

# MONTANA BISON



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Photo by Candy Westre



## JOINT SUMMER CONFERENCE IN UTAH DEEMED A SUCCESS

The Montana Bison Association this summer joined the Western Bison Association for a joint get together in Kamas, Utah.

The Summer Rendezvous was a well attended success, reports Montana Bison Association president, Roland Kroos. Said Kroos, "The two associations that put this together had a great weekend at an amazing bison operation where we were able to swap stories, strategies and more to the benefit to all who attended."

The Summer Rendezvous took place at the Buffalo Run Ranch in Utah, which is located in the beautiful Wasatch Mountains outside of Salt Lake City. The Sorenson family owns the ranch and graciously opened their doors to conference attendees to tour their operation and herd, camp out and enjoy a weekend of bison fellowship.

The joint conference was a first for the bison business and was deemed a success. The tentative plan is to have the Montana Bison Association take the lead on hosting the 2020 summer get together in, you guessed it, Montana. Stay tuned for details.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER: ANTICIPATING A CORRECTION IN THE BISON MARKET THIS FALL BY ROLAND KROOS, NBA PRESIDENT

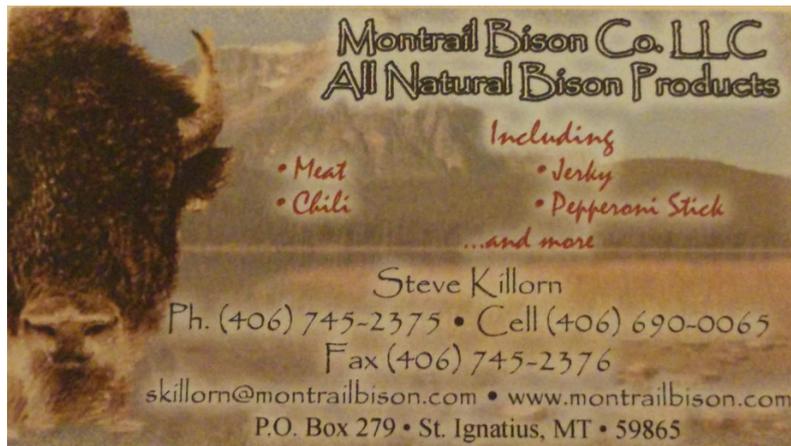
The last couple of months, I have had the opportunity to travel through most of the northern Great Plains and Rocky Mountains. This region was blessed with abundant moisture and moderate summer temperatures. This allowed most bison ranches to produce abundant forage for their herds.

In July, I had the opportunity to attend the NBA Summer Conference held in Bismarck, ND. In visiting with several bison producers and those involved with selling bison meat to the public, they reported to me a significant softening in the market. Several people told me that they expect bison prices to drop 20-30% this fall. For the cow-calf producer, the drop-in prices could be even larger.

If, we see this kind of correction in the bison market, how will it impact your operation? Bison producers have enjoyed a rising market for almost 10 years. I've cautioned several beginning bison producers when creating their business plans to anticipate such a correction in the market. Most bison producers believe they are producing products for a very small niche market. However, even niche markets operate on a basis of SUPPLY & DEMAND.

We've hit a point where currently supply has exceeded demand. There are several signs of this happening within the bison industry. Even last fall I heard reports of producers struggling to find markets for their cull animals. I've heard processors are slowing down -reducing the number they are killing because inventory is building up in their warehouses. The ripple effect of this is that bison in feedlots or pastures are getting heavier as kill dates are pushed back. To move this product, retail prices will have to come down.

Continued on page 3



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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER, CONT'

Now is the time to look at and challenge some of your production protocols. It may have made economic sense in previous years to provide supplemental feed to your bison herd when prices were sky high. However, if we see a 30% correction in price, the return on this feed may no longer be positive.

Brainstorm ways you can reduce cost of production, eliminate/reduce overhead expenditures.

Bison have some wonderful natural attributes that allow them to reproduce, produce a calf and grow with nominal inputs. However, we continue to think bigger is better and the faster this animal gains weight, the more profitable we will be. By mimicking many cattle production protocols, we continue to shift genetic selection to become more like today's cattle breeds. The niche that today's bison producers enjoy could disappear if we greatly change the character and the natural attributes of this animal.

If prices do drop 20-30%, these lower prices will allow opportunities for new producers to get into the bison business or an existing operation to expand. I have several clients who are looking at buying more heifers or bred cows this fall. By improving their grazing management, they have the ability to increase their bison herd 30-50%.

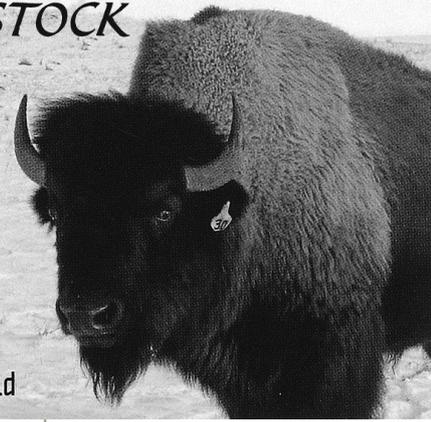
Marketing your bison! I've run out of room and time however; it may be time for us all to dust off how we market our products. With the high prices we've enjoyed, I suspect some of us got lazy and we invested very little time into marketing or creating a unique BRAND. Speaking from experience, I do know that it is very difficult to create a market overnight. In the next newsletter, we plan to discuss MARKETING.

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**WHAT'S A BLUE DUDE LIKE YOU DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?**  
**BY JENNIFER OLSSON**



Wait. What did I just see? I was on my way to town, and being attuned to bison, their shape, and size, a peripheral glimpse of something like -- all of that, caused a snap of attention towards its direction. In the West, the landscape seems lonely without a bison roaming through it, but here in Sweden, where I live from May through September as a riverkeeper and fly fishing guide, with my husband (a Swede), it was completely odd. Not only that, it was blue and yellow, like the Swedish flag. Cartoonish, yes, but why? A tire screeching u-turn later and I was off to investigate.

The blue colored bison was featured at the point of a small peninsula that jutted into one of Sweden's too-numerous-to-count lakes. I'd have to find a way through the forest to get to it. Back about a mile was Camp Viking. I figured, somebody there could help me out.

The main building and reception was a modest one story building with timbered exterior. Very campish. I rang the bell at the desk and a smiling woman entered the office. Here was my somebody. She was delighted and amused by my question. In response to, "What's the bison all about?," she answered, "It's an eye catcher." Well, we can all agree it certainly is.

Continued on page 5.

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*Marty Boehm*

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## WHAT'S A BLUE DUDE LIKE YOU... CONTINUED

When the Belgian couple, Petra and André, bought Camp Viking, six years ago, they cleaned and remodeled. The previous owners had gathered an eclectic assortment of fiberglass animals and had placed them around the camp for amusement.

Petra and André tidied up the place and removed all but this last one, the bison. She painted it what she called, Belgian Blue, and they anchored it on the peninsula so drivers on the passing road would look in their direction and consider checking them out. I had looked in Blue Bison's direction with an imagination powered by my affiliation with this great mammal.

I had begun to hope there was a bison herd hiding in the forest somewhere nearby, or that it commemorated a bull that had once migrated its way north from Europe after being separated from the herd. Alas, it was a less complex and dynamic story than that. But it just goes to show, the bison continues to hold fascination for all of us, all over the world.

Thank you Petra and André for friendly and cheerful conversation.

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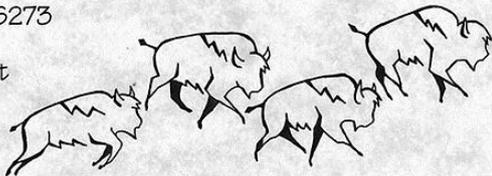
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EXPERIENCES TREATING AND MANAGING BISON AFFECTED BY WILDFIRE:  
THE LEGION LAKE FIRE, SOUTH DAKOTA, DECEMBER 2017 [EDITED]  
BY BY RUSSELL F. DALY  
FROM BISON WORLD - SUMMER 2019 - REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION

Late in the day on December 12, 2017, strong wind gusts turned a small grass fire in Custer State Park, located in South Dakota's Black Hills, into a widespread incident that became known as the Legion Lake Fire. Over the course of 6 days, it burned 54,000 acres, forced the evacuation of 200 homes, and affected countless numbers of wildlife in and around Custer State Park. The fire became the third largest in South Dakota history, and the largest wildfire ever to occur in the state during December. The fire affected wildlife inside and adjacent to the park, including an 82-head, privately-owned bison herd. Eighty-two animals were euthanized in the immediate aftermath due to severe burns, blindness, and behavior considerations and the rest were treated to prevent respiratory disease and promote burn healing. While five more head were euthanized at a second examination, the remainder of the herd healed sufficiently to at least be salvaged. Only ten of the 82 animals were deemed potentially productive enough to remain in the herd. One of the challenges faced by the herd's caretakers and veterinarians was the lack of information to guide the treatment and expected outcomes of bison affected by wildfires. This case report describes the management and treatment of the privately-held bison herd affected by the Legion Lake fire. Information provided in this case report can be used to help veterinarians and animal caretakers make decisions about treatment and euthanasia of bison harmed by wildfire.

#### The Fire

The fire was first reported around 8 a.m. MST on Monday, December 11, 2017, near the Legion Lake Lodge in Custer State Park. High winds had caused a tree to fall and cut an active power line, which started the fire. Dry conditions had been present during the previous months in this part of the Black Hills, and the fire was fueled by several large piles of brush that had been awaiting burning during the winter. Blown embers from these piles helped the fire spread quickly. Within two and a half hours, the fire burned 1,000 acres - 2,500 acres by Monday afternoon. Firefighters worked on Tuesday, December 12 to implement controlled burnouts that would contain the fire to 15,000-16,000 acres to the south and east. Winds increased and additional personnel were called in to protect valuable structures within the park. That evening, a weather front came through the area and the fire exploded and spread out of the park to the east and southeast towards the Lane Johnny Road area, where the bison herd was pastured. Wind gusts over 35 mph pushed the fire to the south-southeast.

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At the time of the fire, the bison were grazing in the south pasture (approximately 336 acres), south of Lane Johnny Road. The only exception was seven yearlings and calves that were housed in a corral on the north property. On Tuesday night, the herd owner arrived at the herd's location. The fire, advancing from the north-northwest, moved quickly in the wind, to the point where it covered a distance of 300-400 yards in a matter of ten seconds. The fire jumped a neighboring property's driveway, then Lane Johnny Road, where it then encountered Lane Johnny Creek lined with cottonwood trees. This was well after dark, around 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday night. The yearlings and calves housed in the north corral miraculously escaped any harm as the fire went around the corral, the head of the fire passing approximately 1/8 of a mile to the east. The bulk of the herd was dispersed into the south pasture with their whereabouts unknown at the time. On Wednesday morning, December 13, with the total burn area now estimated to have covered 41,000 acres, the animals were found in three separate groups within their pasture, each within a quarter mile of each other. The yearlings had largely stayed together; separate from the larger group of cows and calves. The two herd bulls were off by themselves as well. None of the animals were found entangled in fences or brush. The exact pattern of movements of bison during the fire was largely unknown. Interestingly, a cow-calf pair that had been purchased from a Nebraska herd in 2017 came through the fire with not a hair singed. It was later determined that those animals had been exposed to prescribed burning back at their Nebraska ranch.

#### Post-Fire Treatment and Management

Over the next five days, the herd owners and neighbors worked to round up and transport the bison from their location to a neighboring bison ranch ten miles away for examination and treatment. The animals readily approached the herd owner's truck upon first sight. Alfalfa cubes were used to coax the animals into the corral. Once there, the bison were loaded onto trailers and transported. Most animals were captured within two days, but it took an additional three days for the last few to be rounded up (two of these were new animals, not well-bonded with the herd), with the aid of ATVs. Continued on next page .



One heifer calf was found alive but non-responsive and was euthanized in the pasture using gunshot. All other animals could be loaded and transported. Burns were evident on many of the animals. Most notably, many of the animals' guard hair remained in an almost "melted plastic" state on the short undercoat hair: their long hairs had mostly been singed off. Burns were present on exposed skin and eyelids (Figure 1). No problems were encountered in working the bison, as they had been previously acclimated to the facilities. Examinations took place on Thursday and Friday, December 14 and 15, in a hydraulic chute designed for bison work. A tool that came in particularly handy for examination was a mirror on a long handle, which was used to examine the underside of the animals for burn damage.

Animals received one or more of four different treatments:

A). An antibiotic/anti-inflammatory (Neo-Predef with Tetracaine®) was used in animals with corneal edema (cloudy eye) or other eye problems. In some of the animals, their corneas (clear portion of the eyeball) were severely affected by a spreading ulceration ("melting ulcer"). The powder was applied to each affected eye once at the time of examination/treatment.

B). An injectable antibiotic (Draxxin®) was administered to animals, using the labeled cattle dose. This was used to prevent infection in lungs and airways damaged by smoke. When examined, many of the animals were breathing rapidly; however, it was difficult to determine whether this was due to the stress of movement through the chute, or due to damage to the lungs and airways.

C.) Intranasal respiratory virus vaccine (InForce 3®) was given in hopes of protecting the lungs against future infections. Information from the vaccine manufacturer indicated that an active immune response in calves exposed to fire conditions could be expected following vaccination.

D.) Silver sulfadiazine ointment, (Silver Sulfadiazine Cream USP) an antibacterial skin treatment for use on burn-affected skin, was applied to visible burn wounds.

All animals received the antibiotic treatment and vaccine, while the topical powder and ointment treatments were given based on the needs of individual animals at the time of examination. No retreatments were scheduled nor administered, in order to avoid further handling stress on the animals. None of the animals showed signs of severe wounds or broken bones. Some minor skin abrasions were noticed, but in most cases, burn wounds on the lower limbs masked many of these scrapes and scratches. Behavioral changes were predominately confined to the bison most severely affected – those blind in both eyes, for example. In these cases, the danger associated with keeping these animals in the herd necessitated their euthanasia.

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Skin burns were noted at the coronary bands (junction between skin and hooves) of many animals. These bison healed with no loss of their hooves, however, hoof separation was beginning in one cow at the time of the first evaluation and she was euthanized (Figure 3). Hoof loss would likely have taken place in the severely burned animals, had they not been immediately euthanized. Following the first examination, cold and snowy weather moved in. Straw was brought in for bedding and the bison herd stayed in a large corral at the neighboring bison ranch. On January 8, 2018, the animals were re-evaluated by the herd veterinarian. Cows and yearling heifers were pregnancy-checked and all animals were examined, with their clinical signs compared to those recorded at the initial examination. No animals needed further treatments on this date.

### Discussion

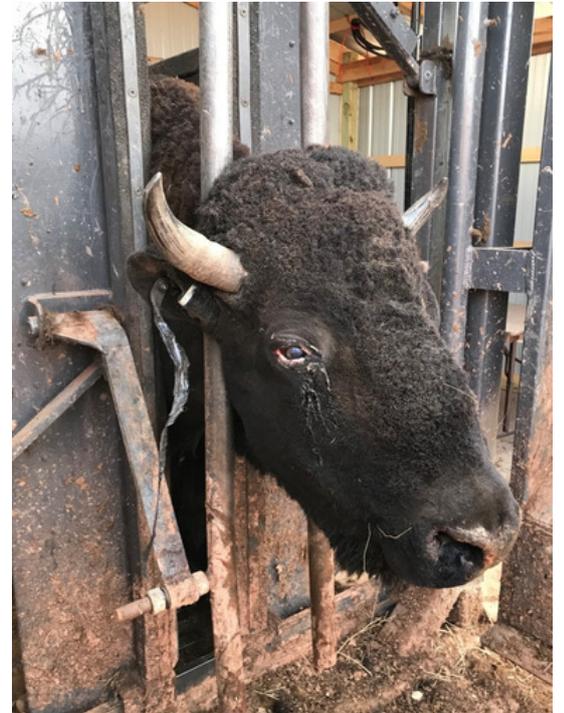
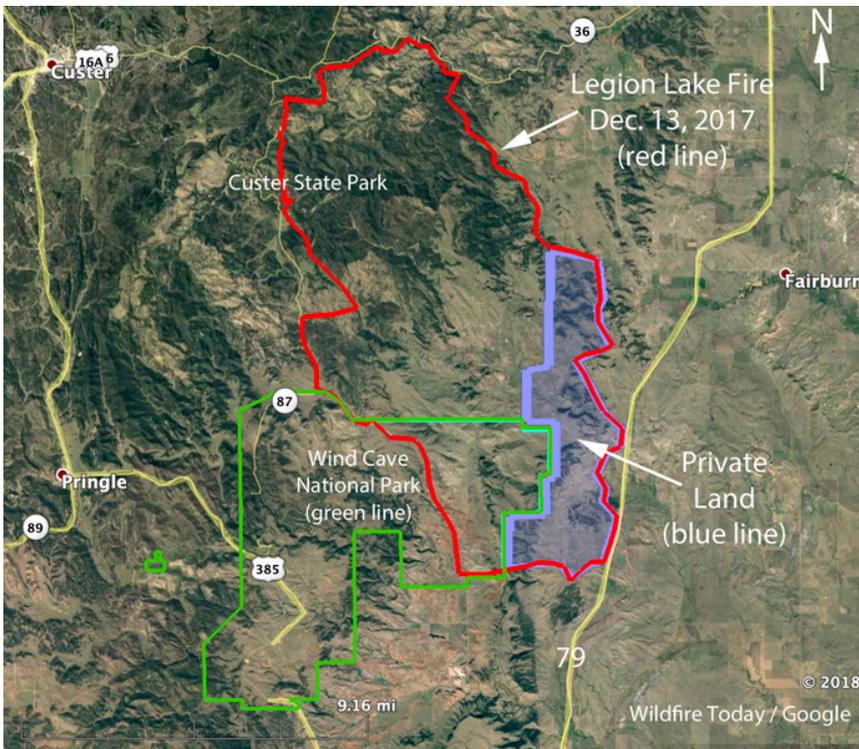
The most difficult management aspect of the fire aftermath was making quick decisions about the disposition of affected animals. Some animals appeared to have survived the fire relatively well, but later were found to have suffered significant damage, particularly to the udder and teats for cows and heifers. For example, a very tame heifer owned by the owner's children was kept in the herd despite some visible damage to the udder. The heifer calved in the spring of 2018 and came into milk; however, the calf was later found dead, having apparently not been able to obtain enough milk even though it was observed that the calf was nursing the dam regularly. The second examination, three and a half weeks following the fire, allowed a more accurate evaluation of the severity and duration of burn wounds, particularly to the teats and underline. Therefore, a higher number of animals were designated to be culled than was expected at the first examination. Of the original 82 herd animals, six mature cows were left at the beginning of spring 2018, the rest having been euthanized or sold to slaughter. No other animals died or were noted with lingering health issues. In addition to the six cows, one two-year-old, and one heifer calf were retained. Since the fire, the herd has been replenished somewhat with three adult cows and a yearling heifer and heifer calf added in January of 2018, and five more cows plus a bull in July 2018. Of the cows that survived the fire, few lingering effects were noted. It was noted, however, that one cow had a particularly heavy load of face flies during the summer of 2018, possibly due to the raw open sores on the eyelids resulting from burn damage. Also of interest was an observed degree of post-traumatic stress in the animals. The herd owner noted a difference in the level of trust between the animals - many of which, as noted, were quite tame and acclimated - and himself after the fire. This behavior improved throughout the summer. The herd stayed in the corral at the neighboring bison ranch until April of 2018, at which time they were let out to graze, still at the neighboring ranch. This allowed the original range to recover from the fire. Had the animals been taken back to their original site, supplemental feeding would have likely been necessary. Plentiful rains in the spring and summer of 2018 have meant a robust range recovery on the original site.

Continued on next page.

## Conclusion

Despite the severity and rapidity of the wildfire event, 69 of 82 bison in the affected herd survived and were able to be salvaged or retained in the herd. Prompt evaluation and preventive treatments with antibiotics and vaccine may have contributed to the lack of long-term effects in surviving animals. The conditions, however, forced the euthanasia of 13 animals: eight upon initial evaluation, with 5 more following the re-evaluation three-and-a-half weeks later. For this incident, severe effects (particularly teat damage in cows) did not become obvious until several weeks later. Veterinarians and bison producers should ensure that final determination of the animal's health and reproductive status does not occur until later-term effects can be observed.

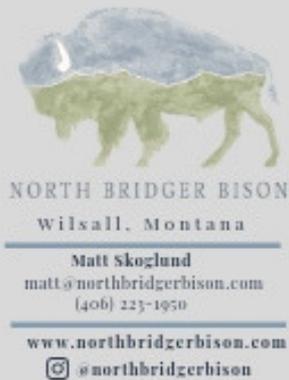
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# SAVE THE DATE - JANUARY 4 - 5, 2020 - MONTANA BISON ASSOCIATION WINTER MEETING

The Montana Bison Association has January 4 - 5, 2020 confirmed for their annual Winter Conference. The location is still being determined, but please mark your calendars and plan to join us for what is always a fun and informative weekend with your Montana bison community.

The association will update its website, <https://www.montanabison.org/news-and-events> for registration information and other details.



*Photo by Matt Skoglund*

## UPCOMING BISON EVENTS

- 09/24/2019 - Holistic Ranching Seminar - KS
- 10/04/2019 - Eastern Bison Association Fall Tour - Owl Creek Bison - OH
- 10/19/2019 - Texas Bison Association Fall Meeting - TX
- 11/02/2019 - Oklahoma Bison Association Sale - OK
- 11/02/2019 - Custer State Park Annual Bison Auction - SD
- 11/09/2019 - Antelope Island State Park Annual Sale - UT
- 11/22/2019 - Canadian Bison Association Annual Conference and Sale - SK
- 11/29/2019 - Minnesota Bison Association (MnBA) Bison Fundamentals Class - MN
- 11/30/2019 - MnBA 23rd Annual Legends of the Fall Auction - MN
- 12/07/2019 - Western Bison Association Annual Conference and Sale - UT
- 12/07/2019 - Kansas Buffalo Association Annual Sale - KS
- 12/14/2019 - North Dakota Buffalo Association Simulcast Sale - ND
- 1/04/2020 - Turner Ranches Prairie Performance Auction - SD
- 1/04/2020 - Montana Bison Association Annual Conference - MT
- 1/22 - 24/2020 - NBA Winter Conference - Denver, CO
- 1/25/2020 - NBA Gold Trophy Show and Sale - Denver, CO
- 1/31/2020 - DTBA Black Hills Conference and Buffalo Classic - SD
- 2/15/2020 - Prairie Legends Bison Auction - NM
- 3/04/2020 - Eastern Bison Association Annual Sale and Conference - PA

# NATIONAL BISON ASSOCIATION NEWS

## PET FOOD REGULATORS TAKE STEPS TOWARD LABEL CLARITY

A key committee of the nation's animal feed regulators this week overwhelmingly endorsed a pair of National Bison Association-backed proposals to clarify the terminology of water buffalo and bison when used in pet food products.

The votes came at the annual meeting of the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) held in Louisville, KY. There, the AAFCO Ingredients' Definitions Committee endorsed two new proposed definitions:

**Water Buffalo.** Common name for *Bubalus bubalus*. The meat or other ingredient derived from the animal (e.g. by-products, meal, fat) must be referred to as "water buffalo" or "water buffalo \_\_\_\_\_" with the specific non-meat ingredient filling in the blank.

**Bison.** Common name for *Bison bison*. The meat or other ingredients derived from the animal (e.g. by-products, meal, fat) must be referred to as "bison," "North American buffalo," "bison \_\_\_\_\_," or "North American buffalo \_\_\_\_\_" with specific non-meat ingredient filling in the blank.

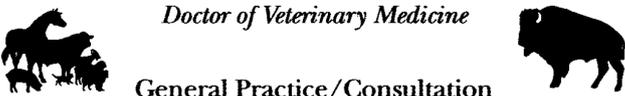
Under AAFCO procedures, recommendations forwarded by committees must wait for formal adoption at following membership meeting. The next full AAFCO meeting is scheduled for January 21-23, 2020 in Albuquerque, NM.

NBA Executive Director Dave Carter addressed the IDC prior to the vote, and stressed that the committees recommendations were supported by both the NBA and the InterTribal Buffalo Council. He said the new definitions would halt deceptively labeled water buffalo ingredients in pet food. "This issue has been very disruptive to our business over the past two years. But, more importantly, it threatens the confidence that consumers have in the integrity of our products," he said.

Carter also publicly thanked the pet food company representatives at the meeting who were committed to using properly labeled ingredients in their products.



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# NBA LAUNCHES TWO NEW BISON APPS

## BY JIM MATHESON

The National Bison Association this summer has developed two new, bison-specific apps to benefit both bison producers and consumers. The NBA Bison Producer's App is a powerful tool that allows producers to track and analyze animal data in the field from the palm of their hand. The Buysome Bison app will replace the antiquated BisonFinder app with a more precise and user-friendly tool that connects bison consumers directly with local members of the National Bison Association to promote and sell all things bison.

The new NBA Bison Producer's App, now available for both iOS and Android devices, is among the deliverables resulting from a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Risk Management Agency (USDA RMA) and the project it's underwriting – Record Keeping for Risk Mitigation. The project aims to improve the overall performance of bison operations through better record keeping and analysis, with the producer's app providing a powerful tool to do so. The app is available at no charge for NBA and MBA members to use during the project period, which ends in March of 2020, after which a nominal fee will be charged to utilize the app. The app's extensive features result in a very powerful resource that literally fits in the palm of your hand. App features include animal photo ID, birth date, herd and tag ID, weight, gender, vaccination/dewormer schedule, North American Bison Registry animal history, notes for things like body condition, health, transfer history, animal test results, genetic/parentage information, calving rates, USDA RMA Crop Insurance fact sheets, NBA push notifications including Trading Board ads, Weekly Update, NBA membership data and more.

The National Bison Association announced today the launch of a new app offering bison consumers easy access the NBA's Online Buyer's Guide (photo above right) from their smart phones and tablets. The new app will replace the now antiquated BisonFinder app with a more highly functioning program that will promote and benefit all NBA members who participate. The new app will amplify the outreach potential for all NBA members who list their products and services on the association's on-line buyers guide. To make sure you are listed in the buyer's guide, and the new app, log on to <https://bisoncentral.com/my-account/>, and follow the instructions at the bottom of this message. The new buyers guide app comes on the heels of the NBA's release of its Bison Producer's App (<https://bisoncentral.com/production-resources/>) Said project coordinator, Jim Matheson, "This app will be a huge improvement over the BisonFinder app in that this will directly connect consumers to our members, rather than connecting them to retail and food service establishments. Utilizing GPS technology, so local users can find local bison, is a great tool for us and I can't think of a better way to connect consumers directly to their local NBA members."

Learn more at [www.bisoncentral.com](http://www.bisoncentral.com).



# HERITAGE YELLOWSTONE PARK BISON TO JOIN MONTANA TRIBAL HERDS[EDITED] FROM UPI NEWS

Descendants of genetically pure Yellowstone National Park bison, part of a herd in northern Colorado, will make their way back to Montana tribal lands by way of the Oakland Zoo. A small herd that started in 2015 with 10 cows at Colorado State University has grown to 77 animals. Canada, said Erin Dogan Harrison, the zoo's communications director. The plan is part of a program to return heritage bison to tribal lands, specifically the Blackfeet Nation in northwest Montana. The Blackfeet Nation's linnii Initiative brought a herd of 89 Elk Island Park bison back to tribal lands in 2018. Four Canadian and U.S. tribes comprising the Blackfeet Confederacy, the Siksika, the Kainai, the Piegan and Blackfeet, worked together to bring bison back to tribal property near Browning, Mont. The herd is like a living inspiration for members of the Blackfeet Nation, said Teri Loring Dahle, who helped coordinate the project. "linnii is a Blackfeet word that means 'taking hardships away.' When we see the buffalo, it means the Creator gave us everything we need in the form of this animal," she said. "These animals are culturally and spiritually connected to our people, and I believe their homecoming will begin a healing of historical trauma to the Blackfeet people," Ervin Carlson, president of the Intertribal Buffalo Council, said in a press release. These buffalo will begin the longstanding efforts to restore buffalo to their historical mountain-front rangelands."

The Colorado buffalo are descendants of a wild herd that survived at Yellowstone in the early 1900s with help of conservationists and at the urging of President Theodore Roosevelt. The Oakland Zoo also received 20 pregnant females from the Elk Island herd. These bison are descended from animals captured on Blackfeet land in 1873, the zoo's Harrison said. Breeding the Canadian bison with Yellowstone bison at the zoo will expand the genetic diversity of the tribal herds, she said. Historically, Yellowstone Park bison were the only surviving U.S. buffalo that never were domesticated, and they have roamed free in the manner they did in prehistoric times. But the Yellowstone herd has another problem -- up to half of the animals are infected with brucellosis, a livestock disease that causes cows to abort their calves. The disease can spread to cattle, as well as elk. Ranchers who graze animals on public land nearby fear brucellosis will affect their herds. For this reason, Yellowstone Park bison have traditionally been culled yearly when they leave the park in winter by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services Division, a process that has been controversial.

The Colorado bison were raised brucellosis-free, said Jennifer Barfield, assistant professor of veterinary science who is the lead scientist on the project. Some of the Colorado State University bison were bred with animal husbandry techniques and one calf was born through in vitro fertilization. "It's been a challenge to breed the animals with the Yellowstone genetics who don't have brucellosis," said Barfield, who is a reproductive physiologist. The herd has grown faster than expected on a 2,700-acre parcel at a nearby open space, she said. The northern Colorado project has also partnered to provide heritage animals to the Pueblo of Pojoaque tribe in New Mexico, which manages bison on the Rio Mora National Wildlife Refuge, in partnership with the Denver Zoo and to the Minnesota Zoo. In Montana, the linnii Initiative herd is a source of pride and a chance to promote eco-tourism at a 9,000-acre buffalo preserve on the Two Medicine River, Dahle said. The program hosts an interpretation center and sponsors school field trips to visit the bison on the range. "Our whole culture was erased for many generations, and so was the buffalo," Dahle said. "Now we are bringing that spirituality back. My grandmother will be 100 years old in September and she never got to see a buffalo free on the prairie, but her mother did. This herd gives us something to look forward to." In June, the Blackfeet Nation released a video shot via a drone of the herd after bison wranglers riding horses and all-terrain vehicles moved the animals to their summer grazing area. "We're going to keep trucking those offspring and their mothers up to Montana in perpetuity," the Oakland Zoo's Harrison said. "That is the entire idea behind this collaboration, to keep growing these genetically pure healthy herds on tribal land."

Source - [https://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/US/2019/08/12/Heritage-Yellowstone-Park-bison-to-join-Montana-tribal-herds/3181565319353/](https://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2019/08/12/Heritage-Yellowstone-Park-bison-to-join-Montana-tribal-herds/3181565319353/)

# LET'S PROCESS THIS FOR A MINUTE - FROM THE NATIONAL BISON ASSOCIATION BLOG

BY DAVE CARTER

Perhaps you saw this in the news a couple of weeks ago: New evidence links ultra-processed foods with a range of health risks. When I saw variations of this headline spill in through my news feeds, I immediately did my 1980's best Valley Girl imitation..."Like, duh." I assume that the lead researcher in this study was none other than Dr. Obvious.

What made me really scratch my head, though, was that most of these articles were accompanied by a photo of a cheeseburger deluxe with French fries. Cheeseburger and French fries ultra-processed? Let's break this down. The cheeseburger consisted of one patty made from 100 percent meat (preferably bison) which consists of ground trimmings. Period. The cheese goes through a bit more processing, but likely consists of milk, whey, yeast and salt. Then, there's the lettuce, tomatoes, pickle and onion which are...well...lettuce tomatoes, pickle and onion. The French fries? Sliced, fried potatoes. Agreed; they aren't the epitome of health food, but deep frying doesn't qualify as ultra-processed. The bun may be considered highly processed, but I generally eat my bison burgers without a bun. The authors apparently had difficulties identifying a specific product that would qualify as highly processed, so I am happy to help them out.

The best place to determine ultra-processed is to look at the ingredient panel for various types of food. Here's one ingredient panel that caught my eye:

Water, textured wheat protein, coconut oil, potato protein, natural flavors, 2% or less of: leghemoglobin (heme protein), yeast extract, salt, soy protein isolate, konjac gum, xanthan Gum, thiamin (vitamin B1), zinc, niacin, vitamin B6, riboflavin (vitamin B2), vitamin B12. Wait: That's the ingredient panel for Impossible Burger®, the lab-created concoction being touted as the healthy, environmentally friendly alternative to meat. Not only is it ultra-processed, but the lab-created protein certainly qualifies as genetically modified, and the soy protein isolate is sourced from GMO soybeans.

How about this ingredient panel?

**Pea protein isolate, expeller-pressed canola oil, refined coconut oil, water, yeast extract, maltodextrin, natural flavors, gum arabic, sunflower oil, salt, succinic acid, acetic acid, non-GMO modified food starch, cellulose from bamboo, methylcellulose, potato starch, beet juice extract (for color), ascorbic acid (to maintain color), annatto extract (for color), citrus fruit extract (to maintain quality), vegetable glycerin.**

That's the ingredient panel for the Beyond Burger®, another lab-created meat alternative. Making any food from cellulose from bamboo, refined coconut oil, and methylcellulose certainly qualifies that product as ultra-processed. Perhaps the graphic accompanying the article wasn't in error.

Perhaps the authors just forgot to explain that the ultra-processed item in the picture was one of those laboratory-created burger "alternatives."

From The NBA Blog - <https://bisoncentral.com/blog/>



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