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## ***NBA Weekly Update for May 15, 2020***

*The Weekly Update is a service designed to provide National Bison Association members with news and information affecting bison production and marketing. Many items in the Weekly Update are reprinted from outside sources. The content of those articles does not necessarily reflect the policy position of the National Bison Association. The articles are reproduced here only as a means to keep our membership informed as much as possible of all information and opinions relating to bison that is circulating publicly.*

### **Mexico is Officially Open for U.S. Bison Meat Exports**

USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) announced earlier today that the Government of Mexico and USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) have formally agreed on the protocols for the export of U.S. bison meat to that country.

The move formally opens the doors to a new market for U.S. bison meat.

"This is a very positive development for the bison business," said Dave Carter, executive director of the National Bison Association. "The Mexican marketplace a growth opportunity for our business. Additionally, many consumers in Mexico tend to favor cuts of meat that are not in high demand by U.S. customers, so this can help our marketers balance carcass utilization."

At the request of the National Bison Association, USDA FAS formally petitioned Mexico in 2018 to open their market to U.S. bison meat. That request led to extensive discussions between agricultural officials in the two countries over the protocols and procedures that would be required from exporters.

Anticipating that an agreement was near, FAS invited two bison marketers to participate in trade delegation to Mexico last November.

Joseph Degreenia of USDA FAS formally notified the National Bison Association today that Mexico had agreed to the latest procedures proposed by FSIS.

Carter noted, "Several people at USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service have worked extremely hard over the past two years to push this process along on behalf of U.S. bison ranchers and marketers. We appreciate their efforts to secure this new market opportunity."

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## **Eight Senators Urge USDA Assistance for Bison Ranchers**

A bipartisan group of eight U.S. Senators, led by U.S. Sens. Tina Smith (D-MN) and Mike Rounds (R-SD), today urged U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Purdue to assure that bison producers will be included in the agricultural assistance package that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is developing under the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

"Bison producers across the country have felt the economic impact of the COVID 19 pandemic," the Senators wrote in a letter sent to USDA Thursday. "As you consider how to assign specific payment amounts to livestock producers, we urge you to assist our nation's bison producers in a fair and reasonable manner as their traditional markets continue to close."

Dave Carter, executive director of the National Bison Association, welcomed the support of the eight Senators as "an important step to keep the needs of bison producers on the table as USDA finalizes the details in the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program."

"Because we are a relatively small segment of agriculture, our producers often get overlooked. Yet, bison ranchers, processors and marketers are all experiencing the same disruption as our neighbors in other sectors of the livestock business. We appreciate the eight Senators for weighing in to make sure the bison sector is included."

Sen. Rounds said, "South Dakota is the leading state in bison production. Like every other sector of our economy, our bison producers are hurting from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Our legislation will make certain they are eligible for much-needed assistance." Sen. Smith added, "The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted bison producers of all sizes. Now that they've been hit with significant hardships and lost large swaths of their markets, we need to make sure resources are available so we can help large and small producers alike."

While Secretary Purdue has announced that USDA will offer \$16 billion in assistance to crop and livestock producers, the details of that aid package are still being developed.

In addition to Smith and Rounds, the letter was signed by U.S. Sens. John Barrasso (R-WY), Mike Enzi (R-WY), John Thune (R-SD), Michael Bennet (D-CO), John Tester (D-MT), and Kevin Cramer (R-ND).

In late April, North Dakota Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring also sent a letter to the Secretary urging specific assistance for the nation's bison producers.

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## **Speakers Announced for Virtual Bison Learning Seminar**





# The NBA 2020 Virtual Bison Live-Streaming Learning Seminar June 22 - 26 - Free to NBA Members

**Monday, June 22nd - 1 pm MDT**

## **The Bison Marketplace and COVID-19**

- *What the Future Holds with Carlotta Mast, Senior Market Analyst, Informa Markets*
- *Pivoting with the Market - Panel Discussion*
- *Direct Marketing during a pandemic - Panel Discussion*
- *NBA General Membership Meeting*



**Wednesday, June 24th - 10 am MDT**

## **Bison Management & Production Tips**

- *Regenerative Ranching with Ray Archuleta, Certified Professional Soil Scientist and Farmer*
- *Conservation Management Plan, Ken Klemm, The Buffalo Guys/Beaver Creek Buffalo*
- *Selecting your feeders and breeders - Panel Discussion*



**Friday, June 26th - 1 pm MDT**

## **Introduction to Bison Management**

- *How I started my bison herd - Panel discussion*
- *The Bison Advantage - Dave Carter & Jim Matheson, National Bison Association*
- *Bison How-To Q&A*



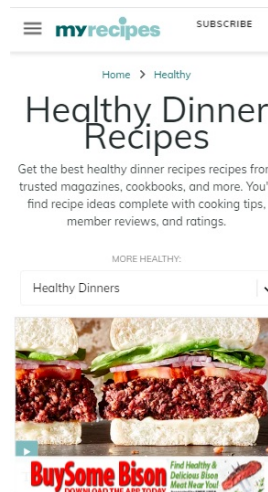
**Register by June 15th by emailing [jim@bisoncentral.com](mailto:jim@bisoncentral.com)**

## **BuySome Bison Promotion Underway**

Readers of the online versions of Food & Wine, Health, Shape, Eating Well, All Recipes, Midwest Living, Southern Living, and Martha Stewart are finding that finding deliciously healthy bison meat is as easy as downloading the BuySome Bison mobile app.

The two-month advertising campaign launched this week promotes the BuySome Bison app, which allows consumers to connect with bison producers to source meat and other bison products. The advertising campaign, and the BuySome Bison app are both underwritten through funding from USDA's Farmers' Market Promotion Program.

Jim Matheson, NBA assistant director, stressed that producers wanting to be included in the app simply need to enter their information into the Buyers' Guide on the NBA website at [www.bisoncentral.com](http://www.bisoncentral.com). Earlier this week, Matheson sent an email to the NBA membership with step-by-step instructions for entering information in the



At right are a couple examples of the images readers of the on-line publications are receiving.

The digital advertising campaign will run through July 4th.

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## **Details Still Lacking in Coronavirus Farm Assistance Program**

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue has promised that the agency will begin issuing \$16billion in assistance to agricultural producers by mid-May, but two presenters in a USDA COVID-19 Farm Assistance Program webinar yesterday acknowledged that the details are still being hammered out.

The webinar featured Bill Beam, deputy administrator of USDA's Farm Service Agency, and Sonia Jimenez, deputy administrator of USDA's Specialty Crop Program. Beam and Jimenez provided an overview of the intent of the program, but no specifics on details. In responding to a question from a webinar listener regarding which commodities would be covered in the relief package, Jimenez said, "The program is open to producers of crops, livestock and dairy, regardless of size and market outlet, if they suffer an eligible loss under the CARES Act."

She added that information on eligible commodities won't be available under USDA posts a formal rule in the Federal Register.

Beam noted that, once the rule is published, producers will be required to complete a series of forms as a part of their application for assistance. He urged producers to begin completing that paperwork prior to publication of the rule so that they can apply quickly for assistance.

The required forms are:

- CCC-901 (Also Available in Spanish) – Identifies members of a farm or ranch that is a legal entity. Member Information will be completed by legal entities and joint operations to collect the following:
    - member names, addresses, and Tax Identification Numbers
    - citizenship status
  - CCC-941 (Also Available in Spanish) – Reports your average adjusted gross income for programs where income restrictions apply.
  - CCC-942 – If applicable, this certification reports income from farming, ranching, and forestry, for those exceeding the adjusted gross income limitation.
  - AD-1026 (Also Available in Spanish) – Ensures compliance with highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation.
  - AD-2047 – Provides basic customer contact information.
  - SF-3881 – Collects your banking information to allow USDA to make payments to you via direct deposit.
- 

## **SBA Includes Ag Producers in Forgivable Loan Program**

Bison Producers are now eligible to apply for forgivable loans from the Small Business Administration (SBA)

According to the SBA website, "In response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, small business owners in all U.S. states, Washington D.C., and territories were able to apply for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan advance of up to \$10,000. This advance is designed to provide economic relief to businesses that are currently experiencing a temporary loss of revenue. This loan advance will not have to be repaid."

The website notes that agricultural producers became eligible as a result of the latest

round of funds appropriated by Congress in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.”

The site notes:

- Agricultural businesses includes those businesses engaged in the production of food and fiber, ranching, and raising of livestock, aquaculture, and all other farming and agricultural related industries (as defined by section 18(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 647(b)).
- SBA is encouraging all eligible agricultural businesses with 500 or fewer employees wishing to apply to begin preparing their business financial information needed for their application.

Information on the Forgivable Loan program is available [here](#).

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## **Dept. of Transportation Finalizes HOS Rule**

The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration this week published its final rule updating the “Hours of Service” rules designed to increase safety on America’s roads.

According to the rule posted in the Federal Register, “This final rule will improve efficiency without compromising safety by providing flexibility for drivers in four areas without changing the maximum allowable driving time.”

According to the Federal Register, the rule extends the maximum duty period allowed under the short-haul exception from 12 hours to 14 hours. It also extends the maximum radius in which the short-haul exception applies from 100 to 150 air-miles.

“FMCSA modifies the definition of adverse driving conditions so that the adverse driving conditions exception may be applied based on the driver’s (in addition to the dispatcher’s) knowledge of the conditions after being dispatched , and extends the driving window during which the current exception for extended driving time may be used by up to 2 hours for truck and bus operations under §§ 395.3(a)(2) and 395.5(a)(2), respectively.

“The Agency makes the 30-minute break requirement for drivers of property-carrying CMVs in § 395.3(a)(3)(ii) applicable only when a driver has driven (instead of having been on-duty) for a period of 8 hours without at least a 30-minute non-driving interruption. The break may be satisfied by any non-driving period of 30 minutes, i.e., on-duty, off-duty, or sleeper berth time.

“FMCSA also modifies the sleeper berth requirements to (1) allow drivers to take their required 10 hours off-duty in two periods, provided one off-duty period (whether in or out of the sleeper berth) is at least 2 hours long and the other involves at least 7 consecutive hours spent in the sleeper berth, and (2) add that neither period counts against the maximum 14-hour driving window in § 395.3(a)(2).

“The Agency excludes from the final rule its proposal to allow a single off-duty period of up to 3 hours to be excluded from the 14-hour driving window.”

The rule will become effective 120 days after its publication in the Federal Register.

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## **Spring Bison World Magazine Now Available**

One of the perks of NBA membership is access to the Bison World magazine before the printed copies arrive in the mail!

Production on the Spring issue has wrapped up and it is available on the website at:

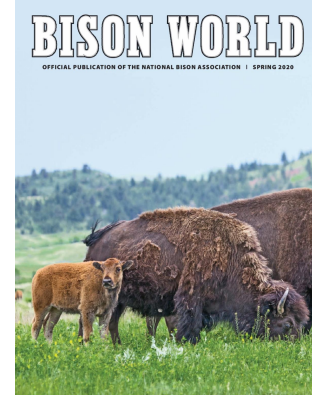
<https://bisoncentral.com/publication/bison-world-magazine/>

The flipbook version of the magazine can be viewed right on



your computer. Handy links allow you to open it into a new window, make it larger, magnify certain features and even print pages if desired. The realistic page turning sounds make it feel like you are reading the printed version of the magazine.

The hard copy magazine is currently being printed and will mail shortly to North American members.



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***Editor's Note: The following news stories were distributed by organizations not affiliated with the National Bison Association. They may not reflect the opinions or the positions held by the NBA on matters such as genetic integrity, animal management, and other issues.***

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## **Bison market crashes down on producers**

*(From Western Producer [Canada])*

Only a couple of months ago, the price of a bison carcass was close to \$5 a pound in Western Canada.

Now, prices on the rail have dropped to \$3.50 per lb.

But that number isn't precise because the packing plants are processing very few animals.

"There's no liquidity right now," said Dean Andres, who raises bison near Windthorst, in eastern Saskatchewan. "Any Canadian (bison) producers that are reliant on a Canadian plant or somebody to buy their calves, that market has, I don't want to say 'collapsed,' but that's probably the most accurate word."

Many producers depend on bison meat sales to the U.S. and Europe to maintain the price of bison in Western Canada. With restaurants closed in America and across the European Union because of COVID-19, exports of Canadian bison meat have fallen off a cliff.

Statistics Canada data illustrates the size of the drop. From Jan. 1 to March 31:

- U.S. bison meat exports were worth C\$1.38 million. That's down from \$3.8 million in the first three months of 2019.
- Total exports were \$1.77 million, down from \$6.07 million in January, February and March of 2019.
- Sales to France were \$81,000, compared to \$479,000 in January-March of 2019.

"The (meat) inventories in Canada are scary right now," Andres said. "It was destined for

Europe or restaurants. And then when things shut down ... a lot of marketers were stuck.” Within Canada, the bison trade sells the majority of meat to restaurants and food service companies. A small percentage is sold at grocery stores.

Bison marketers are trying to reverse those percentages to satisfy the realities of the pandemic.

Read [more](#).

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## **Arsenal Bison Among Those In Planned Transfers To National Park, Indian Reservation**

*(From CBS-4)*

DENVER (CBS4/AP) — Hundreds of wild bison would be transferred from federal lands to a South Dakota American Indian Reservation and a North Dakota national park as a first step in the latest initiative to restore the burly animals to Western U.S. lands that they once roamed by the millions, federal and tribal officials said Friday.

Up to 200 American Prairie bison, also known as buffalo, would be transferred to South Dakota’s Rosebud Sioux Reservation this fall, with plans for a herd of 1,500 within five years, according to tribal officials and the World Wildlife Fund, which is helping pay for the effort.

Approximately 10 bison also would be moved from Colorado’s Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge to Theodore Roosevelt National Park in western North Dakota, possibly in August. The arsenal’s animals are intended to refresh bloodlines of the national park’s herd, Rocky Mountain Arsenal Refuge Manager David Lucas told CBS4. Exchanging animals among smaller herds provides necessary “periodic input” and integration.

“That’s kind of the vision for bison management,” Lucas said. “We don’t have millions of acres for free-ranging bison. It just doesn’t exist. This is the only way we can move forward.”

Preserving the truest genetic form of the animals is the priority.

“The historic bison genome has been in jeopardy because cattle were brought in to make them domesticated,” Lucas said, referring to “beefalo,” the term used to describe animals produced by ranchers’ cross-breeding of bison and beef cattle. “We know where our animals have come from a 100-plus years ago.”

Rea [more](#).

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## **Bison Restoration Proposal DOA**

*(From The Billings of Gazette)*

A proposed “test project” to restore bison to the UL Bend National Wildlife Refuge has been submitted to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks for consideration under the state’s new guidelines but will not be considered due to litigation.

“FWP will not analyze or review your proposal until the litigation is finalized ...” wrote Martha Williams, FWP director, in a letter to Jim Bailey.

Bailey is a retired Colorado State University wildlife biologist who lives in the Gallatin Valley and helped author the Montana Wild Bison Restoration Coalition’s proposal. He sent the document to FWP last month, outlining why the UL Bend area would be a good place to start a new state bison herd.

Williams’ letter noted the coalition’s proposal is the first and only one it has received.

Process

The coalition recommends the test project take place about 150 square miles of fenced land as a way to build trust “across the diverse publics that will be affected by restoring some public, wild bison in Montana.” Endorsing the proposal were two former FWP employees — Gayle Joslin and Jim Posewitz — a former FWP commissioner, and seven state conservation groups including the Helena Hunters and Anglers Association.

Read [more](#).

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## **Wanuskewin Adds To Conservation Herd With Mother's Day Bison Birth**

*(From The Saskatoon Star Phoenix)*

When the last of Wanuskewin’s four pregnant bison cows gave birth on Mother’s Day, CEO Darlene Brander found it a fitting end to a journey that had already been full of pleasant surprises.

Sunday’s calf, the only male, wasn’t the only one born on a significant date. One of his siblings was born on Earth Day (April 22) and the other on Red Dress Day (May 5), the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. In early December, six calves from Grasslands National Park set foot on the land for the first time since the species’ near-extirpation more than a century ago.

The park’s leadership wasn’t expecting that in a few weeks everything would be in place for a second group of bison — a bull and four pregnant cows — to arrive from the United States.

The bull, from a wild herd in Yellowstone National Park, makes Wanuskewin the first place in Canada where two bison populations have interacted since they were wild.

Developing a burgeoning conservation herd of plains bison at Wanuskewin Heritage Park has been one of its goals since the park’s conception, Brander said.

“This has been in the making 40 years, from when the elders first envisioned it,” Brander said. “For it to come to fruition and for the bison to get here in December and then for the babies to be born healthy — and three of them on really special days — is all really significant.”

Read [more](#).

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## **Two Elderly American Bison Die at Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute**

*(From The Smithsonian)*

Ungulate keepers at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute (SCBI) are mourning the loss of two elderly American Bison, a male named Ten Bears and a female named Kicking Bird, who were humanely euthanized May 14. They were both 22 years old. The median life expectancy for American bison is about 15 years of age.

For more than a year, ungulate keepers and SCBI veterinarians have been managing age-related declines in Ten Bears and Kicking Bird’s health. Both bison had limited vision and advanced osteoarthritis. Their discomfort often increased with rising temperatures, particularly during the summer. Despite treatments, these conditions progressed to a point where they affected the animals’ overall quality of life. Because they lived together for almost their entire lives, Ten Bears and Kicking Bird were socially bonded as a pair. The animal care team felt that the death of one bison would leave the other unduly stressed. Given the pair’s declining quality of life, poor prognosis and concerns about the impact of separation to their social welfare, animal care staff elected to humanely euthanize both bison.



Ten Bears was born at the Buffalo Zoo April 25, 1998, and Kicking Bird was born at the Lehigh Valley Zoo June 18, 1998. In May 1999, they arrived at the Smithsonian's National Zoo and were exhibited at the Prairie Trail. Bison were among the first animals in the Zoo's collection when it was founded in 1889, and their arrival commemorated the return of this species to the facility. The Zoo bestowed the honor of naming the bison on an employee who was of Native American heritage. He selected the name Ten Bears—a reference to the principle Chief of the Yamparika part of the Comanche—for the male and Kicking Bird—a reference to the High Chief of the Kiowa—for the female.

Read [more](#).

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## **Prairie Parents**

*(From Kankakee Daily Journal)*

Just like many of us who are working from home, our bison continue to work from their home at Kankakee Sands.

The bison have been busy enriching the plant diversity by eating a plethora of grasses, creating sandy depressions when they wallow in the ground and pooping out nutrients to enrich the soil, just as they have been doing since they arrived in 2016 when they were brought to Kankakee Sands to assist us in managing our prairies.

And this spring, about 25 of our 70 bison will take on an additional job — parenting. These 25 female bison — called cows — are at least 3 years old and would have mated last fall with one of the several mature bull bison at Kankakee Sands.

Bison and humans have a similar gestation period of nine months, so we are in the prime of calving season this May.

When it comes to calves, there is a term called weaning rate. It is the percentage of mature females that give birth to a calf in a year. Our weaning rate over the past several years has been between approximately 90 percent, which means 9 out of every 10 mature bison cows gave birth.

If we maintain that weaning rate this year, our herd could grow by 22 little calves. However, bison cows typically only give birth two out of every three years. Perhaps, this will be the year that our rates drop to the weaning rate that we are seeing at other TNC herds around the country, closer to 60 percent. If that were to be the case, then we would see 14 calves born at Kankakee Sands this year.

Read [more](#).

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## **Governor Donates Wild Bison Hunting License To Support Wyoming Wildlife Conservation**

*(From Oil City News)*

Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon has decided to donate a wild bison hunting license to help support wildlife conservation in the state.

The governor's office says that the license will be given out through a random raffle open to Wyoming residents. It is second year in a row Gordon has donated a wild bison license.

"The bison is the symbol of Wyoming and a fitting hunt to raise money for conservation," Governor Gordon said. "I am pleased to offer this opportunity to residents who care so deeply for wildlife."

People can purchase raffle tickets for \$10 from the Wyoming Game and Fish Department website. Tickets are limited to one per person.

"The raffle winner will receive a 2020 wild bison license, but must still purchase any

additional stamps and applicable licenses,” Gordon’s office said. “Proceeds from the raffle sales will go to the Wyoming Governor’s Big Game License Coalition and will help support efforts to sustain Wyoming’s wildlife.”

“Only Wyoming residents are able to purchase a raffle ticket and must be eligible to hunt big game in Wyoming. Hunters must be at least 12 years of age by the beginning of hunting season and meet hunter education requirements. The wild bison license is non-transferable. Hopeful hunters should review the bison hunt areas on the Game and Fish website.”

Winners will be announced July 22.

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#### **APHIS Announces Changes to Animal Welfare Act Licensing Requirements** (From USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Bulletin)

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is announcing a final rule amending the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) licensing requirements for all regulated animals, as well as certain veterinary care standards.

These new regulations will promote compliance, reduce licensing fees, and strengthen safeguards that prevent individuals and businesses with a history of noncompliance from obtaining a license or doing any regulated activities with regulated animals.

With this change, licensees have to demonstrate compliance with the AWA and show that the animals in their possession are adequately cared for in order to obtain a license. These changes also strengthen existing regulations to prevent individuals and businesses whose licenses were suspended or revoked from doing any regulated activities for regulated entities.

These changes will streamline the licensing process and reduce the regulatory burden for licensees who are fully compliant, by reducing licensing fees and simplifying the payment process.

Full [text](#).

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#### **USDA Lowers 2020 Red Meat, Poultry Production Guesses** (From *BrownfieldAgNews.com*)

The USDA slashed 2020 U.S. meat production estimates because of processing slowdowns related COVID-19.

The estimate for commercial beef production was lowered 1.681 billion pounds to 25.764 billion, with lower imports, lower exports, lower per capita domestic consumption, and a lower average steer price, down \$6.90 from April at \$104.1 per hundredweight, in-line with recent cash trends.

The projection for commercial pork was reduced 1.599 billion pounds to 27.436 billion pounds, with a slight increase in imports against lower exports and consumption, but with a higher average barrow and gilt price, up \$3.10 to \$43.10 per hundred weight, because of the slower processing speed.

Federally inspected broiler production was cut by 1.382 billion pounds to 43.778 billion pounds and the department sees higher imports and exports, but lower consumption and a lower average price, down \$.026 at \$.714 per pound.

Federally inspected turkey production was down 76 million pounds at 5.834 billion pounds with slightly higher imports and exports and average price, but with a modest decline in consumption. The average price is pegged at \$1.046 per pound, compared to \$1.035 last month.

The USDA's next set of supply and demand estimates is out June 11th.

[Source.](#)

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## **House Democrats Propose Billions In Additional Farm Relief**

*(From AgriPulse)*

House Democrats released a massive new coronavirus relief bill that would provide \$16.5 billion in additional direct payments to farmers and authorize USDA to compensate producers who have to dispose of livestock and poultry that can't be sold because of processing disruptions.

The HEROES Act, which the House is expected to vote on Friday, also would provide special assistance targeted toward dairy producers and fruit and vegetable growers as well as biofuel plants and textile mills. The bill would cost more than \$3 trillion, eclipsing the \$2 trillion Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act enacted in March.

In addition to paying for disposal of livestock and poultry — pork producers have been hit especially hard by packing plant shutdowns — the bill also would allow USDA to assist agricultural processing plants to “ensure supply chain continuity during an emergency period.”

The \$16.5 billion earmarked for direct farm payments would be designed to both supplement \$16 billion in payments that USDA is expected to send out in late May or June under its Coronavirus Food Assistance Program and to also provide relief to farms that aren't eligible for the first round.

Chicken producers, for example, will be left out of the first round of CFAP payments. The bill also would direct USDA to account for price differences among commodities based on location, specialized varieties and farming practices, including commodities that are certified organic.

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## **Small Meat Lockers See Surge In Demand While Farmers Search For Processing Alternatives**

*(From AgriPulse)*

While many large meat processing plants slowed down or temporarily closed due to the spread of COVID-19 among their employees, many small, local meat lockers are seeing a boom in demand for custom butchering. As consumers aim to fill their freezers, some meat shops tell Agri-Pulse they are booked full for several months and a few are full until next March.

“I’m seeing my schedule book up a lot further in advance than normal,” said Jerry Leonard, owner/member of Higginsville Processing, located in Higginsville, Mo. “Since this whole thing has started, we are pushing four months in advance that I am booked.” Nathan Genzler, owner of Tulare Country Meats based out of Tulare, S.D., is seeing the same thing. When reached by Agri-Pulse, he said his first opening to process a hog was in mid-November, and his first window for a beef cow wouldn't open until the end of December. “We usually get scheduled two to three months out but not to this extreme,” he said.

A spokesperson for the American Association of Meat Processors said members have reported exponential increases in sales, which they believe are due to demands being placed on grocery stores across the U.S., some of which are temporarily short on beef and pork. Most of their members are small retail establishments that are able to implement safety procedures, reduce the risk of exposure for employees in their businesses and remain open. These safety procedures include increased personal protective equipment for employees, curbside pickup, as well as increased cleaning and sanitizing, according to AAMP.

"We believe consumers will come out of this time period with a better appreciation for small butcher shops and their meat products," said AAMP spokesperson Diana Dietz. Rick Reams, who owns RJ's Meats in Hudson, Wis., and serves as the AAMP president, said COVID-19 has "made many of us look at our businesses differently" but also has presented several opportunities for smaller meat processors.

"Possibly the most important element to this is the meat we sell," he wrote in a post for AAMP members. "Shuttered plants are creating havoc for farmers with animals ready for slaughter and no place to take them. This places more pressure on smaller plants that are called upon to take more animals in. This is another opportunity for you to earn the trust of your community and local farmers. Live market prices are down. If we pay a fair price to our farmers our integrity will show."

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### *Save the Date!*

- 6/22, 24, 26/2020 - NBA Virtual Bison Learning Seminar - Online
- 1/20 - 1/23/2021 - National Bison Winter Conference - Denver, CO
- 1/23/2021 - NBA Gold Trophy Show and Sale - Denver, CO

Please visit <https://bisoncentral.com/calendar/> for details and more up-to-date events. If you have a bison event coming up that's not listed, please send the details to [jim@bisoncentral.com](mailto:jim@bisoncentral.com) and the NBA will post the event on its website at no charge.

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**Click Here for NBA Calendar of Events**

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