

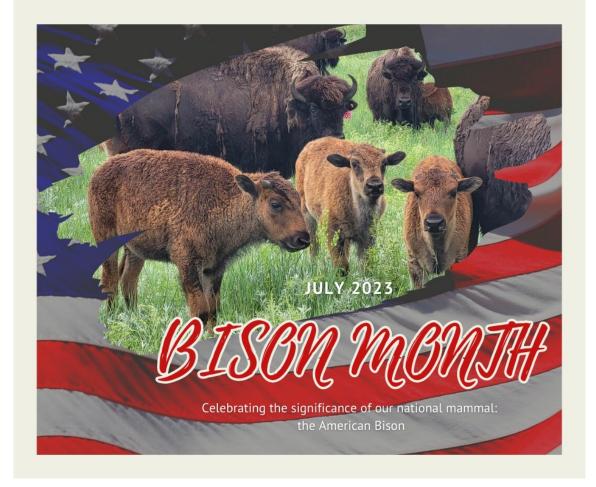
The National Bison Association (NBA) Weekly Update is an exclusive service for NBA members.

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NBA Weekly Update for June 30, 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.



July is Bison Month!

U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Celebrate the United States National Mammal throughout the Month

The National Bison Association announced the kickoff to July Bison Month today, encouraging consumers to add this uniquely American, delicious, humanely raised, supremely healthy protein to their regular diets.

The American Bison, whose population once exceeded 30 million animals, was decimated to near extinction in the late 19th century through a combination of hunting, slaughter, and western-introduced disease. However, the bison has made a tremendous comeback and now numbers over 400,000 head across the continent. This is thanks to a unique collaboration among American farmers and ranchers, Native American tribes, and conservation groups all working to restore the species back to its historic range across North America. It is this collaboration that also successfully made the American bison named the first-ever National Mammal of the United States in 2016.

By making bison a part of your diet, you are eating a delicious, natural, nutrient-dense protein that is healthy for you and good for the environment. By choosing bison, you are helping to restore herds to North American grasslands while supporting regenerative agriculture. Our campaign, <u>Fat Bison to Restore Bison</u>, is educating consumers about their important role in restoring the species, who, by supporting bison ranchers, are in turn supporting grassland regeneration, carbon sequestration, soil regeneration, increased biodiversity, and more bison on the landscape.

July Bison Month, while not a federally designated observance, is celebrated each July by the bison community and is a time in which bison farmers and ranchers promote the delicious taste of bison burgers, steaks, ribs, and roasts as a summer grilling treat. Bison is the leanest protein commercially available to consumers today boasting 26% more iron than beef and 87% lower in fat. Bison has

766% more B12 vitamins than chicken, and 32% less fat, based on nutrient data from the

Bison is easier to find than ever with all major grocery chains carrying at least ground

bison, packaged steaks, with fresh cuts available at natural and specialty food stores, local butchers, etc. offering the same cuts yielded from a beef animal. Bison is showing up on more restaurant menus, and not just bison burgers as chefs discover the versatility of this uniquely American protein. And that's not to mention bison's growing prevalence online, at farmer's markets, farm stores, and CSA programs.

Find a local bison producer near you with our easy to use <code>BuySome Bison</code> app, or our online buyer's guide, both available at www.bisoncentral.com/buying-bison-meat/, and find bison-specific recipes, nutritional data, cuts, and instructional cooking videos at www.bisoncentral.com/how-to-cook-bison/.

The National Bison Association is a 28-year-old, member-based, nonprofit trade association made up of bison farmers, ranchers, marketers, conservationists, public herd managers, enthusiasts and more. We are based in Westminster, Colorado. Learn more at www.bisoncentral.com, and @nationalbison.

Happy 4th of July and Canada Day!

The NBA wishes our American and Canadian members a safe and happy holiday weekend! Please note, the NBA office will be closed on Monday and Tuesday in observance.

Thanks to Cherokee Valley Bison Ranch for Hosting the Ohio Regenerative Ranching Field Day!

The NBA held it's first of three Regenerative Ranching Field Days last Saturday, with NBA Region VII Director, Carie Starr hosting at her Cherokee Valley Bison Ranch, a working regenerative bison operation. Approximately 50 bison producers, presenters and enthusiasts gathered in Thornville, Ohio and experienced an agenda packed with practical information and education in bison farming east of the Mississippi River in a holistic manner.



Thanks to Cherokee Valley Bison Ranch and the Eastern Bison Association for hosting this great event.

Two more field days will take place this year, the next being July 9th at Sleepy Acres Bison in Sleepy Eye, MN, followed by our September 30th field day at JJ Bison in Baldwin, WI. See full agendas and register online at https://bisoncentral.com/nba-conferences/.

Thanks to the North Central Region Sustainable Ag Research and Education program at the University of Minnesota for their support for the field day series.

Bison World Advertising Opportunities for Fall Edition

Production will soon be underway on the Fall 2023 issue of the Bison World magazine. This is one of our largest and most-read issues of the year!

Various advertising options are available within the magazine pages, from 1/8 page to full page. Lifetime and Active NBA members will enjoy discounted rates as part of their membership perks, and contract holders will receive a 5% discount for pre-paid advertising. Karen can work with you to tailor an advertising campaign that fits your budget and targets your message!

The final deadline for advertising materials will be August 1. Editorial submissions and suggestions are welcome at any time but are subject to the same deadline for the Winter issue.

For more information about editorial submissions or advertising your ranch, business, or events, contact <u>Karen@bisoncentral.com</u> or call (605) 381-3738.



Registration for Western NBA Conference Extended until July 7th!



We've extended the deadline for our Western NBA Summer Conference, which takes place in Idaho and Oregon on two working bison operations! Shoemaker Bison Ranch and Brown's Buffalo Ranch are generously opening their gates to welcome attendees to tour their pastures, herds, feed yards, and handling facilities. We'll even tour a bison processing plant, and hear from expert speakers on all things bison, all in less than two days.

At just \$150/person, this is a tremendous value in hands-on bison learning, local bison networking and lots of fun to boot! See the full agenda below, or <u>online</u>, and please register by next Friday, July 7th!

Register online at https://bisoncentral.com/nba-2023-events/ or call the NBA at 303-292-2833 to register by phone. Don't miss out!

Help Recruit Sponsors for the Truth in Buffalo Labeling Act

The NBA's Truth in Buffalo Labeling Act has been introduced in both the Senate and House of the U.S. Congress. We now need your help to recruit co-sponsors for this legislation, which would prevent cheap, low-quality, imported water buffalo products from being deceptively labeled as simply "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 labeled 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". See the proposed legislation and current Congressional sponsors here.

The legislation in the Senate, S. 258, is being sponsored by U.S. Sens. John Hoeven (R-ND) and Michael Bennet (D-CO) Current Co-sponsors include:

- Sen. Bennet, Michael [D-CO]
- Sen. Cramer, Kevin [R-ND]
- Sen. Tester, Jon [D-MT]
- Sen. Braun, Mike [R-IN]
- Sen. Smith, Tina [D-MN]
- Sen. Rosen, Jacky [D-NV]
- Sen. Thune, John [R-SD]
- Sen. Moran, Jerry [R-KS]
- Sen. Marshall, Roger [R-KS]

A companion bill was introduced in the House, H.R. 3866. The lead sponsors in the House are U.S. Reps. Carol Miller (R-WV) and Yadira Caraveo (D-CO).

Now we need NBA members to reach out to their US Senators and Representatives to gain more co-sponsors to keep the bill moving forward. Click here to find contact information for your Senators and Representatives and then copy and paste the letters below, customize with your personal bison information, and send along to your congressmen and women.

Sample (Communic	ation for	Senators:

Dear Senator ,

I am writing to request that you co-sponsor S. 258, the Truth in Buffalo Labeling Act, sponsored by Sens. John Hoeven and Michael Bennet.

I am a bison producer from (your area...briefly describe your operation). Bison producers worked hard over the past two decades to connect with customers across the country over 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.

S. 258 would require that any water buffalo food products in the U.S. marketplace be properly labeled as "water buffalo" and not just "buffalo" as is currently the case. This simple change will stop these deceptive practices and will provide consumers with the assurance that they are getting what they are paying for.

If you are willing to sign on as a co-sponsor, please reach out to Aaron Weber in Sen. Hoeven's office at <u>aaron_weber@hoeven.senate.gov</u>, or James Whaley in Sen. Bennet's office at <u>james_whaley@bennet.senate.gov</u>.

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.

(Your Name)

Sample Communication for Representatives:

Dear Representative

I am writing to request that you co-sponsor the Truth in Buffalo Labeling Act, H.R. 3866, which was recently introduced by U.S. Reps. Carol Miller (R-WV) and Yadira Caraveo (D-CO).

I am a bison producer from (your area...briefly describe your operation). Bison producers worked hard over the past two decades to connect with customers across the country over 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.

This bill would require that any water buffalo food products in the U.S. marketplace be properly labeled as "water buffalo" and not just "buffalo" as is currently the case. This simple change will stop these deceptive practices and will provide consumers with the assurance that they are getting what they are paying for.

If you are willing to sign on as a co-sponsor, please reach out to Emily Henn in Rep. Miller's office at emily.henn@mail.house.gov, or Richa Patel in Rep. Caraveo's office at Richa.Patel@mail.house.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)

Sincerely,



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.

How one local farm is changing bison production in New York By Emily Kenny, Justin Velazquez Spectrum News 1, Central New York June 28, 2023

Agriculture in upstate New York doesn't often include bison, but one local farm has been raising a herd of 170 bison in Homer that are finding their way onto restaurant menus. While there are only 27 bison farms in New York compared to the 12,796 beef farms, according to the 2017 USDA's Census of Agriculture, its demand is growing. The National Bison Association says that nearly all of its bison meat marketers reported growth last year, with half reporting an increase of more than 10%.

Skaneateles Buffalo was started in 2014 by Ellen and Tony Rusyniak when they purchased 30 cows from the Onondaga Nation and three bulls from Saranac Lake.

"We liked the idea of natural grass-fed animals, and we liked the idea that they could be free range," Ellen Rusyniak said. "They are minimal intervention, and they're kind of unique animals."

Working with bison can be dangerous because of their size and their lack of trust with humans, said Spencer Rusyniak, Ellen and Tony's 19-year-old son who helps care for the bison.

"They're very dispassionate, and I don't trust them at all," he said. "People have this idea of prey animals being peaceful and gentle creatures, but with bison, that could not be farther from the truth."

For safety, the Rusyniaks don't interact closely with the grass-fed bison without the protection of a truck or tractor in between them. They don't go into their enclosures on foot, and the fences are much higher than typical fencing for cattle.

The process for butchering bison is quite different from cattle, Spencer Rusyniak said. Rather than loading the animal onto a truck alive and killing them at the facility, the bison are shot and killed on the farm, then taken to be butchered.

Read more.

American bison reintroduced to northern Mexico helping to fight climate change

By Rodrigo Soriano El Pais, Mexico June 27, 2023

Dozens of <u>American bison</u> graze in the wide-open fields of El Carmen (Coahuila), a reserve of 140,000 hectares, roughly the same size as Mexico City. The country's northern plains had not played host to the bison in 100 years, after decades of indiscriminate hunting and habitat destruction eradicated the animals. In 2021, following an initiative led by the Mexican multinational cement company Cemex, bison returned to the grasslands, where the soil stores huge amounts of carbon, making the region key to the fight against climate change. Initially, 19 bison were introduced at the reserve; <u>today there are almost 100</u>. The mammal's daily routine makes it a perfect vehicle for regenerating grassland vegetation and sustaining hundreds of species that coexist with it.

"The even pruning of the grasses [produced by the bison as they eat] helps to increase the diversity of plants on the ground. They also take care of the regeneration of ecosystems by carrying seeds from one place to another in their digestive tract and defecating them," explains Rurik List, a researcher in environmental sciences at the Autonomous Metropolitan University (UAM) in Mexico City. The bison is a temperate animal, which unwittingly encourages other species to survive in the spaces it inhabits. Its considerable weight flattens the grassland in its path, an alteration that helps rodents such as the Mexican prairie dog, which requires short grass to be able to keep watch for predators.

Cemex carries out various different conservation initiatives to try to offset the impact of its operations. The company has more than 250 active quarries around the world, and tries to minimize its footprint from several perspectives: rehabilitating the sites they have exploited, preparing them before starting work to protect their biodiversity, and promoting spaces such as the El Carmen reserve, which Cemex became involved with 22 years ago. "From the beginning, a series of studies were carried out to determine what was most appropriate at the reserve. An inventory of flora and fauna was taken to determine which conservation targets should be retained. And an analysis was done to determine the status of the habitat," says Alejandro Espinosa, director of the El Carmen reserve.

Read more.

Blackfeet Bring Bison Home to Chief Mountain

Flathead Beacon, Montana By Tristan Scott June 28, 2023

A brazen bison calf was the first to clamber off the livestock trailer and into the shadow of Chief Mountain, where for a few wobbly moments it stood alone, blinking uncertainly at a sprawling ancestral homeland that hasn't supported a herd of wild buffalo for 150 years. An instant later, in a thunderclap of hooves, the russet-coated calf was joined by two dozen of its shaggier, surer-footed compatriots, their dark humps heaving against the square, sacred massif that dominates the horizon of their new home on the range.

Or, rather, it's the home they've always had, a place where the Blackfeet Indian Reservation's rolling foothills adjoin the ragged edge of the Rocky Mountain Front to form one of the most diverse ecosystems in North America, and where, for a century-and-a-half, the glaring absence of bison has conjured painful memories of cultural and ecological collapse for members of the Blackfeet Nation.

On June 26, the Blackfeet celebrated their homecoming. For some tribal members who marveled at the procession of wooly animals, their repatriation is an expression of sovereignty. For others, it marked the re-wilding of a landscape that's been missing a central player for far too long. And for others, it signaled the beginning of a renaissance, a reconciliation and a restoration, all on the back of the buffalo.

"It's like bringing them back to where they belong, bringing them home," said Carlson, his voice quiet and his jaw clenched tight. "They took care of us for thousands of years. The best way we can take care of them now is by releasing them to their homeland where they originated from."

For Carlson, who helped engineer the tribal bison program that culminated in the historic June 26 release — marking the first time a sovereign Indigenous nation has returned free-roaming bison back to their native habitat — the emotional weight of the occasion was palpable.

"To see them out here, it just choked me up," Carlson said. "It's a real good feeling. It finally feels right, after feeling wrong for a long time."

Read more.

2 Young Bison Arrive at Michigan at Michigan Zoo

Michigan Live June 30, 2023

ROYAL OAK, MI – Two young bison have been added to the herd at the Detroit Zoo. Juniper and Willow, both 1 year old, are adjusting to their new home in the American Grasslands habitat at the zoo in Royal Oak.

They are "making themselves at home," the zoo said in a social media post announcing

their arrival.

The newcomers join resident full-grown bison Takoda and Teetonka. Juniper and Willow are both quite a bit smaller than the older girls but will reach their full size by spring 2024.

Read more.

How to Avoid Conflicts with Bison at Antelope Island State Park

Utah State Parks June 26, 2023

SALT LAKE CITY — With summer in full swing, many Utahns are heading to the outdoors for recreation. While you are hiking or camping this year, particularly on Antelope Island, there are some important safety tips you should keep in mind if you encounter a bison. **Antelope Island State Park** is a popular recreational destination for outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy hiking, camping, birdwatching and boating on the Great Salt Lake. The island is also home to many wildlife species, including mule deer, pronghorn and bison.

Antelope Island is where you'll find one of the nation's largest and oldest public bison herds. Due to the large population of bison living on the island, it is quite common to see one of the animals. In the winter months, there are about 515 bison on the island. After the female bison have their calves in the spring, it brings the total to over 700 animals. Bison can also be found in the Henry Mountains in southern Utah and in the Book Cliffs in eastern Utah.

During the last few years, there have been several instances when visitors to Antelope Island were charged and injured by bison. While these **incidents are quite rare**, people should still be aware of what to do if they encounter a bison. "People usually get too close," Antelope Island Park Manager Jeremy Shaw said. "They always want to get closer and closer for photos. And any time there is a dangerous interaction with wildlife, it's usually because the person got too close."

Here are a few tips for how to avoid making a bison aggressive if you encounter one:

- If you see a bison and it stops what it is doing and starts paying attention to you, you are too close and should slowly back away.
- If a bison is in the middle of the road, wait for it to pass. Do not get out of your vehicle.
- If a bison is on the side of the road, feel free to slowly drive past it. But again, stay inside your vehicle.
- If you see a bison in the distance, do not walk across the rangeland to get closer to it. Take your photos from a safe distance.
- If you are hiking and a bison is close to you or on the trail, you should either back away and return the way you came, or leave the trail and give the animal a very wide berth when passing it. It is OK to go off the trail if your safety is at risk.

"We've got trail restrictions on Antelope Island in the backcountry, but safety trumps those rules," Shaw said. "If you are in the backcountry hiking and you come across any wildlife that's in your path, we urge you to travel around it. Whatever distance you think you should remain from the animal, double it — that's how far back you should stay."

These safety tips also apply to other species of wildlife. For specifics on what to do when encountering different types of animals in the wild, visit the **Wild Aware Utah website**.

Read more.

The American bison reconquers Mexico to fight climate change From El Pais

Dozens of American bison graze in the wide open fields of El Carmen (Coahuila), a reserve of 140,000 hectares, almost the same size as Mexico City. The northern plains of the country had forgotten the passage of the mammal, eradicated 100 years ago after decades of indiscriminate hunting and habitat destruction. In 2021, and after an initiative led by the Mexican cement company Cemex, the bison returned to roam the grasslands, a soil that accumulates large amounts of carbon, which makes it key to the fight against climate change. 19 bison arrived at the reserve, and there are already more than 90 in the place. The daily life of the mammal makes it a fundamental actor to regenerate the vegetation of the pasture and to maintain hundreds of species that live with it.

"Even-handed pruning of grasses [that bison produce when they eat] helps increase plant diversity in the soil. It also takes care of the regeneration of ecosystems, by carrying the seeds from one place to another in their digestive system and defecating them," explains Rurik List, researcher of Environmental Sciences at the Autonomous Metropolitan University (UAM). The bison is a sober animal, which inadvertently drives other species to survive in the spaces it inhabits. With its 800 kilograms of weight, it flattens the grassland in its path, an alteration that helps rodents such as the plains dog, which need the grass to be short to watch for predators.

Cemex carries out different conservation initiatives to try to offset the impact of its operations. The company has more than 250 active quarries around the world, and tries to minimize its footprint from several perspectives: rehabilitating the places they exploited; preparing them before starting work to protect their biodiversity, and promoting the care of spaces such as the El Carmen reserve, where they arrived 22 years ago.

"Since the beginning of the reserve, a series of studies were done to determine what was most appropriate. An inventory of flora and fauna was drawn up to determine which conservation objects we had to retain. And an analysis was made to see the status of the habitat, "says Alejandro Espinosa, director of the reserve of El Carmen.

Read more.

Drought outlook projects some relief in parts of U.S.

From Meatingplace

Dry conditions persist in certain areas of the Midwest and could continue to impact pastures and ranges despite recent rainfall in other regions, according to U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook released by National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) this month.

The report indicated that drought conditions are expected to continue or slightly improve in the eastern Corn Belt and Great Plains regions. Although pasture and range conditions have improved compared to last year, challenges remain for Texas and Illinois as they are unlikely to see relief in the coming months, the report projected. On the other hand, Wyoming and Oklahoma exhibit more favorable conditions, with 62% and 54% of their pasture acres in good condition, respectively.

According to the USDA NASS Crop Progress report for the week ending June 18, 35% of pasture and range acres in the lower 48 states are in good condition, with an additional 35% in fair condition. While these figures are consistent with the previous week, they represent a significant improvement compared to 2022, when only 28% were in good condition and 27% in fair condition.

Similar conditions are ongoing in parts of Canada as the country as producers are dealing with a shrinking cattle herd.

Senate Committee Approves FY24 Agriculture Appropriations Bill

Senate Committee on Appropriations News Release June 22, 2023

Washington, D.C. - The Senate Committee on Appropriations today approved the Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, providing support for critical agriculture, rural development, nutrition, conservation, and food and drug safety programs.

The measure, which was advanced by a bipartisan vote of 28-0, provides \$25.993 billion in discretionary funding.

"This important legislation will assist America's farmers, invest in critical agricultural and medical research, and support rural communities across the country," said Senator Collins.

"As the Vice Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, I will continue to champion this funding as the appropriations process moves forward."

Read more.

Smaller meat processors get \$115M in federal grants Meatingplace

The U.S. Department of Agriculture on Thursday announced \$115 million in grants to more than a dozen smaller meat and poultry processors in 17 states.

The investments are intended to increase independent meat and poultry processing capacity, expand market opportunities for farms and create additional jobs in rural areas, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack said in a news release.

"While American farmers and ranchers have been responding to the demand to produce more, their communities have struggled to see their share of the benefits," Vilsack stated before meeting with producers and business owners in Des Moines.

The funding includes \$77 million to 10 recipients in 12 states through a program that backs start-ups or expansions of meat and poultry processing plants. The USDA is also distributing \$38 million through a slaughterhouse expansion program to support five independent producers in five states.

Read 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)



Save the Date!

- 7/09/2023 NBA Regenerative Ranching Field Day Sleepy Eye, MN
- 7/15/2023 NBA Regional Conference New Plymouth, ID
- 8/1/2023 NBA Bi-Annual Membership Meeting Virtual Only
- 8/9/2023 Jack Auction Group Video Auction Online
- 9/13/2023 Jack Auction Group Video Auction Online
- 9/29/2023 Eastern Bison Association Fall Conference NY
- 9/30/2023 NBA Regenerative Ranching Field Day Baldwin, WI
- 10/7/2023 NBA Regional Conference Terra Alta, WV
- 10/13/2023 Jack Auction Group Video Auction Online
- 10/27/2024 Wisconsin Bison Producer's Association Fall Conference WI
- 11/04/2023 National Bison Day United States
- 11/04/2023 Custer State Park Annual Bison Auction SD
- 11/8/2023 Antelope Island State Park Production Auction Webcast
- 11/10/2023 Illinois Indiana Bison Association Fall Conference IN
- 11/10/2023 Jack Auction Group Video Auction Online
- 11/24/2023 MnBA Bison Fundamentals Class MN

- 11/25/2023 MnBA Legends of the Fall Show and Sale MN
- 12/02/2023 Kansas Buffalo Association Annual Auction KS
- 12/02/2023 Western Bison Association Annual Auction UT
- 12/6/2023 Jack Auction Group Video Auction Online
- 12/0/2025 Jack Auction Group video Auction Onlin
- 1/1/2024 Prairie Legends Bison Auction Webcast
- 1/17/2024 NBA Winter Conference Westminster, CO
 1/20/2024 NBA Gold Trophy Show and Sale Denver, CO

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

National Bison Association | <u>info@bisoncentral.com</u> | 303-292-2833 | <u>bisoncentral.com</u> @nationalbison







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