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Association Canadienne Du Bison**

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**Bison Industry Marketers Map Strategy for Growth  
*First Ever Industry Roundtable Seeks to Strengthen Capacity to Meet Demand***

DENVER, Colorado (March 19, 2007) -- Bison industry marketing leaders from the United States and Canada gathered here this week to analyze the long-term market growth trends and to begin mapping a strategy to stimulate new production from bison ranchers.

The meeting was called jointly by the U.S. National Bison Association and the Canadian Bison Association to address growing concern among marketers that consumer demand may begin to outpace the supply of market-ready bison in the near future. The 24 marketers participating in the roundtable discussion this week agreed that several steps are needed to help stimulate production and meet anticipated annual growth of more than 10 percent in bison meat consumption.

Despite the growing global demand for bison, production at the ranch level has not been increasing significantly. Producers of all scale are impacted by higher costs of production resulting from drought, feed costs, infrastructure, trade restrictions and other factors. The marketers meeting in Denver identified several priorities to help increase the profitability at all stages of the industry by capturing more value per animal, and by reducing some of the regulatory costs including impediments to trade.

Topping the marketers' lists of concern was addressing the current regulatory environment that forces the bison industry to pay the costs of federal inspection at USDA regulated processing facilities. The Federal Meat Inspection Act requires bison producers to pay for federal inspection. Producers of beef, pork, poultry, and seafood receive federal inspection services at no cost. The user-fees borne by the bison industry add up to \$75 per head in additional expense.

The roundtable participants also began to discuss ideas for establishing better coordination among processors to market hides and byproducts. Because of the small size and dispersed nature of bison processing facilities, processors often face a challenge in finding a profitable market for byproducts. Establishing a program to coordinate the marketing of byproducts could bring extra revenue resulting in higher prices paid to ranchers.

Mike Duncan, president of the National Bison Association, said after the session, "Today marks a significant milestone for the bison industry. Many of our largest processors and marketers came together to identify specific areas in which they can collaborate to increase the long-term viability of our industry."

Mark Silzer, president of the Canadian Bison Association, added, "We recognize that, as a small industry, we are extremely vulnerable to price and production volatility. The ideas discussed today help set the foundation to build a profitable industry in a way that meets growing consumer demand. This will bring economic stability to the ranchers in both of our countries."

The major marketers agreed to reconvene during the International Bison Conference in Rapid City, SD in late July to continue their discussion.