



National Bison Association

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Workshop Set for Farmers' Marketers *Bison Association Seeks to Strengthen Producers' 'Direct Marketing Skills'*

Bison producers and other farmers interested in capitalizing on the opportunity to utilize Farmers' Markets as a successful business strategy are invited to attend a half-day workshop on Friday, March 12 at the Holiday Inn Harrisburg East, 4751 Lindle Rd., in Harrisburg, PA.

Hosted by the National Bison Association in cooperation with the Eastern Bison Association and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service, the workshop will cover subjects regarding planning, merchandising, marketing, and leveraging a presence at Farmers' Markets to build a successful year-round business.

Participants at the workshop will work through a curriculum developed by a working group of buffalo producers with extensive experience in farmers' markets. The workshop and curriculum are targeted to bison producers, but the information can be useful for people marketing other products as well. The session is open to all producers.

Helping to conduct the workshop will be Nathan Stambaugh of Gunpowder Bison and Trading Co. of Monkton, MD. Gunpowder Bison and Trading Co. has been actively selling their products through framers' markets for several years.

Dave Carter, executive director at the National Bison Association, noted that most bison producers are small-scale and rely on direct marketing as an important part of their business. "The average Pennsylvania bison producer has fewer than 20 bison, so they must maximize the return on every animal they produce" Carter said.

"Fortunately, there is a strong upsurge in farmers' markets, as people across the state—and across the country—seek food that is fresh, natural, local and delicious. Our workshop is intended to increase the ability of producers to connect with those customers," Carter added.

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The workshop will run from 8 a.m. – Noon on March 12. Registration is \$40 per attendee, but is free to all participants who are registered for the Eastern Bison Association conference. All participants will receive a take-home copy of the workshop curriculum.

More information is available on the National Bison Association website at www.bisoncentral.com.

The workshop is being funded through the Farmers' Market Promotion Program (FMPP) Grant Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA, under No. 12-25-G-0920.