



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 31, 2018

Bison Ranchers Launch Petition to Stop Deceptive Use of 'Buffalo' on Food Products

Water Buffalo Meat Being Marketed in U.S. Labeled Only as Buffalo

Westminster, CO (August 29, 2018) – The National Bison Association this week launched an on-line petition asking the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service and the FDA to immediately develop new labeling policies to stop water buffalo products sold in the U.S. from being labeled only as “buffalo.”

The petition effort was launched after the National Bison Association learned of a growing number of retail stores carrying water buffalo meat that is labeled only as “Wild Buffalo” or “Free Range Buffalo.”

Dave Carter, executive director of the National Bison Association, said, “Our ranchers and marketers have worked hard over the past two decades to build a relationship with our customers that is built upon quality and trust. That trust is threatened by water buffalo products coming into the market disguised as bison.”

Carter noted that North Americans have been describing bison as buffalo for more than three centuries.

“The Buffalo Nickel, Buffalo Bill Cody, and Buffalo Soldiers are all terms that illustrate how deeply embedded the word ‘buffalo’ is to describe North American bison,” Carter said. “Customers deserve to know whether the products they are buying are bison or water buffalo.”

Three years ago, the National Bison Association asked the USDA and FDA to update its food labeling policies to require that any water buffalo products or ingredients be required to be fully listed as “water buffalo.” A delegation of bison ranchers has scheduled a meeting with the two agencies in Washington, D.C. next month to push for immediate action on that request.

“In the meantime, we want to demonstrate the public’s support for this important truth-in-labeling request,” Carter said. “That’s why we launched our on-line-petition.” People can access the petition by going to change.org and typing “water buffalo” into the search feature.

Carter noted that officials in charge of U.S. pet food labeling are already working on new rules to address similar misleading labeling in pet food and treat products.

“USDA and FDA need to follow the lead of the pet food regulators on this issue,” he said.

Source. <https://bisoncentral.com/press-release/bison-ranchers-launch-petition-stop-deceptive-use-buffalo-food-products/>

Water Buffalo in Bison Clothing is Deceptive by Any Measure

(Blog by Dave Carter)

Some three decades ago, the small cluster of bison ranchers—or “buffalo ranchers” as many called themselves—sprinkled around the United States and Canada were privy to one of the best-kept secrets in the American food marketplace. That secret: The animals under their care produced an absolutely delicious, healthy meat.

They were convinced that, once this secret was revealed, shoppers would rush to their doorsteps clamoring for bison meat. They expanded their herds, bought more land, and built new meat processing plants to prepare for that demand.

Then, they waited. And waited. They waited right until the bison market melted down because unsold bison meat filled the freezers.

The public doesn’t magically discover something as great as deliciously healthy bison meat. Introducing the great qualities of bison to the public was going to involve a lot of hard work.

The National Bison Association, bison meat marketers, regional associations, and individual ranchers rolled up their shirtsleeves and got to work.

The National Bison Association began promoting the flavor, nutritional and environmentally friendly advantages of bison meat. Commercial bison marketers began courting natural food retail chains and restaurants to add bison meat to their offerings. Media mogul-turned bison rancher Ted Turner teamed up with famed restaurateur George McKerrow to launch Ted’s Montana Grill, a new dining concept featuring a selection of quality bison offerings. Small gate-to-plate ranchers courted customers with bison meat samples on toothpicks handed out at farmers’ markets and craft fairs across the country.

Slowly, their perseverance began to pay off as a growing segment of the American public embraced bison.

Since 2011, bison ranchers and marketers of all sizes have enjoyed profitability and stability. That success is built upon a commitment to provide our customers with high quality meat from responsibly raised herds.

Now, that trust is being threatened by a sneak attack from imported water buffalo.

You read that right: *water buffalo*.

Read more here. <https://bisoncentral.com/water-buffalo-bison-clothing-deceptive-measure/>

Board Nominations Due Sept. 7

Friday, September 7th is the deadline for NBA members interested in running for election in Regions I, III, V and VII to submit nominations to the NBA office. The elections will be conducted from September 15 – 30.

According to the NBA bylaws, regional directors "shall be elected by a mail in, or electronic ballot during September of each year prior to the expiration of the regions' directors' terms. If after the initial ballot, no one person in any region has more than 50% of the ballots cast, then a run-off election will occur during November, involving the two persons having the most votes cast in the September balloting. In case of a tie, a coin will be tossed to determine the winner. Only active and lifetime members residing within a region may vote in each region's election." Regional directors are eligible to serve two two-year terms.

The directors elected in September will begin serving in January 2019.

In this election cycle, directors will be elected for two-year terms from Regions I, III, V and VII. The regions up for election for, and the states included are:

- Region I, representing AK, AZ, CA, HI, ID, NV, OR, UT, WA. Alan Douglass, the current director is eligible for re-election.
- Region III, representing MT, ND, SD. Mimi Hillenbrand of South Dakota is the current director and is eligible for re-election.
- Region V, representing NE, IA, MN, WI. Jeremy Allemann of Wisconsin, the current director, is eligible for re-election.
- Region VII, CT, DC, DE, MA, ME, MI, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT. Brian Grubb, the current director, is eligible for re-election.

Nominations for candidates to serve as regional director can be submitted to the NBA at david@bisoncentral.com.

State and Regional Associations to Gather for Biennial Meeting

With fall right around the corner, it's time once again for the state and regional associations to gather for discussion, fellowship and a little fun!

With the meeting slated for October 12-14 in Kansas City, Missouri, plans are for a leadership representative of each association to meet to discuss any issues they are dealing with as well as sharing information. Topics for this year's meeting will include creating a mentorship program that can be customized for each association and discussing succession planning. With a number of the associations experiencing turnover in leadership in the past few years, organizers felt that succession planning would be beneficial for everyone in attendance.

"I would encourage all associations to send a representative to this important meeting," notes NBA Communications Director, Karen Conley. "When I was working for Dakota Territory Buffalo Association, I attended several of these gatherings and found the information invaluable. Being able to take that back to the board of directors and share with the membership was truly a gift to

the association. The networking and sharing of ideas was a bonus. It is well worth the time and cost to be in attendance in Kansas City in October."

The meeting will be held at the Residence Inn-Kansas City Airport. Attendees will arrive on Friday, meet all day on Saturday with a group dinner that evening and wrap up any business on Sunday morning and then travel home that afternoon.

A block of discounted rooms is available through September 14 by clicking [here](#).

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After More Than 20 Years, Healthy Bison Herd on Yakama Reservation a Point of Pride

(From The Daily Chronicle)

In his work with bison, it takes a lot to rattle Darwin Sockzehigh.

"I'm backing up," he said calmly as a cow and her calf came thundering toward his truck.

Sockzehigh occasionally uses the big flatbed pickup to herd the bison he oversees in his role as a wildlife technician for Yakama Nation Wildlife Resource Management. But he wasn't going to get in the way of the pair that had become separated from the others as they moved through a gap from one pasture to another.

Especially this mother, who looked particularly tough. Massive and shaggy with one horn askew, she cast a baleful look back as she and her calf slowed to a walk in the distance.

"They're in pretty good shape right now," Sockzehigh said of the 125 adult bison, along with a dozen or so calves and yearlings owned by the Yakama Nation, noting they sold 19 to tribal members in March to thin out the herd and reduce the number of bulls.

Bison have roamed this Yakama Nation reserve near Satus Longhouse Road since 1995 after returning to Yakama Nation lands in 1991, when the tribe bought about a dozen from a member who had raised them.

"It was a hobby," Sockzehigh said. "It's an expensive hobby. A lot of work, too."

His job with the bison began in May, but Sockzehigh had extensive experience around America's national mammal, having helped his predecessor.

Read more. http://www.chronline.com/life/after-more-than-years-healthy-bison-herd-on-yakama-reservation/article_244f97ec-ab04-11e8-9543-ef7b81ff7472.html

Herd Of Bison Return To Steuben Co. Farm; Few Still Missing

(From WANE)

PLEASANT LAKE, Ind. (WANE) - A herd of bison broke loose from a rural Steuben County farm Sunday afternoon, and after several days, only a few still remain on the lam.

The Steuben County Sheriff's Department said several bison escaped from a fenced-in area of the Pleasant Lake Buffalo Farm at 1460 E. Johnson Lake Road, east of Pleasant Lake. Farm owner Cathy Sanders told NewsChannel 15 that 58 bison had breached a fence and were roaming on the property.

Sanders said she discovered the bison had gotten out when she got home from work Sunday. She said the bison are in mating season and she suspected the bulls were fighting and broke a fence down.

The Sanders worked throughout Monday to corral the animals, the sheriff's department said. The couple said "extensive efforts" were underway to ensure the safety of the public as they work to contain and return the herd safely.

A plane was being used to spot the bison by air. A portable corral had been brought in to get the animals into cattle wagons.

Read more. <https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/bison-escape-from-steuben-co-corral/1399321903>

Montana View: Don't Bully Yellowstone Bison

(From The Montana Standard)

An Oregon man who harassed a bison in Yellowstone National Park in July will be jailed through November, under a sentence handed down last week by a U.S. magistrate in Mammoth Hot Springs, Wyoming.

Park rangers and the U.S. court system take violations of park laws seriously, as they should. Raymond Reinke's offenses were egregious, dangerous and potentially life threatening – to himself, the public and to iconic Yellowstone wildlife.

Park law enforcement encountered the 55-year-old Pendleton, Oregon, man on July 28 in Grand Teton National Park where he was cited for public intoxication and interfering with law enforcement. He spent a night in jail and posted a \$500 bond to be released.

On July 31, Reinke turned up in Yellowstone Park at a bison jam where he got out of his vehicle, walked up to a bison on the road and started waving his arms at it, apparently trying to act like a bull fighter. His antics were captured on video that went viral.

Read more. https://mtstandard.com/opinion/editorial/montana-view-don-t-bully-yellowstone-bison/article_8689ace2-e97e-5d1a-a816-e3d4da4b29d8.html

5 Places Where You Can Get A Snapshot Of A Wild Bison

(From The Honolulu Star Advertiser)

At the turn of the century, America's wild bison — which at one time numbered 60 million — had dwindled to about two dozen animals. Strong, sturdy and resilient, they've made a comeback, thanks to public and private conservation efforts.

On the range, in refuges and national parks, this symbol of our wildlife heritage is magnificent to observe.

Here are five places where you can snap a shot of this American icon — with a zoom lens:

Custer State Park, S.D.

Each year in late September the public is invited to hear the thunder of hooves and photograph the moment as experienced riders corral a herd of 1,300 buffalo during the state's annual Buffalo Round Up and Arts Festival. Considered a critical management tool in maintaining a healthy herd, the buffalo are tested, branded and sorted. The event includes a pancake feed, Western and Native American entertainment and the chance to peruse fine art and crafts from more than 150 vendors. Check the web site for specific dates and details.

Read more. <http://www.staradvertiser.com/2018/08/25/travel/briefs-travel/5-places-where-you-can-get-a-snapshot-of-a-wild-bison/>

Rare White Bison Found Deceased in Jamestown

(From myndnow.com)

A rare white bison at the National Buffalo Museum herd in Jamestown has died.

This year-old calf was introduced to the herd in June.

Staff says it had a hard time being accepted by the other bison - and it was usually seen alone. After not being seen for some time - staff went to look for the bison and found its remains on Tuesday.

The bison was a descendant of White Cloud - another albino bison that lived at the Museum for over 19-years.

Source. <https://www.myndnow.com/news/bismarck-news/rare-white-bison-found-deceased-in-jamestown/1407776282>

Statement of Secretary Perdue on U.S.-Mexico Trade Agreement

(From USDA Press Release)

Washington, D.C.- U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today issued the following statement regarding the announcement on trade between the United States and Mexico:

"President Trump is delivering on his promise to renegotiate the old, outdated North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), making good on his pledge to strike the best deals possible for all of our economic sectors, including agriculture. The President has achieved important improvements in the agreement to enable our agricultural producers to be treated more fairly.

This breakthrough demonstrates that the President's common-sense strategy of holding trading partners accountable will produce results. President Trump and Ambassador Lighthizer, our U.S. Trade Representative, are to be congratulated for their determination, vision, and leadership.

"The agreement specifically addresses agricultural biotechnology to keep up with 21st Century innovations. And we mutually pledge to work together with Mexico to reduce trade-distorting policies, increase transparency, and ensure non-discriminatory treatment in grading of agricultural products.

"This is nothing short of a great victory for farmers and ranchers, because locking in our access to Mexican markets is critical to supporting farm income and strengthening rural communities. Mexico has historically been a great customer and partner and we are happy to have this resolved for our agricultural producers.

"We now hope that Canada will see the need to settle all of the outstanding issues between our two nations as well, and restore us to a true North American Free Trade Agreement."

Source:

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAOC/bulletins/208f77f>

\$25,000 Up For Grabs For College Agriculture Advocates

College Aggies Online scholarship competition kicks off next month

August 28, 2018 – College students are lining up for the chance to win more than \$25,000 in scholarships while advocating for agriculture in the Animal Agriculture Alliance's 10th annual College Aggies Online (CAO) scholarship competition which kicks off September 10. Undergraduate students, graduate students and collegiate clubs can sign up at <https://collegeaggies.animalagalliance.org>.

The nine-week competition empowers students to advocate for agriculture as industry mentors offer expertise and guidance. The competition includes an individual and club division. Individuals develop communication skills by tackling weekly challenges and creating social media content. Clubs host events, such as farm tours, food drives and campus booths, inviting their peers to have a conversation about agriculture. Last year, students reached 4.4 million people on social media and more than 16,000 people at club events.

"College Aggies Online was a fantastic opportunity to gain real, hands-on experience in advocating for agriculture, while stuck in the mundane routine of graduate school," said Erica Ballmer, 2017 CAO first place winner. "I am thankful for everything I learned throughout the competition and look forward to applying the skills I gained in my future career."

Dairy Management Inc. is the platinum sponsor of the competition. "It's more important than ever that young people become connected to where their food comes from and the College Aggies Online program is a great way to empower agriculture communicators to do just that," said Lisa McComb, DMI senior vice president of Communications and Animal Agriculture Alliance Board member. "We're thrilled to support this program that will help make that farm-to-fork connection while also providing valuable scholarship funds."

As part of DMI's sponsorship, Don Schindler, senior vice president of digital initiatives, will serve as one of the program mentors and webinar hosts for the individual division. For the club division, DMI is sponsoring the "Undeniably Dairy" challenge, which encourages students to hand out chocolate milk at an athletic event as a recovery drink, give away pizza and tacos at campus events and talk with their peers about dairy farming and agriculture. Students are encouraged to have dairy farmers participate in the event as a way to bring the farm closer to campus. This is the fifth year DMI has sponsored CAO.

CAO would not be possible without the generous support of DMI and other 2018 program sponsors including: Seaboard Foundation, National Pork Industry Foundation, Cooper Family Foundation, Diamond V, Monsanto, National Corn Growers Association, National Pork Board, Alltech, Vivayic, Ohio Poultry Association, Domino's Pizza Inc., National Chicken Council and Pennsylvania Beef Council.

USDA Sees Another Big Drop In Farm Income For 2018

(From AgriPulse)

USDA today forecast net farm income for this year at \$65.7 billion, up from a February projection but down \$9.8 billion, or 13 percent, from 2017, when the broad measure of farmland profits increased nearly 23 percent.

The department's Economic Research Service said that in inflation-adjusted 2018 dollars, net farm income is expected to drop \$11.4 billion for the year, after increasing \$13 billion (20.3 percent) in 2017. If realized, inflation-adjusted net farm income for 2018 would be just slightly above 2016, which was its lowest level since 2002.

The [report](#) indicated net farm income forecast for this year will be \$6.2 billion higher than forecast in February. Carrie Litkowski, a senior economist at ERS and the agency's farm income team leader, said the revision was primarily due to more and better data.

The earlier 2017 figure, she said, "was a forecast; that was converted to an estimate," she said during an ERS webinar following the report's release. The farm income report will be revised again in November.

The report also forecast a \$12.4 billion (12 percent) drop in net cash farm income to \$91.5 billion. That figure encompasses cash receipts from farming as well as farm-related income, including government payments, minus cash expenses. Net farm income is a more comprehensive measure that incorporates noncash items, including changes in inventories, economic depreciation, and gross imputed rental income of operator dwellings.

ERS noted that its 2018 forecasts, including net farm income, net cash farm income, and government payments, do not include payments under the recently announced Market Facilitation Program, which was designed to assist farmers in response to trade disputes. It said its forecasts are developed assuming a continuation of existing policies and that it's too early to tell how many producers would complete the MFP enrollment process and receive a payment in 2018 versus 2019.

U.S., Canada Closing In On Trade Deal, Reports Say

U.S. and Canadian officials are at a critical stage in talks toward a trade deal to replace the 24-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement, with a resolution expected as early as today, according to several media reports.

Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland has been in Washington since Tuesday for negotiating sessions with U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer. Freeland is seeking a three-country deal by Friday, while President Donald Trump has said he could proceed with Mexico alone, the National Chicken Council said in a [summary](#) on its website.

Mexico and the United States announced a bilateral deal on Monday following a year of talks. NAFTA, including Canada, accounts for over \$1 trillion in annual trade between the three countries.

On Thursday, Freeland told reporters: "We continue to be encouraged by the constructive atmosphere that I think both countries are bringing to the table," ABC News [reported](#). A deal by Friday would provide a 90-day window for Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto to sign the pact before leaving office Dec. 1, the report said.

Both President Donald Trump and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Wednesday made their most optimistic comments yet on the year-old negotiations, the *Toronto Star* [reported](#). Both Trump, at the White House, and Trudeau, in Ontario, told reporters that they were aiming for a Friday deadline to work out an agreement.

According to the *Star*, the deal could involve Canada giving the U.S. more access to its tightly protected dairy market while the U.S. would agree to keep the Chapter 19 system for resolving certain tariff disputes.

USDA Announces Details of Assistance for Farmers Impacted by Unjustified Retaliation

(From USDA Press Release)

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today announced details of actions the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will take to assist farmers in response to trade damage from unjustified retaliation by foreign nations. President Donald J. Trump directed Secretary Perdue to craft a short-term relief strategy to protect agricultural producers while the Administration works on free, fair, and reciprocal trade deals to open more markets in the long run to help American farmers compete globally. As announced last month, USDA will authorize up to \$12 billion in programs, consistent with our World Trade Organization obligations.

"Early on, the President instructed me, as Secretary of Agriculture, to make sure our farmers did not bear the brunt of unfair retaliatory tariffs. After careful analysis by our team at USDA, we have formulated our strategy to mitigate the trade damages sustained by our farmers. Our farmers work hard, and are the most productive in the world, and we aim to protect them," said Secretary Perdue.

These programs will assist agricultural producers to meet the costs of disrupted markets:

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will administer the Market Facilitation Program (MFP) to provide payments to corn, cotton, dairy, hog, sorghum, soybean, and wheat producers starting

September 4, 2018. An announcement about further payments will be made in the coming months, if warranted.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will administer a Food Purchase and Distribution Program to purchase up to \$1.2 billion in commodities unfairly targeted by unjustified retaliation. USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) will distribute these commodities through nutrition assistance programs such as The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and child nutrition programs.

Through the Foreign Agricultural Service's (FAS) Agricultural Trade Promotion Program (ATP), \$200 million will be made available to develop foreign markets for U.S. agricultural products. The program will help U.S. agricultural exporters identify and access new markets and help mitigate the adverse effects of other countries' restrictions.

Full text:

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAOC/bulletins/208ff5c>

Organic lawsuit Against USDA Can Proceed

(From Capital Press)

A U.S. district judge has ruled a lawsuit against USDA over its withdrawal of the Organic Livestock and Poultry Practices rule can proceed. The rule included new standards for raising, transporting and slaughtering organic animals.

The lawsuit, brought by seven nonprofit organizations led by the Center for Food Safety, seeks to reinstate the rule on the grounds USDA's action violates the Organic Food Production Act and failed to comply with the Administrative Procedure Act.

USDA moved to dismiss the lawsuit, arguing plaintiffs do not have legal standing.

U.S. District Judge Richard Seeborg last week ruled the plaintiffs do have legal standing, but sided with USDA on two other issues.

He dismissed, without leave to amend, the plaintiffs' claim that USDA did not have the authority to withdraw the rule based on alleged costs to producers.

He also dismissed their claim that withdrawing the rule without involving the National Organic Standards Board exceeded USDA's statutory authority. He did, however, give plaintiffs leave to amend that claim.

Full text:

<http://www.capitalpress.com/Organic/20180827/organic-lawsuit-against-usda-can-proceed>

Amazon's Whole Foods Stealing Trader Joe's Customers, Says Report

(From sustainable Foods News)

Both Walmart and Kroger Co. have fully bounced back from what many call the "Amazon scare," which occurred 12 months ago when e-commerce giant Amazon [acquired Whole Foods Market](#), the world's largest organic and natural grocery chain, for \$13.7 billion.

However, as a [report by Bloomberg](#) points out, things may not be looking so rosy for another retailer.

"The threat from Amazon is far more pronounced for Trader Joe's Co. and other regional urban supermarkets," the *Bloomberg* report said. Trader Joe's declined to comment.

The report said concerns about Amazon's move into the brick-and-mortar grocery sector "have subsided as investors and analysts came to recognize that it will be years before Amazon becomes a major player in the \$800 billion industry."

"Still, there are already hints that the fabled Amazon effect is boosting Whole Foods, which had been losing ground to rivals as organic food went mainstream," the report said. "In more than 100 places around the U.S., the upscale grocer gained foot traffic at the expense of Trader Joe's, Walgreen and Dollar Tree Stores in the past year, according to Sense360, a Los Angeles company that tracks location data from millions of smartphone users."