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## **Weekly Update**



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### ***NBA Weekly Update for January 10, 2020***

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*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.*

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### **USDA Under Secretary Ibach to Address Annual Bison Association Conference**

*(From NBA News Release)*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's top official overseeing the agency's marketing and regulator programs will be among the speakers addressing the more than 400 bison ranchers, marketers and enthusiasts scheduled to gather at the Renaissance Denver Hotel January 22-25.

Greg Ibach, USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulation, is expected to focus on the agency's work in improving animal traceability, but will likely touch on a variety of other issues important to U.S. bison ranchers and markets. Agency's under Ibach's jurisdiction at USDA include the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS).



“We are extremely pleased to have Under Secretary Ibach joining us at our conference

because the agencies he oversees touch our business in many important ways,” said Dave Carter, executive director of the National Bison Association. “His participation at our conference is a reflection of the excellent working relationship that the bison business has cultivated with professional within AMS and APHIS.”

In a meeting with APHIS officials in Washington, D.C. in September, National Bison Association leaders suggested that the association could play a role in distributing animal identification tags in a process similar to a program that the Canadian Bison Association and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency conduct in that country. The Under Secretary is expected to talk about that concept during his remarks.

Other topics important to bison producers within USDA’s marketing and regulatory mission include:

- Price Reporting – The bison association is working with the AMS Gain and Livestock Reporting Service to improve and expand the agency’s monthly bison price report;
- Commodity Purchase Programs – AMS periodically issues a solicitation to purchase bison meat for distribution in tribal food and nutrition programs. Discussions are underway on how to expand that program beyond tribal reservations.
- Farmers’ Market Promotion -- That National Bison Association is completing a multi-year grant program, underwritten by the AMS Farmers’ Market Promotion Program, which has resulted in new training and marketing resources, as well as the NBA’s new *BuySome Bison* mobile app.
- Live Animal Inspection – APHIS officials oversee the imports and exports of live bison, and coordinate with USDA sister agencies on programs related to herd health and biosecurity.



## **Bison Ranchers Look to Expand Customer Connections at 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting**

*(From NBA News Release)*

The 400 ranchers bringing more than 100 head of live bison to Denver next week will also be bringing a commitment to continue building the market for bison meat based upon the quality of the meat and a dedication to sustainable ranching practices.

The ranchers will be gathering at the National Bison Association’s 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary conference at the Denver Renaissance Hotel, and at the association’s Gold Trophy Show and Sale at the National Western Stock Show.

“The bison business is expanding its efforts to develop meaningful relationships with our customers based on the great taste, nutritional attributes and environmental benefits of bison meat,” said Dave Carter, executive director of the Westminster, CO-based association. “We will be focusing heavily during our conference on working with the public as partners in bison restoration.”

Keynote presenters during the association’s 25<sup>th</sup> annual conference include Laurie Demeritt, CEO of Hartman Group Consumer Research Firm, and Rob Bleifer, executive chef and vice president of culinary at Food Network.

“Laurie and Rob have valuable insights and expertise that will help us introduce more people to bison, which will help us continue to build our business.”

Other sessions during the conference will focus on animal management, herd health, marketing, and cooperative relationships with tribal producers and the Canadian bison business.

USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulation, Greg Ibach, is scheduled to address the group and discuss bison programs within that agency.

The annual conference will kick off at the Renaissance Hotel at 3801 Quebec St. with a

luncheon on Wednesday (which the association has renamed as Bison Hump Day). Working sessions will unfold over the following two days, and the conference concludes with its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary banquet on Friday, January 24<sup>th</sup>.

On Saturday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, activities move to the National Western Stock Show, where the live animal auction will begin at 10:30 a.m. in the Livestock Center sale arena. More than 100 head of live bison are expected to be auctioned.

At 10 a.m., prior to live animal sale, the carcass entries in the “market class” competition will be auctioned in the sale arena.

“The market class auction is a great opportunity for members of the public to come out and purchase meat to stock their freezers,” Carter said, adding that the association has an arrangement with Innovative Packing Co. nearby Greeley to cut and package the meat for anyone purchasing a carcass at the sale.

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## **Carter to Meet with FAS Administrator Isley Tomorrow**

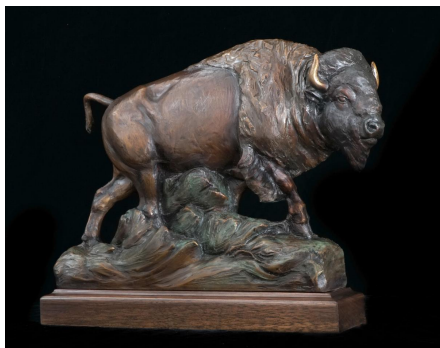
NBA Executive Director Dave Carter is scheduled to meet with USDA Foreign Agricultural Service Administrator (FAS) Ken Isley tomorrow while the USDA official is at the National Western Stock Show in Denver.

Isley is scheduled at events in Fort Collins and at the Stock Show today and tomorrow, and Carter was invited to sit down with him as he wraps up those meetings.

USDA’s FAS has been working closely with the NBA over the past several years to open and expand international marketing opportunities for bison meat. The agency included two bison marketers in its Trade Mission to Mexico in November in anticipation of that market opening for bison meat in the near future. The agency is also coordination with the U.S. Trade Representative to assure that bison issues are addressed in ongoing international trade negotiations.

“This is a valuable opportunity to sit down in person and brief the Administrator on our top priorities and concerns,” Carter said. “We greatly appreciate Administrator Isley’s willingness to carve out time during his Colorado visit.”

Joseph Degreenia, FAS bison specialist, is scheduled to participate in the NBA’s 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference January 22-24 in Denver.



## **Commemorative 25th Anniversary Veryl Goodnight Sculptures**

***Just 3 Sculptures Remain for NBA Members!***

In honor of the NBA's 25th anniversary, Winter Conference Committee chair Beverly Brown approached renowned sculptor, Veryl

Goodnight to inquire about a sculpture to commemorate the milestone to which she agreed. “The Sage” depicts a mature bull in command of his surroundings. Goodnight wanted to convey the pure power of a bull bison as he clears a trail through the sage brush of his native land.

The bronze measures 12”x14”x4” and will be a limited edition, numbered bronze. The NBA will be offering bronze number one at the Winter Conference Benefit Auction, and up to fourteen additional bronzes will be available for first come, first purchase exclusively offered to NBA members.

The cost to the membership will be \$3,800 with pick up at the conference at



no charge, or shipped in the continental U.S. for \$100. Goodnight will honor the price for one month after the Winter Conference and then the price for the bronzes will increase to \$4,200. The sculpture will be released to the public in February of 2020. If interested in purchasing in advance, please contact [karen@bisoncentral.com](mailto:karen@bisoncentral.com) or call 605-381-3738. Orders placed now will be delivered after the conference.

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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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## HELP US BUILD A STRONGER BISON MARKETPLACE



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### All You Need to Know About Bison Meat

*(From Healthline.com)*

Bison are one of over 100 species of hoofed mammals belonging to the *Bovidae* family, which also includes cattle.

While often grouped with buffalo, their anatomical features slightly differ.

Historically, bison has been the second most popular type of red meat, with beef being number one. Today, the demand for bison meat is growing due to increased marketing efforts, its widespread availability, and favorable nutritional profile.

This article reviews bison's nutritional profile, benefits, and drawbacks and compares it with beef.

In terms of nutrient content, bison packs a good amount of several essential nutrients, including protein, iron, zinc, selenium, and B vitamins.

Read more [here](#).

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### The Truth About America's Oldest Herd Of Bison

*(From Grunge.com)*

Despite what "Home on the Range" claims, buffalo don't roam in North America — that would be bison; our national mammal. But much like the fate of Native Americans — bison have been relegated to a shadow of their former numbers, despite having much to offer the world. At one point, there were around 30 million bison roaming the American plains. But with the arrival of European settlers, they were slaughtered to near extinction in just a couple hundred years. By 1880, less than 1000 wild bison remained, according to Defenders.org.

Per the U.S. Department of the Interior, "Had it not been for a few private individuals working with tribes, states and the Interior Department, the bison would be extinct today."

Bison are a herd animal, and the oldest of these herds lives in Yellowstone National Park, where they have lived continuously since prehistoric times. Yellowstone's bison are extra special because they're "the pure descendants (free of cattle genes) of early bison that roamed our country's grasslands."

At the turn of the 20th century, only 23 remained in the park, according to Smithsonian, but now their numbers are closer to 5,000, making the Yellowstone bison the largest population on public lands (read: not for human consumption.)

As you may know, bison are really good eatin', which is part of the reason they were hunted to near-extinction. Ted Turner, the founder of CNN, also owns Ted's Montana Grill, which serves sustainably-sourced bison burgers. He owns roughly 51,000 bison across fifteen ranches, making him the largest private bison owner in the world!

Read more [here](#).

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## **Bix The Bison Found In Garrett, Raising More Questions Than Answers**

*(From Fox55 – Ft. Wayne)*

KENDALLVILLE, Ind. (WFFT) -- Bix the Bison, the fiberglass buffalo stolen from Kendallville last month, has been found but his discovery raises a whole lot of new questions.

The Kendallville Parks and Recreation Department posted on Facebook today that Bix was discovered dumped outside of Garrett, with its art work ground off.

"Why...Why would you steal Bix the Bison?" the department asked on Facebook. "Why would you grind off the beautiful art work? Why would you dump him outside of Garrett? Someone knows something about this."

The buffalo, stolen near Bixler Lake in December, is valued at \$3,500. Police say three flood lights and 10 25-foot extension cords were also taken from the campground area.

Anyone with information is asked to call Kendallville Police at 260-347-0654.

Read more [here](#).

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## **FWP Releases Final Environmental Impact Statement On Bison Restoration On Montana's Public Lands**

*(From the Spokesman-Review)*

BILLINGS – Eight years, two gubernatorial elections and under the leadership of a new director, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks released its environmental impact statement on bison conservation and management Tuesday.

The release of the document was a reason for celebration among conservation advocates who have long promoted returning bison to Montana public lands.

"People of goodwill can move this effort forward," said Tom France, regional executive director of the National Wildlife Federation.

Yet many Montanans – namely those with agricultural interests – have attempted through the Legislature and at the county level to block bison from being restored to public lands in the state.

“For landowners in Montana, I think bison are a nonstarter,” said Chuck Denowh, who has represented United Property Owners of Montana.

Emphasizing the ideological divide, the livestock industry and UPOM have attempted to hamstring the private group American Prairie Reserve in eastern Montana as it pursues the goal of restoring bison to ranch lands it has purchased, as well as Bureau of Land Management acreage where APR holds grazing leases. Those bison are classified as livestock, as are other herds raised on ranches in the state.

Read more [here.](#)

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## **Black Hills Frawley Ranch Adds Bison Herd For Historic Touch**

*(From Associated Press)*

SPEARFISH (AP) — The Frawley Ranch has been an integral part of the history of the Black Hills since the Frawley Brothers began buying up failed homesteads in the Centennial Valley in the 1890s.

In 1977 the nearly 5,000-acre property became only the second National Historic site in South Dakota. There’s even a section of the original Deadwood Stage Route running through the property.

“Today it’s called the milk road, but it is actually the remnants of the Deadwood Stage (route),” said JR Hamblet, operations manager for the Frawley ranch.

A more recent addition to the ranch is the two-dozen strong buffalo herd that calls the landmark home, the Black Hills Pioneer reported.

In the early 2000s, two families with a deep appreciation for South Dakota’s western heritage purchased the land and have been restoring and maintaining it as a sort of living historical preserve.

“The owners are keenly interested in historic preservation on the entire ranch, and I think the buffalo kind of played into that,” Hamblet explained. Hamblet said the Frawley bison bring added historical authenticity to the ranch as the animals once roamed the Great Plains in the millions. Passers-by can catch a glimpse of the American icons as they zoom past the ranch on Highway 85.

The herd consists of 24 cows and two bulls; each year the females give birth, which essentially doubles the herd size until February when the calves are sold

at auction to other ranches across the country.

“The ability to share the way they live and where they live with the people of the area. Just their sheer size and enormity and strength is awe-inspiring,” he said.

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## Senate Panel Approves USMCA

*(From CNBC)*

The Senate Finance Committee approved a new North American trade deal on Tuesday, moving it one step closer to ratification in the United States.

In a 25-3 vote, the panel sent the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement to the full Senate, which could pass the pact this month. The House [approved the accord last month](#) in a bipartisan vote.

USMCA backers, led by President Donald Trump, have called the deal a long-needed overhaul of the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement. The new pact makes several changes to protect auto industry workers, increases access to Canadian dairy markets for U.S. farmers and updates digital trade rules.

“USMCA will bring much needed certainty and real benefits to America’s farmers, workers and businesses,” Finance Committee Chairman Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, said Tuesday at the start of the bill markup.

Businesses have sought stability as Trump stirs up trade conflicts with China and other major economic partners. The president has made replacing NAFTA and cracking down on Beijing’s trade abuses a priority in his first term in the White House and used tariffs as a negotiating tool around the world.

Read more [here](#).

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## Subcommittee Told To Consider Ag As A Resource In Climate Change Mitigation

*(From AgriPulse)*

Agricultural practices have the potential to address climate change by sequestering carbon, witnesses told a House subcommittee Thursday at a hearing focused on regenerative agriculture and ag technology.

David Potere, head of GeoInnovation at Indigo Agriculture, outlined how his company is creating a new market for a different type of crop: carbon. The company, which was founded in 2014, has begun an initiative to sequester 1 trillion tons of atmospheric carbon dioxide in farmland around the world, and through Indigo Carbon is offering farmers the opportunity to get paid for increasing the carbon content of their soil.

“Bringing farmers into the solution ... can be a definitive part of the solution for climate change because of the potential of ag soils to absorb carbon,” Potere told members of the House Innovation and Workforce Development Subcommittee.

Potere pointed to the Energy Improvement and Extension Act of 2008, which contains a provision allowing oil companies to receive a tax incentive for carbon sequestration when they pull oil out of the ground. The way the act is currently written, farmers don't get the same incentive.

“If there is broad bipartisan support for federal policy that incentivizes corporate, industrial and energy producers to sequester carbon, why can’t the same support be

there when farmers try and do the same?" Potere said.

When asked about other ways growers can employ ag technology to make their farms more sustainable, witnesses offered a variety of suggestions.

Roberto Meza, co-founder of Emerald Gardens Microgreens in Bennett, Colo., touted the importance of channeling funding into regenerative agriculture practices to help develop innovative models for producing food.

Kevin France, president and CEO of SWIIM Systems in Denver, said instead of asking the government to create something new, it should make programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program more accessible to farmers.

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## **EPA Science Advisory Board Criticizes WOTUS Proposal**

*(From AgriPulse)*

The Environmental Protection Agency's and Army Corps of Engineers' proposed changes to the definition of "waters of the United States" (WOTUS) in the Clean Water Act "decreases protection for our nation's waters and does not support the objective of restoring and maintaining 'the chemical, physical and biological integrity' of these waters," as stated in the CWA, EPA's Science Advisory Board said in [comments](#) released Dec. 31.

The board, whose members are scientists outside the agency, said EPA's latest proposal "neglects established science pertaining specifically to the connectivity of groundwater to wetlands and adjacent major bodies of water." In particular, EPA did not take into account findings regarding "watershed systems and processes" in EPA's 2015 Connectivity [Report](#).

The proposal's "departure ... from EPA-recognized science" also threatens to weaken protection of the nation's waters "by failing to protect ephemeral streams and wetlands which connect to navigable waters below the surface," the SAB said in its eight-page critique. Those changes do not have "a fully supportable scientific basis" and have the potential to introduce "substantial new risks to human and environmental health."

"There is no scientific justification for excluding groundwater from WOTUS if spring-fed creeks are considered to be jurisdictional," the board said. "The chemical or biological contamination of groundwater may lead to contamination of functionally connected surface water."

Ag groups have pushed for a simplification of WOTUS through the Trump administration's rulemaking, saying a producer should be able to visually detect if they have a navigable water from their vehicle rather than through more advanced means.

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## **Ethical Snacking A Top Trend For College Students**

*(From Sustainable Food News)*

Sixty-seven percent of younger consumers said they would pay more for snacks with an ethical pedigree, according to foodservice management co. [Sodexo USA](#), one of the country's largest university dining providers.

Gaithersburg, Md.-based Sodexo USA, a subsidiary of France-based Sodexo, serves more than 12 million meals a month to students and staff at 700 colleges and universities in North America. The company said ethical purchasing are among the top trends in college snacking for 2020.

"[College students] care about the story behind the product and have access to a lot more information than previous generations," Sodexo said. "Does the yogurt company treat the dairy cows well? Are the ingredients from farms that use sustainable practices? Do the companies embrace workers' rights? These are all considerations when selecting which items to purchase."



Sodexo also said college students want their to-go items in sustainable packaging – another top trend in college snacking. “Compostable craft paper is replacing commonly used packaging such as Styrofoam and plastic,” the company said. “The ultimate goal is to eliminate the use of plastic packaging and use less disposable packing altogether.” Also, a “clear trend” among college students is “toward protein alternatives in snacks like cookies, cakes and ice cream. The evolution of plant-based snacks goes beyond soy and nut proteins to pea, mung bean, watermelon seed and hempseed flours. While plant-based snacks are not new, the number of different types of plant protein continue to expand to an ever-more diverse and delicious array of products.”

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## Consumers ‘More Concerned’ About Food System’s Role In Climate Change

*(From Sustainable Food News)*

In 2020, consumers “will become more concerned” about the role the food system plays in climate change, such as the effects of agricultural production, food waste and transportation of goods, according to the International Food Information Council (IFIC).

IFIC’s climate change claim is part of its five-trend forecast for food and nutrition in 2020. “In 2020, we predict that topics surrounding sustainability, alternative foods and healthy diets will move in some unexpected directions,” said Joseph Clayton, IFIC CEO.

The nonprofit, founded in 1985, is financially supported by the food, beverage, and agricultural industries including companies such as General Mills, the parent of Annie’s Homegrown; McDonald’s; Danone North America PBC, the parent of the Horizon organic milk brand; Coca-Cola; and Bayer, which acquired GMO giant Monsanto in early 2019.

“Interest in sustainability has grown for the past few years, and while in 2020 the topic will mature and evolve, confusion still surrounds the exact definition of sustainability,” said IFIC.

For several years, the IFIC Foundation’s annual *Food and Health Survey* asked whether sustainability was a factor in consumers’ food and beverage purchasing decisions. Between 2012 and 2018, that number ranged between 35 percent and 41 percent of consumers.

However, when the 2019 survey asked whether “environmental sustainability” was a factor in purchase choices, that number dropped to 27 percent, indicating that consumers’ notions of sustainability extend beyond just the environment.

According to the 2019 *Food and Health Survey*, 63 percent said it is hard to know whether the food choices they make are environmentally sustainable. Amon



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- 1/22 - 24/2020 - NBA Winter Conference - Denver, CO
- 1/25/2020 - NBA Gold Trophy Show and Sale - Denver, CO
- 2/6/2020 - DTBA Annual Conference and Black Hills Buffalo Classic Auction - SD
- 2/15/2020 - Prairie Legends Conservation Bison Auction - NM
- 3/05/2020 - Eastern Bison Association Annual Sale and Conference - PA
- 3/07/2020 - Rocky Mountain Bison Association Spring Conference - CO
- 3/21/2020 - Missouri Bison Association Spring Sale - MO
- 04/03/2020 - Minnesota Bison Association's Education Conference
- 06/21 - 06/23/2020 - NBA Summer Conference - Cheyenne, WY

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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