

Welcome to the 4-H Bison Project

Howdy!

We're excited that you chose to become a leader of the 4-H Bison project. Our 4-H projects and programs rely heavily on the countless hours spent by volunteers such as you. You make the program possible. It is our hope that you, and your club members, have a great time this year making new friends, taking part in 4-H activities, and learning more about bison and their native value!

To complete this project year in 4-H bison, members must:

- Complete four to six of the units per club year of the manual material
- Take part in at least 70% of club activities
- Do a communication project
- Complete a record book
- Take part in your achievement day
- Have a lot of FUN!!!!

About the bison project material

Congratulations! You have made the decision to be an integral part of the Alberta 4-H Bison project. We hope that you find the information in these manuals to be both educational and fun! There are suggested activities for each unit in the manuals. Prepare yourself to learn and share with others the colourful past and inspiring future of today's bison.

Today's bison industry is relatively new despite their long history in North America. Because this industry is going through rapid evolution information may change as more research is developed, and we encourage you to add on to the information provided in these manuals as it comes available to you. The project material is covered in three member manuals, and this leader manual has been provided to assist you in presenting this information to the club level. By encouraging the members to place their manuals in a three ring binder, they will be able to create their very own "Bison Handbook". In years to come, this book will become a valuable keepsake, as they will witness the progress of this growing industry.

Alberta 4-H Bison Project - Leader

About the record book

Because of the diversity of projects available to bison project members, the record book they choose to use will depend on the project they wish to do. If the member decides that he or she would like to do a project involving the *Exploring Bison* they may wish to use a craft, sewing or create their own record book that explains the project from the beginning of the 4-H year through to the achievement. If the member does wish to create a record book of their own they need to include the components that are listed at the back of this chapter.

If the member chooses to do the *Bison Herd Observations* project, he or she can use the Alternative Livestock Record book to complete this project. All applicable information needs to be completed in this book by the date specified by the club.

The *Carcass Bison* project is another project that they may wish to create their own record book for, or you could encourage them to use the generic record book depending on the nature of your specific project. Once again, if the member does choose to create their own record book for this project, please have them refer to the last page of the introduction chapters in the member manuals. This information is repeated in this manual for your reference.

Achievement day requirements

For achievement of any bison project, you may encourage members to prepare a display of information depending on the individual project they have selected to do. This may be done using pictures, words or even demonstrations. Provincially, you and your club members are strongly encouraged to attend the Wild Rose Show and Sale held in Camrose. This show provides all members with the opportunity to meet other youth from across the province, and emphasizes valuable skills needed in the industry. For more information you can contact the Bison Centre of Excellence web page at www.bisoncentre.com or phone toll free using the rite line at 310-0000 then coding in 780-986-4100.

Other opportunities in 4-H

Remember that the bison project is only a small part of 4-H. There are many fun and exciting activities that are offered at club, district, regional and provincial levels. These activities will provide members with the opportunity to attend social events, where you can meet other people their age. Clubs are encouraged to invite special guests, plan fun activities, tours and trips. Your district and regional 4-H councils may sponsor workshops, camps and exchanges as well as fun events. At the provincial level, members are encouraged to attend camps, shows and development programs. Many scholarships are also available to 4-H members continuing on in education. It is your responsibility to promote and encourage your members to be active in all aspects of the 4-H life.

Announcing: Meeting, activities, camps
And all other golden 4-H opportunities!



What is this manual for?

This manual is designed to allow you, the leader, to assist the members in their various activities and learning objectives that are presented in the member manuals. Each chapter will list the suggested roll call activity, the learning objectives of each level of manual, and the activities for the individual and club level. This will include suggested meeting ideas.

One possible suggestion for operating a club that has members at various levels is to determine at the start of the year what chapters will be covered during the project year. You may wish to do them in order, or you may wish to mix and match. This decision is one for you and the club members to decide on.

There are plenty of excellent resource people available to help you. If you have access to the Internet, you may wish to utilize the Alberta Bison Centre of Excellence as they have a very informational website. You can reach them at www.bisoncentre.com or if you want to phone and speak to someone at the Centre you can call them toll free at 310-0000 then 780-986-4100.

Alberta 4-H Bison Project - Leader

Objectives:

The club member will...

Gain knowledge about the bison industry covering a wide spectrum of topics.

Develop skills in decision-making, planning, evaluation, and other related skills.

Work cooperatively in a group setting.

Develop skills in leadership, communication, time management, record keeping and goal setting.

Use resources creatively.

Planning the club year

Consider the experience and circumstances of the members and leaders.

How much experience do the members have?

Is it a broad range of knowledge and maturity?

How much experience do the leaders have?

What age are the members and what is their attention span?

How big is the club?

Where will you meet and what resources do you have there?

How long will meetings be?

Are the other adult helpers committed?

Review the topics in the manual.

Decide which topics you will cover. Some topics could require more than one meeting.

Plan the order of the topics.

Decide which activities you will do for each topic.

Identify the resources you will need for each topic, including helpers.

Give a copy of the year's written schedule to each member or family.

Encouraging learning

Involvement

Mentally

Physically (hands on)

Relevance

Why is this important

Today and in the future.

Supportive relationships

With leaders

With fellow members

With family

Structure

Regular meetings

Organized so time is well spent

Reinforcement

To encourage preferred behaviour

Can come from fellow members as well as adults

Can be a simple smile, nod or pat on the shoulder

Repetition

Emphasize key points

Can be pointed out in different ways

Feedback

Answers "How am I doing?"

Can come from members, leaders, family

If the club contact person is put in charge of creating a "COMMUNICATION CORNER" at your meeting spot, it will help to keep members and families involved and up-to-date on events and activities. Things that can be posted here include: letters, posters, dates of activities, a suggestion book or box, and so on. By doing this up from the beginning of the year the parents and members will get in the habit of looking at the corner just to see what is new and relevant to them.

Alberta 4-H Bison Project - Leader

The members were given the challenge of defining what the “bison advantage” is to them. They are given the task of presenting this in some way either through a written or oral story, a presentation, activity or whatever their imagination can dream up. Be sure to encourage and highlight these attempts.

Suggested meeting plan:

At your organizational meeting you may to present the members with a suggested list of possibilities for the projects that are available. It is important to have a clear idea of what each member intends to do. Setting goals, or even a project plan will help to provide a focus for the members and you as to what is expected over the next year.

At this meeting you should give the members the option or input into what chapters they will be covering during the project year.

Important

This meeting may be the first introduction to 4-H for some new members and it is important to let them know that this project is designed to be both a learning and a fun interactive year. You could set up the activity on the following page to let the members know what kind of fun awaits them!!

Program planning 4 a successful year!

The great bison challenge!

This activity is a fun obstacle course that can be set up to introduce members to the Alberta 4-H Bison program that awaits them. You can have senior members or parents help to attend the various stations or set them up and explain them individually and have an adult accompany each group. Use your imagination, that is what entertaining youth is all about!!

Introduction to the bison project

Your bison project is only a small part of 4-H. There are many fun and exciting activities that are offered at club, district, regional and provincial levels. These activities will provide you with the opportunity to attend social events, where you can meet other people your age. Clubs are encouraged to invite special guests, plan fun activities, tours and trips. Your district and regional 4-H councils may sponsor workshops, camps and exchanges as well as fun events. At the provincial level, members are encouraged to attend camps, shows and development programs. Many scholarships are also available to 4-H members continuing on in education.

At this station you can have the members **brainstorm** a list of all the words they can think of that describe bison and 4-H. You will need flip chart paper and a felt, or a paper and a pen.

History

At the time of the Ice Age massive sheets of ice covered a large percentage of the Earth's water. This caused a drop in the sea level and a large wide spread passage from Siberia to Alaska allowed the movement of a large number of animals, and even people! This huge wet plain is what brought animals such as the bison, mammoth, mastodon, camel, deer and horse to the Americas.

Ice berg – for this activity you will have the group all standing on a piece of paper or cloth that is only big enough for everyone to stand on with both feet, but there can not be much extra room. The object is to flip the paper or fabric over without stepping off into the water.

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Nutrition

The digestive system is a complex system that requires certain foods and nutrients in order to keep our animals healthy.

Orange Pass - With the orange pass the group has to line up in a straight line and pass an orange from person to person by tucking the orange under their neck and not touching it with their hands or arms.

Herd health

When giving injections, always

- use sterile equipment
- make sure the injection area is clean
- read the label and follow the directions
- restrain your animal in a squeeze chute with a head gate
- consult your veterinarian if you are not sure

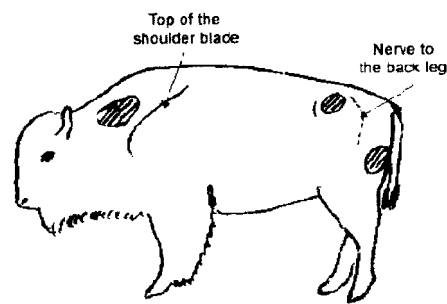


Diagram 2 - Intramuscular Injections

Potato Poke - Take the required number of potatoes and heat them in the microwave just long enough to soften them slightly so that you can inject dye into them without having it spray back at them. You will need to supply a needle and syringe and have a glass of water with red food colouring in it in order to look like blood. The members must use the proper technique to inject the potato.

Reproduction

Spring time!!! Calving is definitely one of the most exciting times on the farm. It is the time of the year when your hard work in feeding and caring for the cows and heifers shows you the results. Your goal as a bison producer is to raise a strong, healthy bison calf from each one of your cows.

Blind Talk - Have the group break into pairs, pick one of these people to become the blindfolded baby. The un-blindfolded person is then responsible for talking the blind person through an obstacle course, without using any words.

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The pair must communicate using another noise that they can agree on before the blindfold is put on the individual. For instance a whistle, but the signal cannot change and it must be used as the only verbal communication. You should set up a route that you want the pair to travel on, but be sure that it is not cluttered or dangerous.

Management

Transporting animals can be a stressful experience.

Egg Toss - if you can be outside for this activity you may wish to use raw eggs, otherwise some other item may be used as a replacement. Have the group split into new pairs and then line up facing on another. To begin with the lines should be only a few feet apart. Start passing the egg or water balloon back and forth until it is dropped. See how far apart the last pair can make it.

Marketing

The first key to a successful advertisement is to make it an attention-grabbing ad. **If no one stops to look at your ad, then what it says is of little importance.**

Come up with an interesting and unique name for your bison enterprise! You must provide a flip chart of paper and markers so that the group can write the name and decorate a sign for their operation.

Congratulations! By completing this challenge course you have just become an important part of today's bison industry. You are now officially initiated into the Alberta 4-H Bison Project.

Activity Solutions for Welcome

Activity solution level one - page 11

Fill in

The crossword puzzle grid contains the following words:

- IDEAL (Horizontal, 1-5)
- HEALTH (Horizontal, 6-11)
- SAFETY (Horizontal, 12-17)
- WINTER (Horizontal, 18-23)
- RECOVERY (Horizontal, 24-31)
- HEIFER (Horizontal, 32-38)
- PRAIRIE (Horizontal, 39-45)
- BISON (Vertical, 35-41)
- MARSHLANDS (Horizontal, 46-54)
- PATIENCE (Vertical, 48-54)
- MARCH (Horizontal, 55-61)

The word unscramble is **“Learn to do by doing”**. This is the 4-H motto and you are responsible for encouraging this behaviour.

Activity solution level two - Page 11

