



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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Wholesale Prices Hold Steady in January

Prices paid for market-ready animals held steady in January, although the number of animals processed fell from the previous year's level, according to the most recent reports from the USDA.

USDA's Grain and livestock Market News Service reported this week that the average price paid for a dressed bull carcass in January was \$483.98/cwt, which was \$2.82/cwt. higher than the previous month, but \$1.98/cwt. lower than in January 2017. Dressed heifer carcasses brought \$470.59/cwt., which was \$1.36/cwt. Below December, but \$18.53/cwt higher than in January 2017. Older bulls brought \$434.80/cwt. And older cows brought \$416.01/cwt. Both of those levels were higher than in December, and from the previous January.

Young bulls comprised 61 percent of the younger animals processed in January. This compares to an average of 48 percent over the previous nine years.

Meanwhile, USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service reported that 4,183 bison were processed under federal inspection through the first five weeks of this year. That is five percent below the 4,868 processed during the same period in 2017, and is the lowest YTD level since 2013. See the full report here. <https://bisoncentral.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Meat1.18.pdf>

Be Sure to Support the NBA Growth Fund

The National Bison Association's retooled voluntary Growth Fund is scheduled to be tapped from some significant consumer outreach, as well as producer recruitment during the coming months, and all members are encouraged to send in at least \$1 for every calf weaned and animal sold during their annual roundups.

We are looking at some significant outreach campaigns to keep our market, and or profitability growing," said Dave Carter, executive director of the NBA. "Our potential to reach new customers—and new producers—is only limited by the resources available in our Growth Fund.

“Our program is completely voluntary and is focused on building our business for all of our members,” Carter said. “That’s why the board has renamed our program as the NBA Growth Fund and will be harnessing the resources there to help us move toward our goal of restoring one million bison to North America.”

Make a contribution here. <https://bisoncentral.com/product/nba-growth-fund-program/>

Fido’s Getting Buffaloed...and It’s Not Good

(From NBA Blog – By Dave Carter)

I hate getting buffaloed.

But many consumers today are getting buffaloed into thinking that something they assume is bison, really isn’t.

It’s a problem becoming more prevalent, particularly in pet food. More and more pet food companies are discovering that bison in their products adds special appeal for discerning consumers. Several national brands are actively pursuing bison hearts, livers and byproducts to add to their formulas. That’s been a great development for bison ranchers.

With only 60,000 bison harvested each year, though, the supply of those ingredients is limited. That hasn’t deterred some companies. They’ve simply started using buffalo in their products...water buffalo...and passing it off as bison.

One national brand, for example, markets a dog formula prominently labeled “with roasted bison.” The front label is beautiful, by the way, with an image of wolves closing in on a herd of grazing bison.

Flip the bag over and look at the ingredients. Yup, there’s roasted bison all right: the ninth ingredient listed in the recipe. Right after canola oil and egg product. The first ingredient listed: Buffalo.

Why isn’t roasted bison listed first? Pet food labeling regulations require that ingredients be listed in descending order, based on their prominence by weight in the product. Those regulations also allow products to be labeled as “Made with xxxx,” as long as they contain at least 3% of xxxx.

And why isn’t buffalo listed as bison? Because it’s not bison.

In other words, about 20% of this product is likely water buffalo, and a tad over 3% is roasted bison. Yet, the average customer believes that they are feeding their companion animal dinner with North American bison as the main ingredient.

Pet food isn’t alone in this shell game. A few meat products being marketed to humans are simply labeled buffalo. Only a close inspection of the back label or the company website will reveal that this is water buffalo.

In late 2016, the NBA formally petitioned the USDA and the Food and Drug Administration to change their food labeling rules to require that any product containing water buffalo be clearly labeled as “water buffalo,” and not just buffalo.

We are now launching a companion effort to enact the same requirements for pet food labeling.

But changing requirements in pet food labeling is often more difficult than in human food. The process is largely governed by the American Association of Feed Control Officials, and organization comprised largely of feed officers from individual state departments of agriculture. AAFCO doesn't set rules, but it establishes "model regulations" that are largely adopted by each individual state.

We have started to contact those feed officials with a formal request to address this issue. After all, consumers are getting short-changed when they get buffaloed by misleading labels. So, too, are bison ranchers and the family pet.

Read all the NBA blogs here. <https://bisoncentral.com/fidos-getting-buffaloed-not-good/>

Where the Buffalo Roam: Mike Fogel, Buffalo Gal Are Pioneers

(From AgriNews.com)

HOUSTON, Minn. — When you arrive on the Buffalo Gal property in Houston, Minn., it's hard to miss the one-ton bison standing on the left side of the road. However, on the right, on the side of the hill, just below the chapel, is a grave.

In that grave lies Cody, the namesake of the bison on the left side of the road named Cody Two.

Cody was almost 20 years old when he died, a death that devastated owner Mike Fogel, who had treated Cody like a pet, even raising him as a calf inside the house. Both Codys, he said, took on dog-like behaviors.

At Buffalo Gal, they sell a variety of unique meats — different bison cuts, Scottish highlander, elk, lamb, yak, and wild boar. Buffalo Gal is the last farm in Minnesota to raise wild boar and Fox News named their wild boar bacon the best in the country last year.

Today, Buffalo Gal is also home to a camel and a muster of peacocks roam the grounds. But Fogel started the operation with a single bison in Wisconsin in 1976.

Slowly Fogel, and his business, previously named Fogel's Buffalo Basin, gained a reputation, even being part of a Playboy magazine article about exotic meats.

Once while visiting Denver, Fogel saw a man riding a bison in a rodeo. After the rodeo, Fogel approached the man, hoping to learn more about how to tame bison enough to ride them.

The man's advice: forget it.

"He said, 'no, you can't do it,'" Fogel remembered. But Fogel would not be deterred.

Not long after the Playboy article, Fogel met a wealthy man who was looking for someone who shared his enthusiasm for bison. He found Fogel, who went to Montana to oversee a herd of 650 bison on the man's 60,000-acre farm.

After four years on the farm, and the death of the wealthy man, Fogel moved to his current home in Houston.

Soon, Cody was trained and ready, and Fogel began walking him in parades and attended the Minnesota State Fair, where a news channel featured him.

Fogel soon received a call from Tig Productions, a production company owned by actor Kevin Costner. The company wanted to know if Cody would be interested in being in "Dances with Wolves," the eventual winner of seven Academy Awards in 1991.

Full story: http://www.agrinews.com/news/minnesota_news/where-the-buffalo-roam-mike-fogel-buffalo-gal-are-pioneers/article_ff2911aa-2a0d-5a69-8adb-988dda5f0fae.html

Crow Tribe Sets Sights on Hunting Yellowstone National Park's Bison

(From The Helena Independent Record)

For the first time Crow tribal members are working to assert treaty hunting rights in the Gardiner area where Yellowstone National Park bison and elk winter.

"The Crow are working through the director's office to make everything legitimate," said Dave Loewen, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks' law enforcement chief. "They've talked about it every year but never put themselves on the ground."

Montana already provides [two free bison hunting licenses](#) to seven tribes to shoot Yellowstone bison when they cross into Montana in the winter and early spring. In addition, Montana recognizes the treaty hunting rights of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, the Nez Perce Tribe, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, and the Confederated Tribes of the Yakama Nation. Those tribal nations work with FWP to control the bison harvest, but their tribal hunters are governed by their own officials and game wardens.

Adding one more tribal group to the hunting is likely to make a congested area even more overrun. Mike Volesky, FWP's chief of staff, told a legislative committee last year, "The treaty hunt is really getting to capacity."

"It's kind of an evolving situation," said Greg Lemon, FWP information chief in Helena, on Wednesday. "We're in communication with (the Crow) now to sort things out like we have with the other tribes down there."

Attempts to contact someone at the Crow Tribe were unsuccessful. Out of six reservation bison herds in Montana, the Crow Tribe has the largest, last estimated in 2010 at 1,000 animals.

Read more. http://helenair.com/lifestyles/recreation/crow-tribe-sets-sights-on-hunting-yellowstone-national-park-s/article_bd97cedd-bb81-5aa4-b769-df6a2fa8f19d.html

Bison buffalo drivers in South Dakota

(From KRDO TV)

Travelers driving through the Black Hills area of South Dakota ran into a roving roadblock this week: a herd of bison set up on the snowy pavement, and it could be because they were hungry.

Frank Carroll sent this video of the herd near Wind Cave. Carroll says that herds have been popping up on roadways more frequently since a fire tore through the area in December.

The bison have little food left to forage after the fire, so they've taken to eating grass that pops through the snow near roadways and licking salt that's laid down on roads for traction.

Source. <http://www.krdo.com/news/bison-buffalo-drivers-in-south-dakota-1/701167749>

Native Americans Used Different Techniques to Hunt Buffalo in Mountains

(From the Grand Junction Daily Sentinel)

Buffalo jumps — sites where Indians chased animals over cliffs so they could gather meat, hides and other parts of the creatures — are well known in the archaeology of the West.

In the mountains of western Colorado, however, buffalo jumps were rare. Instead, native people employed another technique for trapping and killing bison, the animals commonly called buffalo in North America.

"The hunters would force bison up a steep draw," said Holly "Sonny" Shelton, project archaeologist for the Western Colorado Bison Project, which was conducted under the auspices of the Dominquez Archaeological Research Group.

Because it's difficult for bison to raise their heads high, Shelton explained, they don't like climbing up steep trails.

So, they would try to turn around and exit the draw. But hunters would be waiting at the bottom to kill them.

"You couldn't hunt deer or elk like that" because those animals would simply race to the top and escape, she added. "But it seemed to work for bison because people used it over many centuries."

The hunting method was employed before Indians had horses, Shelton's research showed, and continued into the 1800s, well after horses arrived on the scene.

Bison bones found at the bottom of such draws — often with marks showing evidence of human activity, or "cultural modification" — helped Shelton determine the hunting technique. Bison rock art that was found frequently at or near these natural bison traps bolstered the idea about the hunting method.

Shelton began working on the Western Colorado Bison Project several years ago, researching bison bones found in seven counties on the Western Slope — Moffat, Rio Blanco, Garfield, Mesa, Eagle, Delta and Montrose. But her interest in bison began much earlier, when she was growing up on a Colorado ranch.

"As a young person" with Native American ancestry, "I learned to paint bison skulls and to respect the buffalo," she said.

Shelton also heard stories from neighboring ranchers of bison once roaming the Piceance Creek basin and elsewhere on the Western Slope. Later, she read accounts from trappers and

explorers such as Joe Meek, Osborne Russell, Jim Bridger and John Fremont, who reported seeing bison in Colorado's mountains.

Full Story here: https://www.gjsentinel.com/lifestyle/columns/indians-used-different-technique-to-hunt-buffalo-in-the-mountains/article_f0a6da22-0fc2-11e8-8665-10604b9f6eda.html

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) plans to invest \$250 million in technical and financial assistance in 2018 to help private landowners, tribes, land trusts, and other groups protect critical wetlands, agricultural lands, and grasslands through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). Through wetland reserve easements, NRCS helps landowners and tribes restore and protect wetland ecosystems permanently or for 30 years. Through agricultural land easements, NRCS provides funds to conservation partners to purchase permanent conservation easements on private working lands. This program helps keep working lands working, especially in areas experiencing development pressure.

The cooperating entity applies for matching funds from NRCS for the purchase of an easement from the landowner, permanently protecting its agricultural use and conservation values. Landowners do not apply directly to NRCS for funding under this program.

Applications for ACEP are taken on a continuous basis; however, 2018 consideration cutoff dates vary by state. Many occur during December, January, and February.

Read more.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements/acep/>

Montana Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative Demonstration Projects

(From USDA)

This program provides matching funding for projects that include some aspect of private grazing lands improvement and/or management. Applications will be accepted from groups of individuals, non-governmental organizations, and state or local units of government. For 2018, special consideration will be given to demonstration projects that are innovative and address one of the following topics: grazing management, soil/rangeland health, concentrated animal feeding operations/animal feeding operations (CAFO/AFO); and noxious weeds.

Applications are due by February 16, 2018.

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/mt/technical/landuse/pasture/?cid=nrcs144p2_056341

Bovine Tuberculosis in Ottawa County Linked to Indiana Herd

(From Michigan Dept. of Agriculture Press Release)

LANSING - A trace investigation from two bovine tuberculosis positive cattle found at a processing facility led to the identification of a bovine TB positive roping cattle herd in Ottawa County, Michigan. The infected animals originated from an infected herd in Indiana, prior to that herd testing positive for bovine TB in December 2016.

"Every time a bovine tuberculosis animal is identified at a processing plant, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development work to track where the animal has traveled," said Jarold Goodrich, DVM, acting assistant state veterinarian. "In Michigan, all cattle moving off any farm or property must have a radio-frequency identification ear tag that begins with 840 to ensure animals can be traced during a disease emergency. Additionally, there are identification and health certificate requirements for cattle moving to Michigan farms from other states."

In 2016, Indiana identified two beef herds and one white-tailed deer as bovine TB positive, all within Franklin County. Currently, Indiana is one of six states - Nebraska, New Mexico, South Dakota, Texas and Michigan - with infected herds.

The type of bovine TB that has been found in both cattle and white-tailed deer in the northeastern Lower Peninsula of Michigan is unique to that area and can be identified as separate from bovine TB from other states. Whole genome sequencing, which is a specific test that can identify the DNA of the TB bacteria, was used to confirm that the bovine TB found in the infected animals was like the infected Indiana herd.

As a part of MDARD's response, a three-mile surveillance area has been established around the affected farm in Ottawa County. Farms within this special surveillance area will have six months to complete bovine TB testing. These farms will be identified by MDARD and notified through individual letters.

An informational meeting to discuss this finding of bovine TB and the surveillance area is scheduled for:

Tuesday, March 6, 2018, at 7 p.m.
Grandville Public Middle School Auditorium
3535 Wilson Ave. SW, Grandville, MI 49418

Source:

http://www.michigan.gov/mdard/0,4610,7-125-1572_28248-460081--,00.html

Bovine TB Quarantine Lifted For All Affected Canadian Properties (From Medicine Hat News)

The quarantine has been lifted on all properties related to a case of bovine tuberculosis discovered near Jenner in late 2016, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency announced on Monday afternoon.

In total, about 30,000 cattle in 150 herds were tested as federal officials sought to contain the infectious disease over the past 16 months.

Only six cows were certified to have the infectious, respiratory ailment that is the target of an eradication campaign. About 11,500 cattle were ordered destroyed - either as part of the original infected herd, or in order to perform post-mortem investigation.

Federal Agriculture Minister Lawrence MacAuley said that while final testing results and a report will not be issued until later this spring, the lifting of the quarantine "is a positive step forward for Canada's cattle industry."

Read more. <http://tinyurl.com/y8ttfov>

USCA Petitions USDA to Label Alternative “Beef” Products

(From Meatingplace.com)

The United States Cattlemen’s Association (USCA) on Friday submitted a [petition](#) to the USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) asking the agency for rulemaking on beef labeling to clarify for consumers what is beef derived from cattle and “beef” products created in a laboratory.

The petition comes on the heels of Tyson Foods’ recent investment in Memphis Meats, a company creating meat from animal cells in a petri dish. Cargill also has invested in Memphis Meats.

“Consumers depend upon the USDA FSIS to ensure that the products they purchase at the grocery store match their label descriptions,” USCA President Kenny Graner said in a news release. “We look forward to working with the agency to rectify the misleading labeling of “beef” products that are made with plant or insect protein or grown in a petri dish. U.S. cattle producers take pride in developing the highest quality, and safest, beef in the world, and labels must clearly distinguish that difference.”

USCA is not the only meat industry group asking questions about how lab-grown meat will be regulated. The North American Meat Institute also made it [a hot topic](#) at the recently held International Production and Processing Expo in Atlanta.

White House Budget to Slash Ag Programs, Food Assistance

(From AgriPulse)

President Trump is proposing to slash crop insurance and other farm programs by \$47 billion over 10 years and to dramatically overhaul the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, eventually shrinking its cost to taxpayers by one-third.

The proposals will be dead on arrival in the House and Senate Agriculture committees, but they would provide ammunition to farm bill critics on the right and left who would like to reduce nutrition assistance and farm subsidies.

A summary of the fiscal 2019 budget’s proposed cuts says the plan, released today, would “maintain a strong safety-net for farmers while achieving savings by eliminating subsidies to higher income farmers, reducing overly generous crop insurance subsidies to producers and companies, and by eliminating some programs that have no federal purpose.”

The budget would save \$22 billion over 10 years, nearly half of the farm program cut, by reducing crop insurance premium subsidies from the current average of 62 percent to a “more reasonable” 48 percent. Underwriting gains to insurance companies would be capped at 12 percent, saving another \$3 billion over 10 years.

Trump also proposes a means test that would eliminate not just premium subsidies but also commodity payments and conservation benefits to farmers who have adjusted gross incomes of more than \$500,000. According to the [USDA budget summary](#), Trump wants to cut conservation spending by more than \$14 billion over 10 years by killing the Conservation Stewardship

Program, \$12 billion in savings alone, end the Regional Conservation Partnership Program and tighten rules for the Conservation Reserve Program.

The administration wants to limit CRP enrollment of whole farm fields, except for grasslands, and end signing and practice incentive payments, with the exception of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. CRP payments also would be capped at 80 percent of local rental rates.

The budget also would eliminate the Livestock Forage Program, a form of disaster assistance, to save \$4.5 billion over 10 years.

Trump's back-to-the future plan for SNAP is even more far-reaching than many of his farm program proposals: The budget calls for partially converting SNAP to a commodity distribution program and tightening work requirements, slashing projected spending on the program by \$213 billion over 10 years.

Bill Exempts Farms From Reporting Emissions

(From Animal.Ag.Wired.com)

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), National Pork Producers Council (NPPC), National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) and poultry groups including National Turkey Federation, National Chicken Council, U.S. Poultry & Egg Association, and United Egg Producers applaud introduction of bipartisan legislation in the U.S. Senate that would prevent farms, ranches, and other agricultural operations from having to report livestock manure data under Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA).

The law governs toxic Superfund sites which are used primarily to clean hazardous waste sites but also includes a mandatory federal reporting component. Lead sponsors include Sens. Deb Fischer (R-NE) and Joe Donnelly (D-IN), along with 18 other Republican and Democratic senators, including Environment and Public Works Committee Chairman John Barrasso (R-WY) and Ranking Member Tom Carper (D-DE).

"There's not a lot of truly bipartisan legislation in Washington these days, but one thing that pretty much everybody can agree on is that a responsibly-run cattle ranch isn't a toxic Superfund site," said fifth-generation California rancher and NCBA President Kevin Kester. "On behalf of cattle producers across America, I want to sincerely thank the Senators from both parties who worked together to introduce this bipartisan bill. I also want to encourage other Senators to join the effort and pass this bill as quickly as possible."

Full text:

<http://animal.agwired.com/2018/02/14/bill-exempts-farms-from-reporting-emissions/>

Regenerative Supply Chain Verification Introduced

Savory Global has introduced Land to Market, a supply-chain system verification program for meat, dairy, wool, and leather. The program uses Ecological Outcome Verification, a science-backed regenerative verification process that measures trends in biodiversity, soil organic carbon, water infiltration, and ecosystem process function. In this system, producers receive training and verification from regional hubs and then obtain access to brands and retailers.

These brands and retailers share the story with their consumer audiences to continue building demand for verified products.

Read more. <https://www.savory.global/landtomarket/>

Plasma-Treated Water a Potential Substitute for Sodium Nitrite

(From Metingplace.com)

In the search for non-synthetic sodium nitrite sources for use in cured meat applications, manufacturers may find an innovative solution in plasma-treated water (PTW), say a group of Korean researchers.

The scientists have published new data evaluating the use of PTW as an alternative to synthetic sodium nitrite in the curing of loin ham. When compared with chemical brining, PTW improved redness, maintained low residual nitrite content and total bacterial counts, and no genotoxicity was found in the final product.

Read the study in the journal [Plasma Processes and Polymers](#) online.

Marketing To The Generations: Boomers And Gen X

(From MediaPost Communications)

Baby Boomers and Gen Xers are a generation and a full universe apart. Boomers are retiring in droves today, while Generation Xers are at the tops of their careers. The Boomers are watching their Millennial children start families, while Gen X is painfully paying for either college tuition or summer camp. And while the two groups are very different, they have so much in common at the same time. They both saw the rise of the internet and rely on mobile phones, they often work side by side, and neither wants to have a Millennial as their [supervisor at the office](#).

Who are the Baby Boomers?

Baby Boomers are the wealthiest generation, making up 40% of the consumer population – and half of consumer spending, according AARP. They like their comfortable lifestyle, so they tend to view any purchases they make as an investment—and they research accordingly.

In terms of their advertising and media consumption, Boomers were only a little late to the digital party. They're slower than younger generations to adopt new technology habits, but they get there. According to recent Facebook, most Boomers begin their customer journeys in-store, but a growing number are embarking online (more than 30%) or on mobile devices (just under 20%). They use the internet and email a lot, but they're not big app users — yet.

Marketing to Boomers

Trust is a key factor when it comes to convincing and converting Boomers. Boomers do their research, and they're going to make sure they get the best product at the best price. For marketers, this means:

- With all the research they're doing, search is an important channel.

- Give them all the information they need to make an informed decision. That means lots of content, data and useful information.
- Boomers trust their peers, friends, and relatives a lot more than they trust you. Reviews, testimonials and recommendations will go far.
- Personalization will also be very effective. Boomers appreciate the tailored user experience.
- Provide aging Boomers access to easier reading and viewing options, like larger text or increased contrast.
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Finally, Boomers are still media traditionalists. They watch TV and read magazines, and their computers are still their favorite way to access the web. Try to use your marketing materials to bridge the gap between their online and offline worlds by building simple, clean, consistent and user-friendly experiences across channels.

Generation X

Like the Boomers, Gen X prefers marketing material that connects and that originates from a source they know. Gen X also still enjoys traditional media like radio, TV and newspapers—although they are faster to adopt new media. While digital, they are not typically mobile-first and prefer using laptops to access the web.

Unlike Boomers, Gen Xers are not wealthy despite being high earners. They may earn more than their parents did, but—now at the peak of their earning years—they typically have six. Many lost their wealth or their jobs during the Great Recession and are still financially fragile as a result, and most are unlikely to be prepared for retirement. The result of these conditions has left a population of cautious spenders who fear debt and demand honesty, integrity and transparency.

Marketing to Gen X

Gen X wants authenticity from the brands: they know who they are and what they want, and they expect brands to have the same confidence. In terms of reaching this audience, there are a few tips to remember:

- Unlike Boomers, Gen X prefers short, concise copy.
- Email is still Gen X's primary means of messaging, and they check it frequently.
- They still like direct mail, too, and it can move the needle.
- Their expectation of honesty and transparency is repaid. Offer loyalty programs, and you'll see the rewards.
- When it comes to social media, Gen X loves Facebook, and they're big on YouTube, too, accounting for more than 1.5 billion YouTube views per day.

While Boomers still outnumber and outspend Generation X, don't discount the "forgotten generation." Sandwiched between the wealthy, retiring Boomers and the more diverse, more liberal Millennials, Generation X is currently at its prime. Earn their trust with transparency and honest marketing, and you could win customers for life.