



**Take a Look at the  
Bison Industry**





# Bison is Back

There's a rumble in the countryside today...the sound of the American bison industry surging to new levels of strength, profitability, and stability.

Bison today represents one of the true bright spots in agriculture. Consumer demand for bison meat has reached historic highs...and continues to grow. That translates into sustainably profitable prices for producers.

From 2004 to 2011, the prices that ranchers received for finished bulls and heifers climbed steadily, month after month. That's the good news. The better news is that those prices have remained strong and steady for the past four years.

Bison today can be found across the country on the menu of white tablecloth restaurants, brewpubs, adult casual establishments, and in an increasing number of retail outlets. Marketers today are scrambling to secure enough supply to fulfill their orders.

Prospects for continued growth appear bright. After all, bison meat is positioned at the convergence of major long-term trends among today's quality-conscious consumer. Former *New York Times* Food Editor Marian Burros summarized bison's position with the American consumer when she wrote, "Today buffalo, shunned no longer, has achieved an enviable position; simultaneous praise from chefs, nutritionists and environmentalists. At last, steak without guilt."

New processing facilities, distributors, and marketing programs have emerged to supply a national marketplace. What they need now: More bison. That's where you come in.

**One major factor inhibits continued growth in the consumer marketplace: SUPPLY.**

## New Bison Producers Needed!

In the latest bi-annual survey conducted by the National Bison Association, commercial marketers state that the prices they paid to ranchers over the past four years are sustainable.

The bison market is becoming an established part of the agricultural sector. The U.S. Department of Agriculture now publishes monthly wholesale bison market price reports. Lawmakers are including bison as eligible recipients for conservation and disaster assistance. Distributor across the country now offer bison as a part of their standing price list.

Take a new look at today's bison industry. This important part of our American heritage is increasingly a popular part of the American diet, and the agricultural marketplace.

Bison Wholesale Prices September 2015 compared to September 2013 and September 2010					
	Sept. 2015 Weighted Ave.	Sept. 2013 Weighted Ave.	% Change 9-13 to 9-15	Sept. 2010 Weighted Ave.	% Change 9-10 to 9-15
<b>WHOLESALE PRICES</b>					
Young Bulls	\$4.25	\$3.88	10%	\$2.96	44%
Young Heifers	\$4.11	\$3.74	10%	\$2.77	48%
Aged Bulls	\$3.51	\$2.82	24%	\$2.29	53%
Aged Cows	\$3.54	\$2.69	32%	\$2.06	72%
Strip Loin Fresh	\$11.20	\$12.78	-12%	\$6.01	86%
Ribeye, Lip-On Fresh	\$12.22	\$13.55	-10%	\$10.32	18%
Top Sirloin Fresh	\$7.49	\$8.08	-7%	\$6.01	25%
Chuckroll Fresh	\$6.16	\$5.66	9%	\$4.08	51%
Top Round Fresh	\$6.82	\$5.88	16%	\$5.60	22%
Tenderloin Fresh	\$21.34	\$19.31	11%	\$14.13	51%
Bison Trimmings 90% Fresh	\$6.44	\$4.90	31%	\$4.69	37%
Bison Trimmings 90% Frozen	\$6.59	\$5.39	22%	\$4.61	43%
Ground 90% Bulk, Fresh	\$5.98	\$6.12	-2%	\$4.39	36%
Source: USDA AMS Grain and Livestock Market Reporting Service. More information on bison: <a href="http://www.nationalbison.com">www.nationalbison.com</a>					

**Prices received by producers climbed sharply five years ago as consumers discovered the great taste of bison.  
Continued strong consumer demand has kept wholesale prices stable for the past four years.**

# Put the Pencil to Bison

Take a look at this sample break-even. Bison works in today's agricultural economy!

## Bison Cow-Calf Herd Break-Even

Pasture-based cow-calf operation - leased land

### Assumptions

No. of cows 60

Calf Crop Percentage 85%

Operating Costs	Per Cow	Total Herd
Feed Costs		
Grain	\$18.00	\$1,080.00
Hay	\$80.00	\$4,800.00
Salt & Minerals	\$15.00	\$900.00
Total Feed Cost	\$113.00	\$6,780.00

### Other Operating Costs

Veterinary Medicine & Supplies	\$20.68	\$1,240.80
Fuel, Maintenance & Repairs	\$50.00	\$3,000.00
Utilities	\$16.00	\$960.00
Marketing & Transportation	\$20.00	\$1,200.00
Death Loss	\$45.00	\$2,700.00
Insurance	\$25.00	\$1,500.00
Miscellaneous	\$12.00	\$720.00
Subtotal Operating Costs	\$301.68	\$18,100.80
Operating Interest	\$12.21	\$732.60
Total Operating Costs	\$313.89	\$18,833.40

### Fixed Costs

Depreciation		
Facilities	\$28.75	\$1,725.00
Machinery & Equipment	\$66.67	\$4,000.20
Investment		
Facilities	\$11.50	\$690.00
Machinery & Equipment	\$24.00	\$1,440.00
Livestock	\$94.67	\$5,680.20
(Rented) Pasture Land & Fencing	\$360.00	\$21,600.00
Total Fixed Costs	\$585.59	\$35,135.40

Total Operating and Fixed Costs	\$899.48	\$53,968.80
Labor	\$40.00	\$2,400.00
Total Cost of Production	\$939.48	\$56,368.80

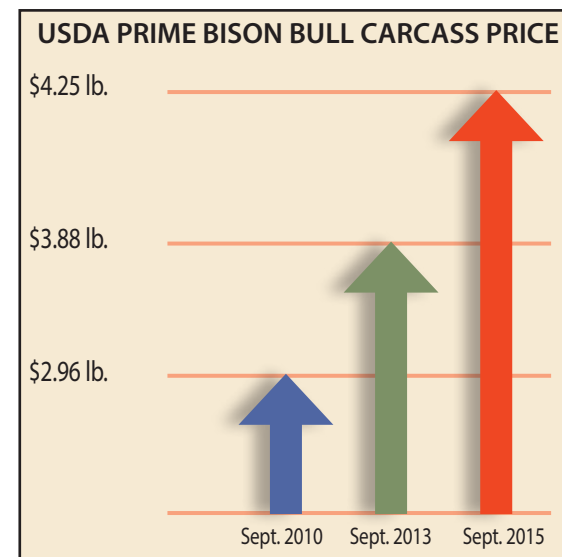
### Break-even selling price/head \$/head

Operating Costs	\$369.28	\$22,156.94
Operating & Fixed Costs	\$1,058.21	\$63,492.71
Operating, Labor & Fixed Cost	\$1,105.27	\$66,316.24
Break-even Price/head = Cost ÷ % calf crop		

\*Sample break-even for illustration only. Actual figures will vary based upon region and producers

# 44%

Increase in wholesale bison meat value  
2010 - 2015



Source: USDA Livestock & Grain Market News Service

## The NBA Can Help

The National Bison Association can help you get started. Our *Bison Producers Handbook* is the best resource around on all aspects of production and marketing. You can view management practices through the eyes of veteran ranchers in *The Insiders' Guide to Bison Handling and Management* DVD. Our Bison 101 and 201 on-line curriculums offer introductory and in-depth tools that can help you take your first steps from your desk-top computer.

And, experienced producers in the NBA are always available to provide guidance and support to those who are just entering our business. An Active-level membership in the National Bison Association will give you access to all of these resources, and much, much more.

[www.bisoncentral.com](http://www.bisoncentral.com)





## TAKE A LOOK AT THE BISON INDUSTRY

### CONSIDER THIS:

- Growing consumer demand is keeping producer prices strong
- Bison require less hands-on attention than other livestock
- Long-lived bison will produce calves for more than 20 years
- Bison withstand extreme weather conditions
- The National Bison Association has the resources to help you get started



“Bison is America’s original protein, and now it’s America’s hottes. Buffalo meat puts the ‘paleo’ in the popular Paleo Diet.”

-Jane Wells, CNBC

“The NBA is my faucet that pours out information, news, notices and keeps me in touch with everything important to my operation. It does not matter if you have 500 head or 5, the NBA is your voice. ALL ranchers gamble with stakes and odds that would drive Vegas crazy. For myself?, not having the National Bison Association on my side is one gamble I will never make.”

- Zane E. Holcomb, Holcomb Buffalo Ranch, Buffalo, SD



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### Check out these resources on today’s bison business:

National Bison Association: [www.bisoncentral.com](http://www.bisoncentral.com)

[www.bisonadvantage.com](http://www.bisonadvantage.com)

USDA monthly wholesale bison price report  
[www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/nw\\_ls526.txt](http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/nw_ls526.txt)

USDA NASS weekly processing report  
[www.nass.usda.gov/QuickStats/create\\_Federal\\_All.jsp](http://www.nass.usda.gov/QuickStats/create_Federal_All.jsp)