



National Bison Association

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Assistance Available to Mitigate Drought and Disaster Impacts for Bison Producers

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Several USDA programs are available to assist producers hard hit by the worsening drought conditions. This overview provides information on how to access those resources.

USDA Farm Service Agency

Livestock Forage Disaster Program

https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdfiles/FactSheets/livestock_forage_program_lfp-fact_sheet.pdf

- The Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) provides payments to:
- Eligible livestock owners and contract growers who have covered livestock; and
- Who are also producers of grazed forage crop acreage (native and improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover;
- Or certain crops planted specifically for grazing) that have suffered a loss of grazed forage due to a qualifying drought during the normal grazing period for the county.

Producers in counties that are rated D2 (severe drought), D3 (extreme drought) or D4 (exceptional drought) are eligible for coverage.

For bison, the 2021 payment rate per head is:

- Adult Bulls and Cows – 31.18/hd.
- Non-adult animals -- \$23.38/hd.

Livestock Indemnity Program

https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdfiles/FactSheets/livestock_indemnity_program_lip-fact_sheet.pdf

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides benefits to eligible livestock owners for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by eligible loss conditions, including eligible adverse weather, eligible disease and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law, including wolves and avian predators. In addition, LIP provides assistance to eligible livestock owners that must sell livestock at a reduced price because of an injury from an eligible loss condition.

Payments for covered losses are based upon USDA's calculation of 75% of the average market price for the animals.

For bison, the 2021 payment rate per head is:

- Adult Bull -- \$1,82.98
- Adult Cow -- \$1,560.75
- Non-Adults 800 lb. and above -- \$1,767.63

- Non-Adult 400 lbs. to 799 lbs. – \$1,282.63
- Non-Adult 250 lbs. to 399 lbs. – \$586.99
- Non-Adult less than 250 lbs. – \$353.58

Emergency Livestock Assistance Program

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdfiles/FactSheets/elap-general-fact-sheet.pdf>

ELAP provides financial assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish for losses due to disease, certain adverse weather events or loss conditions, including blizzards and wildfires, as determined by the Secretary. ELAP assistance is provided for losses not covered by other disaster assistance programs authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill, such as losses not covered by the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) and the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP).

ELAP provides assistance for livestock feed and grazing losses that are not due to drought or wildfires on federally managed lands; losses resulting from the cost of transporting water to livestock due to an eligible drought; losses resulting from the additional cost associated with gathering livestock for treatment and/or inspection related to cattle tick fever, honeybee feed, colony and hive losses; and farm-raised fish feed and death losses.

USDA Risk Management Agency

USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) provides pasture, rangeland & forage Insurance protection, which can be purchased through private crop and rangeland insurance agents, such as [Farmers Business Network](#). However, insurance protection must be purchased by November 15th in the year preceding the year in which the loss is incurred.

- Pasture, Rangeland, Forage (PRF) is an area-based insurance program that protects against yield losses caused by low precipitation relative to a historic average on forage produced for grazing or harvesting hay. Claims are based on roughly 17x17-mile grids and a Rainfall Index.
- Producers make several choices, including coverage level, index intervals, irrigated practice, productivity factor and number of acres.
- Coverage is based on rainfall in a defined grid. Because the index is based on rainfall data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Climate Prediction Center and not on individual production, you may have poor production on a grid and still not receive an indemnity or vice versa.
- You must select at least two, 2-month periods (index intervals) during which precipitation is important to your operation.
- You can establish a value between 60% and 150% of the county base value and match the amount of your protection to the value of forage that best represents your specific grazing or hay operation.
- You can select a coverage level between 70% and 90% in 5% increments. This will be considered the trigger level to determine whether an indemnity is payable. An indemnity will be payable when the interval index falls below the trigger value.
- RMA determines a grazing value based on stocking rates, available forage and the value of the forage in the area. It employs Animal Unit Month data for each state and county to determine the "yield" for grazed acreage and hay prices to determine current value.