

MISSOURI BISON ASSOCIATION



22ND ANNUAL SPRING SHOW & SALE

Saturday, March 20, 2021 – 11:00 AM

Mo-Kan Livestock Market, Butler, MO

Dinner & Business Meeting:

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

To Consign, Call:

Carol Morris: 660-998-0990

or Peter Kohl: 816-585-4779



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

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NBA Weekly Update for March 12, 2021

The Weekly Update is a service designed to provide National Bison Association members with news and information affecting bison production and marketing. Many items in the Weekly Update are reprinted from outside sources. The content of those articles does not necessarily reflect the policy position of the National Bison Association. The articles are reproduced here only as a means to keep our membership informed as much as possible of all information and opinions relating to bison that is circulating publicly.

Section 32 Solicitation Set for May, AMS Officials Tell NBA

USDA's Agricultural marketing Service (AMS) will issue the solicitation for the second round of bison meat purchases under the Section 32 surplus removal program in early May, AMS Commodity Purchase specialist Chyra Lewis told the NBA on Wednesday.

Lewis's comments were part of a broad-ranging discussion that a dozen AMS officials held with NBA Executive Director Dave Carter and Assistant Director Jim Matheson in the first of a quarterly check-in meeting that the agency has initiated with the bison association.

The AMS Commodity Procurement team noted that they have altered the specifications for the second purchase as a step forward in positioning bison as an ongoing offering for



federal food distribution programs. The officials also expressed a commitment to sourcing future purchases from multiple vendors.

Other topics discussed during the hour-long meeting included steps to increase participation in the agency's wholesale monthly bison report and the annual weaned calf report, and the audit procedures that will be required once Asian Pacific Rim nations open their markets for U.S. bison meat exports.

Carter noted afterward, "We were extremely pleased that the officials at AMS have made a commitment to connect with us on a quarterly basis to review issues in which the agency connects with the bison business. This will help continue to build our strong working relationship with AMS on issues ranging from commodity purchases to farmers' market promotion."

New Stimulus Package contains Several Provisions Important to Bison producers

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 contains several provisions under the agricultural title that may strengthen the ability of bison producers to connect with customers ranging from farmers' market shoppers to restaurant diners.

The act appropriates \$3.6 billion for USDA to purchase and distribute agricultural commodities and fund COVID-19 mitigation efforts for agricultural and supply chain workers. The package enacted this week from the previous Farm to Family program by including other distribution channels such as restaurants and food-related entities that can receive, store, process and distribute food items.

The legislation appropriated another \$100 million to reduce fees associated with overtime inspection costs at federally inspected small and very small meat, poultry and egg processing facilities.

Wildlife Among the Petri Dishes

(From the NBA Blog, by Dave Carter)

A couple of news articles caught my attention in recent weeks. First was a story headlined, "Plant Based Diets Crucial to Saving Global Wildlife." A few days later, my newsfeed carried a story on the assertion by Bill Gates that eating lab-grown meat was an important step to addressing climate change and protecting biodiversity. Then, the Governor of Colorado declared March 20 as "Meatout" (meat free) day, citing, in part, climate concerns.



I thought about those stories as Dave Wentz and I were moving the bison to a new paddock on the ranch where we keep our herds. I had paused my four-wheeler beneath a tree where a couple of porcupines were lazily climbing the branches. Overhead, one of the pair of the bald eagles that had recently nested along the riparian area was circling the sky, sizing up the prairie dog smorgasbord laid out below.

I wondered how those animals would fare in a meat lab. I know that most laboratory fractionating columns aren't tall enough for porcupines to climb, or for eagles to utilize as nesting sites. Petri dishes, likewise, probably aren't suitable for use by ground nesting birds. The antelope and deer moving around through a laboratory are likely to create some real havoc with the high-priced, sensitive equipment "growing" the meat. And the prairie dogs...I suppose they could utilize some of the pipes and tubing for their burrows.

Okay, so forget about the lab-grown meat. What about the "plant-based" products? I've already blogged about the arms' length ingredient panel—filled with unidentifiable ingredients—that comprise most plant-based "meat" products. But even the identifiable ingredients come from crops that are grown in cultivated fields, sprayed with chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

I don't know about you, but I prefer to live in a home that isn't subject to total destruction once or twice each year. Burrowing animals probably feel the same way. Having your home (and perhaps your family) disked, plowed, drilled or otherwise cultivated is not conducive to long-term survival.

It's not just about mammals and reptiles. Over the past few years, the collapse of pollinators has become an increasing point of concern among biologists. According to Cornell University, 70% of the 20,000 species of bees in North America nest underground. I doubt those bees thrive on having their nests periodically pulverized.

Then, there's the fungi beneath the soil that is becoming appreciated for its role in breaking down biological matter and building healthy soil. Every trip across a field by a plow or disk is fatal to that vital, delicate link in the ecological cycle.

I'm not castigating farmers, or all farmlands. After all, I enjoy my steel-cut oats every morning, and a good slice of crusty bread with supper. Farming is important. But expecting that transitioning our food production into a system where every ounce of protein comes from a laboratory or a tilled field is a certain prescription for ecological collapse.

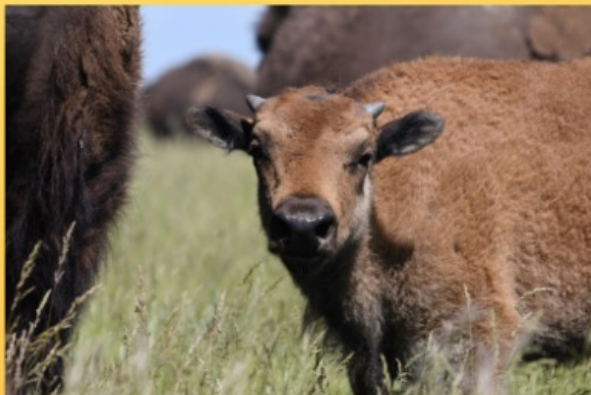
Pastures, prairies, and rangelands and the bison and other ruminants that keep those grasslands healthy, are vital components for wildlife habit, biological diversity, and healthy diets. That's something to celebrate over a good bison burger on March 20, or any time.

Western Buffalo Donates Meat Sales Proceeds to NBA

The combined NBA/Dakota Territory Buffalo Association winter conference received one more boost of support, as the Western Buffalo Co. announced that it was donating all the proceeds from the bison meat sold to the foodservices at the Ramkota Hotel, the host site for the conference, to support the conference.

"Once again, Western Buffalo Co. steps up to support the bison community during these critical times," said Jim Matheson, NBA assistant director. "We greatly appreciate their support."

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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Slaughter shift to U.S. creates bison price gap

(From The Western Producer)

Producers who sell to Canadian slaughter plants are being paid significantly less than those selling to the United States.

For Canadian bison ranchers, the last 12 months have been good or awful.

If a rancher has a business connection with a buyer in the United States and is exporting live bison there, then it's been good.

If not, it's been awful.

That's because there's a massive price gap, where bison sold into the U.S. for slaughter are garnering about \$4.80 to \$5 per pound.

Animals sold for slaughter in Canada are getting \$3.50 to 3.80 per lb.

"If you're selling into the Canadian marketplace, if you can find a buyer, you're at \$3.80 (per lb.), at best," said Les Kroeger, Canadian Bison Association president and a bison producer from Hanley, Sask.

The price difference, between the U.S. and Canada, is about \$1,000 per head.

"Anybody ... who has those relationships to trade live bison into the U.S. are doing very well," Kroeger added. "The Canadian producers relying on the Canadian markets are the ones that are hurting.... We're going to see producers exiting the industry if we don't see some (price) correction soon."

The massive price gap is unusual and is partly explained by COVID-19.

Read [more](#).

Vilsack: US Tariff Deals May Pave Way For EU, UK Trade Deal Talks

(From Agri-Pulse)

Agreements by the U.S., European Union and the UK to suspend all tariffs tied to airplane subsidies may open the door to renewed efforts by the U.S. to strike separate free trade agreements with the British and Europeans, according to Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack.

The U.S. announced Friday an agreement to suspend tariffs for four months on European yogurt, milk, cheddar cheese, Swiss cheese, cherry juice, whiskey, wine, peaches and other goods that are meant to punish the EU for continuing to subsidize airplane-maker Airbus. Likewise, the EU agreed to halt tariffs on U.S. orange juice, cotton, grapefruit, almonds, walnuts, cheese, ketchup and rum that are a response to U.S. subsidies for Boeing.

Similarly, the U.S. announced Thursday its suspension on Airbus-related tariffs on British cheese and other commodities.

"These steps signal the determination of both sides to embark on a fresh start in the relationship," the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative said in a statement.

Both the EU and the U.S. stressed that the tariff suspensions would allow for talks to resolve the airplane subsidy disputes, but Vilsack went further during a seminar at the Commodity Classic.

"Maybe it gives us an opportunity to have conversations about trade agreements with both the UK and the EU," Vilsack said.

European Commission Executive Vice President and Trade Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis issued a similarly optimistic statement, although he did not mention FTA negotiations.

"A positive EU-U.S. trade relationship is important not only to the two sides but to global trade at large," he said.

Facing the Storm Head-On, Like a Bison

(From Spectrum News)

We are heading into severe weather season, which means more thunderstorms. While we as meteorologists are tracking these storms, bison will actually charge right into the storm head-on.

I spoke with the land steward and CEO at [Force of Nature](#) Meats, Robby Sansom, to find out more about this because I think there's a life lesson we can learn from these bison.

"These bison are keystone species on the land, and they evolved to do what allows them to live freely, successfully, and thrive in their ecosystems," said Sansom. "And no doubt there are some pretty treacherous weather events on this continent where these bison are native to and unquestionably they want to mitigate the suffering and get through that as quickly as possible."

Sansom believes the lesson learned from nature is to not be afraid to take on your fears or something scary. Face it head-on, work through it, and you'll get to the end of it faster rather than waiting.

Ranchers Face the Climate Change Criticism Storm Head-On

Sansom, along with many other ranchers, faces criticism for its bison and cattle contribution to climate change. But Sansom said there is no better time than now to promote the best animal agriculture that mimics nature.

"Through properly managed grazing, ruminant animals can improve soil health, stimulate deep-rooted grasses, increase biodiversity, propagate seeds, aerate soil, and sequester atmospheric carbon," according to Force of Nature Meats.

Read [more](#).

APR bison pass first round of testing under agreement with Phillips County Conservation District

(From The Missoulian)

In the wake of a [recent agreement](#) with the Phillips County Conservation District, the American Prairie Reserve announced that testing of its bison herd found no evidence of disease.

In January 2021, an adjustment board appointed by the state Department of Natural Resources and Conservation approved a new bison grazing and disease management agreement between the groups. Under the deal APR has a 10-year variance from the Phillips County bison grazing ordinance during which it agreed to expanding current testing of its herd and sharing the outcome of the tests.

Ninety-seven bison were tested for a range of diseases by the Montana Department of Livestock Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in Bozeman. One test was forwarded and conducted by the National Veterinary Services Laboratory.

The results show that all 97 bison are negative for brucellosis, Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis, Bovine Viral Diarrhea and Johne's disease. The bison samples did carry antibodies for several less-significant diseases, including Bluetongue, Parainfluenza 3 and Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease.

According to the veterinarian conducting the examinations, all three diseases are known to be prevalent or endemic in livestock and wildlife across Montana, and exposure was not a

concern, according to an APR press release.

As the bison samples were being drawn in January, the veterinarian examined all tested bison and reported that they appeared to be healthy and showed no clinical signs of disease. The animals were re-examined in mid-February, and again there was no evidence of clinical disease found.

Read [more](#).

Bison Stakes Out Her Turf in Minnesota's Minneopa State Park

(From Yahoo News)

A territorial female bison was caught in action at Minneopa State Park in Mankato, Minnesota, on March 6, reminding visitors that they were on her turf.

Footage shared by Mankato resident Stephanie Williams, who said it was taken along the designated walking path around the bison enclosure, shows the mammal trailing her as she walked along the range's fencing.

"She did a couple bluff charges at the fence," Williams wrote in a Facebook caption. "The road through the enclosure is temporarily closed due to mud and melting snow, but the trail around the enclosure provided this incredible viewing experience."

"Minneopa State Park has a herd of 32 bison," Williams told Storyful. "One female bison seemed more assertive than the others."

See video at <https://news.yahoo.com/bison-stakes-her-turf-minnesotas-182919355.html>

Bison Management Bills Draw Criticism from Montana Tribes

(From Montana Public Radio)

Montana's legislature is considering four bison-related bills this session. The two bills that would have helped tribal nations expand bison herds were voted down, while tribal leaders say the surviving bills could harm long-standing bison management on reservations.

Managing bison in Montana is an enduring challenge due to the difficulty presented by domestic and wild bison, the cultural and historic significance of establishing large, free-roaming bison herds within Native American nations and concerns that brucellosis disease carried by some roaming wild bison will infect other livestock.

Bills and regulations come up every legislative session attempting to navigate these challenges and this year is no different.

Lawmakers heard testimony Tuesday on [House Bill 318](#), which seeks to distinguish wild from domestic bison more clearly by adding the payment of a livestock per-capita fee to domesticated bison. The bill is sponsored by Republican Rep. Kenneth Holmlund from Miles City, who tried to get ahead of the bill opponents' arguments.

"I will reiterate, the tribes do not pay per-capita now. So, this does not affect them. You will also be hearing that we've muddied the waters. We've made it a lot more difficult to understand. Just the opposite is true. We've made it so that it is more precise," Holmlund says.

Garfield, Phillips, and Valley County officials supported the bill alongside the Montana Farm Bureau Federation and other groups because the per-capita fee helps cover Montana's Department of Livestock testing fees and further separates domestic bison from their wild counterparts.

Read [more](#).

Canadian Genome Biobank to Help Revive North American Bison Population

(From the Battleford News-Optimist)

The University of Saskatchewan has been awarded \$6.76 million from the Canada Foundation for Innovation to help conserve bison and other threatened animal species and address challenges facing the beef cattle industry, including antimicrobial resistance which poses a global threat to animals and humans.

“Working with our partners in the livestock industry, Indigenous groups and other leading academic institutions, we will place Canada on the global stage of animal conservation and production,” said USask Vice-President Research Dr. Baljit Singh.

“This expert multidisciplinary team will apply genomics and other new technologies to the beef sector to enhance production, livestock health, and food safety, as well as reduce greenhouse gases for a more sustainable future.”

The wide-ranging research program, made possible through the CFI Innovation Fund, includes working with Indigenous communities to develop the world’s first bison genome biobank at the university’s [Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence](#) (LFCE).

The federal government has announced more than \$518 million to support the infrastructure needs of universities and research institutions across the country.

“After the near extinction of bison 100 years ago, Canada has led the way in bison conservation, but due to small genetically isolated herds and disease, bison remain at less than two per cent of their historic population. Without conservation efforts, bison as a distinct species would cease to exist,” said team leader Gregg Adams, a specialist in reproductive biology at USask’s Western College of Veterinary Medicine.

Read [more](#).

Groups raising funds for new bison quarantine facility in Yellowstone

(From the Billings Gazette)

Two conservation groups are attempting to raise \$500,000 by June to help pay for modifying and building new quarantine pens near Yellowstone National Park so more bison can be transferred to tribes and avoid slaughter.

“We’re a little over halfway to our goal,” said Scott Christensen, executive director of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition.

The coalition pledged to raise \$250,000. [Yellowstone Forever](#), the park’s fundraising arm, is pursuing another \$250,000.

“This is one of the park’s highest priorities,” said Lisa Diekmann, president and CEO of Yellowstone Forever, who added that her group is also more than halfway toward its goal. “I think in some ways bison are even more iconic than other Yellowstone wildlife. Hopefully, our constituents love them as well.”

The Park Service will provide another \$500,000 to fund the million-dollar project. Construction could start this summer with a goal to have the expanded facilities available by next winter, according to Chris Geremia, the park’s lead bison biologist.

“We’ve shown this can work on a smaller scale,” said Cam Sholly, superintendent of Yellowstone National Park.

The new facilities will require an increase in park personnel to oversee their operation, as well.

Read more [here](#).

California Meat Processing Coalition Promoting Policy Solutions to Processing Bottlenecks

(From ATTRA- NCAT)

In today's world, pet goats participate in yoga classes, apartment building walls bear signs advertising "Farm Fresh Eggs," and the consumer appetite for organic meat and dairy is skyrocketing. Despite this popular sentiment, a lack of investment in regional meat supply chains threatens the future of regional, organic, and regenerative ranching.

California's farmers and their four-legged flocks face severe and longstanding bottlenecks in the final steps along the meat supply chain from ranch to roast: slaughter, cut and wrap, and value-added processing. In the last 50 years, California has lost more than half of its federally inspected slaughterhouses, and the remaining facilities are operating at capacity or are located too far away to be cost-effective for producers. Access to certified organic plants is even more limited.

To address these issues, last September CCOF teamed up with the [UC Davis Food Systems Lab](#) and [Roots of Change](#) to launch the California Meat Processing Coalition.

The coalition is exploring policy solutions that will remove burdens on small and midsize producers and processors, expand meat processing options, and invest in infrastructure to alleviate meat processing bottlenecks and support a resilient regional meat supply chain. Potential solutions include expanding on-farm slaughter, training the next generation of butchers, streamlining regulations, and supporting upgrades and expansion of meat plants.

Read [more](#).

White House Names Blazek As Ag Adviser

(From Agri-Pulse)

The Biden White House has hired Wisconsin native Kelliann Blazek as a special assistant to the president for agriculture and rural policy.

Blazek's career has included a handful of stops around Washington farm policy circles as well as work in her home state and as a food law and policy educator. Her most recent role was in Wisconsin's Office of Rural Prosperity, where she worked under Democratic Gov. Tony Evers.

According to the White House, Blazek has also worked on Capitol Hill for Rep. Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, as well as for the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, the Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic, and the Antonin Scalia Law School.

Ferd Hoefner, Blazek's former NSAC colleague, described her as "a really bright woman with strong legal skills and a lot of legislative experience."

"(Blazek has) a really good feel for Congress and how it works, which I think could be really helpful in terms of advising both the Domestic Policy Council and the president," he said. He specifically referenced her skill in the area of rural development policy as well as her strong knowledge of dairy and livestock policy stemming from her farm upbringing.

"She knows how to get it done," Hoefner added. "She grew up on a farm, she loves rural America, and I think she's going to do a really good job serving the president."

Read [more](#).

Regenerative Farming Practices Yield Benefits, Say Farmers

Surveyed

(From ATTRA-NCAT)

[Soil Health Academy surveyed](#) its 2019 and 2020 course graduates on implementation of regenerative agriculture practices.

The survey found that a majority of respondents are realizing resource and profitability improvements, with those improvements even more pronounced among producers who have been implementing regenerative practices for more than a year. A majority of respondents reported declines in synthetic fertilizer use, decreases in the use of pesticides and herbicides, and improved water infiltration.

Meanwhile, among graziers, a majority of first-year respondents reported biomass increases, while 90% of second-year respondents reported increases. Furthermore, 37% of 2020 graduates and 60% of 2019 graduates reported increased profits from implementing regenerative practices.

Read [more](#).

Conservation Mentorship Program Offered for Underserved Farmers and Ranchers

Since 2003, the Sand County Foundation's Leopold Conservation Award has recognized nearly 150 farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners nationwide for their efforts to improve soil health, water quality, and wildlife habitat.

Now, a \$250,000 Conservation Collaboration Grant from USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will fund Sand County Foundation's two-year pilot project to promote conservation outreach by its award recipients. "Leopold Conservation Award recipients are ambassadors who regularly discuss the importance of agricultural conservation with their peers and the general public.

This project will empower our network of award recipients to share a range of knowledge, from how to apply for an NRCS conservation program to technical assistance, with an important audience," said Dr. Heidi Peterson, Sand County Foundation's Vice President of Agricultural Research and Conservation.

Potential participants in the [Land Ethic Mentorship](#) can learn more and sign up for the free program online.

Read [more](#).



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Save the Date!

- 3/12/2021 - Eastern Bison Association Annual Winter Conference - PA
- 3/20/2021 - Missouri Bison Association Spring Sale - MO
- 4/09/2021 - Minnesota Bison Association's Annual Education Conference - MN
- 6/27 - 29/2021 - National Bison Assn. Summer Conference - Cheyenne, WY

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

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