



National Bison Association

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Weekly Update from the National Bison Association

A news and update service *exclusively* for members of the National Bison Association.
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October 6, 2017

Winter Conference Registration Now Open!

The bison business's biggest gathering of the year, the NBA's annual Winter Conference and Gold Trophy Show and Sale, is scheduled for January 17 – 20th in Denver, Colorado.

The 23rd annual conference has the theme of Roaming to Success and will celebrate our march towards 1 million bison and our many successes of the past year as we head into another exciting year in the bison business.

The Winter Conference planning committee, again chaired by 2016 NBA member of the year, Beverly Brown, has an action-packed week planned bringing back favorites like the buffalo-mentor session, to new and fun activities including our first-ever kids' bison art contest and a Best Bison Chili Recipe Contest!

Don't miss out, register online quickly and securely here, <https://bisoncentral.com/2018-nba-winter-conference-registration-form/>, or download a registration form at <https://bisoncentral.com/winter-conference/> where you can also find lodging details, sponsorship opportunities and more. Please register by January 4th.

NBA Winter Conference Sponsorships Now Available

The NBA Winter Conference features a variety of exclusive sponsorships for bison businesses to get involved and support your industry while gaining great recognition among our community.

We have a range of sponsorship opportunities that range from \$1,000 - \$5,000 that cover a variety of activities that enhance the conference and benefit attendees.

Learn more at

<https://bisoncentral.com/wpcontent/uploads/2016/12/2018WCSponsorship9.29.17.pdf>.

NBA Seeks FSA Beginner Farmer/Rancher Loan Success Stories

During the National Bison Associations recent lobbying trip to Washington, DC, the NBA delegation expressed frustration to the USDA Farm Service Agency regarding how FSA loan officers can sometimes dissuade applicants from pursuing bison production due to their unfamiliarity with the animal. The FSA suggested that we reach out to members who have had success with USDA Beginner Farmer and Rancher loans. The agency will, in turn, potentially include our stories in their agency-wide newsletter as to better educate staff about today's bison business.

The NBA also updated the agency on the current strength of our market and provided literature and materials outlining today's bison industry.

So if you have had a good, or bad, experience with this program, we'd love to hear about it. Please email your experience with the Farm Service Agency to jim@bisoncentral.com.

Learn more about the Farm Service Agency Beginning Farmer and Rancher program here: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs/beginning-farmers-and-ranchers-loans/index>

October Bison World Now Available Electronically

Members can now view the October Bison World on their electronic device of their choosing by downloading the issue at <https://bisoncentral.com/publication/bison-world-magazine/>

The issue should be hitting mailboxes this week as well.

Bison World Advertising Part of Your 2018 Market Plan?

Want to reach the U.S. bison industry most effectively? Then make ***Bison World*** advertising part of your marketing plan for the new year. Readers are looking for inputs, equipment, breeding stock and everything else needed to raise and market bison. Rates start as low as \$100 per issue with deep discounts for contract advertisers and members. Some advertising spots are still available for the 2018 NBA Member Directory, which is an insert in the January issue. Deadline to advertise in the January issue is Nov. 10, 2017. For rates, more information or to talk marketing strategy, contact ***Bison World*** Editor & Advertising Manager Marilyn Bay Drake marilynbaydrake@gmail.com

Attention NBA Life Members

Bison World Editor Marilyn Bay Drake is interested in talking with you about your experience raising bison and being an NBA member. If you would consider participating for a future article in **Bison World**, please contact her at marilynbaydrake@gmail.com

Review: 'Great Plains Bison' by Dan O'Brien

(From The Lincoln Journal Star)

"Great Plains Bison" by Dan O'Brien, University of Nebraska Press, 111 pages, \$14.95

The Homestead Act, railroads, farming, barbed wire and cattle were all tragedies on the Great Plains. That is the thesis of Dan O'Brien's new history, "Great Plains Bison."

The Great Plains are the largest ecotype in North America. They stretch more than 2,500 miles in the heart of the continent. They were originally all open range, supporting thousands of plant and animal species and between 30 and 40 million bison, the keystone species. Bison roamed the far reaches of the plains, leaving a healthy environment for all the other species.

Natives made little impact on the bison at first, according to O'Brien. Afoot with primitive weapons, they were only able to trap and kill a tiny fraction of the huge herds. But when horses, rifles, liquor and iron goods were introduced the killing increased, with many tribes becoming roving hunters dependent upon bison meat, hides and bones. They considered the bison as their brothers.

Then came the Europeans with their own culture of small farms, monoculture agriculture and land ownership passed down to sons. Those ideas transformed the Great Plains from a vast open range to a chopped-up farmland subject to droughts. Even the noted "farmer yeoman" championed by Thomas Jefferson was a mistake. He originally meant them for the American south with ample rain and no snow, not the entirely different Great Plains.

There was no place for bison and so the killing began.

The Homestead Act provided mostly free 160 acres to families, then 640 acres; both plots too small for a family to survive on. About half of the original settlers moved away when the inevitable drought, winds and blizzards came. Cattle came to the open range but when a horrible winter in the 1880s occurred with widespread cattle deaths, that range was quickly enclosed with barbed wire. The railroads divided the southern and northern bison herds and a sudden market for bison hides kept the killing going until there were about a thousand survivors.

O'Brien here has an entirely different point of view than the history of the Great Plains taught in classrooms. For the bison, that normal history was tragic. But even today, droughts, fluctuating cattle and grain markets and deadly weather make sense of O'Brien's ideas. Today's 30 million cattle on the Plains have replaced the bison, but cattle don't have the thousands of generations to adjust to everything the Great Plains can hit them with.

Read more. http://journalstar.com/entertainment/books/review-great-plains-bison-by-dan-o-brien/article_c16ea340-bc8c-505b-b43f-3ab9a92ea41c.html

After 31 years, cowboy shares his memories of the Antelope Island Bison Roundup

(From Fox 13)

GREAT SALT LAKE - For Eldean Holliday of Kaysville the Antelope Island Bison Roundup has been a cherished tradition for decades.

"You step back in time at least a hundred years," said Holliday.

Holliday rode in the very first roundup in 1986. At that time the causeway had been flooded out, and cowboys like Holliday had to be taken over to the island by a boat with their horses.

"Had anything really spooked the horses, they would have all been in the drink," said Holliday.

The horses remained calm, and everyone made it to shore safely. Still Holliday and other riders would soon learn that not everything goes according to plan on a roundup.

"Bison cooperative, uh no," said Jolene Rose, a wildlife biologist with Utah State Parks.

"You follow buffalo, you don't chase them," said Holliday.

Even when precautions are taken, things can go wrong. Holliday remembers a time a bison had to be roped, and once lassoed the bison stopped breathing, forcing Holliday to act.

"I was jumping up and down on it's chest and blowing in it's mouth and finally it came to life," said Holliday.

The roundup helps manage the health and size of the bison heard. Some animals each year are auctioned off to keep the heard around 700 animals.

Read more. <http://fox13now.com/2017/10/02/after-31-years-cowboy-shares-his-memories-of-the-antelope-island-bison-roundup/>

Report recommends capping Yellowstone bison removal at 1,250

(From The Great Falls Tribune)

BOZEMAN — A recently released Yellowstone National Park bison status report says officials are looking to cap this winter's cull of bison at 1,250.

The Bozeman Daily Chronicle reports the recommendations released late last week also include banning bison hunting the West Yellowstone area because the officials have noticed the portion of the herd that migrates there has been decreasing.

Park biologists counted 4,816 Yellowstone bison during aerial surveys in August.

Last year, park officials removed more than 1,200 bison last winter through managed hunts and ship-to-slaughter operations.

According to the park's status report, officials plan to trap bison so they can be shipped to slaughter again this year despite protests from bison advocates.

Various state, federal and tribal officials are expected to finalize winter cull details as early as November.

Read more. <http://www.greatfallstribune.com/story/news/local/2017/10/05/report-recommends-capping-yellowstone-bison-removal/106342664/>

Senate Ag Sets Northey, Ibach Confirmation Hearing

(From AgNetWest.com)

The Senate Agriculture Committee will consider the nomination of Bill Northey and Greg Ibach Thursday.

Northey was nominated by the Trump administration to be the Department of Agriculture undersecretary for farm and foreign agricultural services. Meanwhile, Ibach was nominated to be undersecretary for marketing and regulatory programs. Northey is the current Iowa agriculture secretary, and Ibach is the Nebraska director of agriculture.

The Senate Agriculture Committee confirmation for the two is Thursday, October 5th, at 9:30 am Eastern.

The Committee has yet to vote on two other nominees, Steve Censky, the American Soybean Association CEO tapped to be deputy secretary and Indiana Agriculture Director Ted McKinney, nominated to be the first USDA undersecretary for trade and foreign agricultural affairs.

Source: <http://agnetwest.com/senate-ag-northey-ibach-confirmation/>

Humane livestock and poultry farmers can apply for \$2,500 grants to improve animal welfare

(From Farm Forum)

Chicago, Ill. - Starting on Oct. 3, farmers who wish to improve the welfare of their farm animals can apply for a Fund-a-Farmer grant of up to \$2,500 from Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT).

Since 2012, FACT has awarded 91 Fund-a-Farmer grants totaling \$195,000, directly impacting more than 66,000 animals to independent family farmers across 27 states: Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts,

Maryland, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, and West Virginia.

A 2016 survey of grant recipients found that 90 percent of the projects still are in use, 97 percent had highly improved or somewhat improved animal welfare, and 93 percent had improved the farms' financial sustainability, by improving profits, creating recurring cost savings, and increasing customers.

Full text: <http://tinyurl.com/y8qryhck>

7 common cattle fencing mistakes

(From Beef Magazine)

Whether you're an experienced hand or just learning the basics of wood, wire and tape, there's always something more to learn when it comes to livestock fencing. **Jim Gerrish**, of American GrazingLands Services LLC, in May, Idaho, and **Kevin Derynck**, Gallagher territory manager based in Keystone, S.D., shared their thoughts on the seven most common [cattle fencing](#) mistakes.

1. Corner posts are undersized, or not deep enough

This ranks as the top mistake in fencing, be it barbed, [high-tensile wire](#) or woven wire. The main issues are undersized posts and corner posts not set deeply enough, particularly in sandy or soft soils. Gerrish, who has clients in 43 states, says, "the depth in the ground should be equal to, or greater than, the height of the top wire."

Post diameter depends on the strength of the fence. Gerrish says the lightest-duty fence, such as a 1- or 2-wire, high-tensile pasture subdivision fence, only requires a 4- to 5-inch-diameter post. A 5-strand barbed wire fence, or 5- or 6-strand high-tensile wire fence, requires a 6- to 7-inch-diameter post. For net wire fences, Gerrish recommends an 8-inch-diameter post.

How to fix it: Keeping corner posts in the ground is Derynck's chief concern. He says a 10-foot brace is the ultimate, and he favors a "floating diagonal" bracing system, in which the angle brace is a 4-inch by 10-foot post notched a half-inch into the main corner post. The other end is set on top of the ground opposite the corner post.

And he cautions against using drill stem – the metal pipe byproduct of oil wells – for corner bracing an electric fence. Unlike wood, it can conduct electricity and lessen the [efficiency of the fence](#).

2. Post spacing is too close

Fencers tend to use too many posts, which likely stems from people's experience with barbed wire, where the rule of thumb was 1 post every rod length (16.5 feet).

How to fix it: In an electric-fencing system, Derynck recommends [fence post spacing](#) 80-100 feet apart, or about 50 posts per mile. He suggests using a "stay" – a shorter post that sits on

top of the ground and holds wires up – if posts are spaced 100 ft. apart. Gerrish prefers his fence post spacing closer together, at 50-70 feet.

3. Using the wrong sized energizer

Gerrish recommends 1 joule of output per mile of fence, regardless of how many strands of wire. If there's a total of six miles of fence, it requires a minimum of a [6-joule energizer](#).

How to fix it: Derynck, who represents Gallagher in Nebraska and the Dakotas, recommends a low-impedance energizer, with a low-amp fuse. "The larger the energizer, the smaller the voltage," he says, because larger energizers are apt to power through more vegetation and short out. He considers 7,000-8,000 volts high for an energizer.

4. Ground rod is too close together

[Grounding](#) is 99% of the electric fence, the specialists explain. Gerrish uses this rule of thumb: 3 feet of ground rods per joule of energizer output. So if the fence is using a 6-joule energizer, 18 feet of ground rods are called for. "Typically this would be three, 6-foot ground rods, spaced at least 10 feet apart," Gerrish explains.

How to fix it: Gerrish says spacing is key, as a ground rod is essentially an antenna receiving electrons flowing through the soil and back to the energizer, completing the circuit. Ground rods can also interact with a given volume of soil. If three ground rods are driven into the ground 6 inches apart, in essence, they act as one ground rod because of the volume of soil they interact with.

Read more. <http://www.beefmagazine.com/pasture-range/grazing-programs/0301-common-fencing-mistakes>

State Grants Fund On-Farm Livestock Improvements

(From Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture)

\$2 Million Available for Construction, Physical Improvements

St. Paul, MN - Livestock producers may apply for a portion of \$1.9 million in Livestock Investment Grants. Funds are provided by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's (MDA) Agricultural Growth, Research and Innovation (AGRI) Program and may be used for on-farm improvements.

"Livestock Investment Grants help farmers stay competitive and reinvest in their industry," said MDA Commissioner Dave Frederickson. "Last year, 105 livestock farmers received grants to improve their operations."

With Livestock Investment funds awarded during the 2017 fiscal year, Jordan Daugherty of Raymond purchased feeding and fencing equipment, which will enable him to raise more sheep.

In Hartland, Brady Jensen used grant funds to construct a 2,400 head swine facility to increase profitability and allow a young farmer to start farming full time.

Joseph Hemmesch of Paynesville used the grant funds to update a manure pit and feeding equipment and add more stalls to his barn. These improvements will help grow his dairy herd and protect the environment.

Qualifying producers are reimbursed 10 percent of the first \$500,000 of investment, with a minimum investment of \$4,000. Qualifying expenditures include the purchase, construction or improvement of livestock buildings or facilities. Fencing, feeding and waste management equipment are also eligible. Producers who suffered a loss due to natural disaster may also apply. The grant will not pay for livestock, land purchases or debt refinancing. Projects must begin after January 1, 2018.

Past applicants who did not receive an award must reapply for the 2018 program. Applications for beginning farmers, farmers transitioning into livestock, and those with a positive environmental impact receive priority. Details and grant guidelines are available at www.mda.state.mn.us/livestockinvestmentgrant.

The application deadline is December 15, 2017. Please apply online: <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/grants/grants/~-/media/Files/grants/aq03150ligx.pdf>.

Fund-a-Farmer Grants

Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT) is offering two types of grants for livestock and poultry farmers who want to obtain humane certification or who want to expand their animals' access to pasture.

Up to \$2,500 is available for projects that improve farm animal welfare, such as building hoop houses, constructing fences, laying water lines on pasture, and much more. Family farmers with at least one year of experience are eligible.

Applications are due by December 4, 2017.

Read more. <https://foodanimalconcernstrust.org/grants/>

North Central SARE Farmer Rancher Grant Program

North Central Region SARE (NCR-SARE) is a competitive grants program for farmers and ranchers in the 12-state North Central Region who want to explore sustainable solutions to problems through on-farm research, demonstration, and education projects.

Grants support producers who are protecting natural resources, enhancing communities, and boosting profitability. Farmer Rancher grants are offered as individual (\$7,500 maximum), team of two (\$15,000 maximum), or group (\$22,500 maximum) grants for ideas initiated by farmers and ranchers.

Proposals are due by December 7, 2017.

Read more. <http://www.northcentralsare.org/Grants/Our-Grant-Programs/Farmer-Rancher-Grant-Program>

Practical Farmers of Iowa Savings Incentive Program

Practical Farmers of Iowa's Savings Incentive Program offers beginning farmers the opportunity to receive guidance from a farm mentor and earn up to \$4,800 while working to complete or update a farm business plan.

The two-year Savings Incentive Program works by encouraging enrollees to save up to \$100 per month for two years. After 24 months and completion of all program requirements, participants will earn a dollar-for-dollar match on money saved up to \$2,400, to use toward the purchase of a farm asset. Applicants must either be farming on their own now and have farmed for five or fewer years, be farming in Iowa, and be a PFI member.

Apply to participate in the 2018-2019 class by November 11, 2017.

Read more. <http://practicalfarmers.org/member-priorities/beginning-farmers/savings-incentive-program/>

Final Budget Deal Could Leave Farm Bill Untouched

(From AgriPulse)

House conservatives spent weeks this spring demanding cuts in nutrition assistance that threatened to complicate passage of a new farm bill. But House Agriculture Chairman Mike Conaway, R-Texas, now says he expects the final fiscal 2018 budget blueprint to leave farm bill spending unscathed.

If that's the case, it means that the House and Senate Agriculture committees will be able to write the new bill within the spending amounts projected under current law. That wouldn't allow for increased spending, but it wouldn't require new cuts either.

The House is set to vote Thursday on a budget resolution that would require the Agriculture committees to make \$10 billion in cuts, which most likely would come out of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

However, the Senate version of the resolution, released last Friday, has no such instructions for cuts. "I am very pleased that there are no reconciliation instructions directed to the Agriculture Committee," said Agriculture Chairman Pat Roberts, R-Kan.

"I appreciate (Budget) Chairman (Mike) Enzi's efforts to provide budget certainty for the (Agriculture) Committee to craft a farm bill that works for producers across the country. I will continue to work with Chairman Enzi to ensure that the Farm Bill baseline remains intact."

The Senate and House will still have to agree on a final version of the budget resolution once the two chambers act on their versions.

But Conaway told *Agri-Pulse* on Tuesday that he expects the final Senate-House deal to omit any required cuts and focus instead on authorizing tax cuts. Republicans need to pass a budget resolution in order to use the budget reconciliation process to move their planned tax cuts. The reconciliation process would allow the bill to pass the Senate without the normal 60-vote supermajority needed to overcome a filibuster on other bills.

“The agreement will allow us to do tax reform and get that done,” Conaway said. So, there will be no instructions to cut farm bill spending? “Yeah, that’s what I’m anticipating,” Conaway said.

Shift Toward Prepared Foods Reshapes Grocery

(From Specialty Food News)

As consumers increasingly seek out solutions that make meal preparation more convenient, supermarkets are responding by offering every possible iteration of the cooking process, from raw ingredients to partially prepared foods to full-blown, sit-down table service.

Albertsons’ recent acquisition of Plated is one of the latest forays into this arena, as the chain seeks to gain a foothold in the burgeoning meal-kit delivery niche. A handful of other retailers have launched their own meal-kit offerings, which generally include all of the pre-measured ingredients needed to prepare a recipe for two to four people. Cincinnati-based Kroger Co. is rolling out its Prep + Pared line of meal kits, for example, and Lakeland, Fla.-based Publix Super Markets is doing the same with its Aprons line.

“The move by Albertsons is a good step in the right direction,” said Eddie Yoon, founder of Eddie Would Grow, a think tank and advisory firm on growth strategy and a director at The Cambridge Group. “I think the grocery industry would be wise to adopt the perspective that cooking is likely to go the way of sewing. Back in the day, most people sewed most of their own clothing, and today they do it for a hobby.”

He said that while the widespread popularity of TV cooking shows has certainly enhanced consumer interest in food and eating, it has not necessarily fostered an increase in cooking from scratch at home. According to Yoon’s research, only about 10 percent of consumers say they “love to cook,” down from 15 percent when he first surveyed shoppers 15 years ago.

“My hunch is that I cook less than my parents, and my children will cook less than me,” he said. While meal kits solve part of the challenge consumers face — the planning and shopping aspects of meal preparation — Yoon suggests that they may not go far enough.

“I am waiting for someone like Amazon or Albertsons to buy Domino’s,” he said, noting that the pizza chain has a massive global network of infrastructure already in place to deliver hot, prepared meals to consumers. And pizza, Yoon joked, is a “legal narcotic” that’s not going away anytime soon. “If Albertsons had bought Domino’s, I think it would have been much more exciting than them buying a meal kit delivery system.”

New customers to Amazon’s Whole Foods coming from Walmart: traffic analysis

(From Meatingplace.com)

Nearly a quarter of the new customers flocking to Whole Foods since Amazon purchased it a month ago and lowered prices were regular Walmart shoppers, according to consumer traffic analysis by Thasos Group.

The analysis concluded that foot traffic to Whole Foods increased 17 percent year-over-year during the week of the price reduction beginning on Aug. 28. As of the week ended Sept. 16, foot traffic increases decelerated to 4 percent year-over-year, but remained elevated relative to the three weeks preceding Aug. 28.

The largest percentages of Whole Foods' new customers during the week of the price reduction were regular customers of the following competing stores:

Walmart (24 percent)

Kroger (16 percent)

Costco (15 percent)

Controlling for the size of each competitor's regular customer base, the following stores experienced the highest rates of customer defection to Whole Foods:

Trader Joe's (10 percent)

Sprouts (8 percent)

Target (3 percent)

Customer defection rates remained elevated for all competing stores as of Sept. 16. The new customers Whole Foods attracted with its price reduction were the wealthiest regular customers of the competing stores. The price reduction did not attract a lower income demographic or incentivize longer driving times to reach Whole Foods' stores.