



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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September 9, 2016

Bison Advantage Touted to Illinois Audience

Nearly 20 agricultural extension agents, veterinarian students, and prospective producers got a peek into the bison business Wednesday during the Bison Advantage workshop conducted on the campus of the University of Illinois in Champaign, IL.

The workshop was presented by NBA Executive Director Dave Carter, who provided the participants with an introduction of the basic elements of bison production and marketing. Members of the Illinois-Indiana Bison Association were also on hand to answer questions and to provide insight into bison production in the Midwest.

Following the formal workshop on campus, the attendees traveled to Ruhter Bison Ranch near Villa Grove, IL, for a barbecue lunch and tour of the ranch's bison handling facilities.

The workshop was part of a two-year education and outreach project funded through the North Central Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program.

Regional Election Ballots to Be Distributed Next Friday

National Bison Association members have two weeks to nominate themselves or someone else as a candidate to serve on the board as a director from Regions I, III, V or VII. Ballots will be distributed September 15th, with voting to be conducted through the end of September. The directors elected in that balloting will serve from January 2017 through January 2019,

To qualify, candidates shall have been active or lifetime members of the Corporation for at least two years, and must have registered for and attended at least one general membership meeting or other NBA sponsored event during the two immediately preceding years.

Directors will be elected from the following regions:

Region I is comprised of Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington. Alan Douglass, the current director, is eligible and has filed for re-election.

Region III is comprised of Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota. Dave Hunter, DVM, the current director, is not seeking reelection. John Cammack of Stoneville, SD has been nominated as a candidate.

Region V is comprised of Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska and Wisconsin. Tom Barthel, the current director, is eligible and has filed for re-election.

Region VII is comprised of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont. Brian Grubb, the current director, is eligible and has filed for re-election. Kevin MacRitchie of Michigan has also been nominated as a candidate.

Learn About Bison Business

(From AgriNews)

WOLCOTTVILLE, Ind. — Producers wanting to help satisfy consumers' growing appetite for bison can learn more about the opportunities and challenges of raising bison by attending a Purdue Extension program.

The Bison Advantage Workshop, co-sponsored by the National Bison Association, will be from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sept. 16 at Cook's Bison Ranch, 5645 E. County Road 600 S, Wolcottville.

"We love being able to be a part of raising an animal that has deep roots in our American history," said workshop host Pete Cook. "Bison meat is an excellent product with a high consumer demand. The history of bison, along with the advantages of raising this animal, make it an attractive option for producers. It's an exciting time to be involved in the bison business."

Sales of low-fat, high protein bison meat in restaurants and retail stores now amount to more than \$340 million per year, according to the National Bison Association. Prices paid to producers have reached record highs in each of the past six years.

Compared with cattle, bison are relatively easy to raise — hardy and resistant to disease — needing no artificial shelter.

Those attending will be introduced to management and marketing of bison and receive a free toolkit of bison production educational materials. There also will be a tour of the host ranch, lunch and a networking hour.

There is no cost to attend, but registration is required by Sept. 9. Register by email at jim@bisoncentral.com or call the National Bison Association at 303-292-2833.

For more information, contact Steve Engleking at 260-499-6334 or englekin@purdue.edu or visit www.bisoncentral.com/events for more details.

Source. <http://agrinews-pubs.com/Content/Default/Indiana-News/Article/Learn-about-bison-business/-/3/79/15922>

The 2016 Texas State Bison Music Festival is Coming

(From KYFO)

Get ready to enjoy live music and good food for a good cause at the 2016 Texas State Bison Music Festival.

The Sixth annual Texas State Bison Music Festival will be held in Quitaque, Texas on Saturday September 17th.

Vendors will open at 9 am with booths down the main street and at 4 live music will be performed by Ed Montana, Kevin Deal, Zac Wilkerson, Mark Powell, and the headliner Robert Earl Keen.

General admission is \$30 and tickets can be purchased at BisonFest.com. Proceeds will go to the Texas State Bison Herd Restoration project.

Coolers will be allowed with a \$10 fee at the gate.

Read More: The 2016 Texas State Bison Music Festival is Coming | <http://kfy.com/the-2016-texas-state-bison-music-festival-is-coming/?trackback=tsmclip>

Editor's Note: The Texas Bison Association will host its Fall Get Together on Friday, September 16th at the Hampton Inn in nearby Childress. Learn more at www.texasbison.org

How to Cook a Reverse-Seared Bison Tomahawk

(From Men's Fitness)

Until very recently, I only consumed bison in the form of a burger—partly because that's how it's usually sold here in Toronto, but mostly because I didn't know any better. Bison is generally leaner than beef with less intramuscular marbling and has a slightly gamey flavor, which is why some restaurants grind it, serve it on a bun and top it with caramelized onions and aged cheddar. If they're goal is to make it more palatable for the consumer, they're doing a disservice. Bison, when cooked correctly, is juicy and tender. And with delicate, earthy, and sweet notes lacking from most beef, it has a far more nuanced flavor profile. It is, in my humble opinion, best served outside the bun.

While taste is subjective, scientific facts are not. Bison, and the particularly special animals raised by Sean Lenihan and his Honest Bison team, are 100% grass-fed from birth to slaughter. They never see the inside of a feedlot, are not grain-finished and are never treated with steroids, hormones, or antibiotics. The result is a more humanely raised animal that has the added benefit of a higher ratio of omega 3 to omega 6 fatty acids, which translates to a heart-healthier cut of meat.

Bison can be cooked in the exact the same way as beef. However, I have found that best results are achieved using the 'Reverse Sear' method. The meat is roasted low-and-slow in the oven where the internal temperature gradually rises before being quickly seared to finish on the stovetop. Not only does this help keep all of the natural juices in the steak, it results in a more evenly cooked center. The 'Reverse Sear' is particularly great for large and thick cuts like the

tomahawk shown here (i.e. a frenched, bone-in ribeye with an extra-long bone). For smaller cuts, I like the quick-and-dirty method outlined in my Friday-Night Steak and Yam Fries.

Read more. <http://www.mensfitness.com/nutrition/what-to-eat/how-cook-reverse-seared-bison-tomahawk>

Yellowstone's Bison Breeding Season a Window to Past

(From the Casper Star Tribune)

HAYDEN VALLEY — Perhaps no other occurrence in Yellowstone National Park has the potential to transport visitors back in time quite like the bison breeding season.

In late July and August visitors can park in one of the pullouts in this wide river valley, located just north of Yellowstone Lake and south of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, and be amid a spectacle unlike any other.

Small bands of bison cross the Grand Loop Road between the foothills to the west and the Yellowstone River bottom to the east. If visitors can temporarily ignore the traffic, which is often backed up bumper to bumper for a mile or more, the unfolding drama resembles the early 1800s when the massive animals crowded the plains in great bellowing bands.

Bison facts

Yellowstone National Park has published a detailed treatise on bison titled “Yellowstone bison: Conserving an American icon in modern society,” which is filled with information about the park’s largest and most populous animal species.

At last count the park’s two geographically separated herds numbered more than 5,000 animals. One herd largely resides in the Lamar Valley, in the park’s northern range, and migrates in winter to the Mammoth Hot Springs and Gardiner areas. The central herd summers in the Hayden and Pelican valleys and spends the winter mainly along the Firehole and Madison river drainages.

During the breeding season the mature males are testosterone-crazed, single-minded and unpredictable. “Plains bison reach sexual maturity at 2 to 4 years of age, but males usually do not successfully breed until about 6 years due to the presence of larger, older males,” according to “Yellowstone bison.”

“Mature males fight to determine dominance, with competitive interactions including threatening postures, growling-type vocalizations, and sometimes, violent head-to-head clashes with opponents pushing to displace each other,” the publication adds. “Winners have an opportunity to copulate with receptive females, and as few as 10 percent of the males in the population may complete 50 percent of the breeding during a given year.”

Read more. http://trib.com/lifestyles/recreation/yellowstone-s-bison-breeding-season-a-window-to-past/article_7041bea8-102f-5088-b225-ff5179f17662.html

The Bison Commons Was Not a Tragedy After All

(From Value Walk)

North America was once home to massive herds of bison. Approximately 30 million bison roamed the plains during the 19th century, and in 1870, there were still at least 10 million bison on the continent.

But by the mid-1880s, that figure had fallen to less than 1,000. Entire herds were wiped out in a matter of years. “In 1880, the country was practically uninhabited,” wrote early rancher Granville Stuart, describing the plains of Montana. “One could travel for miles without seeing so much as a trapper’s bivouac. Thousands of bison darkened the rolling plains.”

How the slaughter of the bison occurred has been well documented. The question of why, however, has received less attention. That all changed in just a few years. “In the fall of 1883 there was not one bison remaining on the range” in Montana, according to Stuart.

The story of how this massive “slaughter on the plains” occurred with such speed and ferocity has been well documented. The near extermination of bison and the massive harvesting of them by white hunters continues to hold great interest among historians of the American West. The species has recently garnered renewed interest: in May, President Obama signed a bill designating the bison as the U.S. national mammal. The question of why the historic bison slaughter happened, however, has received less attention. And the explanations that exist often lead to incorrect conclusions about this era.

Bison commons – An Alternative Explanation

The usual explanation of this rapid depletion of the bison – at least among economic historians – was the lack of ownership of them. Because no one owned the bison, the story goes, no one had an incentive to protect them, resulting in a “tragedy of the Bison commons.”

Although some Indian tribes had loosely defined claims to certain areas to hunt the animals, those claims were virtually extinguished as settlers moved westward. In essence, bison were taken on first-come, first-served basis, with no incentive to account for the future of the population. Anyone could kill bison on the plains as rapidly as they wished.

This lack of well-defined and enforced property rights is the root cause of virtually all environmental problems. But upon closer examination, it does not adequately explain the demise of the bison during this period. In a recent academic article, published in the Independent Review, I offer an alternative explanation: the bison were slaughtered not because of a lack of property rights to them, but because there was a higher-valued use of the land on which their massive herds thundered.

Read more. <http://www.valuewalk.com/2016/09/bison-commons-not-bad/>

The Remarkable Comeback Story of the American Bison

(From CBS News)

Few places make you feel in this world like Yellowstone National Park. Its timelessness spreads to the horizon and it’s where the bear and the antelope play. But the bison dominates.

Here lives what may be the last free-ranging, pure herd of wild bison in North America, reports CBS News correspondent Mark Strassmann.

“Look at the valley full of bison. It’s primitive America,” said Dan Wenk, the park’s superintendent. “It’s probably as close as you can get to what this part of the country looked like in the early 1700s and the 1800s. And it’s really - it’s a treasure.”

Bison roam its 2.2 million acres, an area nearly as big as Rhode Island and Delaware combined. But little about scale impresses America’s largest land animal -- a mature bison stands bull six feet tall and can weigh more than a ton.

“There’s not many fullbacks who would like to approach that line,” Wenk said.

The animals are imposing, and yet, they almost disappeared.

“Well, in Yellowstone National Park, there were less than 25 animals,” Wenk said. “It is one of the greatest wildlife conservation stories in the history of the United States.”

Read more. <http://www.kpax.com/story/33015978/the-remarkable-comeback-story-of-the-american-bison>

Food Chain Radio Plugs Bison

The California-based Food Chain Radio network on Saturday conducted an hour-long interview with NBA Executive Director Dave Carter on the topic: The Big Business of Bison.

In his lead-in to the interview, host Michael Olson said, “Raising bison is a big, exciting business. In fact, each can weigh upwards of a ton and run 35 miles per hour! And so we ask... How does one do business with bison?”

“Topics include a look at the American Bison; how it serves up as a food source; and how one goes about herding animals that weigh a ton and run 35 miles per hour,” Olson said.

The full interview is available here: <http://metrofarm.com/food-chain-radio-3/>

Indiana board outlines bovine TB testing process

(From AgriNews)

BROOKVILLE, Ind. - The state of Indiana has held a bovine tuberculosis-free status since 1984, but a recently confirmed case of bovine TB in a wild white-tailed deer in Franklin County has producers and state officials on edge.

The Indiana Board of Animal Health held a bovine tuberculosis information meeting in Franklin County attended by more than 250 producers, state officials and concerned citizens from around the area, as well as Kentucky and Ohio.

One of the main speakers was Dr. Bret Marsh, the Indiana state veterinarian. Marsh answered questions about the recent case of bovine TB and what the Indiana State Board of Animal Health is doing as a result.

Full text: <http://tinyurl.com/j94dx9l>

FSIS Surprises Industry with Move Toward Testing Beef Primals

(From Meatingplace.com)

By the end of the year, USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) plans to propose subjecting some beef primals and sub-primals to the same pathogen testing as boneless manufactured trim.

Dan Engeljohn, assistant administrator of FSIS's Office of Policy and Program Development, surprised industry representatives with the news at the North American Meat Institute's pathogen control conference here.

Taken aback by the prospect, food safety executives from Tyson Foods, Cargill and JBS all challenged Engeljohn on the proposal, suggesting FSIS already has enough information about these products because the trim that is carved from them at the plant is tested.

At the heart of the proposal is concern that, increasingly, further processors, retailers and foodservice customers turn these cuts into ground beef rather than preserving them as whole-muscle intact cuts, where presumably pathogens would be killed on the surface when cooked. "The agency has decided we need to move into a more protective mode with regard to those primal and sub-primal cuts that are particularly made into ground beef products and to simply define them as boneless manufactured trimming," said Engeljohn. "In essence, this would expand that policy to include items from the chuck, round and sirloin that are assumed to be cuts that could be used in ground beef and as a consequence would be eligible for verification testing in our boneless beef manufactured trimming verification program. We also look for salmonella in that program."

USDA is under pressure to figure out why, even as less than 1 percent of beef carcasses test positive for salmonella, there are still people getting sick from salmonella carried by beef products.

In addition, Engeljohn said FSIS intends to move forward "soon" with expanding its non-O157 Shiga toxin verification testing program to head meat, cheek meat and weasand meat. Industry and agency data indicate there is a salmonella risk associated with these products that is not being adequately addressed by the current policy.

"We are concerned about salmonella in these products. We are not sure why we have the number of illnesses we have associated with salmonella in these products and we think one way to get at that is through a performance standard," he said.

Engeljohn said chuck, sirloin and round primal and sub-primals would be tested in the same way trim is tested unless slaughter facilities can provide an adequate level of support to identify them as products that will only be further cut into whole muscle intact products. He said the policy would also apply to imported primal and sub-primal cuts at the point of entry, "unless there is ample evidence to support they are for intact use only."

Watch for Anaplasmosis

(From Drovers CattleNetwork.com)

A few years ago, many cattle producers in the heartland had never heard of anaplasmosis. But now, when Kansas State University Extension planned a one-day seminar on the cattle disease, registration quickly exceeded the facility's seating capacity, and the organizers added a webcast of the event to accommodate interested ranchers from Kansas and other states.

Anaplasmosis, associated with the bacteria *Anaplasma marginale*, is a tick-vectored disease that also can be spread by some biting insects such as flies and mechanically such as through the use of syringes.

In the past, the disease has been most prevalent in the Gulf Coast region and other wet, tick-friendly environments. More recently though, anaplasmosis has appeared and caused economic losses in beef and dairy herds around the country, including the Midwest and arid West.

"In 2015, almost every county in the eastern two-thirds and several far-west counties of Kansas had samples that were tested and found to be anaplasmosis positive," says Gregg Hanzlicek, DVM, PhD, director of production animal field investigations for the Kansas Veterinary Diagnostic Lab, noting that it's not unusual for the disease to be found in eastern Kansas but had not been so much a problem in western Kansas until recently.

"We don't know if the geography of this disease has changed or if veterinarians and producers are looking harder for it, but it is clear that there are positive herds in a very large percentage of Kansas."

Full text:

<http://www.cattlenetwork.com/advice-and-tips/prevention/watch-anaplasmosis>

Early-Onset Spring Models May Indicate 'Nightmare' For Ag

(From Cornell University)

ITHACA, N.Y. – Warm springs in the Great Lakes and Northeast regions – which create havoc for agriculture – may start earlier by mid-century if greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced, according to a new Cornell University study published in *Climate Dynamics*.

Very warm springs have been anomalies, but this new analysis of climate model data shows an increased frequency to nearly one in every three years by the end of this century.

"The spring of 2012, with its summerlike warmth, brought plants out of dormancy and then had a lengthy freeze. This was a nightmare scenario for many growers, and it showed us a snapshot of what global warming might look like in this region," said Toby Ault, assistant professor in earth and atmospheric sciences at Cornell University, an author on the study.

Unusually warm temperatures early in spring 2012 led to the warmest March, breaking records in more than 15,000 U.S. sites.

Modeling shows that frequency and magnitude of early springs could occur more than a month earlier, for example, throughout the Great Lakes region by 2080.

“The time to act on curbing greenhouse gas emissions is now. If we don’t, years like 2012 – ruinous to farmers and producers – in the U.S. could become normal by 30 to 40 years from now in addition to a host of other impacts,” said Ault.

The researchers sought to understand seasonal-transition timing to offer strategies as climate change unfolds. To ensure their models are accurate, Ault said researchers distinguished and separated normal climatic variability from long-term atmospheric alterations, by using a new ensemble of climate change simulations.

Read more. <http://mediarelations.cornell.edu/2016/09/02/early-onset-spring-models-may-indicate-nightmare-for-ag/>

USDA Announces Changes for Largest Conservation Program

(USDA Press Release)

In response to customer and partner input, USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service announced today a significant update to the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), the nation’s largest conservation program by acreage. Beginning with the new enrollment period planned later this year, the updated CSP will leverage redesigned planning and evaluation tools and an expanded array of new enhancements to provide conservation-minded producers with more options to improve conditions on working lands.

“After hearing from farmers, ranchers, and partners who wanted to see improvements to the Conservation Stewardship Program, we’re launching this update to make a successful program work even better,” said NRCS Chief Jason Weller. “We’ve redesigned the program to provide for greater local involvement, offer more opportunities for conservation and innovation on working lands, and make the connection between actions and outcomes more accessible to producers. Together, we can help those that grow our food and fiber take conservation efforts on working lands to the next level.”

Updates to the program will help make CSP more accessible and transparent by helping producers better evaluate their conservation options and the impact to their operations. NRCS has developed new CSP tools that function similarly to other standard NRCS tools, which will better integrate CSP into the suite of NRCS conservation programs. With these new tools, producers will be able to see up front why they are or are not meeting stewardship thresholds, allowing them to pick practices and enhancements that work for their conservation objectives. The new tools also allow producers to see potential payment scenarios for conservation early in the process, allowing them to better evaluate their conservation options. NRCS has addressed producer and stakeholder input requesting greater flexibility to address local resource concerns. Now, NRCS will more effectively utilize input from farmers, ranchers and partners in State Technical Committees and local workgroups to inform and expand conservation strategies under the program. Producers will be better prepared to apply because they will know these local ranking priorities and targeted resource concerns in advance.

“A lot has happened in agriculture and conservation since 2010, and the new CSP allows producers to take advantage of new techniques and technologies to increase conservation while

boosting production,” Weller said. “Through the incorporation of new practices and enhancements, we’re making CSP work for more people across the country.”

CSP will offer nearly double the enhancements and conservation practice opportunities as before, taking advantage of emerging trends and conservation practices to be more responsive to producers’ goals and capabilities. For example, CSP will offer producers four new enhancements that utilize gypsum as a soil amendment, which has been shown to improve water quality by reducing dissolved phosphorus and reducing the potential for pathogens to reach ground and surface water from manure. CSP will also offer support in the production of biochar following fuel reduction harvests or wildfires, which an NRCS-funded Conservation Innovation Grant offsite link image shows can reduce debris while increasing soil organic matter and water-holding capacity. NRCS will also offer enhancements for on-site carbon storage and planting for high carbon sequestration rate, while expanding on investments in monarch habitat improvement by supporting the establishment of habitat in pastures.

Read more.

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD1288622>

Beginner’s Guide to Local Meat Processing

(From Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network)

Want to learn more about meat processing but aren’t sure where to start? Processing is an essential link in local meat supply chains, but it’s a complicated business. If you’re a livestock producer — or work with producers — and have questions or concerns about processing, you’ll benefit from NMPAN’s “Beginner’s Guide to Local Meat Processing” on the basics. And if you’re a processor already, you can use the short fact sheets below to educate others about your business.

Our four short and easy-to-read fact sheets — free to download — cover:

- What is Local Meat Processing?
- What are the Rules?
- Small Plant Economics
- New Plant Checklist

Download and share them with clients, collaborators, regulators, and others who would benefit from a deeper understanding of local meat processing.

When you’re done with the Beginner’s Guide to Local Meat Processing and ready to take the next step, explore the NMPAN website to go deeper on operations, regulations, business planning, case studies, and other key aspects of local meats processing.

Download at <http://www.nichemeatprocessing.org/beginners-guide-to-local-meat-processing>

Majority of Consumers Would Pay More for Transparent Products

(From Specialty Foods News)

Transparency is important to nine in 10 consumers and 73 percent of consumers said they are willing to pay more for a product that offers complete transparency in all attributes, [according to Label Insights' 2016 Transparency ROI Study](#). The study also found that 40 percent would switch to a new brand if it offered full product transparency.

Other key findings from the study show that 81 percent of consumers would consider a brand's entire product portfolio if they switched to that brand as a result of increased transparency. More than half of consumers report that additional product information about how food is produced, handled, or sourced would make them trust that brand more.

Transparency is highly important to millennial moms, with 86 percent of 18-to-34-year-old women with children saying they would pay more for food products with completely transparent information

Hartman Infographic Details Millennial' Food Culture Habits

Millennials are crafting their own food culture. They began with a foundation of childhood habits learned from their parents, then received unprecedented exposure to the philosophies of healthy diets throughout their years in school, and now they have started breaking out into their own conversations and discoveries about food through their social networks and popular media channels.

Millennials are ethnically diverse, which affords them the opportunity to incorporate eating habits from across many different cultures. This diversity will continue to drive food culture trends around the exploration of authentic, global food experiences.

Read more.

http://www.hartman-group.com/acumenPdfs/millennials-at-restaurants-2016-09-01.pdf?utm_content=de.carter@comcast.net&utm_keyword=tGGMpzNmBLYdCRXOSd59&utm_source=tailoredmail&utm_term=What+types+of+restaurants+do+Millennials+prefer%3f&utm_campaign=Where+Millennials+Dine+Out+Infographic&utm_campaign=What+types+of+restaurants+do+Millennials+prefer