



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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November 9, 2018

Farm Broadcasters Amplify Bison Message

National Bison Association Executive Director Dave Carter and Regional Director Keith Yearout conducted nearly 40 radio interviews yesterday, as they hosted the association's booth at the National Association of Farm Broadcasters' Trade Talk event in Kansas City, MO.

Trade Talk provides agricultural organizations and industries with an opportunity to share their message with the radio and television journalists gathering each November for the NAFB annual meeting.

In a whirlwind of interviews, Carter and Yearout promoted the Bison Advantage to journalists hosting programs ranging from California to Virginia. The NBA representatives also helped spread the message about the NBA's campaign to stop water buffalo meat from being marketed as "buffalo" in the U.S. marketplace.

"Trade Talk provides a setting for us to communicate our message to agricultural audiences across the country," said Carter. "We have been participating for the past eight years, and now have a steady group of broadcasters who stop by each year to see what's new in the bison business."

Also stopping by the NBA booth yesterday was Bill Northey, USDA Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation.

"It was great to connect with Under Secretary Northey to highlight the ways that the USDA is working with U.S. bison producers to continue to build a strong sustainable opportunity for producers," Carter said.

Are You Listed on the New and Improved NBA Buyer's Guide?

Have you taken a moment to review your NBA Online Buyer's Guide listing? This is where the NBA sends all consumers looking for all things bison.

A buyer's guide search filter was recently added to the site, which allows users to narrow their

search by an array of parameters that range from location to services like tours, hunts, meat sales, breeding stock sales and more.

Take a look at <https://bisoncentral.com/buyers-guide/> and click on the "Search" button to search specific parameters. To update your buyer's guide listing, please follow these instructions:

1. Follow this link to log in: <https://bisoncentral.com/my-account/>
2. Enter username and password.
3. Once logged in, click on the "Please be sure to complete your profile. Click here." link to update your information.
4. Fill out all applicable fields as they pertain to your operation, and be sure to complete the "Create Your Free Buyer's Guide Listing" section, which is auto-populated with your contact information. You can also upload a photo or logo for your buyer's guide listing here and add your website. This is where we send customers looking for all things bison from our membership, please take the time to complete.
5. Be sure to select "Yes" when asked "Do you want your Buyer's Guide Listing visible on the website?" in order for your listing to appear.
6. And this is the most important step... **BE SURE TO CLICK THE "UPDATE" BUTTON AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE!**

Please email jim@bisoncentral.com for assistance or questions.

Winter Conference Hotel Block over Half Sold Out – Reserve Soon!

The host hotel for the 2019 NBA Winter Conference will again be the Renaissance – Stapleton Hotel - <https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/densa-renaissance-denver-stapleton-hotel/>. The block of rooms available during the conference, however, is already over half full. The NBA encourages attendees to reserve their lodging soon, as the hotel generally sells out this week. The office also encourages you to

Place your reservation by calling the hotel at 303-399-7500 and request the National Bison Association room block for the discounted rate of \$133/night (double occupancy), or \$138/night which includes a hot buffet breakfast. (Breakfast is not served at the conference accordingly.)

Overflow lodging will be offered at the Holiday Inn Express approximately three blocks south of the Renaissance as needed.

For those flying in for the conference, see hotel transfer options at https://www.marriott.com/hotelwebsites/us/d/densa/densa_pdf/DENSA_2016-171_Aiport_Light_Rail5.pdf.

NBA Member Wins Congressional Race in West Virginia

When the new session of Congress convenes in Washington, D.C. in January one of the incoming members will be bringing to Capitol Hill some hands' on experience in bison production.

Carol Miller, owner and operator of Swann Ridge Bison Farm in Huntington, WV, was elected to Congress from West Virginia's Third Congressional District on Tuesday. Miller previously served as a member of West Virginia's House of Delegates, and is the daughter of former U.S. Rep. Samuel Devine.

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Bison Blues

(Meatingplace Blog by Greg Bloom)

If you've seen *Saving Private Ryan* you likely recall the line at the end of the movie where Captain John Miller (Tom Hanks) whispers his final words to Private James Ryan (Matt Damon). As Private Ryan leans in close to the dying man, he hears, "Earn this; earn it." The North American bison industry has certainly earned its respected place in the marketplace. For over two decades it has inched its way forward from infancy to a well-respected provider of nutritious, delicious and sustainable protein with a great production story.

If you've never had a bison burger or ribeye steak, you're not living.

It's very easy to find North American bison products in restaurants, retailers and big box stores these days. It's become so popular that many national retail chains have it private-labeled with their store brand. That's a sign of success, even though only around 65,000 head of bison are slaughtered annually, which is one reason North American Bison costs more than double what fed beef costs.

Should you call it 'bison' or 'buffalo?' North American bison producers, processors, marketers and the National Bison Association (N.B.A.) highly prefer the term 'bison' to distinguish their North American (N.A.) raised and processed bovines from the imported water buffalo. Don't forget that the largest exporter of red meat in the world is not the United States, Brazil or Uruguay, but India with its massive water buffalo industry. Buffalo in India are referred to as 'black gold' and their industry is predicted to grow and export even more in the years to come. Imported water buffalo has never really threatened the N.A. bison industry until this year.

Recently, retail brands of buffalo can be found to contain imported meat, processed in the United States and labeled as 'buffalo.'

Probably 99 percent of people, if asked what's the difference between bison and buffalo would not know the answer. The term buffalo has long been used synonymously with bison. Most restaurants in the United States are buying N.A. Bison, yet still call it buffalo on their menu.

And there's the fact that Buffalo Bill was not Bison Bill and the Buffalo Nickel is not the Bison Nickel. The point is that when people order buffalo, they think they're buying N.A. bison, not imported water buffalo from India or S.E. Asia. The bison industry wants imported water buffalo to be labeled as such to distinguish it from their product.

In an attempt to protect their industry and livelihood, the National Bison Association has petitioned USDA and the FDA to disallow the use of the term buffalo alone on imported water buffalo meat. In a letter October signed by key U.S. Senators and sent jointly to: Carmen Rottenberg, Acting Under Secretary for the Food Safety Administrator at USDA's FSIS and Dr. Stephen Ostroff, Deputy Commissioner for Foods and Veterinary Medicine, the USDA and FDA have been asked to prioritize and act on transparent labeling requirements for all products containing imported water buffalo to be labeled as water buffalo.

Executive Director of the N.B.A., Dave Carter, recently said, "North American bison producers and marketers have worked diligently during the past two decades to build a strong relationship with their customers based upon the great taste and nutritional benefits of the meat, along with sustainable practices utilized in raising the animals. We intend to protect the integrity of our products, and our relationship with our customers." For more information about this issue, read this brief article on the N.B.A. website entitled "[Water Buffalo in Bison Clothing is Deceptive by any Measure.](#)"

The North American bison industry has worked tirelessly to earn its acceptance and access to the marketplace. Still a small industry, the hard-earned producer and processor margins will very likely disappear if imported water buffalo is allowed into our market place labeled deceitfully as "buffalo."

The N.A. bison industry should be protected by Federal labeling requirements. Yes, I know this sounds like a proposition for COOL (Country of Origin Labeling) which meat plants largely don't like, but in the case of the small bison industry, the origin, sorting and labeling of bison is not as difficult as it is for beef, and it's more critical to the survival of their industry.

Consumer trust must be honestly earned. It can only be earned ultimately through transparent labeling so consumers actually know what they are buying.

Water Buffalo Meat Sparks Labeling Concerns

(From Capital Press)

The appearance of imported water buffalo meat on U.S. retail shelves has alarmed U.S. bison producers, who worry the product isn't being inspected or properly labeled.

The National Bison Association has requested an investigation by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration after discovering Australian water buffalo meat sold simply as "wild ground buffalo" through a 200-store grocery chain along the East Coast.

In North America, the word "buffalo" commonly conjures up images of native bison roaming the prairies, not foreign livestock, said Dave Carter, the NBA's executive director.

The mislabeling problem is worrisome for the bison industry because there are only about 400,000 native bison in the U.S. and Canada, compared to nearly 100 million water buffalo in India alone, Carter said.

"There's a lot more water buffalo meat than there is bison meat," he said.

Since the ground water buffalo costs about \$2 per pound less than ground bison, which typically sells for \$7 per pound, that creates a competitive concern for the domestic industry, Carter said. “We could be seeing the tip of the ice berg right now,” he said.

Native bison producers don’t object to the importation or sale of water buffalo meat into the U.S. as long as it’s properly labeled as such, Carter said.

Water buffalo has a distinctly different taste than native bison, with which many U.S. consumers are only now becoming familiar, he said.

There’s also the matter of reputational harm in case of a food safety crisis.

Full story here. <http://www.capitalpress.com/Livestock/20181107/water-buffalo-meat-sparks-labeling-concerns>

Gazette Opinion: Make Room For Bison In Montana

(From The Billings Gazette)

For countless generations, millions of American bison sustained human life on the Great Plains. Native people relied on bison for food, shelter, clothing and tools.

The U.S. government policy of exterminating the bison helped force Native Americans onto reservations where they were deprived of their traditional food and hunting lifestyle. Wild bison nearly became extinct in the late 19th century.

But a small population survived in Yellowstone National Park, which was created in 1872 and protected somewhat from poachers by the U.S. Cavalry (Army). In 2018, there are an estimated 4,000 bison roaming Yellowstone Park and more than 20,000 bison in tribally managed herds around the country.

Last week, representatives of several tribes and wildlife conservation organizations gathered in Denver to share their management strategies and discuss the benefits of restoring bison to tribal lands.

Read more. https://billingsgazette.com/opinion/editorial/gazette-opinion-make-room-for-bison-in-montana/article_5919f28d-2a68-5204-a47b-31a62c9fd81e.html

Bison Crawl Highlights National Mammal At Sugar Creek Preserve, Midewin Prairie

(From The Chicago Tribune)

Don’t call it a buffalo.

That’s one distinction Jessica Prince-Sharrar, environmental education supervisor with the Will County Forest Preserve District, said revelers of National Bison Day should take with them.

She led visitors through restored native prairie land at Sugar Creek Preserve, just southeast of Joliet, and educated them about bison and their habitat on Saturday.

Prince-Sharrar said buffalo are from Africa and Asia, while the bison is native only to North America and is adapted to live in tallgrass prairie land, such as was native to Illinois before European agriculture.

"We are a bison family," said Catherine Sieber of New Lenox who brought her two children to the event. "They were given the option of seeing a movie or seeing bison today, and they chose bison."

They joined dozens of visitors at the preserve, many of whom were fans of bison.

"They're just so majestic when you see them," said Mary Jensen of Steger. "And they're pretty calm as long you leave them alone."

Saturday's festivities at Sugar Creek also included a bison chip throw with the prize of a real bison skull to going to whoever threw the farthest.

Read more. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/daily-southtown/news/ct-sta-national-bison-day-st-1105-story.html>

At Tribal Bison Summit, Advocates Look To Future

(From Wyoming Public Media)

Last week, numerous Native American tribes from around the Rocky Mountain region joined with bison conservation groups in Boulder, Colorado for the first ever Tribal Bison Summit. Part of the event was a drumming ceremony celebrating National Bison Day, said Eastern Shoshone member Jason Baldes. He was recently hired by the National Wildlife Federation to serve as the tribal buffalo coordinator.

"The spirits were with us," said Baldes. "The eagles were flying over the top of us as well as cranes. It was kind of an emotional and spiritual moment to kind of convene the summit in that way through ceremony."

Tribes around the Rocky Mountain region have been working for years to relocate genetically pure wild bison from Yellowstone National Park to reservations. Baldes has been instrumental in building a herd for the Eastern Shoshone in Wyoming, which is now up to 23 animals. He said, at the summit, leaders discussed the challenges of getting more wild bison into the care of tribes.

"We're still trying to break through this barrier of treating buffalo like cattle," he said. "And it's kind of an ingrained philosophy that buffalo are rarely considered wildlife and so it's a paradigm shift."

Read more. <http://www.wyomingpublicmedia.org/post/tribal-bison-summit-advocates-look-future#stream/0>

Blackfoot Nation Works To Restore Bison On The Rocky Mountain Front

(From KRTV – 3)

Bison are an icon of the west, but for generations the animals have been largely absent from western Montana and the Blackfoot Tribe that once depended on them.

“They were our economy in the beginning, they were our food, our clothing, our lodging, and our tools. They provided for us in that way,” said Ervin Carlson, manager of the Blackfoot Bison Project.

According to Carlson, the Tribe now has more than 600 bison in a herd meant to revive that economy by selling meat while also providing healthy food for elders and the sick.

There is also a smaller herd meant for a bigger purpose.

“The cultural significance of them is the big push behind the Iinnii Project,” said Carlson.

The project aims to reestablish Iinnii, the Blackfoot word for buffalo, as free ranging animals on the reservation and historically tribal lands in Glacier National Park.

“This is not a bison herd as in a domestic herd, but this is actually bison as wildlife,” said Park Superintendent Jeff Mow.

Read more. <https://krtv.com/news/montana-and-regional-news/2018/11/03/blackfoot-nation-works-to-restore-bison-on-the-rocky-mountain-front/>

Bison Counted, Culled At Annual Roundup

(From Pawhuska Journal Capital)

Last week it was time for the annual nitty-gritty of bison herd maintenance at the Nature Conservancy’s Tallgrass Prairie Preserve. It was time for weighing and shots and the inevitable decisions about which bison will be around for the next roundup, and which ones may be on the way to the great bison herd in the sky.

Katie Hawk, spokeswoman for the Nature Conservancy, drew attention to the artful skill with which the ranch hands working the annual roundup use their trucks to “dance” across the prairie and drive the bison into a holding pen just after first light. She also explained that with some 500-700 new bison born every year, it is necessary to cull the herd down to its overwintering size of some 2,100 animals. Most of the bulk sales go to meat producers.

That means, as the ranch hands say while working the line, some are “keepers” and others are “sellers.” This was the 25th annual bison roundup at the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve and current Preserve Director Bob Hamilton has seen them all —though not all as director.

“The thing that impresses me about is they’re so resilient,” Hamilton said, contemplating the issue for a few moments as he helped work the animals coming through the line Thursday

morning. “They’re the ultimate low-maintenance type animal. They don’t really like to be messed with that much.”

Read more. <https://www.pawhuskajournalcapital.com/news/20181107/bison-counted-culled-at-annual-roundup>

Bison Exhibit Coming To National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum In 2019

(From KFOR)

OKLAHOMA CITY – The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum announced a new exhibit coming in 2019.

The temporary exhibition, “Ancient. Massive. Wild – The Bison Exhibit,” will focus on the iconic American bison through interactive experiences that combine history, artifacts, and hands-on activities.

The museum made the announcement on Saturday, which was also National Bison Day.

According to the museum, the exhibit “celebrates the history and significance of the United States’ first national mammal and highlights the importance of its preservation and conservation.”

The traveling exhibition will be augmented by the museum’s permanent collection, which offers a rich display of paintings, photographs, and sculpture depicting bison across the many cultures of the American West.

The exhibit will be at the museum from February 9, 2019 to May 12, 2019.

Source. <https://kfor.com/2018/11/05/bison-exhibit-coming-to-national-cowboy-western-heritage-museum-in-2019/>

Momentum Building For Cattle Traceability

(From Beef Magazine)

“The discussion has started to become not if we have an animal disease outbreak, but when,” explained Greg Ibach, undersecretary for USDA’s marketing and regulatory programs.

Yes, there is the mandatory USDA Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) program. But it only pertains to cattle older than 18 months crossing state lines. Plus, patchwork state regulations can make for inconsistent enforcement of the federal regulation.

Related: Electronic ID moves closer to new standard

No, a traceability system does nothing to prevent disease. However, a robust traceability system could pave the way for containment and control of foot-and-mouth disease, or a similar one, at an exponentially faster rate than is currently possible.

"In the event we do have an animal disease, finding sick and exposed animals is going to be key to control and eradication, and that's where time is going to matter very much," Ibach explained at the recent Livestock Traceability Forum hosted by the National Institute for Animal Agriculture.

"With the system we have in place today, many times trace-outs take weeks or months to accomplish; it's not hours or days."

As a former director of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Ibach has firsthand experience garnered by working with the state's animal health officials. He also remains involved in his family's Nebraska ranch. So, he understands the need for traceability relative to disease surveillance and control. He also understands the need for practical solutions.

"I'm a cow-calf producer and have in the back of my mind that the rules I make at USDA, the systems I put in place at USDA, are rules and systems I'm going to be expected to adhere to on my own farm and ranch," Ibach said. "That's very much in my mind: Is this something that would work in real life?"

Read more. <https://www.beefmagazine.com/animal-health/momentum-building-cattle-traceability>

Wildlife Disease Ecology Specialist Joins Agrilife Center

(From AgriLife Today)

Dr. Tammi Johnson has joined the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Uvalde as its new Texas A&M AgriLife Research specialist in wildlife disease ecology.

Johnson, who began working at the center Oct. 1, will investigate various aspects of wildlife diseases, including disease vectors and bacterial pathogens, in addition to species distribution modeling and spatial ecology.

Dr. Tammi Johnson is the new wildlife disease specialist at the Texas A&M AgriLife center in Uvalde. (Texas A&M AgriLife Communications photo by Paul Schattenberg)

"Dr. Johnson has extensive wildlife-disease experience designing and implementing ecological research programs with a wide variety of collaborators and audiences," said Dr. Daniel Leskovar, center director. "In her work, she has routinely collaborated with internal and external associates, including state and federal biologists, ecologists, epidemiologists, natural resource managers and university personnel."

Leskovar said Johnson has specialized wildlife training as well as a variety of field, technical, laboratory and molecular skills.

"Her work here will be important in understanding how certain diseases that affect wildlife, livestock and possibly humans are vectored and transmitted," Leskovar said. "This will be useful in helping ensure both animal and human health."

Full text:

<https://today.agrilife.org/2018/11/06/wildlife-disease-ecology-specialist-joins-agrilife-center-in-ualde/>

Soil and Water Conservation Society Invites Submissions for Conference Presentations

The Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) is seeking oral presentations, posters, symposia, and workshops for the 74th SWCS International Annual Conference, taking place in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, July 28-31, 2019. Oral presentations are 15-20 minutes, a symposium is 90 minutes, and workshops can be two to four hours. Submissions are being accepted for three special and eight general topic areas.

Abstracts submitted within the general conference track should cater towards the conference theme, "Bridging the Divide: Uniting Rural and Urban Landscapes for Conservation." Submissions are due by January 9, 2019, except for poster submissions, which are due March 6, 2019.

Read more.

[https://www.swcs.org/static/media/cms/Call for Presentations CD1EDB2A6E7E8.pdf](https://www.swcs.org/static/media/cms/Call_for_Presentations_CD1EDB2A6E7E8.pdf)

Farmers Market Vendors Need Food-Safety Training, Penn State Study Shows

Penn State researchers who have completed a five-year study on food safety at farmers markets say that many vendors take inadequate precautions to reduce food-safety risks and should receive training in food safety. The research assessed food safety-behaviors at Pennsylvania farmers markets using direct concealed observations, state sanitarian observations, and self-reported vendor surveys. Researchers found a vast difference between what vendors reported they were doing and what observers saw them doing. Hand washing, personal hygiene, and cross-contamination were specific problem areas, with vendors failing to use disposable gloves and handling money or unpackaged foods without changing gloves.

Researchers checked samples of leafy green produce and meat obtained from Pennsylvania farmers markets for coliforms, fecal coliforms, Listeria, and E. coli. They found E. coli in 40% of beef samples and 18% of pork samples, and in 28% of kale samples, 29% of lettuce samples, and 17% of spinach samples. They found Listeria in 8% of beef samples, 2% of kale samples, 4% of lettuce samples, and 7% of spinach samples.

An earlier phase of this same project developed a curriculum for training farmers market vendors in food safety that is available online through the Penn State Extension website.

Read more. <https://news.psu.edu/story/545445/2018/11/01/research/farmers-market-vendors-need-training-improve-food-safety-practices>

What's A Bison Doing On Ross Avenue In Dallas? He's The Mascot For A New Restaurant

(From guidelive.com)

The name's Bucky: Bucky the bison. He's the mascot for a new restaurant on Ross Avenue in Dallas called Bison Bar and Grill.

Bet you can guess what's on the menu. Owner Tim Tremoni and his team have created a small, focused menu with a bison burger, bison tacos and bison dumplings. The Bison Bar also serves a chicken sandwich, chicken strips and a veggie burger, alongside sides like elotes, fries, coleslaw and onion rings.

So perhaps bison is more like a guiding light for the restaurant rather than the North Star. Same goes for Bucky outside. He was originally going to be placed on top of the restaurant's roof. (Tremoni was inspired by a beefy restaurant in West Texas, where a life-sized cow statue welcomed hungry passersby.) But the logistics of installing a life-sized bison on top of the building proved to be complicated, and Tremoni instead placed Bucky out front. Hey, now diners can take selfies with Bucky instead.

Bison meat is more healthful than beef, and Tremoni says that's what encouraged him to consider it as a menu focus. Bison is high in protein, low in fat. And Tremoni, age 50, thinks about that stuff now. He formerly worked as a bartender at the [now-shuttered The Palm](#), as a bartender and manager at Al Biernat's steakhouse, and as a partner at the One Eyed Penguin, a bar in downtown Dallas.

He's done with bars and back in restaurants. "I wanted to do game," he says, especially since he'd been eating more of it at home. "But I didn't want to do ostrich and elk and all that. Then I landed on bison."

"After you eat bison, you don't have that heavy, fatty feeling."