



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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June 9, 2017

Ted Turner to Address IBC Closing Session

Ted Turner, the world largest; bison producer, is set to welcome the attendees of the 2017 International Bison Conference as he hosts the closing conference session at his Flying D Ranch near Big Sky, MT.

“We are pleased that Ted will be on hand to greet the IBC gathering, and to share his thoughts on the growth of the bison business over the past few decades,” said Dave Carter, executive Director of the National Bison Association.

The flying D event will wrap up the formal activities for the 2017 IBC. The event kicks off on July 4th at the 320 Guest Ranch near Big Sky, On July 5th and 6th, the conference activities will take place at the Big Sky Resort. Then, buses will carry the attendees to the Flying D for the closing session on the 7th.

Turner will be joined by Flying D Ranch Manager Danny Johnson in welcoming the IBC crowd. In addition, the group will hear a presentation from Laurie Demeritt, CEO of the Hartman Group consumer research firm, and from a panel of individuals focused on bringing new producers into the bison business.

More than 600 people have registered for the 2017 IBC. Conference registration remains open through June 20th.

Yellowstone Tour Sold Out

The tour of Yellowstone National Park, offered as an optional add-o activity for attendees of the International Bison Conference, has sold out.

“We are limited by the number of seats available on the buses we have arranged for the tour, and we have filled every seat available,” said Jim Matheson, assistant director of the National Bison Association.

People planning on staying in the Big Sky area following the July 7th closing event for the IBC won't lack for activities. Fly fishing, river rafting, horseback riding, and other activities are readily available in the Big Sky areas.

Last Chance for international Exposure at IBC

Monday is the deadline for anyone wanting to reserve advertising space in the official Program Guide for the upcoming International Bison Conference.

"We are producing a commemorative magazine for the IBC, and this is a great way for anyone connected with the bison business to get their message out to everyone attending," said Dave Carter, executive director of the National Bison Association. "As with past IBC programs, this publication will have a long shelf-life, with attendees taking it home as a souvenir of their Big Sky experience."

Advertising rates in the IBC Commemorative Program range for \$600 for a full-page, to \$125 for business card advertisements. Anyone interested in advertising should contact Dave Carter at david@bisoncentral.com.

Individuals and businesses signing up for sponsorships of \$2,500 and above will receive complimentary advertising in the program commensurate with the level of their sponsorship.

Bidding Opens on Two IBC Prizes

Even if you can't get to the International Bison Conference, you have an opportunity to bid on a couple of prizes being offered as a part of the IBC fundraising program!

An on-line auction launched this week will accept bids for the reproduction Shiloh Sharps 1874 Sporter No.3, valued at \$5,000; and a luxurious four-night getaway for two to Flathead Lake Lodge in Montana, valued at \$3,500. Bid online at <https://bradeenauction.hibid.com/catalog/103281/international-bison-conference-online-only-auction/>

The Shiloh Sharps Gun Co. crafted 15 unique reproduction 1874 Sporter No. 3 rifles specifically for the 2017 IBC. Each 45/70 caliber black powder cartridge rifle has a 30" full heavy octagon barrel, with semi-fancy wood, a traditional steel butt-plate, pewter trip, and full Buckhorn and Blade front. Each rifle is engraved with a full buffalo on the hammer side, and is individually numbered. The online auction is for # IBC015.

Flathead lake Lodge is located on the shores of one of the most spectacular lakes in North America. It has been rated in the top 2% best family vacations spots in America. In Montana, the lodge is the highest rated hospitality facility by the Mobile Travel Guide. The dude ranch has received national acclaim from *Better Homes & Gardens*, *Bon Appetite*, *Good Morning America*, *Sunset Magazine*, *Travel & Leisure* and was named Best of the Best by *Kilgore's Ranch and Resort Guide*.

Bradeen Auctions, in conjunction with the National Bison Association (NBA), is pleased to offer an Online Only Fundraising Auction for the 2017 International Bison Conference (IBC). The

auction is an online only format, with all bidding taking place online. There are two lots up for bids, one featuring a trip for two to Flathead Lake Lodge in Bigfork, MT in early September and the second lot featuring IBC Shiloh Sharp Rifle No. IBC012. This online only auction is currently open for viewing and bidding. The auction will begin to close on Thursday, July 13 at 6:00 p.m. MDT. This will be the final opportunity for fundraising for the IBC event and the last opportunity for supporters to enjoy a fantastic fall vacation or take home a commemorative rifle.

Registering and bidding for the online auction is very easy. You will need a credit card to get registered and set up an account in the system. The auction is available at <https://bradeenauction.hibid.com/catalog/103281/international-bison-conference-online-only-auction/>. At the top of the page you will see a button labeled "Login/New Bidder". This is where you will go to access your account (if you have previously registered with us) or set up your new account. Follow the prompts, enter your payment information and your account will be complete. You can then register for the IBC auction or any of the other auctions listed on the site.

When you place your bids, you can enter a "Max Bid" that will let the system bid on your behalf up to your maximum amount, thus letting you enjoy your summer without having to watch the computer screen to make sure you are in the lead on a lot! Outbid notices can be emailed directly to you so you can keep up on all the bidding action.

This online auction is an important fundraising opportunity for the 2017 IBC. Take a few minutes and get your account set up and place your bids! If you have questions or need assistance with your account, please contact Karen at auctions@bradeenauction.com or call 605-381-3738. Bid early, bid often and good luck!

Marketers' Foresee Tight Animal Supply, Continued Strong Sales

The major bison marketers in the United States and Canada predict continues Seventy five percent of the marketers' report that they are continuing to short their customers because of tight meat supplies. The remaining marketers report that the supply and demand situation is roughly in balance. And, 59% of the marketers participating in the survey said that consumer demand is continuing to grow at the current price levels. The other 41 percent reported that demand has leveled in the past year.

Two thirds of the marketers said that the supply of finished bison has dropped in the past year, and 58 percent predict that even fewer animals will be available for processing over the next 7-12 months.

Trim continues to drive the market, with 92 percent of the respondents reporting that demand for trim is exceeding their available supply. Slightly more than half of the marketers report that demand for middle meats is exceeding supply. And, two thirds say that they cannot fill the demand for pet food ingredients.

Fifty eight percent of the marketers believe that a young bull carcass price between \$4.76 and \$5.00/lb. is a sustainable level. Another 25 percent believe that a price between \$4.51 and \$4.75/lb. is sustainable.

The National Bison Association has conducted a twice-yearly survey of commercial marketers since 2012. The latest survey was conducted between May 10-20. The full survey results are available in the members' section at www.bisoncentral.com.

Experts: Shift brucellosis focus from bison to elk

(From the Jackson Hole News and Guide)

A committee of veterinarians and wildlife scientists is advising managers to turn their attention toward elk in the effort to reduce the transmission of brucellosis to cattle.

No silver bullet exists to eliminate the disease, though the Committee on Revisiting Brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Area recommends incrementally closing elk feedgrounds to help stem the spread of an expanding disease.

“The use of supplemental feedgrounds should be gradually reduced,” Washington State University professor Terry McElwain said in a May 31 presentation that aired online. “But it’s very important that this be done in a strategic, step-wise and science-based approach that should be undertaken by state and federal land managers.”

McElwain’s remarks were part of the unveiling of the first comprehensive study of brucellosis in the Yellowstone region since 1998. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine prepared the report at the request of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service office — the branch of the federal government that deals with livestock health threats and wildlife conflicts and disease.

An impetus for the agency’s interest is the disease’s continued spread.

Whereas brucellosis was confined to wild bison and feedground elk 19 years ago, it has since spread to elk throughout much of the ecosystem and, on 27 occasions, to domestic cattle and bison herds in Montana, Wyoming and Idaho.

McElwain called the growing prevalence among unfed elk herds and the re-emergence in captive animals a “cause for alarm.”

A bacteria-spread infectious disease, brucellosis can cause elk, cattle and other hosts to abort their firstborn offspring. Fetuses are in turn infectious and a vector for spread of the bacteria. The treatable disease can be contracted by humans and has implications for livestock producers whose herds become infected. All individuals in *Brucella abortus*-positive herds must be tested repeatedly, and animals that test positive are slaughtered.

Read more. http://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/environmental/experts-shift-brucellosis-focus-from-bison-to-elk/article_5943ff30-7a99-570b-b801-546a85b76cd2.html

Dakotas buffalo trail tour traces story of American bison

(From the Washington Post)

PIERRE, S.D. — From historical details of Native Americans' final great wild buffalo hunts to tales of the animal's rescue from near extinction, a new self-guided tour across 10 sites in the western Dakotas tells the story of the last stand of the American bison, the national mammal. The trail, which is accompanied by the tour book "Buffalo Trails in the Dakota Buttes" oriented toward history and nature enthusiasts, officially opens June 11. Starting in Hettinger, North Dakota, the route runs — at times across gravel or pasture roads — into South Dakota before returning north with an opportunity to see the Standing Rock Sioux's tribal bison herds.

"They're authentic places, and not only that, but most of them are unspoiled," said Francie Berg, the tour book's author. "There's one place where it's good to be able to roll under a fence."

Tens of millions of bison, also known as buffalo, once thundered across a range stretching from central Canada through the Great Plains and northern Mexico. After a century-long slaughter driven by commercial hunting for buffalo pelts, the population dwindled to a thousand or fewer near the end of the 1800s.

At the tour's second stop in North Dakota, visitors see the valley near Hiddenwood Cliff where the "Great Buffalo Hunt" began in June 1882 on the Great Sioux Reservation. According to the book, for the previous 15 years those grasslands were empty of buffalo as white hide hunters had pushed them west and most herds had been killed.

Read more. https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/travel/dakotas-buffalo-trail-tour-traces-story-of-american-bison/2017/06/06/c048e0a8-4af8-11e7-987c-42ab5745db2e_story.html

Public Input to Help Shape Management Plans for Montana Wildlife Refuges

(From Montana Public Radio)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was in Polson and Kalispell this week, seeking public input on a pair of management plans for wildlife refuges in northwest Montana.

About 15 people showed up to each meeting, hosted by Service staff, like Bernie Petersen, a regional refuge supervisor helping oversee the process.

"We're just in the state of gathering information from the public, of what they want to see, what they think is important to protect, and how they think we should be managing those resources," says Petersen.

The Service is drafting comprehensive conservation plans, or CCPs, and accompanying environmental analyses for two areas: one for the National Bison Range, and a separate CCP for the rest of the units within the refuge complex, including the Lost Trail, Ninepipe and Pablo National Wildlife Refuges.

The Service is required by law to develop a CCP for each refuge it manages. The plans will probably take about three years to develop and will guide management decisions for the next 15 years.

"Obviously there's been a lot of contentious issues at the bison range and that's why we wanted to do it as a separate CCP, in and of itself," says Petersen.

The National Bison Range currently does not have a CCP. That process was delayed due to a series of agreements between the Service and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes that allowed for co-management for some aspects of the bison range. Last year, the Obama administration proposed transferring management entirely to the Tribes while maintaining federal ownership. Earlier this year, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke reversed course and announced the Service would retain management.

Bernie Petersen, with the Service, says in developing the new management plans, the Service will consider a range of options that include tribal involvement.

"It could be anything from particular projects the tribe would help us with on the refuge," Petersen says.

Petersen notes the Tribes already conduct prescribed burns and manage some habitat on the refuge.

"Going to the other end of the scale, it could be any number of the programs on the refuge — visitor services program, biological program, maintenance program — any of those could be taken over by the tribe," he says.

Full Story: <http://mtp.org/post/public-input-help-shape-management-plans-montana-wildlife-refuges>

Helen the Blind Bison Becomes Nanny to 4-Month-Old Cow

(From NBC-4i)

SCIO, OR (AP) — The staff at an animal sanctuary in Oregon had tried all they could to find their blind bison named Helen a pasture pal.

They tried sheep, goats and a blind pig named Luke, but Helen was skittish around them all — until Oliver came around.

[The Statesman Journal reports](#) Helen has found a new friend in a 4-month-old calf, Oliver the cow. The two animals live at the Lighthouse Farm Sanctuary in Scio.

Oliver runs from the barn to join Helen in the pasture every morning, where they share meals, graze together and nap together in the sun.

Sanctuary executive director Gwen Jakubisin says she catches the two animals grooming each other, which is Helen's first experience expressing natural motherly instinct.

Jakubisin says Helen is basically Oliver's nanny.

Read more. <http://nbc4i.com/2017/06/08/helen-the-blind-bison-becomes-nanny-to-4-month-old-cow/>

What's With the Bison in Golden Gate Park?

(From KQED)

Take a stroll through San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, and you're bound to come across something interesting. There's a [pair of windmills](#) that look like they belong in the Dutch countryside, and through an elaborate gate you'll find the [oldest public Japanese Tea Garden](#) in the United States. But perhaps the wildest treasure in the park is the herd of six American bison. Seeing the animals in the park is unexpected, says Bay Curious listener Paul Irving. After all, bison aren't native to San Francisco, and they certainly stand out in today's urban setting. After years of cycling past the paddock, Irving asked Bay Curious:

"What's the story behind the bison in Golden Gate Park?"

The answer goes back hundreds of years.

In the 1500s, an estimated 30 million to 60 million bison roamed American prairies. They grazed all over the West, from northern Mexico up through Canada.

As European Americans expanded into the West, the bison's habitat was chopped up by railroads, or turned into farms. Imported cattle brought grazing competition and new diseases to the bison. But the greatest threat to bison was hunting. Bison meat was exported or eaten on the spot, skins were sent to commercial tanneries, and bones were ground up to make things like fertilizer and bone china

Read more. <https://ww2.kqed.org/news/2017/06/08/whats-with-the-bison-in-golden-gate-park/>

Badlands National Park To Add New Grazing Land For Bison Herd

(From Newscenter1.tv)

INTERIOR, S.D. - Badlands National Park launched a new Bison Stewardship Program on June 1 that will add 22,533 acres of new grazing land for their bison herd.

The park collaborated with the National Park Foundation, the World Wildlife Fund, the Defenders of Wildlife, the Nature Conservancy, and the Badlands History Association to implement the program. In just two weeks after the partnership was announced, The National Park Foundation and World Wildlife Fund raised more than \$513,754. The National Park Service added another \$475,000.

The added grazing land will expand the current land from 57,640 acres to 80,193. The new land will help contribute to the health and genetic integrity of the herd, add to the health of the prairie, and give visitors better viewing opportunities as well. With the funds, the program will add 38 miles of new fence, along with cattle guards.

Full text:

<http://www.newscenter1.tv/story/35578906/badlands-national-park-to-add-new-grazing-land-for-bison-herd>

Art Lander's Outdoors: Once upon a time, American bison was free-ranging native Kentucky species

(From Kentucky Forward)

During Kentucky's pioneer era, longhunters and early explorers feasted on buffalo steaks and roasts.

Herds were vast and had a significant impact on the land, grazing down vegetation as they traveled, and creating an extensive network of wide trails throughout the state. Many of Kentucky's buffalo trails served as primitive roads for early explorers, and eventually became state and federal highways connecting Louisville, Lexington, Frankfort and northern Kentucky.

Explorer Simon Kenton reported seeing more than 1,000 buffalo in the vicinity of Blue Licks Spring, on the south fork of the Licking River, in modern day Nicholas County.

In far western Kentucky, explorers found a vast grassland, teeming with buffalo, white-tailed deer, eastern elk and wild turkeys, the open lands maintained as "barren" prairies by frequent fires set by native Americans, to discourage woody vegetation and concentrate game.

The American bison (*Bison bison*), a native species in Kentucky, disappeared in the last 30 years of the 18th century, with the last report of a wild herd along the Green River in Hart County about 1820.

Historic Range

Historians believe bison extended their range as far east as Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee and the Carolinas, beginning about 10,000 B.C., as a result of over population in the Great Plains.

There are two subspecies, the plains bison, smaller in size and with a more rounded hump, and the wood bison, taller with a square hump.

The bison's historical range once extended from the boreal forests of Canada's far northwest, south to Mexico and east to the Atlantic Seaboard. Herds numbered in the tens of millions across the continent.

America's westward expansion into the grasslands west of the Mississippi River nearly caused the extinction of the plains bison in the 19th century. Herds were decimated through a combination of commercial hunting, shooting for sport, and the introduction of bovine diseases from domestic cattle.

But restoration efforts on public, private and tribal lands saved the buffalo from extinction. Today there are numerous herds on large, private ranches in the West, and at least four free-ranging, genetically-pure herds on public lands.

The largest buffalo herd on public land is on Yellowstone National Park, in Wyoming, Montana and Idaho, where the herd now numbers in excess of 3,500, descendants of some two dozen animals that remained there in 1902.

Buffalo Farming in Kentucky

In Kentucky, buffalo farming has grown steadily in recent decades. Steve Freibert has operated Wooded Ridge Bison Farm, in Port Royal, Ky., in Henry County, for the past 18 years.

He said demand for bison meat has increased by 20 to 30 percent in the last five years, in part because of consumer interest in local foods.

"It's low fat, low cholesterol, high protein," said Freibert. "Bison is very filling, and tastes like sweet beef."

Read more. <http://www.kyforward.com/art-landers-outdoors-once-upon-a-time-american-bison-was-free-ranging-native-kentucky-species/>

Animal Disease Traceability Program Releases Annual Movement Numbers

(From Lakefield Standard)

The Minnesota Board of Animal Health recently released the 2016 numbers for animal movements into and out of the state. The tracking, done annually, assists with the ongoing work of monitoring and responding to animal disease events.

"The flow of domestic animal movements within the state and across Minnesota's borders helps fuel our agricultural economy, which underscores the necessity to maintain a database of where they've been and when," said Dr. Stacey Schwabenlander, senior veterinarian in charge of the Board's traceability program. "If a disease of concern is discovered in a group of animals in Minnesota, we need to know where they came from and what other animals they had contact with so we can appropriately respond and contain the disease."

In 2016 there were 5.7 million domestic animals imported into Minnesota and 2.1 million exported, excluding domestic poultry, which was 49.5 million exports and 57 million imports. In 2014, the Board moved to a new electronic database to sort, store and easily search animal movement data. This database also maintains health records for some species, which increases the number of records that can be used for traceability. The Board works closely with the United States Department of Agriculture and other states to further enhance our country's Animal Disease Traceability program.

Full text:

<http://www.lakefieldstandard.com/Stories/Story.cfm?SID=65913>

NCAT Accepting Applications for Armed to Farm Training in New York

The National Center for Appropriate Technology and the Cornell Small Farms Program are bringing the week-long Armed to Farm (ATF) training to Queensbury, New York, from July 31 - August 4, 2017. ATF gives veterans and their spouses or farming partners an opportunity to see sustainable, profitable small-scale farming enterprises and examine farming as a viable career. ATF 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. The event is free for those chosen to attend; lodging, transportation to local farms, and most meals will be provided. Applications to participate are due by June 23, 2017.

Learn more at https://www.ncat.org/armed-to-farm-events/#ATF_NY_17

Consumers Increasingly Concerned about Animal Welfare

(From Meatingplace.com)

More than half of U.S. consumers (58 percent) are more concerned about food animal welfare than they were just a few years ago, according to market research firm Packaged Fact's recent report, "Animal Welfare: Issues and Opportunities in the Meat, Poultry, and Egg Markets in the U.S."

In the report, "animal welfare" encompasses key areas including housing, handling, feeding and slaughter.

Rising interest in animal welfare issues is due in part to consumers' increased concern about the safety of their food and the growing belief that if an animal is raised in healthy circumstances, then its meat and dairy products will be healthier, as well as better-tasting and more nutritious.

Although the common assumption that organic standards currently include animal welfare provisions is a misconception, organic foods such as grass-fed beef succeed precisely because of the consumer assumption that organic certification in meat, poultry and dairy case foods is inherently linked to animal welfare.

Consumers have different levels of understanding and trust when it comes to product claims associated with animal welfare. The Packaged Facts survey data reveal that 19 percent of consumers only have a general idea of what 'grass-fed' means, with another 19 percent reporting they don't have a good idea of what the term 'certified humane' means.

Only a minority of grocery shoppers (33 percent) view themselves as well-informed about claims such as hormone/steroid/antibiotic free, cage-free, free-range, pasture-raised, and certified humane. Nonetheless, nearly two-thirds of consumers agree that humane treatment of animals raised for food should be a societal concern and a regulatory issue.

Despite consumers' varying levels of understanding the relationships between organic brand foods and animal welfare standards, new standards are being shaped by next-generation consumer expectations.

More information and report purchase instruction are available on the Packaged Facts [website](#).