

Month XX, 2014

Dear Bison Producer:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is conducting an in-depth study of U.S. commercial bison operations. This is the first national bison study conducted by USDA's National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS). The Bison 2014 Study will yield critical information that will benefit the entire bison industry. You have been randomly selected to receive the study questionnaire, and I hope you will participate.

This study will benefit you and your fellow producers by providing the following information:

- Baseline description of the U.S. ranched bison industry, including inventory, operation size, and operation type;
- Current U.S. bison production practices and challenges, including animal identification, fencing, care and handling, trade and movement, and disease testing;
- Producer-reported occurrences of *Mycoplasma bovis* and other important diseases of bison; and
- Health management and biosecurity practices important for controlling infectious diseases of bison on commercial operations.

NAHMS and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will conduct the survey in all 50 States in August 2014. Please complete your survey and return it to NAHMS in the enclosed pre-addressed, postage-page envelope. If you have any questions about the survey or the completion process, please contact us via one of the means listed below.

Please be assured that your survey responses will be kept strictly confidential, as required by law, and used only in combination with other responses to report regional estimates. NAHMS is a statistical unit under the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA). All information collected during the Bison 2014 study will be used for statistical purposes only and will be treated as confidential in accordance with CIPSEA guidelines. Bison 2014 results will be presented only in an aggregate manner.

We truly value your input. Your participation is vital in making the Bison 2014 Study a success for the entire bison industry.

Sincerely,

Name
Director
National Animal Health Monitoring System

For questions: (970-494-7000 or Margaret.a.parker@aphis.usda.gov)