



## 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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**August 3, 2018**

### Select NBA Summer Conference Presentations Now Available Virtual Ranch Tour coming soon

The NBA is pleased to announce that select presentations from the 2018 summer conference are now available to members at <https://bisoncentral.com/publication/conference-presentations/>.

Special thanks to our video sponsor, Nebraska Bison/Good Life Premium Meats, for making this possible through their generous donation.

The NBA is working to post the very well received virtual ranch tour, which was filmed professionally and offers aerial tours of six Kansas bison operations. The film will be posted at <https://bisoncentral.com/production-resources/>.

### AAFCO Appoints Working Group on Buffalo/Bison Ingredient Definition

The Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) this week appointed a working group to consider developing new language to clarify the definitions of bison and buffalo when used as ingredients in pet products. The move to appoint a working group came during the Ingredients Definitions Committee meeting held during the AAFCO annual meeting in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

NBA Executive Director Dave Carter was invited to participate in the working group, which will be comprised primarily of state feed regulators and a representative of the FDA. The water buffalo industry will also be invited to have a representative on the working group.

The action came after the NBA Board of Directors earlier this year unanimously adopted a resolution asking that the pet feed regulations be amended to require water buffalo ingredients

to be fully identified as “water buffalo,” rather than just as “buffalo.” The use of the term buffalo in pet food often misleads consumers into thinking that those ingredients are derived from bison.

Carter addressed the AAFCO meeting in Florida and stressed that the clarification would provide customers with better transparency regarding the ingredients in their pet products. “There is also an issue of food safety,” Carter said. “If there was a recall, or if some pets died because of contamination in the water buffalo ingredients, all the public would hear is that there was a problem with the buffalo. That could be devastating to our produces.”

The working group will meet over the next several months and is tasked with developing a formal recommendation for the AAFCO Mid-Year meeting, scheduled in January.

## **Yellowstone Park superintendent: Man taunting bison was 'reckless, dangerous and illegal'**

*(From 7KBZK News)*

Officials at Yellowstone National Park said Thursday they are investigating an incident captured in a recent viral video of a man taunting a bison in Hayden Valley.

In a statement posted on Facebook, Superintendent Dan Wenk called the man's actions "reckless, dangerous and illegal.

"We need people to be stewards of Yellowstone, and one way to do that is to keep your distance from wildlife. Park regulations require people to stay at least 25 yards from animals like bison and elk, and 100 yards from bears and wolves. These distances safeguard both visitors and the remarkable experience of sharing a landscape with thousands of freely-roaming animals. People who ignore these rules are risking their lives and threatening the park experience for everyone else," Wenk said in the statement.

The video was posted by Lindsey Jones Tuesday evening. It's been shared with several media outlets and gone viral. As of Thursday afternoon, it had been viewed on Q2 more than 29,000 times.

The video shows a man in the road taunting a bison. At one point, the bison begins to charge the man, who quickly dodges out of the way.

Rangers said park visitors should tell ranger or call 911 if they witness behavior in the park that might danger themselves or the park.

Source: <http://www.kbzk.com/story/38802563/yellowstone-park-superintendent-man-taunting-bison-was-reckless-dangerous-and-illegal>

## **North Dakota rancher donates bison to Cheyenne non-profit**

*(From KGWN News)*

A North Dakota man is bringing his prize bison calf to Wyoming for a cause. Ernie Fischer, owner of the Bar 33 Ranch near Mandan, ND is bringing Donut the Bison to Terry bison ranch. The female bison will stay there to acclimate to the climate of Wyoming until she is sold at an auction in November.

The proceeds from that auction will go towards suicide prevention with Grace for 2 Brothers. Fischer says he doesn't have a personal connection, but that it is simply a need he wants to fill. "I'm coming from North Dakota, I'm doing it here." Fischer says, "Because it needs done." Fischer went on to say that if he can come from such a distance and donate a bison, then perhaps Cheyenne can step up and help the cause as well.

Source: <http://www.kgwn.tv/content/news/North-Dakota-rancher-donates-bison-to-Cheyenne-non-profit-489943381.html>

## **Custer State Park bison shot ... with paintball guns** *(From KOTV – ABC)*

The bulls at Custer State Park have an extra colorful mark this time of year.

"So every year we do an annual breeding bull survey. We currently have about 120 breeding aged bulls in the park and so it is the one time of year that we go out and see how many we have of each age class and we start to compare what we have to last year," says Mark Hendrix, Custer State Park resource manager.

With over 900 bison in the entire park, keeping track of the mobile creatures is pretty difficult.

"The paintball gun is just a way to mark them. As we are going through the herd we usually use a couple of pickup trucks with some park staff in it and it then once you paintball them we record their age," says Mark Hendrix, Custer State Park resource manager.

The bulls were also branded when they were calves with a year marker so the staff can count the number of differently aged bulls in this survey as well.

" There for a while we were keeping ten bulls a year. For the last few years, we've kept 15 bulls. You know, we can tell if we need a few more of the 2-year-olds bulls. We pick all of our breeding bulls at two and a half," says Hendrix.

Read more. <http://www.kotatv.com/content/news/Custer-State-Park-bison-shot--with-paintball-guns-489880491.html>

## **Recovery for the ages: Bison went from near extinction to a symbol of West** *(From The Cody Enterprise)*

Rick Wallen uses the acronym GOAT to describe the recovery of the American bison.

That stands for Greatest of All Time, and most recently has been applied to individual sports heroes.

Wallen, Yellowstone National Park's chief bison biologist, claims the species recovery of the bison is the top achievement in American history by scientists, wildlife managers and conservation-minded citizens in rescuing an animal from the brink of extinction. More impressive than the recoveries of the Yellowstone area grizzly bear, the black-footed ferret and the sage grouse, other animals recently and prominently declared great recovery success stories in Wyoming.

"I would argue that bison qualify for that GOAT status because their recovery occurred without the benefits provided by the Endangered Species Act," Wallen said.

From the stunning low of just 23 animals in the early 20th century, many thousands populate the United States now, including about 4,000 within Yellowstone's 2.2-million acres. The herd within these boundaries is the only genetically pure strain of the original American bison.

The bison, also called buffalo, is a unique species in American history, a keystone animal involved in complex ways with the settling of the West and the attempted extermination of the American Indian. But in the second decade of the 21st century the bison has assumed an exalted status as both a symbol of the nation and as a compelling tourist attraction.

In 2016, an animal that was nearly wiped from the face of the earth was granted enhanced stature when President Barack Obama anointed the bison the national mammal. Obama signed the designation proclaiming the bison the United States' first national mammal under the National Bison Legacy Act.

Read more. [http://www.codyenterprise.com/news/local/article\\_4fbca474-95c9-11e8-af05-83e294d457f1.html](http://www.codyenterprise.com/news/local/article_4fbca474-95c9-11e8-af05-83e294d457f1.html)

## **Yellowstone bison wanders into Idaho** **(From KIVI – ABC)**

Here's something you don't see very often, if ever: a wild bison running alongside the highway in Idaho!

Six On Your Side environmental reporter Steve Liebenthal was in eastern Idaho last week shooting several environmental stories, when he captured this rare footage of a large bull bison that wandered out of Yellowstone Park.

We spoke to the state veterinarian who says this is a rare occurrence, that is concerning to the Idaho

Department of Agriculture. The state vet says bison pose a risk to people... Who often get too close to the wild animals.... and straying bison could spread disease to cattle in the area.

State officials tracked the bison, and say it moved into Montana on Friday, the day after we spotted it just north of Island Park. Fish and Game says capturing a wild bison is extremely difficult, so when this happens they generally try to haze the animal back into Yellowstone

Read more. <https://www.kivitv.com/news/yellowstone-bison-wanders-into-idaho>

## **Risk assessment on Yellowstone bison could delay transfer** *(From The Bellingham Herald)*

A plan to transfer wild bison from Yellowstone National Park to an American Indian tribe in northeast Montana faces possible delay.

The park is holding 89 bison in quarantine corrals to certify they are free of the disease brucellosis before they can be transferred to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation.

The Bozeman Chronicle reported Thursday that Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk says it's uncertain if the transfer will happen this year as originally planned.

Wenk says the U.S. Agriculture Department is concerned the animals have not been in quarantine long enough to ensure they are disease free.

Agriculture Department spokeswoman Lyndsay Cole says a risk assessment of the quarantine program is underway.

Fort Peck tribal attorney Majel Russell says the tribes were left out of discussions about the animals.

Read more. <https://www.bellinghamherald.com/news/article215984120.html#storylink=cpy>

## **A Lonely Guarded Blind Bison Finds a Best Friend in a Young Jersey Cow at an Oregon Sanctuary** *(From Laughingsquid.com)*

or three years, a blind bison named **Helen** was at the **Lighthouse Farm Sanctuary** in **Scio, Oregon** without making a single friend. The guarded bovine was nervous around other animals and while she was living in a safe environment, it looked like Helen was doomed to a lone existence.

In February 2017, however, a **jersey calf named Oliver was born** and as soon as he was old enough to start exploring the farm around him, he did the impossible and **made friends with Helen**. Since that time, the two have **become absolutely inseparable** from one another. Additionally, Oliver given Helen the confidence to **make other friends** at the sanctuary.

Source and photos here. <https://laughingsquid.com/blind-bison-and-jersey-cow-are-best-friends/>

## **Plains Bison Now Roam Freely in Banff National Park** *(From Canada NewsWire)*

Today, we are pleased to announce that the Banff wild plains bison herd is now officially free-roaming. After being absent from Banff National Park for well over a century, the return of wild plains bison as free-roaming animals is a historic and cultural triumph.

On July 29th, 2018, the enclosed pasture in Banff National Park's backcountry that housed the wild plains bison was opened and the herd was successfully released. The Banff herd currently totals 31 bison and is comprised of 16 bison that were translocated from Elk Island National Park in 2017, as well as two generations of Banff-born calves (some of this year's calves have yet to be born).

For the next three years, Parks Canada will closely monitor the bison as they explore their new home within a 1,200 km<sup>2</sup> reintroduction zone in the remote eastern slopes of Banff National Park. Here they will interact with other native species, forage for food, and begin to fulfill their missing role in the ecosystem. At the conclusion of the reintroduction pilot project in 2022, Parks Canada will evaluate the success of the project to determine if long-term bison restoration is feasible in Canada's first national park.

Bison are an icon of Canada's history. They were an integral part of the lives of Indigenous peoples and Canada's pioneers, and they still have an important role in the culture of Indigenous peoples. In addition, plains bison were historically dominant grazers that helped shape the ecosystems of what is now Banff National Park. The restoration of wild bison in Banff returns a keystone species to the landscape, fosters cultural reconnection, inspires discovery, and provides stewardship and learning opportunities for residents and visitors.

## **Senate Names Nine Farm Bill Negotiators, Including GOP Leader**

The Senate's nine farm bill negotiators include Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who wants the legislation finalized next month, as well as a Democrat facing a tough re-election race this fall, Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota.

The slate of four Democrats announced Wednesday includes Sen. Sherrod Brown of Ohio, who also is seeking re-election in November, along with the Senate Agriculture Committee's ranking member, Debbie Stabenow of Michigan, and former Agriculture Chairman Patrick Leahy of Vermont.

In addition to McConnell (shown above), the five Republican conferees include Senate Agriculture Chairman Pat Roberts of Kansas, John Boozman of Arkansas, John Hoeven of North Dakota and Joni Ernst of Iowa.

All but McConnell, Ernst and Heitkamp were conferees on the 2014 farm bill. North Dakota will have its entire three-member congressional delegation represented on the conference committee.

A source familiar with how the nominees were selected said Minority Leader Chuck Schumer wanted Heitkamp included after her challenger, Rep. Kevin Cramer, was named among the [47 House conferees](#). Heitkamp's selection meant that Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., was left off the conference committee. Klobuchar was a conferee for the 2014 farm bill.

The Senate, then controlled by Democrats, had 12 conferees during development of the 2014 farm bill. They comprised seven Democrats and five Republicans.

In a joint statement, Roberts and Stabenow said “this strong group of Senate conferees knows how to work together on a bipartisan basis to get the farm bill across the finish line. We look forward to beginning the conference process so we can provide certainty to our farmers, families, and rural communities.”

McConnell reiterated his intent Wednesday to have a final version of the farm bill ready for President Donald Trump to sign by the end of Sept. 30, when many programs in the 2014 farm bill will expire. "I look forward to serving as a conferee myself and to finishing up the farm bill prior to its expiration," McConnell said.

McConnell has taken a personal interest in insuring that the final version of the bill includes provisions included in the Senate-passed version to legalize the production of industrial hemp. McConnell also is said to see the bill as important to his effort to retain control of the Senate. Roberts has said he hopes to schedule a meeting of the full conference committee in late August. He expressed confidence the Senate conferees could reach agreement with House Republicans on work requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

"I think we can come together," Roberts said Wednesday. "The paramount issue is to get this (bill) done. ... It's not quite a farm crisis yet, but it's damn close."

## **Delay Possible for Livestock ELD Mandate**

*(From DTN)*

U.S. Senator Deb Fischer, R-Neb., praised the Senate’s passage of her amendment that would extend the electronic logging device (ELD) waiver for livestock haulers by one year, while she continues working to make the hours-of-service (HOS) requirements more flexible.

Senator Fischer, a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee and the Senate Commerce Committee, has continued to fight for HOS relief and issued the following statement in a press release, “Today the Senate passed my amendment to delay electronic logging device requirements for livestock haulers for one year. With this extension, we will have more time to bring commonsense to these rules and provide additional flexibility.”

Senator Fischer worked closely with Senate Commerce Committee leadership, Chairman John Thune and Ranking Member Bill Nelson, to include her ELD amendment in the Minibus Appropriations bill that passed the Senate.

This new extension would replace the current deadline date of Sept. 30, 2018, for livestock and insect haulers. As for non-livestock agriculture haulers, the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) waiver for agriculture truckers expired June 18.

Steve Hilker, transportation committee chairman for the United States Cattleman’s Association (USCA), thanked Fischer for offering her amendment and her persistence on the issue for both ELD and hours of service rules for livestock haulers. “Current HOS rules were not written with

the needs of livestock haulers in mind, and therefore, offer very little flexibility when it comes to hauling live animals,” Hilker said.

“This one-year delay is needed because we still have not received the flexibility we have asked for from the FMCSA. We have the solution already drafted and introduced in Congress,” Hilker added.

Remember, the ELD and HOS actually intertwine, and thus are mentioned together when an ELD exemption is requested. Once the driving time expires when HOS are reached, the ELD doesn't shut the truck down, but it alerts the driver that they are violating the rule if they continue to drive. If they are found in violation, the truck and driver could face being taken out of service. The out-of-service criteria (OOSC) associated with the ELD mandate went in to effect on April 1, 2018, for anyone not exempt from compliance.

Full Story: <http://kticradio.com/agricultural/possible-eld-livestock-delay/>

## **West Virginia Gets Grant to Train Veterans in Agriculture**

*(From Associated Press)*

West Virginia has been awarded a \$400,000 federal grant to provide [agriculture training for military veterans](#).

The state Department of Agriculture says in a news release the grant from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs aims to [improve veterans' health](#).

The statement says the Hershel "Woody" Williams VA Medical Center in Huntington will train participants to pursue agricultural vocations while addressing their behavioral and mental health needs.

Department of Agriculture staff will provide production, business and market planning for the program.

West Virginia Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture program coordinator James McCormick says he wants the state to take the lead on agricultural initiatives for veterans.

Source: [https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/education/2018/08/02/west-virginia-gets-grant-to-train-veterans-in-agriculture/?utm\\_source=Agri-Pulse+Daily+Harvest+2018&utm\\_campaign=cd35d64397-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2018\\_08\\_03\\_08\\_27&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_6978e27d37-cd35d64397-48795109](https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/education/2018/08/02/west-virginia-gets-grant-to-train-veterans-in-agriculture/?utm_source=Agri-Pulse+Daily+Harvest+2018&utm_campaign=cd35d64397-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_08_03_08_27&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_6978e27d37-cd35d64397-48795109)

## **USDA Announces Streamlined Guaranteed Loans and Additional Lender Category for Small-Scale Operators** *Options Help More Beginning, Small and Urban Producers Gain Access to Credit*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the availability of a streamlined version of USDA guaranteed loans, which are tailored for smaller scale farms and urban producers. The program, called EZ Guarantee Loans, uses a simplified application process to help beginning, small, underserved and family farmers and ranchers apply for loans of up to \$100,000 from USDA-approved lenders to purchase farmland or finance agricultural operations.

A new category of lenders will join traditional lenders, such as banks and credit unions, in offering USDA EZ Guarantee Loans. Microlenders, which include Community Development Financial Institutions and Rural Rehabilitation Corporations, will be able to offer their customers up to \$50,000 of EZ Guaranteed Loans, helping to reach urban areas and underserved producers. Banks, credit unions and other traditional USDA-approved lenders, can offer customers up to \$100,000 to help with agricultural operation costs.

EZ Guarantee Loans offer low interest rates and terms up to seven years for financing operating expenses and 40 years for financing the purchase of farm real estate. USDA-approved lenders can issue these loans with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) guaranteeing the loan up to 95 percent.

More information about the available types of FSA farm loans can be found at [www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans) or by contacting your local FSA office.

## **Enhancement ideas for the Animal Disease Traceability framework (From Beef Magazine)**

"While APHIS [Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service] is confident that implementation of the basic Animal Disease Traceability [ADT] framework was successful, some of its parameters limit the progress of the program, and significant gaps still exist within current tracing capabilities," according to Animal Disease Traceability, a summary of program reviews and proposed directions from the State-Federal Animal Disease Traceability Working Group (ADTWG).

Among examples of the gaps:

Application of the official ID requirement only to livestock moving interstate creates significant confusion in marketing channels and enforcement challenges.

Use of visual-only, low-cost ID ear tags presents obstacles for collecting animal ID efficiently and accurately.

The traceability regulations do not include feeder cattle, which APHIS views as an essential component of an effective traceability system in the long term.

Some federally approved slaughter plants could improve collection of ID devices at slaughter and correlation of the devices to the carcass through final inspection.

Recommendations to ADT improvements are based on last year's program assessment, as well as input from nine stakeholder meetings held across the country that sought input on traceability objectives and how to accomplish them. Keep in mind that ADT stems from an industry-government development process that began in 2002.

Full text:

<https://www.beefmagazine.com/management/enhancement-ideas-animal-disease-traceability-framework>

## **Brown County case of bovine TB has state vet curious [SD]**

*(From Farm Forum)*

State officials are investigating the origin of a steer that tested positive for bovine tuberculosis last month in Aberdeen.

A young, red feedlot steer tested positive for a new strain of bovine tuberculosis during a routine slaughter inspection at DemKota Ranch Beef, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture report to the state's Animal Industry Board.

State Veterinarian Dustin Oedekoven said South Dakota has had other cases of bovine tuberculosis in the last year. They were in herds in two West River counties.

The strain of bovine tuberculosis found in Brown County is closely related to a strain that has been confirmed in Mexico, he said.

"We've found out from the National Veterinary Services Laboratory that the strain that was identified in that steer was not related to the cases we had in Tripp and Harding counties. Furthermore it has not been identified in the United States previously. It's a really strange presentation of bovine tuberculosis. The closest relative of this strain was in Mexico, which is not uncommon. That's where we see other related strains," Oedekoven said.

Since the steer was younger than 18 months, it was not required to have an identification tag.

"The group that went to slaughter that day was the last of a the group that was in that pen, and there were no other animals identified (with bovine tuberculosis) within that group," Oedekoven said.

"We don't know exactly which herd that steer came from. The feedlot owner had sourced animals from auction markets and there were multiple sellers. We're investigating those potential sales," he said.

Full text: <http://tinyurl.com/y8m7zpbo>