



# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Morning view before the start of the 2025 Eastern Summer Regional Bison Conference at White Oaks Bison Farm in Indiana.

[NATIONALBISON.ORG](https://NATIONALBISON.ORG)



## OUR MISSION

The mission of the National Bison Association is to bring together stakeholders to celebrate the heritage of American bison, to educate, and to create a sustainable future for our industry.

## OUR VISION

The vision of the NBA is a community bound by the heritage of the American Bison.

## FROM NBA'S 2023 - 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

### FULFILLING THE MISSION

- EDUCATION
- WELCOMING, BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER
- COMMUNICATION
- CONFERENCES, EVENTS, STOCK SHOW
- PROMOTING BISON
- COORDINATED NATIONAL VOICE
- FACILITATING RELATIONSHIPS

### CREATING THE FUTURE

- PRODUCER EDUCATION
- CONSUMER OUTREACH
- PROFITABILITY
- LOBBYING & ADVOCACY
- EVOLVING THE ORGANIZATION



Zach Martin, Red Frazier Bison (IN), providing bison care overview at first ever national USDA NRCS Bison training in September, 2025.



# 2025 NBA BOARD

Past President: Chad Kremer

President: Ken Klemm

Vice President: Jessi Deardorf

Secretary/Treasure: Ace Ward

At-Large: Sean Graese

Region 1: Garrett Brown

Region 2: Shawn Bennett

Region 3: Melinda Anakalea

Region 4: Stuart Schrag

Region 5: Dr. John Bowron

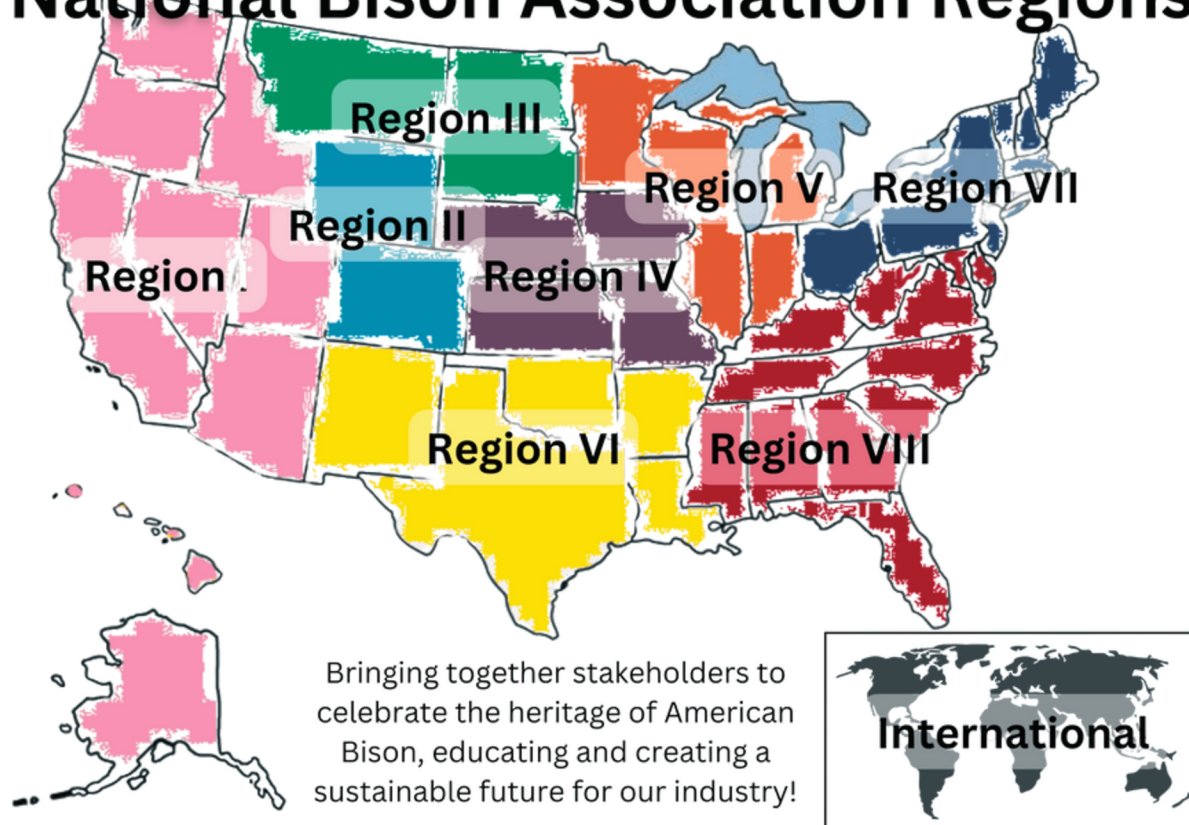
Region 6: Ron Miskin

Region 7: Dr. Susan Golembeski

Region 8: Elizabeth Riffle

International: Justin Dorey

## National Bison Association Regions



## NBA STAFF

Jim Matheson, Executive Director

Karen Conley, Bison World Editor

Lydia Whitman, Program Manager

Adam Ulbricht, Program & Comms. Coordinator



# NBA MEMBER OUTREACH

NBA's member-led education and outreach creates platforms for today's bison stewards to share their knowledge and experience, and to help build strong support networks for the membership to utilize. These events are wholly unique: hosts advise on the topics and guide the events. Expert speakers and bison steward attendees also contribute immensely to the discussion with just about every event taking place on working bison operations across the country.



## CONSUMER AND PRODUCER OUTREACH

The NBA continues its efforts to educate consumers on all the reasons that they should make bison a regular part of their diet. Thanks to the member-driven NBA Growth Fund, we were able to host informational booths at 14 in-person consumer-facing events in 2025, all of which were located next to the chef's station, featuring gourmet chefs cooking and serving our bison.

The NBA targets consumer markets that are bison-friendly where foodies are able to experience bison cuts "beyond the buffalo burger" introducing them to steaks, short-ribs, roasts, bone-marrow and more! Chefs loved cooking with bison too.



We promoted ground bison as well, particularly on social media and working with popular "influencers" where young chefs prepared amazing ground bison dishes. The result was nearly 1.5 million social media impressions! The NBA is also pursuing bison producer outreach as the supply of bison continues to tighten and we work to recruit the next generation. We hosted booths at five farm shows, and soil health and sustainable ag conferences where we educated existing producers why they should add value to their operation with bison.



## 4 REGIONAL SUMMER CONFERENCES 350+ ATTENDEES, WINTER CONFERENCE SOLD OUT

Our 2025 summer conference season welcomed the most attendees to date. We partnered with Oklahoma Bison Association and Oklahoma Trophy Ranch, Western Bison Association and Stangel Bison Ranch, Dakota Territories Buffalo Association and Custer State Park/Kremer Buffalo, Indiana Illinois Bison Association and White Oaks Bison Farm to offer events in the North, South, East and West. These events collectively gathered over 350 members, all on working bison operations across the country. The NBA also sold out it's 2025 Winter Conference with over 600 attendees!

We are amazed at the talents of our membership! At the Oklahoma Conference, Jessi and Austin with Benjamin Lee Bison led a sous vide cooking demonstration (pictured right). By vacuum-sealing the bison steak and immersing it in a temperature controlled water bath, the result is a tender, succulent texture. Attendees were treated to bison steak appetizers, showcasing the versatility of flavors and ease of creating tasty bites for potential consumers.



## BISON RESEARCH SHOWCASED IN POSTER SESSION

At the 2025 National Bison Association Winter Conference, a new research poster session showcased 25 diverse projects, offering bison practitioners, stewards, and scientists an opportunity to exchange findings and gain expert feedback. Topics ranged from habitat suitability for long-term restoration, mineral supplementation impacts, rumen microbial pathways, and conservation planning, to studies on disease prevalence, nutrition, and herd health. Additional bison-specific research explored ecological interactions such as bison as bee habitat engineers, monitoring grazing habits with GPS collars, feeding patterns on tribal lands, and carcass chilling dynamics, alongside innovations in fiber sourcing, meat quality, parasite detection, and cellular development. Collectively, the session highlighted cutting-edge science and practical insights to advance bison management, conservation, and industry collaboration worldwide. Summaries of these and more were made available in the NBA member's area at [www.nationalbison.org](http://www.nationalbison.org).





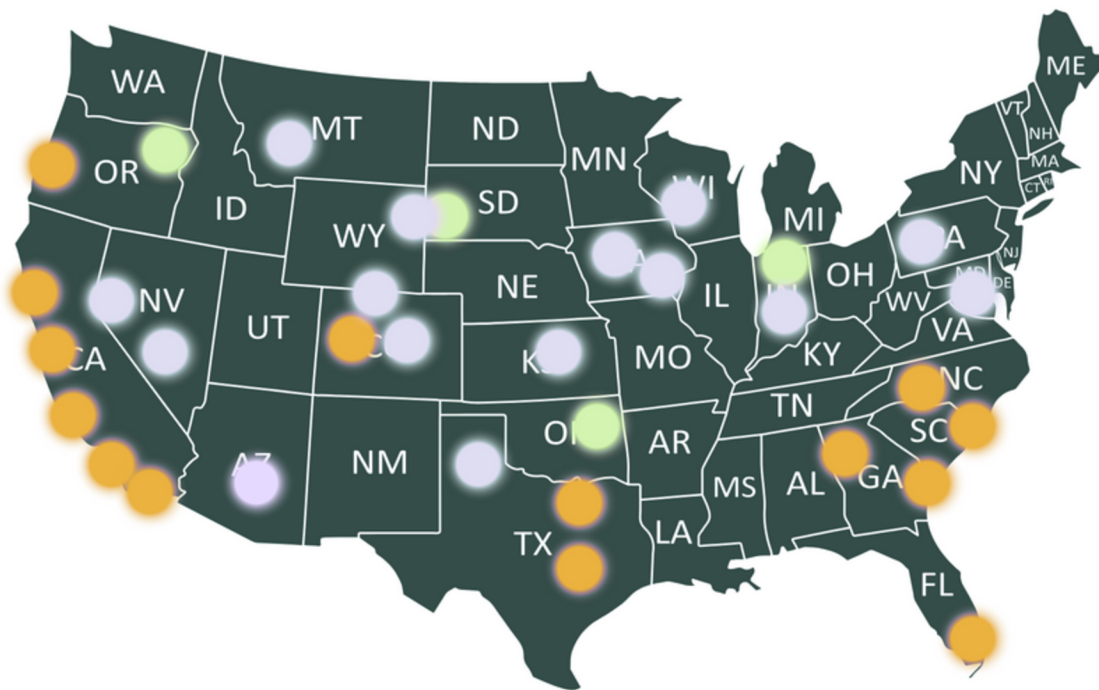
## OUTREACH AND THE GROWTH FUND

The NBA Growth Fund was established to raise important funds that support the NBA's outreach to consumers and the general promotion of bison to the public. Donations to this fund will not only raise these crucial outreach dollars, but also supports the day-to-day operations of the NBA's important work. In 2026, the NBA is committing 20% more of our total Growth Fund dollars to support outreach and education. Support the Growth Fund at <https://nationalbison.org/product/nba-growth-fund-program/>

### 2025 Achievements

- 40% Increase In-Person Consumer Outreach
- 45 NBA member contributors to the Growth Fund
- Collaboration utilizing social media influencers
- NBA presence at 15 producer-facing farm shows and conferences
- Bison featured at 14 consumer events and 15 producer events

## 2025 Outreach & Education



2,315,000 people reached  
through virtual marketing



48,00 people reached  
through in person  
outreach



33 in-person events



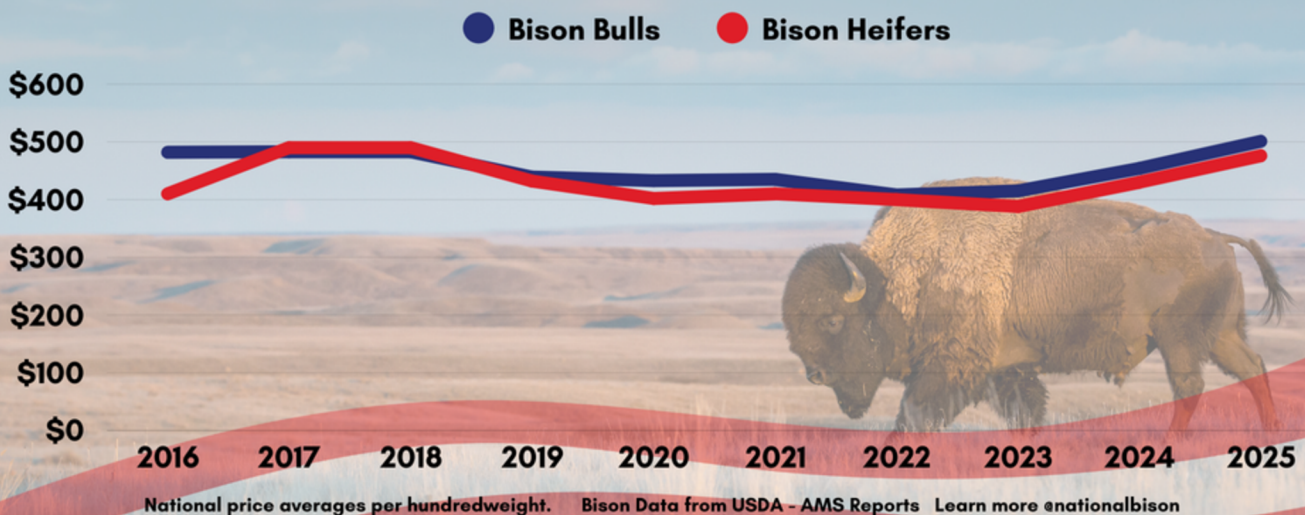
## TRACKING THE TRENDS

The NBA provides members access to live bison pricing, herd health information, production expense data, digital marketing materials and tools, and over 150 videos of NBA conference presentations, webinars and more to learn from.

We also work behind the scenes to ensure our members have equal access to federal cost share programs, and fair consideration for Farm Service Agency financing through business planning tools, loan programs, market data, and education.

# THE BISON MEAT MARKET

**STABLE. PROFITABLE. UNIQUELY AMERICAN.**



## SUPPORTING HEALTHY BISON

The NBA's focus on herd health has earmarked federal dollars for bison-specific issues, and has corralled today's top scientists and researchers for the betterment of the species. Our 2024 International Bison Health Symposium was a springboard for exciting forthcoming bison research that benefits all bison stakeholders, which we continue to support through our poster sessions and grant projects. The NBA is currently involved in three different grants to advance bison health, which include our work with South Dakota State University on the benefits of Body Condition Scoring and winter bale grazing, our work to develop a bison herd health network to benefit all stakeholder groups, and our new USDA grant that will redevelop all of the NBA's educational tools, to include health resources. The NBA is also actively lobbying Congress to earmark agricultural appropriated dollars to support bison-specific herd health efforts.



## LEGISLATIVE & REGULATORY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The NBA continued its legislative and regulatory work with the United States Congress and federal agencies to ensure an even playing field for bison producers and marketers while supporting policies that will restore bison across North America. Here are just some of our legislative and regulatory successes in 2025:

- March and September In-person NBA Lobbying Trips and August recess tours of Bison Ranches
- 2025 National Bison Day Celebrated on November across the United States
- \$1.75 million in Senate Fiscal Year 2026 Budget for Malignant Catarrhal Fever (MCF) in bison
- Ag Marketing Service - \$5 million producer marketing grant program made available in 2025
- Ag Research Service - Continued research and development of MCF and *M. bovis* vaccines
- Animal Plant Health Inspection Service - Addition of NBA/bison to regular Cattle Sector Stakeholder Meetings. Bison producers are eligible for free electronic identification tags, condemned Canadian imported bison issue resolution
- Natural Resource Conservation Service - First-time bison-specific technical note developed to guide bison practices and awards, including infrastructure reimbursement for EQIP
- Foreign Ag Service/U.S. Trade Representatives Office - Inclusion of NBA as a member of the Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee to represent bison, elimination of tariff on EU meat exports, new market access, bison continues to be exempted from Canadian import tariffs, 2026 US Mexico Canada Trade Agreement negotiations
- Farm Service Agency - Continued inclusion of compensation for losses due to *Mycoplasma bovis* for US producers, addition of bison as an eligible species for Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL)
- Food and Drug Agency - Continued work with the NBA regarding the labeling of Water Buffalo and Bison for human consumption



2025 NBA Delegation advocating for bison stewards in Washington D.C. in September

## JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Joining or renewing your membership is easy and immerses you in an incredible community that provides support, education, and advocacy on all aspects of bison, from production, to conservation, to profit and more.

## SERVE AS AN NBA LEADER

Thank you to all of you who served as leaders of our organization in 2025! We truly value what you bring to the table and hope you will continue to serve this organization. We would love to have more of you join us to provide governance and guidance, teach at and host events, share your stories with others and help mentor beginning bison stewards. Consider joining a NBA Committee in 2026!

## ATTEND OUR EVENTS

We organize events year-round to help you build resilient ranches and communities. Please take time to attend, get to know others and learn from our member-leaders. Please bring your friends and neighbors along!

## ENGAGE WITH US ONLINE

We know it's not always possible to attend events in person. When you can't come to a conference or workshop, connect digitally with the NBA: follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Linked In, YouTube, and like, comment, share our posts – and let us know what you are up to so we can promote our members!

## DONATE TO THE GROWTH FUND

Contribute \$1/head of bison that you sold this year to support the NBA Growth Fund, which supports the NBA's operation and virtually all of its consumer and producer outreach and education supporting 18 in-person events in 2025.

### STAY CONNECTED

[nationalbison.org](https://nationalbison.org)

[facebook.com/nationalbison](https://facebook.com/nationalbison)

@nationalbison

@nationalbison

@nationalbison



# HOW TO SUPPORT THE NBA

Please consider further supporting the National Bison Association financially beyond your member dues. Donations through the Growth Fund and NBA Sponsorship packages provide vital funding sources, helping the NBA to stay financially solvent and able to respond quickly and directly to our members' needs. We graciously accept cash donations, gifts from donor-advised funds, and more all in the effort to continue the good work of the National Bison Association as it works towards its mission.

Please consider making a gift to the National Bison Association. This will not only help you create a legacy benefitting the stewardship of bison across the country.

Email [info@nationalbison.org](mailto:info@nationalbison.org), or call (303) 292-2833, ext. 700 to learn more.



National Bison Association  
711 North Creek Drive  
Rapid City, SD 57703

[@nationalbison](https://www.nationalbison.org)  
303-292-2833  
[info@nationalbison.org](mailto:info@nationalbison.org)