



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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March 2, 2018

State Regional Spring Meetings and Sales Underway

Spring meetings for state/regional bison associations are getting underway, as the bison producers gather to share information, and to plan for the seasons ahead.

The Rocky Mountain Buffalo Association's spring meeting is convening this afternoon in Westminster, CO, following the Genesee Bison Ranch annual auction west of Denver. The RMFA meeting will take place tomorrow, with NBA Executive Director Dave Carter Participating.

Next weekend, the Eastern Bison Association will host its annual meeting and Show and Sale in Harrisburg, PA. The annual meeting will kick off with a reception and buffet at the Red Lion Inn in Harrisburg on March 8 and will continue with the annual membership meeting on the 9th. The association's annual live bison sale will be conducted at the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex at 11 a.m. on March 10th. NBA Assistant Director Jim Matheson will provide the EBA members with an update on the national association's activities at the annual meeting.

And, on March 16-17, the Missouri Bison Association will conduct its membership meeting and annual sale at the MO-Kan Sale barn in Butler, MO. The membership meeting and buyers' reception is scheduled for the evening of the 16th, with the auction scheduled for 11 a.m. on the 17th.

Northstar Bison Conducting On-site Intro Seminar the Next Week

Northstar Bison Co. is hosting an on-site introduction seminar on holistic resource management Monday-Thursday next week at the ranch's operation near Rice Lake, WI.

The session, being facilitated by Holistic resource trainer Roland Kroos of Crossroads Consulting, Inc., will provide participants with concepts to help make better decisions and improve management skills.

"You will learn how to improve your Quality of Life, Work as a Team, Increase Profitability, Raise Healthier Bison (Livestock), and Improve the Health of the Land. People who attend these

seminars come from all walks of life; seasoned bison/livestock producers to those just thinking about getting into the business,” Kroos said.

Located in northern Wisconsin where rainfall is plentiful most of the year, the Graese family has been practicing Holistic Management for 20 years. Learn how they converted worn out farm ground to very productive pasture that supports large numbers of bison. Also learn how to manage small acres with smaller herds of livestock. The Graese family will also share how they market their animals from pasture to plate.

Openings are still available to participate in the three-day seminar. For more information, click here:

<http://www.crossroadsranchconsulting.com/#!educational-services/c2522>

NBA to Team with Culinary School for On-Line Educational Videos

NBA Executive Director Dave Carter met this week with the Executive Chef of the Auguste Escoffier School of Culinary Arts in Boulder to begin planning for development of three brief on-line videos that will help first-time buyers of bison meat to overcome their fears about cooking the product.

“The ideas for these brief videos came from the working group that is helping us plan the activities under the USDA Farmers Market Promotion Grant we are administering,” Carter said. “The idea is for our marketers to have a usable resource that will help their customers feel more comfortable about cooking with bison.”

The on-line videos will feature student chefs from the Escoffier School demonstrating the ease of working with bison meat. Three videos are planned: Cooking with ground bison; cooking with bison steaks, and cooking with bison roasts.

“We will provide marketers with materials that will have the URL links, and perhaps QR codes, that they can provide to their customers at the point of sale. Then, the customers can log-on and learn some handy techniques for cooking the perfect bison meal the first time they try.”

The videos are being underwritten by resources from the USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service’s Farmers’ Market Promotion program.

Bryan Adams, Former NBA Board Member, Dies at 70

Bryan Mark Adams, longtime bison industry leader, and former member of the National Bison Association board of directors, passed peacefully in his sleep last Friday at the age of 70.

Mr. Adams (as he preferred to be called) was born on August 4, 1947 in Waukesha, Wisconsin to LaVern and Martha Adams. Growing up on the family dairy farm, he learned the value of hard work early on and maintained that ethic throughout each and every one of his 70 years on this earth. After enlisting in The United States Marine Corps where he proudly served as a first line

radio man in the Vietnam War, he returned to the University of Wisconsin in Oshkosh to obtain his B.A. in Sociology.

After college graduation, Mr. Adams left the Midwest in search of the Colorado Rockies, eventually splitting his time between his Evergreen, Colorado and Buckeye, Arizona ventures. His entrepreneurial spirit led him into the construction business where he started, grew and led a successful drilling and blasting company for 40+ years throughout the west. Additionally, he followed his farm roots into another business where he and his wife Mary Adams started Arizona Buffalo Company and Adams Natural Meats.

Mr. Adams was many things to many people – a Vietnam Vet, boss, blaster, bison rancher, avid runner, lover of fast cars, fisherman, hunter, son, brother, grandfather, father; and loving husband and best friend to his wife Mary. But above all, he was a great man.

A service to honor Mr. Adams will be held at 10:30 am on Friday, March 9, 2018 at Trinity Lutheran Church, 830 E Plaza Circle, Litchfield Park, AZ 85340.

At a future date, he will be honored for his service and laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery.

Bryan Adams is survived by his wife, Mary Adams; his mother, Martha Adams; his brother, Jeff (Judy) Adams; sister, Susan Schroeder; his children, Beth (Ryan) Moore and their two children Grady and Harlan; Melisa (Brian) Busse and their three children, Gabriella, Kendall, and Maxwell; Amanda Moore and her four children, Jacob, Ayden, Alayna and Julea; Nicholas Turner and his three children, Blake, Dominic and Shayla; and Ashley (Michael) Herndon and their two children, Katelyn and Aubree; brothers-in-law, Doug and Gary Smith; and sister-in-law, Geraldine Terry.

The family asks that any donations wanting to honor Mr. Adams be made to the following: Mayo Clinic Cancer Research Program:

<http://www.mayo.edu/research/centers-programs/cancer-research/supporting-cancer-research>.

Bison Industry Labors Under Misconceptions

(From Farm Forum)

“The bison industry still deals with many misconceptions,” began Jim Matheson, assistant director of the National Bison Association, located in Westminster, Colorado. “Opinions continue to abound that bison are wild and dangerous, their meat is gamey, they get out all the time, and that they need fencing rivaling that around Fort Knox,” Matheson said at a workshop known as the Bison Advantage. It was co-hosted by the Dakota Territory Buffalo Association (DTBA), headquartered in Rapid City, South Dakota. Held on Feb. 2 in conjunction with the Black Hills Stock Show in Rapid City, the session was geared toward new and aspiring producers but had something for everyone.

“What is the Bison Advantage?” Matheson asked. “It is a marketing campaign to producers to explain that this is a viable livestock endeavor they can take advantage of.”

Although a relatively young and very small industry, there is an excellent market for bison meat. It is a sustainable source of high quality protein while also being low in fat. Demand exceeds availability and consumers are willing to pay a premium for it, even for hamburger and items such as jerky and other snack foods.

The most current bison count is about 200,000 head in the United States, including private, tribal, and park herds. Only 200 head are processed per day nationwide, and carcasses on the rail have been selling for \$4-\$5 per pound for six solid years. In 2017 retail meat sales were \$350 million.

South Dakota is the number one producing state, followed by Nebraska and Montana. There are bison in every state in the country except for Rhode Island. The average herd consists of 60 head.

Bison are very adaptable to their environment, and they live long, productive lives. Cows on occasion live past the age of 30 and still calve every year. Bulls have been known to reach 15 years of age and still get the job done.

“Bison are low- but not no- maintenance,” stressed Matheson. Females calve on their own, but unlike cattle, they don’t breed for the first time until they are two years old. A.I. isn’t performed on bison, not only due to excessive stress on the animal but also because the technology is not yet there to make it a viable option.

There is no branding or castration, and by and large no dehorning, although Canadian producers practice it on occasion. Horns on bison can be a problem if animals are bunched too closely together and are unable to move away from each other. They don’t like to be cornered, so the best places for gates are toward the middle of a fenceline.

Fencing is always a big concern for producers just getting started; so much so that sometimes they spend too much money on it and then don’t have enough capital left to buy breeding stock. According to Matheson, cattle fencing is pretty easily converted to fencing for bison. Everything from barbed wire to woven wire to a strand or two of hot wire incorporated into a fence will work. A good visual deterrent is to have the top strand higher than the animal’s line of sight.

“What is more important,” he points out, “is daily management. Keep the animals happy.” This means clean water and good, abundant grass through a rotational grazing program. The stocking rate for bison is similar to that of cattle.

In breeding stock we desire athleticism, length, and a straight topline “from hump to rump.” Sound legs are necessary, especially for bulls, and there should be appropriate characterization of masculinity and femininity.

Read more. <https://www.famforum.net/2018/02/28/bison-industry-labors-under-misconceptions/>

How This Philadelphia Retailer Is Reviving Bison in The US Through Fashion

(From Forbes)

This Philadelphia-based retail brand is developing a new supply chain for bison farmers across the US. As the demand for bison meat has risen, given its lower fat content and grazing practices, making it a savvy alternative to cattle, bison fibers are cropping up in fashion. [United by Blue](#), a mission-driven brand, is showcasing it with its latest collection of bison jackets, socks, and beanies.

“Our goal is to reduce the waste [bison fiber] of the bison meat industry,” says founder and CEO Brian Linton. “Despite a single bison hide yielding only about a pound of bison down after scouring, and de-hairing the amount of hides available to shear far surpasses the amount that we have used since we started shearing bison about 4 years ago. There are plenty of additional opportunities for waste diversion and we’re at the tip of the iceberg in the bison fiber industry.”

According to the National Bison Association, about 61,300 bison were slaughtered in 2016 in the US. (In contrast, about 125,000 cattle are slaughtered daily.) The largest concentration of bison can be found in Wyoming, the Dakotas, Montana, and in Colorado. But Linton says that bison farming is extending to all 50 states with a population of about 500,000 bison: “Being hunted to near extinction, they are now an important and growing industry for American farmers across all 50 states.”

Before rearing bison, these farmers were raising domesticated cattle for the beef industry. But traditional cattle farming requires more hands-on time from the farmer, he explains. Bison, in contrast, are [largely wild](#), even when raised on a farm and can be left to roam for hours with little supervision required. Just north of the border, Canadians have been consuming bison meat for generations and in Alberta, bison are making a stronger comeback, bypassing beef.

Given that bison spend their days roaming the landscape, munching on wild grasses, fences are the largest obstacle and investment in bison farming, Linton says. “Bison can jump over or break through a shorter, less sturdy [cattle] fence.”

Nevertheless, its taste and healthier attributes are making it a more popular option for ranchers: bison meat is known to have less fat than beef. Federal regulations also prohibit the use of growth hormones in bison.

Read more. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/eshachhabra/2018/02/26/how-this-philadelphia-retailer-is-reviving-bison-farming-in-the-us-through-fashion/#379a219e9050>

YNP Plans More Security for Corralled Bison

(From Associated Press)

Two cases of broken fences and bison walking free from Yellowstone National Park's bison trap this winter have been a disruption of the status quo.

The first incident, when 52 bull bison escaped through two layers of broken fence in January, erased the possibility that those bison might eventually be transferred to a tribal reservation, which officials say was likely to happen sometime this year.

But the second illegal release of Yellowstone bison, which came sometime late Wednesday night or early Thursday morning, was quickly nullified, as many of the bison returned to the corrals and park staff captured hundreds more shortly after the fence was repaired. Separate criminal investigations into each are ongoing, but the two incidents have raised questions about the security of the Stephens Creek Capture Facility, and the park's top official said they're trying to shore it up.

In an interview Friday, Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk declined to offer specific details on the extra measures park officials are taking but said they are providing a higher level of security. He also said it appears they'll have to do so into the future.

"It has just pointed out to us that we have to put a lot more funding and manpower behind securing that facility and operating that facility," Wenk said. "And that's what we'll do." The facility, which consists of several corrals, a squeeze chute and a loading dock for cattle trailers, has been the starting point for the slaughter of bison for two decades. Last year, it became the starting point for an alternative to slaughter, one that could be used to send live bison to tribal or private lands where they can be used to start new conservation herds or join existing ones.

The alternative, quarantine, certifies bison as free of the disease brucellosis, which can cause animals to abort. About half of Yellowstone's bison are believed to have been exposed to the disease. It's feared by the livestock industry, and those fears limit where Yellowstone bison are allowed.

Becoming brucellosis free requires bison to live in isolation in a specific kind of corral for a certain amount of time. Once the brucellosis free status is gained, the animals can be moved more freely. They could join conservation bison herds on tribal reservations or on private lands. In 2016, Yellowstone proposed establishing a quarantine program at the Fort Peck Indian Reservation and held onto some bison to start the program. But legal and political barriers prevented that plan and, last year, Yellowstone upgraded two corrals at Stephens Creek for quarantine. The idea was to send the bison to Fort Peck after gaining disease-free status.

Full story: https://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/environment/yellowstone-to-increase-security-at-bison-trap-after-illegal-releases/article_97a8a2c7-a48f-519d-b909-ac1afce21678.html

Native Communities are Fighting for a More Inclusive Farm Bill

(From Civil Eats)

About 10 miles west from the Missouri border in the wooded, lush-green northeastern corner of Oklahoma sits the [first tribally owned meat-processing plant](#) in the country.

In addition to processing its own beef and bison, the 4,800-member Quapaw Tribe manages four greenhouses that grow fresh herbs and vegetables and a bee operation that both pollinates its plants and produces honey. The Quapaw people also [roast their own coffee](#), which they package and sell, and earlier this year, they [opened a craft brewery](#).

While participating in greater America's enterprise system, the Quapaw also use some of what they produce to feed their own people and surrounding non-Native communities. In addition to supplying the steakhouse and restaurants at its casinos with freshly grown food, the tribe distributes bison to senior citizens and at the reservation's daycare center.

"Our contention is tribes are not sovereign unless they can feed themselves," said Ross Racine, executive director of the [Intertribal Agriculture Council](#). "But today, \$3.3 billion of Native American agricultural products go into the commodity market. [By contrast,] Quapaw is eating what they are growing."

Although agriculture continues to play a big role in Native life today, the Quapaw's ability to feed themselves is nearly unique. While the overwhelming majority of farm operators in the U.S. are white, among farmers of color an [estimated 30 percent](#) are Native American or Alaska Native, and together they generate \$3.3 billion in sales each year. But Native producers have little access to critically important resources such as credit, insurance, or loan programs, and that fact limits their ability to be fully autonomous.

Hoping to ensure that the voices of the nation's original caretakers are heard, Native American groups have come together to advocate for more inclusion, greater funding, and extensive revisions in the upcoming [farm bill](#), which will replace the soon-to-expire Agricultural Act of 2014. For nearly a year, the [Native Farm Bill Coalition](#)—made up of more than 22 tribes, tribal organizations, and nonprofits across the country—has been meeting to craft policy for the \$489 billion omnibus bill, which oversees food assistance for more than 46 million low-income Americans, as well as food safety, agriculture insurance and losses, agricultural research, and rural housing and economic development.

"The farm bill holds the potential for tribal governments and producers to feed their own people in their own tribal food systems," said Colby Duren, co-author of a report commissioned by the [Native Farm Bill Coalition](#), during a recent webinar. "All of this will help spur economic development [and] build critical infrastructure, which is lacking in a lot of communities. [It will] be able to support traditional foods and ... improve health, nutrition, food access and food security."

Full story: <https://civileats.com/2018/02/26/native-communities-are-fighting-for-a-more-inclusive-farm-bill/>

Fugitive Chihuahua Governor Duarte's Bison Seized

(From The BBC)

Prosecutors have seized four ranches belonging to César Duarte, the fugitive former governor of the Mexican state of Chihuahua.

Mr Duarte, who fled Mexico in March after being accused of embezzling millions of pesos, is believed to be in the United States.

Investigators also confiscated a number of exotic animals kept on the ranches such as bison, llamas and wild boar.

In total, 20 properties of Mr Duarte's have been seized since he fled. They add up to more 40,000 hectares, which prosecutors say were bought through illegal means.

Among the animals found on the ranches were 450 cattle, some of which Mr Duarte is accused of having stolen from a consignment of animals imported for poor farmers.

Mr Duarte, from the governing PRI party, was governor of Chihuahua from October 2010 to October 2016.

He was known for his lavish lifestyle and is accused of using an official helicopter to fly friends and family to his ranch at weekends.

He is suspected of embezzling 79m pesos (\$4.2m; £3.2m) during his term.

His successor in office, Javier Corral from the rival PAN party, ran on a promise to bring Mr. Duarte to justice.

Mr Duarte has been reportedly spotted in Texas, New Mexico and Florida since he fled.

Read more. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-43195550> \

Bison Slaughter's Destructive Legacy for Native Americans

(From Inside Science.com)

In 1870, there were at least 10 million bison in the southern herd on the North American plains. Fewer than 20 years later, only 500 wild animals remained. That part of the story -- the bloody removal of the animals for hides, meat and to devastate Native American communities -- is well-known. We have countless movies, books and ballads about the dust-strewn slaughter.

What hasn't been so well-studied is the story of what happened next to the people involved. That's the focus of a new report presented at the American Economic Association meeting in January. The researchers claim that the rapid destruction of the bison created an equally dramatic decline in the heights of the Native Americans who depended on them -- and a worse per capita income that persists today.

"You could imagine what would happen to certain sections of the American economy if oil disappeared, and people had no alternative," said Donna Feir, an economist at the University of Victoria, Canada. Now, imagine that these people couldn't migrate to other economic activities, and were kept in certain locations for 50 years. It would be a cultural and economic bomb that would continue for decades.

Before the bison disappeared, the native people living in the plains were among the tallest in the world. They didn't diversify their work from a single resource, the researchers said, because the bison pretty much supplied them with everything they needed. They were at least as well-off as European colonists at the time, researchers have argued. "The idea of poverty coincides with the reservation era, which happened after the slaughter of bison," said Feir.

The slaughter changed everything. It happened in two waves. The first came slowly: European settlers brought cattle with them, and those animals competed for land with the wild bison. The second started in the 1870s, after German leather-makers created technology that allowed bison hides to be tanned more efficiently and economically. During 1871 and 1872, an average of 5,000 bison were killed every day, as thousands of hunters poured onto the plains. The slaughter continued until 1889, when only about 85 free-ranging bison remained.

In just a generation, the height of the Native American people who depended on bison dropped by an inch or more, as measured by physical anthropologist Franz Boas, who collected data on the height, gender and age of over 15,000 Native Americans between 1889 and 1919.

Groups that experienced rapid bison extinction had an even more precipitous drop -- children born after the slaughter were up to 2 inches shorter at adulthood than those born before the slaughter, the researchers found. Population declined, as well. And what the researchers called a kind of cultural depression settled on bison-dependent groups.

Full story here: <https://www.insidescience.org/news/bison-slaughter%E2%80%99s-destructive-legacy-native-americans>

Experts Issue Warning After Encounter with Bison at Oklahoma Wildlife Refuge

(From Oklahoma News4)

WICHITA MOUNTAINS WILDLIFE REFUGE, Okla. – Officials at a wildlife refuge say a man is lucky to be alive after getting a little too close to a wild animal.

Daneila Zyks and her husband were at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge when she saw a man squatting just feet away from a bison.

"I figured the buffalo was about to charge," [Zyks told KSWO](#).

She told her husband to call 911 and get help.

"Whether we would've honked, yelled, or told him to get away, he was going to get charged," she said.

Deputy Refuge Manager David Farmer says the man was lucky that he didn't get charged, and he recommends staying at least 25 yards away from bison.

"They are very, very wild animals," he said. "They may look tame, they may look domesticated, but they are very wild. They are three times faster than the average person and they have great

hearing and a great sense of smell and poor vision so it does allow people to get closer to them than they should.”

If you find yourself too close to a bison, Farmer says you should slowly walk backward unless the bison is aggressive. If the bison is being aggressive, try to put a large object between yourself and the bison.

Full story: <http://kfor.com/2018/03/01/experts-issue-warning-after-dangerous-encounter-with-bison-at-oklahoma-wildlife-refuge/>

Icy Plunge Blamed for Deaths of Three Bison in Yukon

(From the Canadian Press/AP)

HAINES JUNCTION, Yn - Conservation officers in Yukon have unraveled the mysterious deaths of three apparently healthy bison.

The remains were found in a remote valley northeast of Haines Junction and conservation officer T.J. Grantham says it appears the three slipped on a buildup of ice on a hilltop. He says the bison were among a herd that started moving down a hill covered in snow and ice that was nearly an inch thick.

Marks in the snow reveal the entire herd likely skidded down the hill, but the unlucky trio was swept over another drop.

Grantham says they plummeted a further 300 meters to the bottom of the hill.

They careened through trees as they fell, and Grantham says the animals probably died of internal injuries.

While such accidents probably occur from time to time in nature, Grantham says it has piqued the interest of biologists.

"I can say it's rare for us to encounter it in the field," Grantham says, adding that scientists don't often get a chance to document such events. (CKRW)

Author Dan O'Brien on the Importance of Great Plains Bison

(From Iowa Public Radio)

Bison once roamed the plains in herds so thick they obscured the land. They were hunted nearly to extinction and now only live in controlled and managed herds.

On this hour of *Talk of Iowa*, Charity Nebbe talks about the history of the American bison and their relationship with humans with author, conservationist, and bison rancher Dan O'Brien, author of *Great Plains Bison*.

"Their impact on the flora and fauna of the Great Plains is what makes the Great Plains what they are," O'Brien says.

Bison have a physical impact on the land. They graze vigorously and vacate areas, allowing grass to rest. Their hooves also give prairie grasses the opportunity to reseed.

"Every time they're moving, they're massaging the prairie as if they're lovers," O'Brien says.

Despite their importance, bison were hunted nearly to extinction. O'Brien estimates that less than a thousand bison roamed the prairie at their lowest number, due to a concentrated hunting effort on the part of the United States government, which clashed with Native Americans in the Great Plains.

"If we destroy the buffalo, we destroy the Indians, and we win the war," O'Brien says about the logic behind the hunting effort.

Now, O'Brien ranches bison as part of his conservation vision. He hopes that creating a market for bison meat will result in more room for bison to roam.

"Our product is conservation," O'Brien says. "The buffalo meat is a side product."

Full story and link to broadcast: <http://iowapublicradio.org/post/author-dan-obrien-importance-great-plains-bison#stream/0>

Special Section: Ranch Managing Rewards the Body, Mind and Soul

(From the Columbine Courier)

It's a family affair at Evergreen Memorial Park, so there was never much doubt in Jaymee Lewis' mind that she would somehow play a role in the business.

The 100-acre operation contains quite a few elements, including a full-service mortuary and crematory, funeral home, wedding chapel and animal preserve. However, for Lewis, 27, of Evergreen, it's all about the animals.

And there a quite a few in her care. On any given day, dozens of buffalo, elk, deer, goats, chickens, yak, and geese roam the park's land.

"I've always been an animal person," Lewis said. "Even when I was little, I was always the one out here."

At Evergreen Memorial Park, she serves as a ranch manager of sorts. Every day, rain or shine, she is out, walking the land, feeding the animals, providing them with fresh water, cleaning, herding and more. Without a dedication to all of her animals, Lewis couldn't imagine being able to accomplish what she does on a daily basis.

"That's why I do it. ... I don't have to (come every day), but I love waking up and coming to see my animals," she said.

Working with animals demands creativity and quick thinking, and it's important to let the animals manage themselves when possible. Thinking outside the box is perhaps the most important lesson Lewis has learned in her time on the job.

For example, Andrea Goethe, a friend and former ranch worker, taught her to fill up the tractor bucket with water to replenish the animals' supply instead of dragging the hoses from trough to trough.

Full story: <http://www.columbinecourier.com/content/special-section-ranch-managing-rewards-body-mind-and-soul>

Farmers Seen Expanding Livestock Production, Crop Plantings Amid Slump

(From AgriPulse)

Amid depressed farm income, American farmers will produce record amounts of meat, poultry and milk this year while slightly increasing plantings of major field crops, according to the Agriculture Department.

Slumping commodity prices continue to weigh on farm earnings and producers are taking on an increasing amount of debt, but an improving global economy and the falling value of the dollar compared to currencies in customer countries are helping to maintain U.S. exports, Rob Johansson, USDA's chief economist, said at the department's 94th annual Agricultural Outlook Forum.

"The agricultural sector still faces economic stress. Debt is increasing as working capital continues to fall," Johansson warned in his annual economic projections. He said the decline in U.S. farm income, which is projected to continue in 2018, reflects that "productivity is outpacing population growth and food demand."

But he noted that the International Monetary Fund last month sharply raised its 2017-19 growth estimates, "showing marked growth in the last year and continuing stable over the next few years that should help boost demand."

Farm exports for fiscal 2018, which ends Sept. 30, are projected to remain near the FY17 level at \$139.5 billion, Johansson said. The U.S. agricultural trade surplus is forecast to narrow slightly to \$21 billion, down from \$21.3 billion in FY17. That would be welcome news to farmers who are projected to boost production this year.

USDA predicts that farmers and ranchers will produce 27.7 billion pounds of beef this year, a 5.9 percent increase from 2017. Pork production will almost keep pace with beef, rising 5.1 percent to 26.9 billion pounds. Broiler production, meanwhile, is expected to increase by 2.3 percent while milk production rises 1.5 percent.

"With low and stable feed costs over the past few years and projected going forward, the outlook for livestock and dairy is for another year of record total meat and dairy production," Johansson said.

Report: Antimicrobial Resistance Still High in Humans, Animals and Food

(From Meatingplace.com)

Bacteria from humans and animals continue to show resistance to antimicrobials, according to a new report by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). The report highlights some emerging issues and

confirms antimicrobial resistance as one of the biggest threats to public health, mainly by reducing the effectiveness of treatment options.

Among the new findings, based on data from 2016, are detection of resistance to carbapenems in poultry, an antibiotic that is not authorized for use in animals, and of ESBL-producing *Salmonella* Kentucky with high resistance to ciprofloxacin in humans, which was reported for the first time in four European Union (EU) countries.

In a news release about the report, EFSA and ECDC scientists commented that the findings raise several pressing concerns. Marta Hugas, EFSA's chief scientist, said, "The detection of resistance to carbapenems in poultry and to linezolid in methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* in pigs is alarming because these antibiotics are used in humans to treat serious infections. It is important that risk managers follow-up on these findings."

ECDC chief scientist Mike Catchpole expressed concern that *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* bacteria in humans show high levels of antimicrobial resistance. "The fact that we keep detecting multidrug-resistant bacteria means that the situation is not improving. We need to investigate the origins and prevent the spread of highly resistant strains, such as ESBL-producing *Salmonella* Kentucky," Catchpole said.

Beef Industry Joins Big Dairy in Petitioning Plant-Based Competition

(From Forbes)

In a food landscape dominated by headlines about plant based-products receiving [funding](#) and a gradual but noteworthy [increase](#) in plant-preferring consumers, the [U.S. Cattlemen's Association \(USCA\)](#) has [joined the broader resistance against the rise of plant-based products](#) and meat alternatives which aim to replicate their animal-based counterparts.

In a [petition](#) filed on Feb. 2, [the USCA is requesting that the United States Department of Agriculture establish stricter meat labeling requirements](#) . The [USCA](#) believes that the broad use of the terms "beef" and "meat" on the packaging of products not derived from animals generated consumer confusion. The petition argues that this confusion originates in part from alternative proteins including those derived from plants, insects and lab-grown methods.

The [petition](#) states: "USCA has learned that some major U.S. meatpackers and companies in other countries are heavily investing in creating alternative products that may resemble in appearance and taste beef products, including synthetic 'beef' and 'beef' grown in laboratories using animal cells, known as 'in vitro' meat, 'bio meat,' 'clean meat,' or 'cultured meat.' Such products, which are not derived from animals born, raised, and harvested in the traditional manner, should not be permitted to be marketed as 'beef,' or more broadly as 'meat' products."

The petition also presents issue with the Federal Trade Commissions' inconsistent enforcement of "truth in advertising" standards for food products. Expanding on this contention, the document specifically cites the 2015 warning that the FDA issued against Hampton Creek Foods (now [JUST](#)) for its usage of a cracked egg illustration on its vegan mayonnaise packaging. Ultimately, the FDA required the company to state its "egg-free" contents via larger font type on its packaging.

Full story: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/christinatroitino/2018/02/28/beef-industry-joins-big-dairy-in-petitioning-plant-based-competition/#416003af7def>

Applications Available for Armed to Farm in New Hampshire

The National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) is bringing its week-long Armed to Farm sustainable agriculture training for military veterans to New Hampshire June 11–15, 2018. Armed to Farm combines engaging classroom sessions with farm tours and hands-on activities. Participants learn about business planning, budgeting, recordkeeping, marketing, livestock production, vegetable production, and more. Participants gain a strong foundation in the basic principles of operating a sustainable farming enterprise. In addition, Armed to Farm attendees join a nationwide network of supportive farmer-veterans and agricultural advisors. The program is available to military veterans in the Northeast who are interested in starting a farm or who have recently begun farming (less than 10 years). Spouses and farming partners are also invited to apply. The event is free for those chosen to attend; lodging, transportation to local farms, and most meals will be provided. Applications are due by April 27, 2018.

Read more at <https://www.ncat.org/armed-to-farm-events/>

Online Publication Helps Farmers Prepare for Serving Food

Come & Get It: What You Need to Know to Serve Food on Your Farm is a free publication available from Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture online in PDF. The 34-page publication provides a starter toolkit and roadmap for farmers interested in potentially starting an on-farm venture that involves food service.

The publication addresses the regulatory requirements for part-time, on-farm food service ventures, such as pizza farms and farm-to-table dinners, that can supplement and diversify an existing farm's income base. It also offers basic business planning, marketing, and outreach suggestions to support ultimate business success. MISA also has available two separate documents that provide the relevant laws and regulations specific to Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Read more at <https://www.misa.umn.edu/publications/comeandgetit>

Farmer Veteran Fellowship Fund

Members of the Farmer Veteran Coalition can apply for equipment grants of \$1,000 to \$5,000 from the Farmer Veteran Fellowship Fund. The application consists of short answer and essay questions regarding military service, educational background, prior farming experience, business and financial planning, and short-term and long-term goals. Veterans from all military branches and service eras, as well as those currently serving, are eligible to apply.

Applications are due by March 1, 2018.

Read more at <http://www.farmvetco.org/fvfellowship/faq/>

Minnesota Value Added Grant Program

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture will award up to \$2.5 million through the competitive Value-Added Grant Program. The goal of this program is to increase sales of Minnesota agricultural products by diversifying markets, increasing market access, and increasing food safety of value-added products. Grant funds reimburse up to 25% of the total project cost.

Funding under this round is offered at two levels. Level 1 projects will have a maximum award of \$200,000 and a minimum of \$1,000. Level 2 projects will have a maximum award of \$1 million and a minimum of \$200,001. Grants may be used for equipment purchases or physical improvements. Level 2 projects must also provide significant economic impact to a region of the state.

Applications must be received by March 9, 2018.

Read more at <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/news/releases/2018/nr20180119valueadd.aspx>