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Weekly Update



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NBA Weekly Update for September 10, 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.

Denver BBQ Festival to Showcase Bison

Bison will be on the menu at the Q BBQ Series Denver Festival at Mile High stadium next Friday through Sunday. Rocky Mountain Natural Meats, in cooperation with the National Bison Association, will be hosting a booth during the three-day event, which is part of a series of BBQ festivals being held in four cities.

The Denver BBQ Festival is smoking up 30,000 pounds of meat in this year's three-day event. There will be live music, a variety of barbeque flavors from well-known pit masters and an all-you-can-eat pass that includes free beer, wine and cocktails. Entry is free, with barbeque and drinks available to purchase.

North American Bison, L.L.C. provided bison for the Kansas City BBQ event held at Arrowhead Stadium in July and will be at the upcoming St. Louis event at Keiner Plaza on October 1-4.

The Denver BBQ Festival runs Friday, Sept. 17, from 5 to 9 p.m.; Saturday, Sept. 18, 11 a.m.-8 p.m.; and Sunday, Sept. 19; 11 a.m.-6 p.m. at Empower Field at Mile High, 1701 Bryant St. in Denver.

The NBA has helped sponsor the marketers' participation with support through the NBA Growth Fund. The Growth Fund will also help underwrite bison promotion at the upcoming World Food Championships in Dallas in the November.

More information on next week's festival in Denver is available here.

www.denverbbqfest.com

Candidates Set for NBA Regional Elections

Candidates have filed for all four regional director seats scheduled for elections to be conducted from September 17 – 30 with the 2-year terms starting in January 2022.

According to the NBA bylaws, regional directors "shall be elected by a mail in, or electronic ballot during September of each year prior to the expiration of the regions' directors' terms. If after the initial ballot, no one person in any region has more than 50% of the ballots cast, then a run-off election will occur during November, involving the two persons having the most votes cast in the September balloting. In case of a tie, a coin will be tossed to determine the winner. Only active and lifetime members residing within a region may vote in each region's election." Regional directors are eligible to serve two two-year terms.

The directors elected in September will begin serving in January 2022.

In this election cycle, directors will be elected for two-year terms from Regions II, IV, VI and VIII.

The regions up for election for, and the states included are:

- Region II, representing CO, WY. Boyd Meyer of Wyoming is the current director and is a candidate for re-election.
- Region IV, representing KS, IA, MO and NE. Ken Klemm of Kansas is the current director, and is a candidate for re-election.
- Region VI, representing AR, LA, NM, OK, TX. Campbell Burgess of Texas is the current director and is a candidate for re-election.
- Region VIII, AL, DC, FL, GA, KY, MD, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV. Liz Riffle of West Virginia has filed as a candidate to replace Kristopher Kelley of Kentucky the current director who is prohibited from seeking re-election because of term limits.

Ballots will be emailed to all eligible members in each respective region next week.

Bison Producers Eligible for USDA Assistance to Cover Fee Transportation Costs for Drought Impacted Ranchers

Bison producers in drought impacted regions are eligible to file for assistance to help cover the cost of transporting feed for livestock that rely on grazing, under an update to the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-raised Fish program (ELAP) announced this week by USDA.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will provide more details and tools to help ranchers get ready to apply at their local USDA Service Center later this month at fsa.usda.gov/elap.

"USDA is currently determining how our disaster assistance programs can best help alleviate the significant economic, physical and emotional strain agriculture producers are experiencing due to drought conditions," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "The duration and intensity of current drought conditions are merciless, and the impacts of this summer's drought will be felt by producers for months to come. Today's announcement is to provide relief as ranchers make fall and winter herd management decisions."

ELAP provides financial assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees, and

farm-raised fish for losses due to disease, certain adverse weather events or loss conditions as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture.

ELAP already covers the cost of hauling water during drought, and this change will expand the program beginning in 2021 to cover feed transportation costs where grazing and hay resources have been depleted. This includes places where:

- Drought intensity is D2 for eight consecutive weeks as indicated by the [U.S. Drought Monitor](#);
- Drought intensity is D3 or greater; or
- USDA has determined a shortage of local or regional feed availability.

Cost share assistance will also be made available to cover eligible cost of treating hay or feed to prevent the spread of invasive pests like fire ants.

Under the revised policy for feed transportation cost assistance, eligible ranchers will be reimbursed 60% of feed transportation costs above what would have been incurred in a normal year. Producers qualifying as underserved (socially disadvantaged, limited resource, beginning or military veteran) will be reimbursed for 90% of the feed transportation cost above what would have been incurred in a normal year.

A national cost formula, as established by USDA, will be used to determine reimbursement costs which will not include the first 25 miles and distances exceeding 1,000 transportation miles. The calculation will also exclude the normal cost to transport hay or feed if the producer normally purchases some feed. For 2021, the initial cost formula of \$6.60 per mile will be used (before the percentage is applied) but may be adjusted on a state or regional basis.

To be eligible for ELAP assistance, livestock must be intended for grazing and producers must have incurred feed transportation costs on or after Jan. 1, 2021. Although producers will self-certify losses and expenses to FSA, producers are encouraged to maintain good records and retain receipts and related documentation in the event these documents are requested for review by the local FSA County Committee. The deadline to file an application for payment for the 2021 program year is Jan. 31, 2022.

Bison Processors Eligible Under USDA Program to Provide Relief to Small Processors, Distributors, Farmers Markets and Others Impacted by COVID-19

Bison processors will soon be eligible to apply for assistance under the U.S. Department of Agriculture' (USDA) \$700 million program to support agricultural stakeholders who haven't yet received substantial federal financial assistance in responding to the COVID-19 crisis. USDDA on Thursday announced it will soon publish Requests for Applications (RFAs) for new grant programs - the [Pandemic Response and Safety \(PRS\) Grant](#) .

These grant programs will provide assistance to small businesses in certain commodity areas, including small scale specialty crop producers and processors, shellfish, aquaculture and other select producers, meat and other processors, distributors, farmers markets, seafood facilities and processing vessels.

Funds will be used to issue grants for COVID-19-related costs incurred between January 27, 2020, the date upon which the public health emergency was declared by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act, and December 31, 2021. Grants will cover the activities associated with:

- Workplace Safety Measures: Workplace safety measures, including, but not limited to, personal protective equipment, sanitizer, hand washing stations, air filters, thermometers, cleaning supplies, or similar items.
- Market Pivots: Market pivots such as transition to virtual/online sales costs (online platform development and fees, online marketing, credit card processing fees), supplies, new signage.

- Retrofitting Facilities: Retrofitting facilities for worker and consumer safety (plexiglass, walk up windows, heat lamps, fans, tents, propane, weights, tables, chairs).
- Transportation: Additional transportation costs incurred to maintain social distancing.
- Worker Housing: Additional worker housing costs incurred to maintain social distancing or to allow for quarantining of new or exposed employees.
- Medical: Unreimbursed costs associated with providing or enabling vaccinations, testing, or healthcare treatment of infected employees, including any paid leave.

More information of the Grant Program is available [here](#).

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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Bison Disappearance, Comeback on Exhibit

(From the Great Bend Tribune)

LARNED – A sought-after traveling national exhibit becomes available to the Golden Belt public for the Labor Day weekend at the Santa Fe Trail Center and Museum west of Larned.

“Bison: Masters of the Plains” is a national traveling exhibit produced by Flint Hills Design in collaboration with the Kauffman Museum in North Newton that is currently touring Kansas.

After a Friday select viewing for its association membership, the Santa Fe Trail Center and Museum will open the West Gallery to the public on Saturday.

The exhibit will run through Oct. 25.

Seth McFarland, SFTC director, sought the exhibit for its relevance, not only in celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Santa Fe National Historic Trail, but also as an homage to the animal seen as an important facet to the shaping of commerce and community throughout the Great Plains.

“Before Europeans came to settle and develop this country, the American Bison was an important facet of the ecology of the Great Plains,” McFarland said. “It was important to the native Americans who lived here.

Read [more](#).

'Ag-Tourism' Lets You See Bison Up Close and Personal

(From Fox 31)

LIMON, Colo. (KDVR) — An increasing number of farms and ranches throughout Colorado are participating in what is called “ag-tourism.”

It is a way to augment their annual income by allowing visitors to come and see what ranches and farms are really like.

Even in the best of times, farming and ranching is a hard way to make a living. Ray Thieman, owner of Prairie Ridge Bison Ranch in Limon, knows this.

”Ag tourism is bringing out a group of people to enjoy what we do naturally, and that is raise livestock, raise crops, being in agriculture, sharing that experience with the public,” said Thieman.

In addition to raising bison for food, Thieman now charges people to come out to his ranch and get up close and personal with the legendary and indigenous creatures.

”Not only do we get close, but you get to experience good, healthy animals that are on the plains in their natural state,” said Thieman.

Bison customers can purchase processed and frozen bison meat.

Ag-tourism provides much needed income for Colorado ranchers and farmers. It’s also a great learning experience to see, firsthand, where food comes from.

Read [more](#).

Bison Center Construction Progressing Well

(From the Black Hills Pioneer)

RAPID CITY — Construction of the Bison Center in Custer State Park is progressing nicely, even as officials make plans for even more building improvements in the park.

Scott Simpson, director of the state parks and recreation division told the Game, Fish and Parks Commission that the majority of the dirt work and utility work is completed at the planned Bison Center. Water lines have been run, footings have been poured and walls are getting ready to be poured before winter, he said. The building, Simpson said, is a package that will be shipped as soon as crews have completed the pours and have everything in place.

”Right now, we are making sure that the area looks good for Roundup,” Simpson said about the annual Buffalo Roundup that is scheduled for Sept. 23-25. “We want to make sure that our construction doesn’t impact that event.”

The Bison Center is a \$5 million building that will serve as a large visitor’s center. Its primary purpose will be to tell the story of the bison, including the importance of buffalo to manage Custer State Park and the animal’s importance to the Native American culture. The project is funded primarily with a \$4 million gift from The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust, a \$500,000 allocation from the S.D. Legislature, \$170,000 from the S.D. Parks and Wildlife Foundation, and other private donations.

Read [more](#).

Bison, Elk and Social Distance: A Photographer’s View from Yellowstone During Delta

(From the Washington Post)

I remember when I was a girl, [Yellowstone National Park](#) was one of those places I saw

on travel magazines and a place I always dreamed of visiting. Now as a photographer, I get to capture it myself.

My friend and I decided to take a trip to Yellowstone and [Grand Teton National Park](#) after months of nonstop working.

The park's general route looks like the number eight. Depending on our daily plan, we stayed at four different lodges during our seven-day trip. We stayed at Under Canvas Yellowstone, a glamping site located just 10 minutes from the west entrance of Yellowstone National Park. We took the southern route first, then the northern.

Because of the pandemic, some of the park's access was limited in 2020. Park staff said it almost feels like the park healed itself from damage and pollution. Once the park fully reopened, land was cleaner, and the animals approached more closely — although the latter isn't always a good thing.

Animals are usually active from 4 a.m. to 9 a.m. We managed to get up early so we wouldn't miss them and the beautiful sunrise views. We saw groups of bison gathering on the hill, pronghorn antelopes crossing roads and bears walking through bushes.

Read [more](#).

When Bison Attack in Yellowstone, They Don't Care If It's a Car

(From Laramie Live)

If you've gone to YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok or any other type of social media page, there's a good chance you've seen Bison getting angry. 2021 has been a record setting year for attendance in Yellowstone National Park and we've seen MANY videos, pictures and heard stories of Bison/Human interactions. Stay 25 yards away from bison when you see them in Yellowstone.

The American Bison is a magnificent sight! They're big, bad and don't take crap off of anyone or anything. According to this first video that was put up this past Augusts of a Bison going head first into the rear bumper of a Chevy Impala and rips it off. Luckily the person videoing the event, rolled up his window to make sure he was safe.

With all the possibilities of things to spook a bison herd, when something does set them off and you're in the middle make sure you hold on tight. Even though they are fairly agile, to be stuck in the middle of a stampede is enough to get your heart racing.

Read [More](#).

Senators announce bill to reinstate COOL

(From Meatingplace)

U.S. Sens. Mike Rounds (R-S.D.), John Thune (R-S.D.), Jon Tester (D-Mont.) and Cory Booker (D-N.J.) announced on Wednesday a bipartisan bill that would reinstate mandatory country of origin labeling for beef.

To be formally introduced next week, the American Beef Labeling Act would compel the U.S. Trade Representative to develop a World Trade Organization-compliant version of COOL within six months, followed by a six-month window to implement it.

In December 2015, Congress repealed COOL for beef and pork after the WTO ruled that the law violated U.S. trade obligations and discriminated against Canadian and Mexican animals shipped to the U.S. for feeding and processing. WTO had approved those nations' proposal to impose over \$1 billion in tariffs against the U.S.

COOL proponents, including independent cattlemen, contend major packers' purchases of foreign animals to fill out their plants has contributed to decreased pricing for domestic animals, and that beef products carrying a "Product of the USA" should be born, raised

and processed in the U.S.

Read [more](#).

NASDA Calls on USDA to Protect Diversity of Meat Processing

(From SoutheastAgNet.com)

The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) has expressed its recommendations for a resilient, diverse and secure meat processing system. Specifically, NASDA commented that flexible funding for solutions to workforce shortages and processing infrastructure investments for small to mid-sized meat processing facilities is critical to ensuring our food system is built to handle future challenges.

Twenty-seven state departments of agriculture operate state meat and poultry inspection programs covering approximately 1,900 small or very small establishments. State agriculture departments hold a unique position as they are the only entities certified to inspect meat other than the USDA. Nationwide, NASDA members report small establishments are facing significant challenges with shortages of inspectors and workers.

NASDA CEO Dr. Barb Glenn said, "Having re-assembled our food supply chains in response to each hurdle the COVID-19 pandemic has presented, NASDA members deeply understand the connection between diversity in production and food system resiliency." She said, "We must do all we can to support our small meat processors now and invest in their ability to stand on their own in the future."

Full [text](#).

White House Blames Meat Industry Consolidation for Higher Grocery Food Prices

(From AgriPulse)

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and National Economic Council Director Brian Deese unveiled a new report Wednesday that in unusually strong terms blamed consolidation in the beef, pork and poultry sectors for higher grocery store bills and unveiled new actions to address the situation.

"One of the interesting findings of the [report that we put out today](#) is that about half of the overall increase in grocery prices can be attributed to a significant increase in prices in three products: beef, in pork, and in poultry. And in beef and in pork, we've seen double-digit increases in prices over the last couple of months," Deese told reporters at a White House briefing.

Anywhere from 55% to 85% of the market is controlled by the top four producers in those industries, Deese said, while raising concerns about "pandemic profiteering," which he described as companies that are driving price increases in a way that hurts consumers while not benefitting the farmers and the ranchers growing the product.

Deese said this is going to be one of several issues discussed during the inaugural meeting of the President's Competition Council on Friday -- about promoting greater competition across the economy.

Funding Opportunities

Pandemic Livestock Indemnity Program

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, authorized payments to producers for losses of livestock or poultry depopulated from March 1, 2020, through December 26, 2020, due

to insufficient processing access as a result of the pandemic. Pandemic Livestock Indemnity Program (PLIP) payments will be based on 80% of the fair market value of the livestock and poultry and for the cost of depopulation and disposal of the animal. Eligible livestock and poultry include swine, chickens, and turkeys, but pork producers are expected to be the primary recipients of the assistance. Eligible livestock and poultry producers can apply for PLIP starting July 20, 2021, by completing the FSA-620, Pandemic Livestock Indemnity Program application, and submitting it to any Farm Service Agency county office.

Read [more](#).

Minnesota Zero-Interest Drought Emergency Loans

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Rural Finance Authority (RFA) Board determined that an emergency exists in Minnesota due to drought, which makes zero-interest loans available immediately for Minnesota farmers whose operations are suffering from lack of rain. The Disaster Recovery Loan Program can be used to help cover lost revenue or expenses not covered by insurance.

The funds can be used to help clean up, repair, or replace farm buildings, repair or replace septic and water systems, replace seed, fertilizer (or 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) and in contiguous counties are eligible to apply.

Read [more](#).

North Dakota Soil Health Cover Crop Grant Program

The North Dakota Department of Agriculture's Soil Health Cover Crop Grant Program will provide cost-share assistance to producers via a lottery system. Cover crops must be planted by August 31, 2021. There is a cost-share payment of \$15 per acre for new applicants and a future cost-share payment of \$10 per acre for repeat applicants. There is a 50-acre cap per applicant per year. Applications open September 1, 2021, and close October 1, 2021, for the 2021 season.

Read [more](#).

Wisconsin Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant Program

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP) provides funding to producer-led groups that focus on nonpoint source pollution abatement activities through the Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant Program (PLWPG). Each application must come from a group of at least five farmers in the same watershed, collaborating with conservation agencies, institutions, or nonprofit organizations. The maximum grant award per group is \$40,000, with a total of \$750,000 available funding each fiscal year. Applications are due by September 27, 2021.

Read [more](#).

Scholarships for 8th National Grazing Lands Conference

The National Grazing Lands Coalition is offering the Lynn Myers/Hezekiah Gibson Producer Memorial Scholarship for the 8th National Grazing Lands Conference, December 6-9, 2021, in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. This scholarship will provide two producers \$500 to cover the costs associated with attending the conference.

The deadline to apply for the scholarship is October 15, 2021.



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Save the Date!

- 9/11/2021 - RMBA Fall Ranch Tour of Prairie Ridge Buffalo - CO
- 9/16/2021 - Dakota Bison Symposium - ND
- 9/23/2021 – Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup & Arts Festival - SD
- 9/25/2021 – BisonFest Music Festival, TX
- 10/15/2021 - Wisconsin Bison Producers Association Fall Meeting - WI
- 10/23/2021 - Custer State Park Roundup and Arts Festival - SD
- 10/30/2021 - Texas Bison Association Fall Ranch Tour - TX
- 11/6/2021 - Custer State Park Annual Bison 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
- 11/21/2021 - Canadian Bison Association Convention, Show and Sale - SK
- 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 - Rocky Mountain Bison Association's Spring Conference - Location TBD
- 7/12/2022 - International Bison Conference - Saskatoon - SK

Please visit <https://bisoncentral.com/calendar/> for details and more up-to-date events. If you have a bison event coming up that's not listed, please send the details to jim@bisoncentral.com and the NBA will post the event on its website at no charge.

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

