>.

USDA's \$500M meatpacking initiative a start, but will have its limits

(From AgriPulse)

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack is promising to pour \$500 million into expanding meat processing capacity, which farm groups say will be a great start toward increasing competition in the sector and boosting livestock prices.

Vilsack hasn't said how the funding will be divided up and plans to use upcoming public input sessions to inform the program's specifics. But farm group representatives say it's likely to be used in a combination of grants and loans.

The high capital costs of building processing plants will limit the impact of the initiative, something Vilsack essentially acknowledged when he announced the program, saying it would require collaboration from other sources.

"We're not just talking about the power of \$500 million to stimulate interest and then leverage those to act as a catalyst to draw those additional resources," Vilsack said at a press conference in Council Bluffs, Iowa, on July 9.

Glynn Tonsor, an economist at Kansas State University, says a general rule of thumb when considering the cost of building a new facility, at least for beef cattle, is about \$100,000 per head of processing capacity.

"The economic size of the meat and livestock industry and the cost involved with industry infrastructure expansion is way larger than most people recognize," Tonsor said. "So, \$500 million doesn't go nearly as far as it sounds."

From 2016 to 2020, the number of cattle relative to the processing capacity available for those cattle has increased from 102% to 112%, an indicator that more capacity is needed. However, as Tonsor told the Kansas House Ag Committee in March, the total U.S. beef herd size has been going down and should become equal to capacity by 2023.

"There's a legit risk, just as an unbiased analyst, that we're going to wake up in 2023 and have more capacity than we need again," he said.

Jessica Roosa is the owner of This Old Farm Inc., a nearly 14,000-square-foot facility in Lafayette, Indiana, that can harvest between 60 and 80 cattle and about 50 hogs a week on top of some sheep and goat processing.

Roosa is hoping to add 10,000 square feet to double her operation's capacity, but doing so would cost her more than \$3 million, and it's been difficult to find the funding to do that. Most small pieces of equipment like vacuum tumblers and stuffers cost at least \$50,000, and bigger pieces of equipment like packaging machines start at \$200,000.

"You can't get started in the business without a million-dollar investment," she said. "If you're going to do slaughter of large animals like me, you're not going to be doing anything without a million dollars."

House Members Urge Emphasis on Small Facilities as USDA Weighs Meatpacking Investment

(From AgriPulse)

A bipartisan group of 30 U.S. representatives sent a letter to the USDA today with suggestions on how the agency's \$500 million investment in expanding U.S. meat processing capacity should be focused.

The legislators — led by Reps. Angie Craig, D-Minn., Dusty Johnson, R-S.D., Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, and Jeff Fortenberry, R-Neb. — called for the USDA to ensure small and regional meat and poultry processors can access the funds, as well as provide "more generous and accessible financing options" for processors.

"We encourage USDA to make investments that will provide leverage for producers at all levels of the supply chain, including in industries that are less vertically integrated, like the cattle industry, and industries that are more vertically integrated, like the poultry and pork industries," the letter states.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the USDA would be putting \$500 million into expanding the nation's meat processing capacity at a press conference on July 9. The USDA will be undertaking a public input process to determine how the money will be allocated.

The legislators want USDA to implement a small plant infrastructure grant program, which they believe would help small plants afford state or federal inspection costs and slaughter and processing capacity.

In addition, they are pushing for USDA to offer higher-cap, scalable financing options for plants, which they believe will quickly address processing capacity shortages and help plants become more competitive.

Finally, the group wants the agency to expand outreach to stakeholders on existing programs that facilitate local food processing. They would like to see funds given to land-grant universities, community colleges or technical schools for training meat and poultry processors.

Jacobs-Young Chosen to Lead Scientific Research At USDA

(From AgriPulse)

Chavonda Jacobs-Young, a scientist who has been at USDA for nearly two decades, is the Biden administration's pick to oversee the department's research agencies. Currently the administrator of the Agricultural Research Service, Jacobs-Young will be nominated to become undersecretary for research, education, and economics and USDA's chief scientist, roles in which she has been serving in an acting capacity. The REE mission area includes the Agricultural Research Service, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, the National Agricultural Statistics Service, Economic Research Service, and Office of the Chief Scientist.

Jacobs-Young "has excelled in top-level positions in USDA," the White House said, noting

she led the Office of National Programs and the Office of International Research as the Agricultural Research Service associate administrator for research programs. In addition, as founding director of the Office of the Chief Scientist at USDA, “she facilitated the coordination of scientific leadership across federal agencies within USDA, ensuring that the research and scientific information and data produced were held to the highest standards of scientific integrity.”

Jacobs-Young also served as acting director of NIFA and has been acting deputy undersecretary for the REE mission area.

Jacobs-Young also has served as a senior policy analyst for agriculture in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy during the Obama administration, “where she supported the President’s Science Advisor and others within the Executive Office of the President ... on high priority agricultural scientific issues,” the White House said.

Drought draws state disaster assistance

(From Farm Progress)

The drought is prompting state officials to activate programs that provide financial assistance to impacted farming businesses.

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture’s Rural Finance Authority board voted unanimously on July 14 to make zero-interest loans available immediately for farmers whose operations are suffering from lack of rain.

“This zero-interest loan program is especially important for farmers whose crops and livestock are suffering from the drought and were not insured or were underinsured,” said Thom Petersen, MDA commissioner.

The Disaster Recovery Loan Program funds can be used to help clean up, repair or replace farm buildings; repair or replace septic and water systems; and replace seed, fertilizer, other cropping inputs, feed or livestock and poultry.

Farmers in Minnesota counties considered to be in severe drought or worse (D2+ on the [U.S. Drought Monitor’s designation scale](#)) and in contiguous counties are eligible to apply. Eligible farmers must have received at least 50% of their annual gross income from farming for the past three years, and will work through their bank to secure the loans from the RFA. Interest rates on the RFA portion of the loan are currently set at 0.0%.

More information is available online on MDA’s [Disaster Recovery Loan](#) website.

[Source.](#)



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Save the Date!

-
- Fall 2021 - Date TBD - RMBA Fall Ranch Tour of Prairie Ridge Buffalo, CO

- 09/23/2021 – Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup & Arts Festival, SD
- 09/25/2021 – BisonFest Music Festival, TX
- 10/15/2021 - Wisconsin Bison Producers Association Fall Meeting - WI
- 11/6/2021 - Custer State Park Annual 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 - RMBA's Spring Conference - Location TBD

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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