Information Needs Assessment for NAHMS Bison 2022 Study: Brief Summary of Results Used to Guide Study Development

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INTRODUCTION

The National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) conducted the bison information needs assessment to support the development of study objectives and identify critical information needs regarding bison management and health for the NAHMS Bison 2022 Study. The survey was available to a wide variety of stakeholders via an online platform from October 1, 2020, to November 25, 2020. NAHMS encouraged individuals involved in any aspect of the bison business and/or conservation to participate, regardless of bison ownership, to provide input on bison management and health priorities, industry burdens, and participation incentives. Responses were received from 179 individuals across at least 33 states, representing all sectors of the bison industry.

RESULTS

All respondents were asked to rank the top three management priorities and the top three disease, disorder, or pathogen priorities they would like to see as focus areas in the NAHMS Bison study. To evaluate the priorities, the responses were weighted so that priority 1 responses were given three points; priority 2 responses two points; and priority 3 responses one point. The point totals for each topic were summed and ranked for each question. After responses were weighted, the number one management priority for all respondents was environmental stewardship/responsibility, which was the number one priority for 12 percent of respondents. Parasite control was ranked second and was the number one priority for 7.4 percent of all respondents (figure 1). Of the disease, disorder, and pathogen options listed, internal parasites was the top priority and was the number one priority for 16.8 percent of responses. *Mycoplasma bovis* was ranked second and was the number one choice for 15.3 percent of respondents (figure 2).

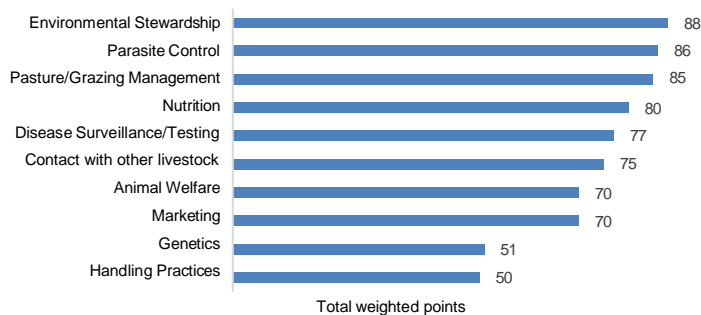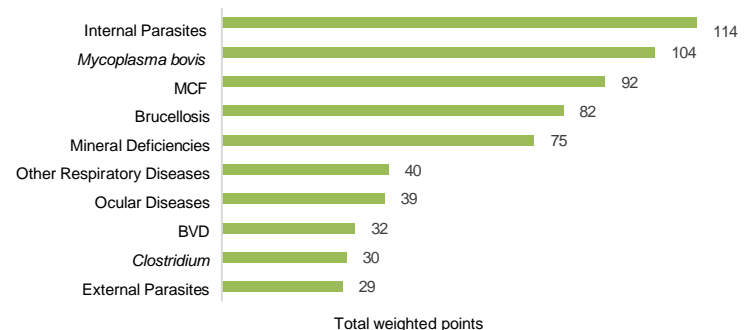**Figure 1. Top 10 management priorities ranked by total weighted points**

Figure 2. Top 10 disease, disorder, or pathogen priorities ranked by total weighted points

STUDY INCENTIVES

Respondents were asked to rank their top three incentive choices, which were also weighted. Incentives might encourage producers to participate in the study, while also filling a critical information gap for the industry. Fecal parasite and anthelmintic resistance testing were indicated as the top incentive for participation. The second most common selection for incentives was feed/forage analysis. When we looked at the subset of producers within all respondents, producers also chose fecal parasite and anthelmintic resistance testing and feed/forage analysis as their top two results.

CONCLUSION

The results from this survey provided an important foundation for developing study objectives and the focus for the Bison 2022 Study. These results—along with input from industry meeting discussions, review of scientific literature, and discussion with bison researchers—were used to prioritize the needs and goals for the study. This information can also be used by other stakeholders to further meet the needs of the bison industry. After receiving approval from the Office of Management and Budget, NAHMS, in conjunction with the National Agricultural Statistics Service, launched the Bison 2022 Study in July 2022. Field work ended in February 2023. Validation and data analysis are in progress. We expect results as early as 2024. For more information, please visit USDA APHIS | NAHMS Bison Studies.