



## **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 26, 2016**

### **NBA Science and Research Committee Identifies Priorities**

The newly formed Science and Research Committee of the National Bison Association, chaired by Dr. Dave Hunter, met this week to identify potential priorities that will benefit producers across North America.

Members of the committee agreed during the meeting to focus efforts on developing new and improved, science-based information regarding appropriate nutrition and handling for bison. Those issues can provide producers of all types with knowledge that can improve herd health.

The committee also recommended that the NBA develop user-friendly information that can assist new producers in selecting healthy animals as they start to build their herds, or add to them.

### **Bison and Bison Meat Are Hot but Remain a Niche Market**

*(From The Capital Journal)*

The history and artifacts still found on the ranch are a prime setting for the Limperts' Slim Buttes Buffalo Ranch, begun by Brodie's father and mother, Sandy and Jacki Limpert 25 years ago.

He is the fourth generation of his family ranching in that spot. The first two generations raised sheep and cattle.

His father Sandy's decision to go full tilt into buffalo has given the ranch with so much history a pretty rosy-looking future at present.

"The market is pretty strong right now," Brodie said Monday in an apparent understatement.

Pressed about the reported hot demand for the limited supply of buffalo and buffalo meat right now, he goes further: "It's crazy."

After a big swoon in the buffalo industry at the turn of the century - this century - things are looking very good right now, said David Carter, executive director of the National Bison Association based in Denver.

The wholesale price of bison meat - figured by the 600-pound carcass that is the result of slaughtering a 1,150-pound bison - is \$4.56 a pound in the latest report, 128 percent higher than the price of a beef carcass, Carter said. That premium of bison meat to beef is the highest on record, he said.

Sure, fat beef steers yield more meat per live body than the leaner bison.

But bison are such efficient feeders that a bison cow, in a bad winter when the grass is poor, needs only 18 to 20 pounds of hay per day, compared to beef cows who need 50 pounds, Limpert said.

“They don’t ever over-feed themselves,” he said.

They don’t really need shelter in the winter and seldom need help when calving - not that it would be easy to give it with a species still considered “undomesticated” - and they mostly need no more than the native prairie grass found on the thousands of acres on the Slim Buttes ranch.

That helps make bison meat leaner and higher in protein, lower in fat, than beef, Carter says. And the American public is getting into that.

Read more. [http://www.capjournal.com/news/bison-and-bison-meat-are-hot-but-remain-a-niche/article\\_dd9e19be-68ec-11e6-ae70-fb6d3ce49f8b.html](http://www.capjournal.com/news/bison-and-bison-meat-are-hot-but-remain-a-niche/article_dd9e19be-68ec-11e6-ae70-fb6d3ce49f8b.html)

## **Scheming Buffalo Herd Roams Amok at Grand Canyon**

*(From the Wall Street Journal)*

NORTH RIM OF THE GRAND CANYON—Grand Canyon National Park has become the home where the hybrid buffalo roam.

Park officials can’t figure out what to do about them.

The park’s so-called bison problem is getting worse with no clear solution in sight. The U.S. National Park Service estimates the size of the herd is 600 and growing at an average rate of 30% a year. The animal has no natural predators here, except for one: Man. So far, the bison have evaded him.

Hunting isn’t permitted in national parks and somehow, these “beefalo”—as they are still colloquially called by some—are on to that. “They have figured out that if they move to the park no one can hunt them,” said Bill Andres, information branch chief of the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Up to 2,000 pounds apiece, the crafty creatures are voracious eaters. Visitors going to the North Rim of the canyon drive through lush meadows with grasses until they reach the park boundary. Here, on the other side of the welcome sign, where the wild herd hangs out, grass struggles to grow even an inch around patches where the bison wallow. Poop is abundant.

It is a dry area to begin with, but since the animals can drink up to 10 gallons of water at a time, they have practically drained tiny Little Park Lake, which serves as a crucial water source for the likes of the tiger salamander. On a recent day in August, Little Park Lake looked less like a lake and more like an oversize mud puddle.

Tourists love the critters. “We are learning that the visitors are finding a lot of value in coming to the northern rim and seeing wild bison,” says Glenn Plumb, acting chief of science and resource management at Grand Canyon National Park since June. Dung or no dung, visitors think the animals are “pretty cool.”

Sure they do, says the park’s former chief of science and resources Martha Hahn as she trudged through the park uprooting woolly mulleins, an invasive weed often spread by bison. “If giraffes were in the park tourists would love them too,” she said. “That doesn’t mean that’s what’s best for the park.”

Read more. <http://www.wsj.com/articles/scheming-buffalo-herd-roams-amok-at-grand-canyon-1471620343>

## **Bison vs Beef – Which Red Meat Reigns Supreme?**

*(From Onnit Academy)*

After decades of being maligned for its saturated fat, beef has made a comeback with nutritionists, with recent research showing that fat doesn’t increase the risk of heart disease as previously thought.

But beef has another opponent to contend with, and it’s been here for centuries: bison. Similar to beef both nutritionally and in terms of flavor, buffalo meat is an alternative to the cow (incidentally, “bison” is technically the correct term for the animal, but it’s come to be used interchangeably with “buffalo”).

Both bison and beef can be part of a healthy diet. But if you had to pick one big animal to take a bite out of, which one should you choose?

We compared beef and buffalo in every important category to determine the alpha protein on the range.

\*There are many cuts of both bison and beef available. To equate them as closely as possible, we chose top sirloin—a very lean cut preferred by athletes—for the nutrition facts part of the table. Also, as bison is mainly raised on pasture, we went with grass-fed beef in the example to match it. In other words, the table compares buffalo to the very best the beef world has to offer. More commonly found conventional beef would have approximately 230 calories, 23g protein, and 15g fat per four-ounce serving.

WINNER: Bison

*Why Bison Wins (By A Horn): Buffalo Meat is Better Quality*

Across all cuts, buffalo meat is lower in calories and fat than beef is, and higher in protein. A three to four-ounce serving of bison ribeye has 177 calories, 6 grams fat, and 30 grams protein compared to a typical beef ribeye, which contains 265 calories, 17 grams fat, and 27 grams protein. According to the USDA, bison burgers have 152 calories and 7 grams fat, which is less than even a 90% lean beef burger (184 calories and 10 grams fat) and a 93% lean turkey burger (176 calories and 10 grams fat). Bison offers more omega-3 fats than beef, and a better omega-6 to omega-3 ratio.

Bison doesn't give up any micronutrition to beef either. It's higher in B vitamins than beef—critical nutrients for boosting energy levels, memory, and mood—as well as copper, potassium, and zinc. Reader's Digest even recommended it as one of the best sources of iron for pregnant women, who tend to be anemic more than men due to menstruation.

Research supports bison as being heart-healthier too. A study published in Nutrition Research in 2013 compared the effects of consuming bison versus beef. Ten healthy men ate 12 ounces of either beef or bison per day, six days per week, for seven weeks. Then, after a 30-day “washout” to clear their systems, the bison-eaters switched to beef and vice versa for another seven weeks. Researchers concluded that “in terms of vascular health, bison meat appears to provide a healthier alternative to red meat.” In fact, after a single beef meal, harmful oxidized LDL cholesterol levels were elevated. The same changes did not occur after eating buffalo.

If you're concerned about how your meat was raised (and you should be), bison is the safer choice every time. “All bison spend the majority of their life grazing on pasture,” says Dave Carter, Executive Director of the National Bison Association, a non-profit organization of bison producers. “Some are finished with grain, sometimes in a feedlot,” meaning that they'll eat grain feed just as most cows do to fatten them up a bit in the last few months before slaughter so they yield more meat. But Carter says that, even if the bison are forced to spend some time fenced in, they get a lot more space than cows do. Bison aren't as easily controlled as cattle, so it's much harder for ranchers to keep them in confined quarters like cows are where they can be mistreated and develop diseases.

In fact, it's more advantageous for buffalo ranchers to treat their livestock well. “If there's stress on the animal, it won't produce good meat,” says Carter. “One thing you can be sure of with all bison is that it's produced without growth hormones or antibiotics. It's illegal to use them. And most of the bison producers have independent auditors come in to test them.”

Full Article: <https://www.onnit.com/academy/bison-vs-beef/>

## **Veterinarian Discusses Pathology, Prevention of Mycoplasma Bovis Diseases in Bison**

*(From High Plains Journal)*

Veterinarian Randy Shirbroun of Newport Laboratories Inc. addressed more than 200 bison producers regarding the pathology and prevention of diseases caused by Mycoplasma bovis. The producers had gathered for the 2016 National Bison Association Summer Conference held in June at Elk River, Minnesota. Shirbroun specializes in ruminant health issues including those seen in the American bison, which became the official U.S. national mammal in May.

*Mycoplasma bovis* is a bacterium responsible for a number of diseases. "Each animal species tends to have its own *Mycoplasma* species," Dr. Shirbroun said, "but multiple strains of *Mycoplasma bovis* can affect cattle and bison." The morbidity and mortality rates associated with *Mycoplasma* infections in bison, however, are higher than other species.

Shirbroun explained, "It's actually a very common pathogen in domestic cattle, present in up to 86 percent of pneumonia cases according to reports from some diagnostic laboratories. But bison tend to be much more susceptible to *Mycoplasma* than domestic cattle are. Whether it's because of different strains or some other reason, we haven't been able to answer that yet."

Full text: <http://tinyurl.com/z8kw85g>

## **Consumers Say They Want "Antibiotic Free" Meat, But Will They Pay for It?**

*(From Bovine Veterinarian)*

Surveys comparing consumer attitudes in the two largest beef-producing countries - the United States and Brazil - reveals several important trends in purchasing preference that are influenced by how beef is raised and fed.

Cargill's 'Feed for Thought' survey of more than 2,000 people in the U.S. and Brazil, found that the majority of U.S. consumers (54 percent) and Brazilian consumers (69 percent) are more likely to purchase beef raised without antibiotics. Only 35 percent in both countries are willing to pay more for it.

"I expect that as American Millennials age, we will need to work toward continuously heightening our efforts in the area of transparency, while always working to address consumer food trends with a nutritious and affordable food supply," said Randy Krotz, CEO of the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance. "Animal feed companies and farmers must continue to find alternatives to meet consumer demand and should be prepared to serve a customer base that scrutinizes where their food comes from and how it's made."

Read more. <http://www.bovinevetonline.com/news/industry/consumers-say-they-want-%E2%80%9Cantibiotic-free%E2%80%9D-meat-will-they-pay-it>

## **FSIS Seeks Comments on non-GMO labels**

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) this week established compliance guidance on how companies can make label or labeling claims concerning the fact that bioengineered or genetically modified (GM) ingredients or animal feed were not used in the production of meat, poultry, or egg products. And, the agency will be accepting comments through October 24<sup>th</sup> for the compliance guidance.

Previously, FSIS did not allow the use of the terms "genetically modified organism" or "GMO" in negative claims unless the name of a third-party certifying organization contained these terms — for example, "Non-GMO Project."

However, recent legislation was enacted requiring the secretary of agriculture to develop and implement a mandatory national bioengineered food disclosure standard within two years. In the wake of such legislation, FSIS is allowing the use of the terms “genetically modified organism” or “GMO” in negative claims provided that the label or labeling is otherwise truthful and not misleading.

FSIS has developed a compliance guide for companies that seek to make label or labeling claims concerning the fact that bioengineered or GM ingredients were not used in a meat, poultry or egg product.

Consistent with past practices, FSIS will continue to allow the use of synonymous terms such as “genetically engineered.” If FSIS has approved an organic claim on the product label, establishments may add an applicable negative claim of the kind discussed in the guidance. Because FSIS cannot independently verify negative claims for ingredients or feed, the agency has required establishments that make these claims to comply with standards established by a third-party certifying organization. FSIS currently requires that the third-party certifying organization’s standards be publicly available on a website and the label or labeling disclose the website address of the third-party certifying organization.

A downloadable version of the compliance guidance is available to view and print at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulatorycompliance/labeling/claims-guidance/procedures-nongenetically-engineeredstatement>.

Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods: Federal eRulemaking Portal: This Web site provides the ability to type short comments directly into the comment field on this Web page or attach a file for lengthier comments. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov/>. Follow the on-line instructions at that site for submitting comments.

Mail, including CD-ROMs: Send to Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Patriots Plaza 3, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Mailstop 3782, Room 8-163B, Washington, DC 20250-3700.

All items submitted by mail or electronic mail must include the Agency name, docket number FSIS- 2016-0027, and the document title: Statements that Bioengineered or Genetically Modified (GM) Ingredients or Animal Feed Were not Used in the Production of Meat, Poultry, or Egg Products. Comments received in response to this docket will be made available for public inspection and posted without change, including any personal information, to <http://www.regulations.gov>.

For additional information about FSIS labeling policies and programs, including Generic Label Approval, please review the FSIS Web site at: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulatory-compliance/labeling/> or contact the Labeling and Program Delivery Staff at (301) 504- 0878 or (301) 504-0879.

See the Federal Register notice: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-08-24/pdf/2016-20227.pdf>

The formal guidance is available at: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulatory-compliance/labeling/claims-guidance/procedures-nongenetically-engineered-statement>

## **Reward Offered in Shooting Death of Bison Near Stanton**

*(From the Morning Sun)*

A Grand Rapids man is offering a \$500 reward for information on the shooting death of his 4-year-old bull bison that was found dead on his Stanton-area ranch Wednesday morning.

Phillip Stewart, originally from Stanton, said on Facebook that “Goliath” went down late Tuesday and was found dead on Wednesday at R & L Bison on West Stanton Road between Dickerson Lake and Clifford Lake.

Describing Goliath as a gorgeous animal and prized breeding bull, Stewart asked for help identifying the shooter who killed the bison on his farm, located northeast of Greenville and southwest of Edmore.

Stewart said a taxidermist found the bullet holes, believed to be three or four days old from a small-caliber rifle, and that the animal died from a resulting infection. The worst part of all of it is the entire animal was wasted,” Stewart said on Facebook. “Our taxidermist was able to salvage the cape off from him, but 1,600 pounds of meat and four years of hard work are down the drain.”

Stewart’s Facebook post offering the reward on Goliath, made late Wednesday, had been shared nearly 3,500 times by midday Thursday.

Source. <http://www.themorningsun.com/general-news/20160825/reward-offered-in-shooting-death-of-bison-near-stanton>

## **In a Forest in Poland, a Battle Over Beetles, Bark, and Bison**

*(From Undark Magazine)*

When Americans think of bison, they probably picture the massive, shaggy Great Plains mammal they call the buffalo. But here in Poland, there’s a herd of equally formidable mammals at the center of a sharp debate over wildlife conservation, forest management, and human pressure on the environment.

They are called wisent (VEE-zent) — heavier and taller than their American cousins, with slimmer bodies, smaller beards, and shorter horns. Like the buffalo, they were almost driven to extinction in the 19th and 20th centuries, due to hunting and loss of habitat. And similarly, they’ve made a modest comeback, thanks to determined wildlife conservationists. Europe’s largest herd — 570 strong — lives in the Białowieża Forest, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in eastern Poland, where tourists can see them not only in the flesh but immortalized in monuments, as toys in souvenir shops, and in restaurant logos and names of hotels.

But a decision announced by the Polish government in May to begin logging in the forest could drive them out. The aim is to stop an infestation of spruce bark beetles, but conservationists argue that many unaffected trees will be cut down, devastating the forest and its inhabitants.

Rafał Kowalczyk, director of the Mammal Research Institute in Białowieża, says the logging plan would change the primeval forest into a managed, simplified “economic” woodland — a bad thing for the wisent. “Forest management, with logging, fast replantation, and fencing of forest



clearings, reduces availability of open areas for bison,” he said. (Paweł Mucha, of the Polish Ministry of Environment, says that without action to curb the beetles, “the degradation of the natural habitats” in the forest will only get worse.)

Read more. <http://undark.org/article/in-a-forest-in-poland-a-battle-over-bark-beetles-and-bison/>

## **FDA Revises Animal Drugs Regs for Minor Species**

The Food and Drug Administration this week amended the animal drug regulations by revising the definitions of the two categories of new animal drugs used in medicated feeds to preserve the availability of medicated feeds intended for therapeutic use in minor animal species and prevent a significant disincentive for future development of additional minor species therapies.

The new regulation will become effective December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. The agency also announced that it will be accepting public comments on the new regulation throughout November 7.

In the Federal Register notice published this week, FDA said it is issuing this direct final rule to revise the definitions of the two categories of new animal drugs used in medicated feeds to base category assignment only on approved uses in major animal species. This action is being taken to address a potential consequence of animal drug sponsor cooperation in implementing a strategy initiated by the FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) to address antimicrobial resistance by taking measures to ensure the judicious use of antimicrobial drugs in animal agriculture.

In the Register notice, the Agency wrote, “Under this program, sponsors of antimicrobial new animal drugs that also have importance in human medicine were requested to voluntarily withdraw approval of production (e.g., growth production, feed efficiency) indications for their drug products that are intended for use in the feed or water of food-producing animals.

“Based on the existing drug category definitions, the voluntary withdrawal of production indications by these drug sponsors would, in some cases, result in a change to a medicated feed drug’s category, potentially leading to additional consequences not foreseen at the time the program was initiated. The category in which a new animal drug used in medicated feeds is placed is based on their likelihood of producing unsafe residues in the edible products of treated animals.”

Public comments can be submitted in the following way: • Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments. Comments submitted electronically, including attachments, to <http://www.regulations.gov> will be posted to the docket unchanged.

Written/Paper Submissions Submit written/paper submissions as follows: • Mail/Hand delivery/Courier (for written/paper submissions): Division of Dockets Management (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

The Full Federal Register Notice is available here: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-08-24/pdf/2016-20149.pdf>



## **Minnesota Motorcyclist Has Close Encounter with Bison at Yellowstone**

*(From Fox 9)*

Stopping the car for an up-close view of bison at Yellowstone National Park is a common activity for the park's 4 million annual visitors. But imagine being on a motorcycle, surrounded by 3 of the 1,400 lb. animals, then finding yourself face-to-face with one of them.

That was the experience of Kelli McDaniel of Cottage Grove, Minnesota during a ride through Yellowstone's Lamar Valley on Aug. 8. McDaniel was in the middle of a two-week motorcycle trip out west when she found herself frozen, face-to-face with a bison.

"I could actually hear him coming from behind me before I could see him," she said.

McDaniel had already seen a herd of bison earlier on her trip, and had been waiting 30 minutes for the road to clear before this encounter.

"I didn't move, didn't breathe. I just waited," McDaniel said. "It seemed like an eternity."

Source. <http://www.fox9.com/news/194013208-story>

## **Mexican Wolf, Bear and Bison Being Recovered in Chihuahua**

*(From the Yucatan Times)*

CHIHUAHUA — The state is working on the recovery and reintroduction of priority species for conservation, such as the Mexican wolf, black bear, bison, bighorn sheep, golden eagle, thick-billed parrot, prairie dog and pronghorn. Notimex reported Chihuahua has biodiversity in ecosystems, which is one of the biggest concerns worldwide, said the Ministry of Urban Development and Ecology in a statement.

The country's largest state has a land area of 247,087 square kilometers, made up by diverse ecosystems such as grasslands, bushes, temperate and tropical forest, besides aquatic environments.

The agency said that is working with the National Commission for Knowledge and Biodiversity Usage (Conabio, for its acronym in Spanish), the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (Conanp, for its acronym in Spanish) and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (Semarnat, for its acronym in Spanish) for recovery and reintroduction of priority species.

Some were about to disappear in the state. However, they have been recovered gradually in its area, thanks to the knowledge there is today on their population and location.

Source. <http://www.theyucantimes.com/2016/08/mexican-wolf-bear-and-bison-being-recovered-in-chihuahua/>

## **Indiana TB Case Prompts Cattle Restrictions in Wisconsin**

*(From The Wisconsin Ag Connection)*

Wisconsin's state veterinarian says effective immediately, all Indiana cattle and bison of any age will require a negative tuberculosis test within 60 days prior to entering the state, unless they are going directly to slaughter.

Dr. Paul McGraw says the declaration is in response to the Hoosier State's recent announcement that a wild white-tailed deer was killed on the property of a TB positive beef herd.

"This is a precautionary step that is taken on a case-by-case basis when a state identifies a new herd affected by tuberculosis," McGraw said.

The Indiana State Board of Animal Health says the 41 head beef herd was depopulated in April.

Source:

<http://www.wisconsinagconnection.com/story-state.php?id=980&yr=2016>

## **Videos Demonstrate Tire Tank Preparation and Installation**

Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture has posted two short videos on how to prepare a used tire for conversion to a watering tank for cattle and how to install the tank once it is ready. Kerr Center Livestock Program Assistant Daryl Davis demonstrates how to plumb an old tire converted for use as a watering tank. The six-minute videos are available online.

See the video at <http://kerrcenter.com/video/tire-tanks-preparation/>

## **Start to Farm Initiates New Farmer Training in Iowa**

*(From Iowa State Extension)*

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach is organizing Start to Farm: New Farmer Learning Network, a statewide program designed to provide education and support for beginning and early-career agricultural producers. Multiple groups will be organized throughout the state, with beginning farmers able to join a group that will be most beneficial to them through either a focus on farm enterprises or geography.

Based on priorities and topics determined by each group, they will discuss production techniques, ways to grow and improve business practices, and farm management strategies. Registration for the program is requested, but there is no participation fee.

Read more. <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/article/join-start-farm-network-new-farmers>

## **Registration Opens for 5th National Conference for Women in Sustainable Agriculture**

Registration is now open for the 5th National Conference for Women in Sustainable Agriculture, an event that will bring together farmers, educators, technical assistance providers and activists engaged in healthy food and farming to share educational and organization strategies, build technical and business skills, and address policy issues aimed at expanding the success of women farmers and ranchers. The conference is scheduled November 30 through December 2, 2016, in Portland, Oregon.

The event will feature keynote speaker Natasha Bowen, founder of the The Color of Food, a multimedia project focusing on Black, Latino, Native and Asian farmers. Participants will also enjoy eight concurrent, interactive workshop sessions, a trailblazer panel of venerable sustainable agriculture pioneers, a diverse sponsor trade show, author roundtable, incredible tours of area food and farms, and capstone speaker Cathy Whims, Chef and owner of Nostrana, a top Portland restaurant. This year, organization of the conference is being led by Oregon State University Small Farms with support from a national team of leaders in sustainable agriculture and agricultural women's organizations.

Read more. <http://2016wisa.org/>

## **Minnesota Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grant Program**

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) has announced a new round of funding for the Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grant Program. Approximately \$250,000 is available to test ideas that could conserve natural resources, enhance profitability, and improve life on the farm. This program funds projects that demonstrate farming methods or systems that increase energy efficiency, reduce agricultural chemical usage, and show economic and environmental benefits.

Applications from farmers receive priority, but the program also funds Minnesota nonprofit and educational organizations that meaningfully involve Minnesota farmers in their projects. Projects must last two to three years and applicants may receive up to \$25,000.

The deadline to apply is December 13, 2016.

Read more. <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/grants/grants/demogrant.aspx>

## **USDA mulls revising U.S. standards for grades of beef**

*(From Sustainable Food News)*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is seeking comments on whether or not to amend the U.S. Standards for Grades of Carcass Beef to include dentition and documentation of actual age as an additional determination of maturity grouping for official quality grading.

Currently, the beef standards only include skeletal and muscular evidence as a determination of maturity grouping. The proposed changes would allow carcasses of grain-fed steers and heifers determined to be less than 30 months old either by dentition or by documentation of actual age to be included in the youngest maturity group (A maturity grouping) for carcasses recognized as "beef" regardless of skeletal evidences of maturity.

AMS commodity standards are designed to facilitate the orderly marketing of U.S. agricultural products. The official USDA beef quality grades, including USDA Prime, USDA Choice and USDA Select, enjoy considerable consumer recognition and are a major value determining factor for the cattle and beef supply chain. At any time, AMS may consider changes to its official grade standards to ensure they continue to serve their intended purpose. Several industry stakeholders indicated the beef standards should be revised to allow for alternative methods of determining carcass maturity grouping for the purposes of official USDA beef quality grading.

The notice will publish in the Aug. 24, 2016, Federal Register. Comments may be posted online at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), submitted by email to [beefcarcassrevisions@ams.usda.gov](mailto:beefcarcassrevisions@ams.usda.gov), or sent to: Beef Carcass Revisions, Standardization Branch, Quality Assessment Division; Livestock, Poultry, and Seed Program; Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture; 1400 Independence Ave., SW; Room 3932-S, STOP 0258; Washington, D.C. 20250-0258.

Comments received will be posted without change, including any personal information provided. All comments should reference the docket number: AMS-LPS-16-0060; the date of submission; and the page number of the issue of the Federal Register. Comments must be received by Oct. 24, 2016. If you have any questions, contact Bucky Gwartney, International Marketing Specialist, Quality Assessment Division at (202) 720-1424.