



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 22, 2018

See You in Kansas City!

The NBA looks forward to seeing nearly 250 NBA members next week in Kansas City, Missouri.

We have an exciting few days lined up for you next week, please see the following important information to make the most of the conference!

Please note, we do not have a shuttle arranged for the Friday ranch tour due to lack of demand as most will have their own transportation. We will have a ride-share sign up sheet at the registration desk in which those with extra seats can carpool with those who need a ride. There is also a Hertz rental car agency in the hotel lobby, if folks need to rent transport.

Note, while the weather in Kansas City is unpredictable, the 10 day [forecast](#) is looking good, though quite hot. Please note, we'll largely be in our comfortable, air conditioned [hotel](#), but please dress accordingly for our outdoor Thursday luncheon as well as the Friday ranch tour, which is a working bison operation with very little shade and is expected to hit the upper 90s.

Dress - Our summer conferences are casual events, please dress accordingly. Again, we'll largely be inside the climate controlled host hotel, but you'll want to get out and explore this great part of Kansas City! The Thursday night benefit auction dinner is our "banquet" dinner, when some attendees will dress it up a bit.

Breakfast - Please note, due to the plethora of breakfast options in and around the hotel, we do not serve breakfast. There are sit-down breakfast options in the hotel lobby, and the hotel connects the Crown Center, which has a plethora of dining options, as well as Panera Bread, which is adjacent to the hotel, for a fast breakfast option. See dining options [here](#).

Benefit Auction and Raffle - We have some great items for this year's summer conference raffle and benefit auction, both of which raise crucial funds to help the NBA operate. Please be sure to bring your benefit auction item as well, to help make this a successful event. We'll have a beautiful handmade bench and a very cool bison area rug up for raffle. We'll also have some exclusive items for the benefit auction, including a donated Garden City/Bufalo Preserve/C.J. "Bufalo" Jones commemorative Henry .22 rifle.

Starter/Expansion Herd Auction - And don't forget about the 7 head, Kansas Buffalo Association starter/expansion herd! This is an amazing opportunity for both the budding buffalo rancher as

well as the seasoned producer with the herd being auctioned off at the Thursday evening Benefit Auction. This hand-picked herd will consist of six heifer calves and one bull calf. The animals will be selected from the seven donating ranches later this fall and will be grouped together at one ranch and made available to the buyer around the end of November or the beginning of December for pickup. Featuring some unique genetics, these calves have the potential to get a new producer started in the bison business or will make an excellent addition to any existing herd. Don't miss out on this amazing opportunity!

Please note, as most staff will be at the conference next week, there will not be a Weekly Update published, and shipping will be delayed until Monday, July 2nd.

Spotlight on Our Summer Conference Sponsors and Committee

It's no small task to host a conference and line up sponsors for everything from meat to nametags to attendee gifts. As a national organization, it's even more complex and we are very grateful for all our generous sponsors and donors.

The past few weeks, we have spotlighted our Starter/Expansion Herd donors. Today, let's take a look at our other sponsors and donors who help with all the "nuts and bolts" that go into making the conference complete.

Meat for the banquet/Benefit Auction is being sponsored by our friends at Durham Ranch. The Wednesday night supper meat is coming from the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma and our Wednesday and Thursday lunch sponsors include Pneu-Dart, Intertribal Buffalo Council and Black Kettle Buffalo.

Those really cool hotel room keycards are sponsored by Western Buffalo Company, while the conference bags (these are going to be awesome!) are being provided by Pneu-Dart. Nametag lanyards are sponsored by BestBison with Harper Cattle and Bison sponsoring the nametag badges.

Video production for our Virtual Ranch Tour is being brought to us by Nebraska Bison. Other sponsor partners include Buffalo Gold, The Buffalo Wool Co., North American Bison, LLC, Longreach Buffalo Company, LLC, Buffalo Trace Whiskey and the National Buffalo Museum. Last but certainly not least, our host for the conference this year is the Kansas Buffalo Association. This group has pulled out all the stops to make this trip to Kansas City one to remember. They are the "boots on the ground" for us and are crucial in taking the lead for all things local. Thank you to Summer Conference Committee members Dick Gehring, Reese Gehring, Ryan Hanna, Ryan Brady, Keith Yearout, Ryan Mahlandt, Bruce Gaskill and Stuart Schrag.

We cannot thank these partners for the important role they play in making our conferences successful. Please take time to thank these sponsors and volunteers and let them know how much we appreciate them!

NBA Attends National Buffalo Museum Fundraiser in Jamestown, ND

Jamestown, North Dakota is home to the National Buffalo Museum and the World's Largest Buffalo! The concrete behemoth weighs in at 60 tons and is 26 feet tall and 46 feet wide. It is visible from I-94 and certainly catches your eye! But that was not the reason for the gathering this past week. Patrons and supporters in Jamestown and the surrounding area gathered for the 25th Annual Fundraising Auction for the Museum.

With over 600 people in attendance, it is the largest fundraising event in Jamestown. Supporters enjoyed a fabulous prime rib meal (bison, of course!) and bid on silent auction items, purchased raffle tickets and then had the opportunity to bid on a wide array of items during the live auction. Bidding was spirited in the festive atmosphere and museum Executive Director, Ilana Xinos, reports that the net raised is approximately \$70,000 (reconciliation is still taking place at this time).

NBA Communications Director, Karen Conley, had the opportunity to visit with a number of bison producers in attendance as well as many of the museum supporters. With the event coinciding with Bison Hump Day, a lot of Hump Day sunglasses were distributed along with lots of photos being taken. Conley visited with the emcee for the evening, Casey Stoudt, owner of RM Stoudt, Inc., a vehicle dealership in Jamestown, and shared with him about the Bison 1 Million campaign, a bit about how Hump Day plays into that and the NBA's push to "Eat More to Restore More" as we work to grow the herds. Lo and behold, when Stoudt hit the stage to get things started, he graciously sported his Hump Day sunglasses and told the crowd about the Bison 1 Million initiative and encouraged them to "Eat More to Restore More"! What a great opportunity to share our message with other bison enthusiasts!

A big thank you to Xinos and all the volunteers who support the museum and work throughout the year to plan this event.

For those of you who have never been to the museum, we did a Facebook live the following morning and it can be seen on the National Bison Association's Facebook page. It gives a look inside the museum and what it has to offer. Make sure to check it out!

Absentee Bidding Available on Starter/Expansion Herd

For those of you who will not be able to attend the Summer Conference in Kansas City, MO later this month, the NBA will be offering absentee bidding on the Starter/Expansion Herd that will be sold at the Benefit Auction on Thursday evening, June 28.

To be eligible to bid on this exclusive offering, we are asking that you pre-register by Wednesday, June 27. Be prepared to give us your maximum bid and we will carry your bids to the auction and bid on your behalf. When you register to bid, please have the maximum bid amount, your contact information and method of payment information ready and we will get you signed up!

This is a fantastic opportunity to take home some unique genetics to add to your herd. Don't miss out!

To sign up for absentee bidding, please contact Karen at (303) 292-2833, extension 301 or email her at Karen@bisoncentral.com.

2018 Bison Food Booklet Available – Order by July 1 to Save!

Back by popular demand, the Bison Food Booklet, inserted into the July Bison World, will again be offered as a stand-alone publication suitable for promotional use and distribution to consumers and food enthusiasts! These booklets are perfect for handing out at farmers' markets or at your on-farm store. They also make great promotional tools for your food truck or trade-show booth.

The 16-page booklet contains nutritional, cuts, cooking and preparation technique information as well as cooking trends, a restaurant profile and plenty of delicious recipes.

Pre-order pricing will be \$1.50 per booklet until July 1. After that, the cost will be \$2 each. If you are interested in ordering booklets, please email barb@bisoncentral.com with your information and the number of booklets you would like to order.

Show Us Your Farmer's Market Promotions

It's the season of Farmers' Markets and many of our members have dynamic trailers and displays they use to promote their products at these venues. We would like to showcase what our members are doing and share their innovative set-ups on our social media platforms. Send photos and a brief description of your Farmer's Market set-up and we will highlight them in the coming weeks, giving you, the participants, additional recognition on our social media sites. Tell us the name you use to market products and where you are located and where you typically set up and we'll give you a shout out! Send photos and information to Karen@bisoncentral.com.

Prices Holding Steady for Wholesale Bison

Wholesale prices for dressed bison carcasses in softened slightly from April but continue to hold steady compared to the past year.

Carcass prices for young bulls averaged \$489.88/cwt. In May, which was \$2.98/cwt lower than in April, but \$7.24/cwt. Higher than the previous May. Heifer carcasses averaged \$468.65/cwt., which was \$2.92 lower than April and \$8.72/cwt. Lower than May 2017. Aged bulls averaged \$409.47/cwt., while aged cows averaged \$401.40/cwt.

Year-to-date slaughter of bison under federal inspection is 22,415 head, which is slightly behind last year's 4,490. However, processors are reporting heavier carcass weights this year, compared to 2017. Bulls comprise 59 percent of the younger animals processed under federal inspection to date. That compares to the nine-year average of 58 percent.

The USDA Monthly Price Report can be found here:
https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/nw_ls526.txt

The NBA's five-year price tracking report can be found in the members' section of www.bisoncentral.com, or just click here.

USDA Announces Purchase of Bison Meat

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) this week announced that it had awarded contracts to purchase up to 1.2 million lbs. of lean frozen ground bison for distribution to Federal food nutrition assistance programs for orders placed from September 16, 2018 through September 30, 2019.

The contract was awarded to A contract was awarded to Rocky Mountain Land and Cattle 3640 South Yellowstone Highway Idaho Falls, ID. The purchase price for the frozen ground bison is \$8.98/lb.

Details on the bison purchase contract are available here:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2000005389%20-%20PCA%20Report.pdf>

Further information can be obtained from the Contracting Branch, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 3522-South Building, Washington, DC 20250, telephone (202) 720-4517 or the website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/cp>.

No Weekly Update Next Week

It's not that we don't want to let you know what's happening, but most of the NBA staff will be at the summer conference next week. So, the next weekly Update will be on July 6th. Also shipping will be delayed until Monday, July 2nd.

Can Bison Help Save Oak Savanna? Scientists Look to Anoka County Herd to Find Out

(From The Minneapolis Star Tribune)

Not for a century have such thunderous hoofs struck the tree-studded grasslands of northern Anoka County.

Under clear June skies, a herd of young bison barreled from trailers and tore through fields stippled with oaks and wildflowers while scientists nearby hugged the fence of the grassy enclosure. Some snapped photos. Others seemed too gobsmacked to move. At least one wiped away tears.

A shared question hung in the air: Could these burly newcomers become the heroes of a landscape in peril?

"Look at them running!" cried Caitlin Potter, a University of Minnesota scientist. "This is where they belong."

Bison are being reintroduced on 200 acres near East Bethel, part of a broader project to see what role the storied animals may play in helping save the oak savanna, one of Minnesota's most threatened ecosystems.

A delicate blend of prairie and scattered oak trees, oak savanna once covered about 9 percent of Minnesota, according to the state Department of Natural Resources. Less than 1 percent remains, largely lost to croplands and pasture.

Read more. <http://www.startribune.com/can-bison-help-save-oak-savanna-scientists-look-to-anoka-county-herd-to-find-out/485745622/>

This Photographer Got Charged by a Bison in Yellowstone

(From PetaPixel)

Photographer Willis Chung was shooting in Yellowstone when he came across a solitary bison bull in the plains. As he walked parallel to the animal, photographing it from a safe distance (a minimum of 25 yards), the bison began charging at him.

Chung, a 56-year-old doctor based in Denver, Colorado, says the bison was returning to the hills from the meadows after the mating season was wrapping up on August 24, 2016, when the encounter occurred. It started with Chung photographing the bison for over 90 minutes as it walked through the grass and wallowed (rolling around vigorously to scratch themselves) in the dirt.

"I am not inconspicuous as I move and work, with a Nikon 300mm f/2.8 VR attached to a Nikon D800e body on a Gitzo 3 series tripod with a Wimberly gimbal head," Chung tells PetaPixel. "I was set up with my tripod and 300mm with the D800e getting head and shoulder photos as the bull wallowed. I went to my handheld D7100 with 28-300mm f/3.5-5.6 to get full body photos as the bull lay down for a second wallow."

But after a few more rolls, the bison suddenly rocked to its feet, snorted, and began charging at Chung.

Read more. <https://petapixel.com/2018/06/19/this-photographer-got-charged-by-a-bison-in-yellowstone/>

Park Superintendent Shuffle Shouldn't Slow Bison Quarantine

(From Associated Press)

The impending change in Yellowstone National Park superintendents shouldn't disrupt the progress of a quarantine program created to produce brucellosis-free bison, officials said.

The transfer of a group of bull bison to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation later this year should still be on track, Yellowstone bison program manager Tim Reid said.

"I think there's a world of hoopla and speculation that's kind of overarching things," Reid said. "The reality on the ground is that we're moving forward with quarantine."

National Park Service officials signed off on Yellowstone's quarantine program about a month ago. It's designed to produce disease-free bison for transfer to tribal governments and other conservation herds and to reduce the number killed during Yellowstone's annual population control efforts, the Bozeman Daily Chronicle reported.

The project was one that park superintendent Dan Wenk had hoped to see through. But Wenk recently told the Associated Press that he was being forced out of his job.

The Interior Department announced last week that the National Park Service's Midwest Regional Director Cam Sholly would replace him. When that will happen remains unclear.

Read more. <http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2018/jun/17/park-superintendent-shuffle-shouldnt-slow-bison-qu/>

Tribes Say Yellowstone Supervisor's Removal Could Jeopardize Bison Program

(From Wyoming Public Radio)

Northern Plains tribes are calling for the Interior Department to keep Yellowstone National Park Supervisor Dan Wenk on board until after a program to relocate wild bison from the park onto their reservations is complete.

Wenk said he was forced out over disagreements with the Interior Department over growing bison population numbers and the spread of brucellosis to cattle. But he said he thinks Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke supports the tribal bison program.

"I think this is something that, to my understanding, the Secretary wants to have happen, we want to have happen, APHIS (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service) wants to have happen and the states do and the tribes do. So, I think we're going to get there," said Wenk.

Read more. <http://wyomingpublicmedia.org/post/tribes-say-yellowstone-supervisors-removal-could-jeopardize-bison-program#stream/0>

North Dakota Author Details Comeback of American Buffalo

(From the Telegram.com)

North Dakota author Francie Berg's last book about the American buffalo was a guide for adventurers eager to get out on back roads to see the historic sites where the great animal once flourished. Then she found she had more to say.

The result is "Buffalo Heartbeats Across the Plains," a deeper dive into the stories and trails of the last book, with colorful illustrations, historic paintings and photographs for the history buff who may never leave her armchair.

"It's a companion piece to the self-guided tour book for people who want to dig a little deeper into the buffalo story," Berg said.

Bison, or buffalo, once thundered across the heart of North America in the tens of millions. But overhunting saw their numbers plummet to a few hundred by the late 1800s.

“I could see our country was changing fast,” reads an excerpt from the new book quoting Plenty Coups, the last chief of the Crow Nation, in 1898. “Anybody could now see that soon there would be no buffalo on the plains, and everybody was wondering how we could live after they were gone.”

The new book also tells of early restoration efforts by Peter Dupree and other families who took in bison calves and raised them on their lands. By the time of his death in 1898, the family was raising more than 80 bison and spurred restoration efforts.

“Tatanka” — the Lakota word for bison — was at the core of its people’s culture for thousands of years, providing not only food but also a spiritual and physical connection.

“The buffalo provided virtually everything to live on and live from,” said North Dakota Indian Affairs Commissioner Scott Davis, a member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

According to the National Bison Association, nearly 400,000 bison are now living in North America, on private ranches, native reservations and public lands like Yellowstone National Park.

Full story: <http://www.telegram.com/news/20180618/north-dakota-author-details-comeback-of-american-buffalo>

Salisbury Zoo's Male Bison Dies

(From The Delmarva Daily Times)

The big, hulking bison that has been a “must-see” for countless families visiting the Salisbury Zoo for the past 25 years has died.

The zoo said the male American bison was humanely euthanized this week.

Bubba the Bison was born on July 12, 1993, at the Oglebay Good Zoo in Wheeling, West Virginia. The Salisbury Zoo acquired the male bison at 4 months from Oglebay in October 1993.

He sired one female in 2001, which currently resides at the zoo.

The Salisbury Zoo has been exhibiting this keystone land mammal for over 50 years and has a long history with American bison conservation, the zoo said in a release.

The zoo said that keepers had begun to notice apparent changes in the bison’s mobility in the past few months.

Zoo keepers addressed the symptoms with medication but within this past month, his health declined rapidly. Staff assessed his quality of life and the decision was made to humanely euthanize him, it said. A post-mortem exam is scheduled.

Read more. <https://www.delmarvanow.com/story/news/local/maryland/2018/06/21/sallisbury-zoos-male-bison-dies/720795002/>

Beginning Producers Log Wins in Senate Farm Bill

(From National Young Farmers coalition)

The Senate bill includes many provisions from the [Young Farmer Agenda](#), including increased funding for beginning and underserved farmers, investments and reforms to preserve farmland for the next generation, and expansion of local and regional food programs. Here are the highlights:

- **Funding for training and support for farmers of color, indigenous farmers, and veterans was significantly increased.** The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) and 2501 were funded together at \$50 million, reaching mandatory funding for the first time.
- **Loan limits for farm purchase were doubled.** Direct farm operating loan limits were increased from \$300,000 to \$600,000, allowing young farmers to compete in a competitive real estate market.
- **Farmland protection dollars increased with new emphasis on working farm easements.** Funding for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) was significantly increased, helping to protect our nation's farmland and transition it to the next generation.
- **Small-scale farmers will gain better access to conservation dollars.** Micro-EQIP, NYFC's idea to level the playing field and help young farmers access conservation cost-share dollars, made it into the bill. Set-asides for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers were tripled.
- **The 'Big Bank Amendment' went down.** The Hoeven amendment was defeated, protecting credit access for smaller producers.

Michigan Updates TB Zoning Orders

(From BrownfieldAgNews.com)

Michigan has updated its zoning order to further protect cattle producers from bovine tuberculosis (bovine TB).

An enhanced wildlife biosecurity zone has been established within the state's modified accredited zone of Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency and Oscoda counties.

State veterinarian Dr. James Averill says the announcement comes as USDA questions if Michigan's bovine-TB free status should be downgraded. "There's a lot a stake here for Michigan in our dairy and cattle industries. We're working with USDA at this point in time to address their concerns."

Averill says between 2016 and 2017, Michigan confirmed five herds positive for bovine TB which was more than allowed under the current memorandum of understanding with USDA.

He says the more 130 farms within the new zone will work with experts to create customized wildlife biosecurity plans and remove any deer who have made those farms their homes.

Averill says the state will pay for 75 percent of infrastructure improvements to mitigate the risk of cattle being exposed to deer.

Source with link to audio:

<https://brownfieldagnews.com/news/michigan-updates-tb-zoning-orders/>

Gene-edited Pigs Are Resistant To Billion Dollar Virus, Study Finds

(From The University of Edinburgh)

Scientists have produced pigs that can resist one of the world's most costly animal diseases, by changing their genetic code.

Tests with the virus-called Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome, or PRRS-found the pigs do not become infected at all.

The animals show no signs that the change in their DNA has had any other impact on their health or wellbeing.

PRRS costs the pig industry around \$2.5 billion (£1.75bn) each year in lost revenue in the US and Europe alone.

The disease causes breathing problems and deaths in young animals and if pregnant sows become infected, it can cause them to lose their litter.

The virus infects pigs using a receptor on their cells' surface called CD163. Researchers at the University of Edinburgh's Roslin Institute used gene editing techniques to remove a small section of the CD163 gene.

They focused on the section of the receptor that the virus attaches to, leaving the rest of the molecule intact.

Full text:

<https://phys.org/news/2018-06-gene-edited-pigs-resistant-billion-dollar.html>

Bison to Restore Threatened Ecosystem at UMN Nature Reserve

(From Minnesota Daily)

A herd of bison was brought to a University of Minnesota nature reserve last week in an effort to restore a threatened ecosystem.

On June 13, the herd of 32 two-year-old bulls was released into the 200-acre Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve in East Bethel. There are no wild bison in the area, and were introduced to the reserve in an effort to bolster the area's natural ecosystem.

At the release event, the bison bolted out of their transport to explore their new home. They immediately started grazing on the grass, paying no attention to their human spectators.

Caitlin Potter, the education and outreach coordinator at Cedar Creek, had tears in her eyes as she watched the herd be released.

"To see animals be released like that and behave naturally is amazing," Potter said. The bison program is part of a larger project to help restore the oak savanna ecosystem, which has become rare in Minnesota, said Cedar Creek director David Tilman. The reserve has studied the ecosystem since the 1960s, and the program is part of its mission to preserve ecosystems and provide a deeper understanding of how nature and humanity work together. "The biggest danger to nature is humanity," Tilman said. He added that while there are some bison in Minnesota, they've been largely absent for the past 187 years.

Implementing the bison into the area has been a long-time goal for Tilman, who has been trying to bring bison back to Minnesota for 20 years in order to help restore the oak savanna in the area, said post-doctoral ecology researcher Chad Zirbel. Bison help maintain the grassland by feeding on grass, which creates room for oak trees to grow.

Full story: <http://www.mndaily.com/article/2018/06/n-herd-of-bison-to-restore-threatened-ecosystem-at-umn-nature-reserve>

FDA To Hold Public Meeting on Lab-Grown Meat

(From Sustainable Food News)

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said Friday it will examine the regulatory process of approving and labeling meat grown from animal cells.

"Cell culture technologies that have been increasingly used to produce cells and tissues for human therapeutic use are now being used by the food sector to create innovative products that resemble conventional meat, poultry, and seafood," the agency said.

The FDA will hold a public meeting on July 12 where it will discuss with stakeholders some of the inputs involved to produce foods using animal cell culture technology and how to assess their safety and whether there is a need for unique control measures to address potential hazards associated with the production of such foods.

"This is a dynamic space that's gaining interest among companies for various reasons, including appealing to consumers motivated by animal welfare concerns and commercial incentives," said FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb in a statement. "Our intent is to engage in a public discussion on this evolving technology to ensure we understand and consider all aspects as we determine the FDA's approach to these novel products."

Public meeting attendees are encouraged to [register online](#) to attend the meeting in person or by live webcast. Registration is free, and early registration is strongly recommended because seating is limited.

House GOP Pushes Through Farm Bill on Second Try

(From AgriPulse)

House Republicans revived their farm bill and its expanded work rules for food stamp recipients by narrowly passing the legislation with the help of conservatives who had used the measure as leverage to get the House to act on immigration policy.

The farm bill, which is unchanged from the version that failed May 18, narrowly passed Thursday afternoon, [213-211](#), with no support from Democrats, who continued to denounce the GOP reforms to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program as cruel and unworkable. The key was that just 20 Republicans voted against the bill this time, versus 30 in May. The Republicans who switched from no to yes on the bill included the chairman of the House Freedom Caucus, Mark Meadows of North Carolina, and the group's former chairman, Jim Jordan of Ohio.

House Agriculture Chairman Mike Conaway, R-Texas, said he was worried about the bill's fate "right up until the time they gavelled down at 213-211."

[The bill was defeated last month 198-213](#) after conservatives demanded that the House first take up an immigration bill they wanted considered. That immigration bill was debated, and defeated, in a vote earlier Thursday, clearing the way for the farm bill to be reconsidered. Passing the House farm bill clears the way for House and Senate negotiations to begin as soon as July on a final version of the legislation, so long as the Senate goes forward with plans to debate its version of the bill next week.

"For both chambers to have gotten their farm bills individually done before July 1 is a pretty terrific task that a lot of folks who have bet the other way on. I'm just proud to get ours across the House floor and anxious to get to conference when Pat gets his bill done," Conaway said, referring to Senate Agriculture Chairman Pat Roberts, R-Kan. The ranking Democrat on the House Agriculture Committee, Collin Peterson of Minnesota, quickly left the Capitol after the vote, declining to discuss the outcome with a reporter and saying only, "It passed."

Trump Administration Plan Would Shift USDA Programs

(From AgriPulse)

A plan announced today by the Trump administration would shift Department of Agriculture programs to different government agencies, dramatically shrinking the size and scope of the department.

The plan, detailed in a [132-page document](#) released by the White House on Thursday, would move nutrition programs to the Department of Health and Human Services, shift some USDA housing programs to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and consolidate the government's food safety oversight into a new Federal Food Safety Agency.

Many of the proposals included in the plan – such as a merger of the Education and Labor departments – are likely to face stiff opposition in Congress and in the public square. Margaret Weichert, the deputy director for management at the White House Office of Management and Budget, acknowledged in a call with reporters that the changes “will not happen overnight,” but hopes some of the language can serve as the “beginning of a national dialogue on government reform.”

“Shining a light on those examples should cause the well-intentioned civil servants who administer these programs to look for ways to better integrate and better provide service with greater efficiency,” she said.

Many of the proposed changes would have direct impacts on USDA operations. Perhaps chief among them could be a shift of government nutrition programs to HHS (which also would be renamed the Department of Health and Public Welfare). Programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program would shift away from USDA; “commodity-based” programs like the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs, Emergency Food Assistance Program, and others would stay.

Weichert defended the proposed changes, saying many states already have different departmental organizations than the federal government for their public assistance programs. That difference, she said, “actually creates burden for the states and frankly takes away resources that should be going to needy families.”

Mary Ann Goodnight: The Texas Woman Who Helped Save the Buffalo

(From Rare.us)

Buffalo were once disappearing in record numbers, but the kind efforts of one Texas woman helped them return from the verge of extinction.

In the 1870s, Charles and Mary Ann Goodnight resided in a Victorian-style home on their ranch in the Texas Panhandle. The couple lived a good life. They entertained heads of state, hungry cattlemen and Comanche leader Quanah Parker. But the harsh life of the western plains was right outside their door. In the dead of night, Mary Ann Goodnight would lie awake and listen to the bison calves cry after their mothers were slaughtered.

Years earlier, white settlers had begun killing buffalo and selling the hides for high dollar at the market. The buffalo hunters took what they needed from the animal, often leaving the rest of the body to rot on the open plain.

Just a century before, between 30 and 60 million buffalo roamed the west. By the late 1800s, there were [only about 300 of the species left](#) in existence. Mrs. Goodnight, known as the “Mother of the Panhandle” for her compassionate demeanor, wanted to do something.

When the Goodnights came across two bison calves, Mary Ann convinced her husband to keep and raise them. From then on, the couple began to build the herd that would save a part of western heritage.

By the time the Goodnights began their bison conservation efforts, Charles Goodnight had already etched his name in the book of Texas legends. Along with fellow cattle driver Oliver Loving, Goodnight carved out the the Goodnight-Loving Trail, which was used in several arduous cattle drives in the 1860s. Goodnight and Loving’s travels would later inspire Larry McMurtry’s masterpiece novel “Lonesome Dove.”

Goodnight is known as the father of modern cattle ranching. To this day, visitors hang their bandanas by his grave in tribute to the legendary cowhand.

But it was Mary Ann who saved the buffalo. While Charles viewed the animals as a business endeavor, going as far as to crossbreed the bison with cattle, creating “cattalo,” his wife cared deeply for the creatures. She rescued and raised the orphaned bison calves and helped the herd at the Goodnight Buffalo Ranch grow to over 200 head of bison.

Full story: <https://rare.us/people/woc-mary-ann-goodnight-texas-buffalo/>

Why and How Retailers Are Taking on The Role of Incubator

(From New Hope Media)

By helping small vendors get their businesses off the ground, retailers differentiate themselves in a competitive marketplace and build important local supply relationships.

As the retail landscape continues to change, thanks to factors like grocery delivery and Amazon taking over Whole Foods, relationships involving retailers have changed, too. That includes relationships with both suppliers and with consumers, and one way that some retailers have adapted is by taking on the role of small business incubator.

Some are doing it more aggressively or more formally than others. We spoke to a few who shared why it's been nothing but great for everyone involved. Bi-Rite Market in California also has a reputation for supporting small food purveyors in a similar capacity; the retailer says this has been a part of its ethos since Sam Mogannam took over 20 years ago. “We love helping these makers tell their stories so our guests can learn about the passion and artistry in their food and form personal connections to the makers,” said a Bi-Rite spokesperson. Including locals such as McVicker Pickles and Jamnation’s ‘Damn Good Jam’ on our catering menus creates a uniquely San Francisco culinary experience for our guests as well.”

Senators’ Frustrations Rise with Tariffs

(From AgriPulse)

Republican and Democratic senators let loose Wednesday with scathing criticism for President Donald Trump’s escalating tariffs and tariff threats that are attracting retaliation from around the globe.

Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross spent much of a two-hour Senate Finance Committee hearing defending the tariffs, but most of the lawmakers appeared not to be swayed.

“I don’t think you’re empathetic enough to agriculture,” Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., told Ross, the hearing’s lone witness. “These people might go out of business while you’re creating your trade wars.”

Lawmakers criticized Trump’s steel and aluminum tariffs, which have prompted retaliation from Mexico, Canada, the European Union and China, as well as the \$450 billion in tariffs Trump is threatening to slap on China to punish it for intellectual property theft. China is threatening to hit

back with billions of dollars of its own tariffs, including an additional 25 percent tax on U.S. soybeans, wheat and corn.

Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, and Sens. Michael Bennet, D-Colo., and Rob Portman, R-Ohio, criticized the Trump administration's claim that it was imposing global steel and aluminum tariffs to protect U.S. national security. Sens. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, and John Thune, R-S.D., complained about the haphazard way in which China was being threatened.

"Recently Mexico announced it will impose tariffs of 20 percent on U.S. pork in retaliation for U.S. steel and aluminum tariffs," Hatch said. "I just don't see how the damage posed on all these sectors could possibly advance our national security."