

Marketing/Processing Panel Discussion

Bob Dineen, Rocky Mountain Natural Meats

Henderson, Colorado

800/327-2706; 303/287-7100 · bob@greatrangebison.com

Bob founded Rocky Mountain Natural Meats in 1986 and remains as president. Rocky Mountain Natural Meats was the first bison meat packer/distributor to establish a quality grade for bison carcasses. Originally focusing on the Colorado front range, Rocky Mountain Natural Meats has grown to become the nation's largest bison processor and distributor, marketing over 20,000 bison per year. Clients include Whole Foods, Wild Oats, Ted's Montana Grill Restaurants, Darden Restaurants, Safeway, Kroger, Albertsons, Wegman's and Buckhead Beef. Flagship products distributed nationwide include premium quality, fresh sub-primals, and a full line of fresh, case-ready cuts to retail, all marketed under the Great Range Bison brand.

A pioneer in the industry, Bob's previous experience includes managing a 250 head bison cow/calf operation 1983 - 1986, acting as sale chairman for the National Bison Association's Gold Trophy Show and Sale 1987 - 1995, judging at the Canadian National Bison Show and regional U.S. shows. Bob sat on the board of both the National Bison Association and the Colorado Bison Association where he also served as president from 1999 through 2001.

Bob has a BS in Agriculture from West Virginia University and resides in Ft. Lupton, Colorado with his wife Laurie and 2 children.

Bruce Anderson, Western Buffalo Co.

Rapid City, South Dakota

605/342-0322 · bando@rapidnet.com

Bruce was raised on a ranch/feedlot here in western SD. He received my BS Business Administration from Black Hills State University. Bruce is married to Martha and has 2 boys and 2 girls.

He began his career in the packing industry in 1979, where they processed and sold buffalo since 1979. He got serious about the buffalo business in 1987. Today, Western Buffalo Co. harvests and markets 120-200 head weekly.

OVERVIEW OF MARKETING DISCUSSION

Bob Dineen and Bruce Anderson gave a brief overview of their operations and markets, with Rocky Mountain Natural Meats dealing primarily in fresh bison products and Western Buffalo Co. dealing primarily with frozen bison products. The diversity of these companies helps cover the growing demand for bison meat around the US. Anderson stated that even in today's economy, a large percent of consumers are more concerned about what they eat, and many choose bison over other types of meat protein which has helped increase demand for bison products.

Both men agree that new producers are needed to help meet that demand. The knowledge base that exists today within the industry is invaluable in helping new producers become successful. By understanding both production and marketing, these two gentlemen are able to connect the dots to help ensure a quality product and stable market for the industry.

Anderson stated that in addition to the market for bison meat, there is a lot of potential in by-products such as hides, but this is still an immature market. He mentioned pet food as another possibility to help round out the overall industry.