



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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April 28, 2017

NBA Leaders meet with SDSU to Map Bison Research Priorities

Members of the National Bison Association Science and Research Committee, along with NBA Executive Director Dave Carter, gathered yesterday with key agricultural faculty from South Dakota State University at the SDSU Ag Research Center in Brookings, SD to discuss potential collaboration in addressing key research needs for commercial bison.

The day-long work session generated several ideas for increasing herd health and production research programs that will benefit producers across the country.

“This was a very important and productive work session,” said Dave Hunter, DVM, chair of the NBA Science and Research Committee. “The scientists and staff attending the session from SDSU were engaged in the discussion throughout the day, and seemed very enthused about working with the bison industry to help us build healthy herds.”

Carter opened the session with an overview of the bison business. He also provided a summary of the *Bison 2014* report, which was released in December by the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection service. That report provided data from a comprehensive epidemiological study of the commercial bison sector in the United States.

Participants at the meeting, including several from Canada, agreed to work together to improve the current databases of bison research information, so identify key research priorities, and to pursue funding to underwrite specific research projects.

Two Bison Advantage Workshops Set for Tribal Producers Next Week

Bison Advantage workshops scheduled on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations next Wednesday and Thursday will introduce potential tribal bison producers to the resources available to develop and expand bison herds on tribal lands.

The Wednesday Workshop in Kyle, and the Thursday workshop in Mission, are being sponsored by South Dakota State University, with underwriting from the USDA Farm Service Agency’s Beginning Farmer and Rancher Grant program.

NBA Executive Director Dave Carte will conduct each of the workshops, using the curriculum developed by the association last year. Wednesday's session is scheduled from 10 a.m. – 2 pm. at the Lakota Trade Center in Kyle. Thursday's workshop is planned from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Multipurpose Building Commons Room in Mission.

From 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. participants from both workshops are invited to the Alex and Cassie Heim Ranch west of Wood, SD, to learn more about bison production.

"This is a great opportunity to continue to build our relationship with tribal producers and leaders, in a common effort to bring more bison back to private and tribal lands," Carter said.

Anyone interested in attending should contact Jason Schoch at 605-415-3104, or Patricia Hammond at 605-858-8185. *Space is limited to 15 participants for each workshop.*

Children's Activities Make IBC a Family Event

While adults will be spending, time learning about bison production, marketing and outreach issues during the International Bison Conference July 5th and 6th at Big Sky, MT, kids will have an opportunity to Tie-Dye T-Shirts, hug a tree, and simply enjoy pizza and movies.

Big Sky Resort is working with the organizers of the International Bison Conference to offer a smorgasbord of activities for children ages two and above. The following are 2016 activities, as the resort is still finalizing 2017 prices and options, but the staff assured the NBA it will be comparable to this:

- **Groovy Tie-dye** We will make amazing tie-dye t-shirts, bandanas and other hip clothing!
 - *Ages 4 and up. Up to 2 hours \$28.00/child*
- **Sports day** Get ready to have some fun in the sun! We will get out our sports equipment and play! Frisbee, soccer bean bag toss and relay races are some of the fun outdoor activities we will do.
 - *Ages 4 and up. 2 hours \$18.00/child*
- **Hug a Tree Nature Hike** Come on a hike and learn about Montana's beautiful flora and fauna! We will play nature games and enjoy the beautiful hike!
 - *Ages 8 and up. 2 hours \$18.00/child*
- **Pizza and a Movie** A simple favorite. Yummy pizza with soda and juice and a movie.
 - *Ages 4 and up. 2 hours \$50.00/child*
- **Face Painting** Kids can get their face painted at one of your group's functions. Price is for one face painter.
 - *All ages Up to 2 hrs. \$80 flat fee for group*

Bison World Advertising

Rancher brings bison back to Georgia's coast

(From The Brunswick News)

More than two centuries ago, they were common.

The American bison, also called buffalo, roamed North America — including here in Coastal Georgia — in the tens of millions until their near eradication in the early 1800s.

In his account of the newly founded 13th colony, written in 1735, traveler and author Francis Moore noted, “The island (St. Simons) abounds with deer and rabbit. There are no buffalo on it, though there are large herds upon the main.”

Later in his account, commissioned by the Royal African Company of England and published in 1744, Moore adds indigenous people commonly hunted the broad-shouldered beasts. He specifically names present-day Darien as a fruitful hunting ground.

Aggressive hunting of the herds led to dwindling population numbers by the mid-1800s. Prior, the continent teemed with as many as 60 million bison. The animals were a mainstay in the Native American diet and culture. As a means of controlling indigenous tribes, the U.S. Army launched a campaign in the late 1800s aimed at culling bison herds, according to the National Park Service.

Since then, the American bison has made major strides. In 1894, Congress passed the Lacey Act, aimed at stricter punishments for poachers, and in 1902, the U.S. Army, ironically, relocated 21 bison to Yellowstone National Park in an effort to preserve the animals. More than a century later, in 2016, President Barack Obama signed the National Bison Legacy Act, designating the bison as the official mammal of the United States — on par with the bald eagle. Troy Bivens, a bison rancher who lives in Brunswick, knows the value of the iconic and imposing creatures. As the owner a local bison ranch, Georgia Buffalo, north of Darien, Bivens raises bison for their meat. His 47-acre ranch has likely seen bison roam there before — but they returned there when he opened his ranch seven years ago.

“I have an uncle in Minnesota that has a buffalo farm,” Bivens explained. “I used to work in construction, but when the bottom fell out (during the Great Recession), I got to thinking this might be something I could do.”

Currently, Bivens has 11 bison — both male and female — at his ranch. Six months ago, though, he had 30. Recent demand for bison meat has dwindled his numbers, but through breeding, more will come. In fact, a new calf was born Sunday, Bivens said.

Read more. http://goldenisles.news/life/rancher-brings-bison-back-to-georgia-s-coast/article_0496eb7c-c7db-55bd-87a9-55a5800d4439.html

Bison Births Are First in Canadian National Park Area in 140 Years

(From Voice of America)

Bison calves have been born in the area that makes up Alberta's Banff National Park for the first time in 140 years, Parks Canada officials said Tuesday, marking a milestone in attempts to reintroduce a wild herd to the area.

Conservation officers said three calves had been born since Saturday in the remote Panther Valley on the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains and that seven more were expected.

Western Alberta is dealing with unseasonably cold spring weather, but Bill Hunt, resource conservation manager for Banff National Park, said the calves were well-equipped to deal with harsh conditions.

"Last night, we had 2 to 3 feet (60 to 90 centimeters) of snow, but fortunately bison are very well-adapted, so these little calves drop out, get their legs straightaway, start nursing and do fine," Hunt said.

Parks Canada released a 16-strong herd of plains bison, including 10 pregnant females, in the country's oldest national park in February.

They are keeping them under observation until summer 2018, when the animals will be released into the full 460-square-mile (1,189-square-kilometer) reintroduction zone after the females calve again next spring.

Bison herds of up to 30 million animals once migrated freely across North America. The shaggy, hump-shouldered animals, also widely known as buffalo, were nearly hunted to extinction in the late 19th century. Rangers estimate that bison have not grazed in Banff National Park since before it was established in 1885.

Read more. <https://www.voanews.com/a/bison-births-first-banff-national-park/3825951.html>

Baby bison keep Fermilab herdsman hopping

(From The Beacon News)

At the high-tech scientific center that is Fermilab in Batavia, Cleo Garcia has a unique job – herdsman.

Garcia is in charge of managing Fermilab's herd of bison on a day-to-day basis. Every spring, the herd is in the spotlight as baby bison are born.

The baby bison nursery is a big attraction at the particle physics laboratory in Batavia. Garcia said three calves were born in the past week. Expectant bison mothers will give birth any day to five more baby calves, he said.

He said a team is in charge of managing the herd. This time of year in particular is busy. "We closely watch that the calves start walking and are feeding," Garcia said.

He said it's also a busy time of year for families and wildlife enthusiasts eager to see the offspring.

"We have people that come every day to monitor the progress," he said.

The young bison nurse and rest throughout the day, he said. Occasionally they will burst into a sudden sprint with the mothers clustered around them.

Garcia said he helped on his uncle's cattle farm in Mexico so he is familiar with raising animals. "In many respects the bison are strong animals. They can endure the cold winters," he said. In all, 17 bison and three newborns live on a secured 77-acre gated community at the lab.

"They are enjoying the sunlight. Who can blame them," he said Monday.

Fermilab's bison herd is a tradition initiated by Robert Wilson, the laboratory's first director, as a symbol of the history of the Midwestern prairie. Wilson introduced the first American bison, a bull and four cows, to Fermilab in 1969.

The bison are given a dairy-protein feed and in a separate self-feeder they take a mineral supplement for their dietary needs.

Read more. <http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/aurora-beacon-news/news/ct-abn-fermilab-bison-st-0426-20170425-story.html>

Here's what Ted Turner wants you to know about his new south Charlotte restaurant

(From the Charlotte Observer)

The new Ted's Montana Grill at the burgeoning Waverly development near I-485 and Providence Road is not, you should know, the first business that Ted Turner has owned in Charlotte bearing his name.

"I once owned a TV station here. The NBC station. Got \$20 million for it," said the 78-year-old billionaire, who indeed claimed the network's Charlotte affiliate – then WRET, for his initials: Robert Edward Turner – as part of his portfolio from 1970-1980. "That was the money that I needed to start CNN. Carried me for about six months till I got another loan."

The difference this time around is that Turner isn't using Charlotte as a stepping stone to bigger and better things. There were already 46 Ted's Montana Grills in 17 states – No. 47 officially opened at 4 p.m. Wednesday – and if this one finds success in south Charlotte's restaurant landscape, we'll likely see him double or triple down by bringing additional locations to other parts of the city down the road, he says.

Several of those 46 locations, by the way, are in the Southeast (including one at Durham's Renaissance Center, one in Tennessee, two in Virginia, and a whopping 13 in Georgia), so it's quite possible you're familiar with the concept.

If not? It can be summed up in one word: Bison.

"When I was a little boy, I read the books of how they were killed, from 30 million (in the 1500s) down to 200 (in the federal herd at Yellowstone National Park), almost extinct," said Turner on Tuesday night, fresh off a private jet from Atlanta and a fight with south Charlotte traffic, as he sat on his new restaurant's patio next to Ted's Montana Grill co-founder George McKerrow. "And I said, If I ever grow up and make some money, I'm gonna see if I can bring the bison back."

Read more here:

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/entertainment/restaurants/article146847984.html#storylink=cpy>

Twitter User Who Adopted Bison After NDSU Beat Iowa Has Baby Buffalo Named in His Honor

(From The West Fargo Pioneer)

FARGO—A baby bison in Jamestown has been named in honor of a popular Twitter personality who symbolically adopted another buffalo to celebrate Iowa's loss to North Dakota State University's football team.

The National Buffalo Museum in Jamestown, N.D., announced Tuesday that Carl the buffalo was born April 11. The American bison was named after Twitter user Fake Bo Pelini, the personality who symbolically adopted a bison for \$20 through the nonprofit Defenders of Wildlife shortly after the NDSU Bison defeated the University of Iowa Hawkeyes 23-21 in September.

To celebrate the victory, the National Buffalo Museum volunteered to name a bison in honor of Fake Bo Pelini, Museum Executive Director IlanaXinos said Wednesday. But when the museum told the Twitter user last September a baby bison would be named in his honor, he tweeted with his handle, @FauxPelini, "Could we name it Carl? Please."

Weighing in at 50 pounds, Carl was the first bison born this year from the museum's herd, which consists of 30 bison that reside in Jamestown. That includes Dakota Miracle, a rare white buffalo and offspring of White Cloud, the famous white buffalo that, according to Xinos, attracted an estimated 3 million visitors to Jamestown before she died last year.

Fake Bo Pelini is a parody account of Mark "Bo" Pelini, head football coach for the Youngstown State University Penguins. Fake Bo Pelini is a known Huskers fan—the real Bo Pelini previously coached for the Nebraska Huskers but was fired in 2014—and has more than 447,000 followers on Twitter.

Read more.

<http://www.westfargopioneer.com/news/4257129-twitter-user-who-adopted-bison-after-ndsu-beat-iowa-has-baby-buffalo-named-his-honor>

Perdue promises to support trade as he takes office at USDA

(From Supermarket News)

Sonny Perdue, sworn in Tuesday as the new U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, pledged to fight for farmers, consumers, food safety and the environment but takes office amid concern over trade and budget constraints that may be imposed on the agency and the interests it represents.

Food retailing groups including Food Marketing Institute, the National Grocers Association and producers like the United Fresh Produce Association have been supportive of Perdue's appointment and said they were anxious to work with the former governor of Georgia who grew up on a rural dairy farm and whose appointment was confirmed Monday by the U.S. Senate in an 87-11 vote. Purdue succeeds Michael Young, the acting deputy secretary since January.

President Obama's USDA Secretary, Tom Vilsack, resigned Jan. 13 and was briefly replaced by his deputy, Michael Scuse, until the new administration took office Jan. 20.

The secretary of agriculture oversees the USDA and its farm programs and can influence a myriad of issues important to food retailers including SNAP and WIC food assistance programs, food safety, country of origin and GMO labeling bills, and other policy.

"As secretary, I will champion the concerns of farmers, ranchers, foresters and producers, and will work tirelessly to solve the issues facing our farm families," Perdue said in an address to USDA employees Tuesday morning. "I am proud to have been given this opportunity and look forward to rolling up my sleeves and getting to work as we continue to move the USDA and our nation forward."

Purdue during his address in fact removed his jacket and tie and rolled up the sleeves of his dress shirt. "Y'all gotta know I was a farmer first," he said to applause. "We're gonna get comfortable, in our working clothes."

Meat Groups Cheer Purdue Confirmation

(From Meatingplace.com)

It was a long time coming, but the Senate finally on Monday confirmed former Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue as the new U.S. Secretary of Agriculture on a vote of 87 to 11.

Meat industry groups had largely supported Perdue from the time his name was first floated as a candidate and rushed to congratulate him in statements issued Monday evening.

"USMEF is pleased to see Secretary Perdue receive such strong, bipartisan support in the Senate, and we look forward to working with him to promote U.S. red meat products worldwide," said U.S. Meat Export Federation CEO Philip Seng in a statement. "Secretary Perdue's track record as governor and his recent testimony before the Senate leave no doubt that he understands the important role of international trade in enhancing the profitability of U.S. livestock producers and the entire U.S. supply chain, and that he is very committed to expanding U.S. exports.

There has been concern about how the Trump administration's withdrawal from the Trans Pacific Trade Agreement and its vow to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement would impact meat exports.

Calling it "a critical and rather uncertain time for agricultural trade," Seng went on to say, "USMEF is confident that Secretary Perdue will be a champion for U.S. agriculture and will help the Trump administration build strong relationships with key trading partners."

"Decisions made every day at the USDA have a significant impact on our ability to run our operations," said Craig Uden, president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. "We are excited to have a Secretary that comes from the industry, understands the complexities of our business, and is willing to stand up and fight for the hard-working men and women in rural America."

USDA To Launch New Study on Antimicrobial Use on Feedlots

(From The High Plains Journal)

In May, the USDA's National Animal Health Monitoring System, in conjunction with USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, will launch Antimicrobial Use on U.S. Feedlots, 2017, a new national study focusing on antimicrobial use and stewardship practices on feedlots with a capacity of at least 50 head.

The study represents a new data collection and reporting effort for NAHMS and was first proposed in the USDA's Antimicrobial Resistance Action Plan released in 2015. This plan specifically called for enhanced monitoring of antimicrobial use in food-producing animals. These activities will add to our understanding of antimicrobial use and stewardship in veterinary medicine and animal agriculture.

Objectives of the study follow:

Describe antimicrobial-use practices in feed and water on feedlots with a capacity of at least 50 head.

Estimate the percentage of feedlots administering and the percentage of cattle receiving specific antimicrobials in feed and water by reasons for use.

Provide baseline data on antimicrobial-use practices in place prior to implementation of FDA policy changes. This baseline can be used for evaluating trends over time.

Describe antimicrobial stewardship practices on U.S. feedlots.

Full text: <http://tinyurl.com/kvtr5uh>

Trace Investigation from Indiana Finds Bovine TB Infected Cow in Lake County Michigan

(From Michigan Dept. of Agriculture & Rural Development Press Release)

LANSING - A trace investigation from a bovine tuberculosis positive beef herd in Franklin County, Indiana, led to the identification of an infected cow in a small beef herd in Lake County, Michigan. The three-year-old cow was imported from the Indiana herd prior to that herd being found positive with bovine TB in December 2016.

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

"Every time a bovine tuberculosis herd is identified, the U.S. Department of Agriculture works to track all animal movements in and out of the infected herd, which can include animals that moved across state boundaries," said Rick Smith, DVM, assistant state veterinarian. "Whole genome sequencing, which is a specific genetic test for bovine TB, was used to confirm that the bovine TB found in the infected animal was same as the infected Indiana herd."

There are many types of bovine TB in the U.S. However, 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.

As a part of MDARD's response, a three-mile surveillance area has been established around the affected farm in Lake 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:

Monday, May 8, 2017, at 7 p.m.

Reed City High School

225 W. Church Ave., Reed City, MI 49677-1367

Source: http://www.michigan.gov/mdard/0,4610,7-125-1572_28248-410242--,00.html

Survey: 58% of consumers now more concerned about animal welfare

(From Sustainable Food News)

A new survey shows 58 percent of consumers agree that they are becoming more concerned about the treatment of animals raised for food.

"Consumer concern over animal welfare issues has reached critical mass in the meat and poultry industries, creating a new generation of challenges and opportunities," said David Sprinkle, research director for Rockville, Md.-based Packaged Facts. "This development, kindred to the organic movement, is readily apparent in the proliferation of overt product claims such as certified humane, cruelty free, and cage-free, along with linked claims such as antibiotic-free, hormone-free, or grass-fed."

The Packaged Facts survey completed last month asked respondents: "I am more concerned than I was a few years ago about the treatment of animals raised for food"

- Strongly Agree - 26 percent
- Somewhat Agree - 32 percent
- Neither Agree Nor Disagree - 28 percent
- Somewhat Disagree - 8 percent
- Strongly Disagree - 6 percent

However, the survey also showed that 48 percent of U.S. consumers strongly or somewhat agree that livestock animals are "treated appropriately under current practices and regulations. Only 21 percent strongly or somewhat disagree.

"I'm satisfied that animals raised for food are treated appropriately under current practices and regulations"

- Strongly Agree - 20 percent
- Somewhat Agree - 28 percent
- Neither Agree Nor Disagree - 31 percent
- Somewhat Disagree - 12 percent
- Strongly Disagree - 9 percent

The results are further examined in Packaged Facts' new report, [Animal Welfare: Issues and Opportunities in the Meat, Poultry, and Egg Markets](#), which shows that 53 percent of U.S. adults agree that meat and poultry is healthier if the animal was raised humanely.

The survey data also show that 49 percent of U.S. adults agree that increasing consumption of vegetarian sources of protein is better for the environment, and 21 percent of U.S. consumers report cutting back on red meat in the last few years.

Vegan Eating Isn't as Environmentally Friendly or Sustainable as You Think

(From Quartz.com)

The moral high ground of food just shifted a little bit.

Using biophysical simulation models to compare 10 eating patterns, researchers found that eating fewer animal products will increase the number of people that can be supported by existing farmland. But as it turns out, eliminating animal products altogether isn't the best way to maximize sustainable land use. Their work was published in *Elementa*, a journal on the science of the anthropocene.

The researchers considered the vegan diet, two vegetarian diets (one that includes dairy, the other dairy and eggs), four omnivorous diets (with varying degrees of vegetarian influence), one low in fats and sugars, and one akin to the modern American dietary pattern.

Based on their models, the vegan diet would feed fewer people than two of the vegetarian and two of the four omnivorous diets studied. The bottom line: Going cold turkey on animal-based products may not actually be the most sustainable long choice for humanity in the long term.

...the vegan diet wastes available land that could otherwise be used to feed more people.

Of course, this is not an argument to embrace a meaty diet. The study says striving for plant-based diets (with a little bit of meat on the side, at most) is the way towards environmental efficiency (in other words, using land more sustainably to produce more food).

The average US consumer today requires more than 2.5 acres (over two football fields) of land each year to sustain his or her current diet. That number decreases dramatically as you reduce meat consumption and add in more vegetables. Three of the vegetarian diets examined in the study would use less than 0.5 acres of land per person each year, freeing up more land to feed more people. So why not go whole-hog vegan?

When applied to an entire global population, the vegan diet wastes available land that could otherwise feed more people. That's because we use different kinds of land to produce different types of food, and not all diets exploit these land types equally.

Grazing land is often unsuitable for growing crops, but great for feeding food animals such as cattle. Perennial cropland supports crops that are alive year-round and are harvested multiple times before dying, including a lot of the grain and hay used to feed livestock.

Read more. <https://qz.com/749443/being-vegan-isnt-as-environmentally-friendly-as-you-think/>