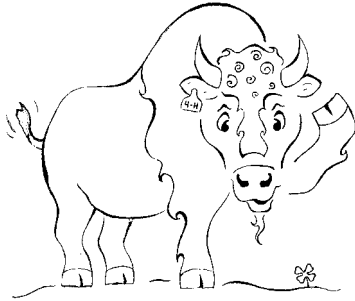


# Alberta 4-H Law



## Roll Call:

Name a concern that the public may have about the welfare of bison in Alberta.

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## The welfare of our animals

Owning any type of livestock is fun and exciting, but it carries some important responsibilities. It is important that we understand how to treat our animals humanely and that we give them the best possible care.

Despite the mutual relationship we have with our animals, there are many people who perceive animal agriculture as cruel. If you recall from Level One we discussed the difference between animal welfare and animal rights. What is the difference between animal welfare and animal rights?

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As livestock producers our primary concern should be the welfare of our animals. It is important that we raise our animals in healthy safe environments in order to maximize growth and production. Remember though, animal rights positions are also important to the livestock producer because they raise important questions that we all need to be concerned for.

- Where do we draw the line on animal use?
- How important is agriculture in order to feed our population?
- Why don't we just let all the animals run free?

## Alberta 4-H Bison Project – Member Level Two

Can you think of any other questions that an animal rights person might ask of a bison producer?

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Why is it important that they ask this question?

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### Where our opinions come from

Where we live, what we hear and what we experience affect the way we see and interpret the things around us. Most Canadians now live in cities so fewer people understand agriculture or know how their food is produced. Let's consider how this may affect their views:

- To many urban residents think an animal is a pet. To some, food animals may be viewed as pets. To a farmer, the end use of our livestock is an important food supply.
- To someone raised on a farm with chickens, getting a fresh egg for making a cake may be as simple as walking out to the chicken house. For someone raised in a city they will need to make a trip to the store and purchase a carton of eggs. There is no association with how the egg got to the store for retail.
- To a rancher, a horse may be something they enjoy riding, but it is also an important and useful tool for working with cattle. Some horse owners may use them mainly for recreation. To others, horses may be viewed as something that belongs in the wild.

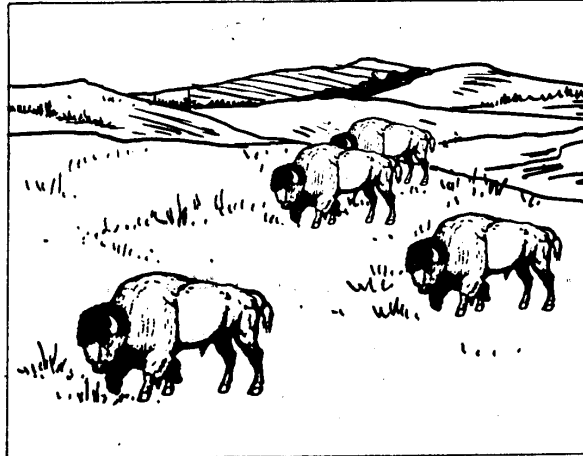
## Alberta 4-H Bison Project – Member Level Two

Can you see where opinions may be different depending on where you raised? In the 1800's bison flourished on our prairies and woodland areas. Is it really important that we raise bison in an agricultural sense?

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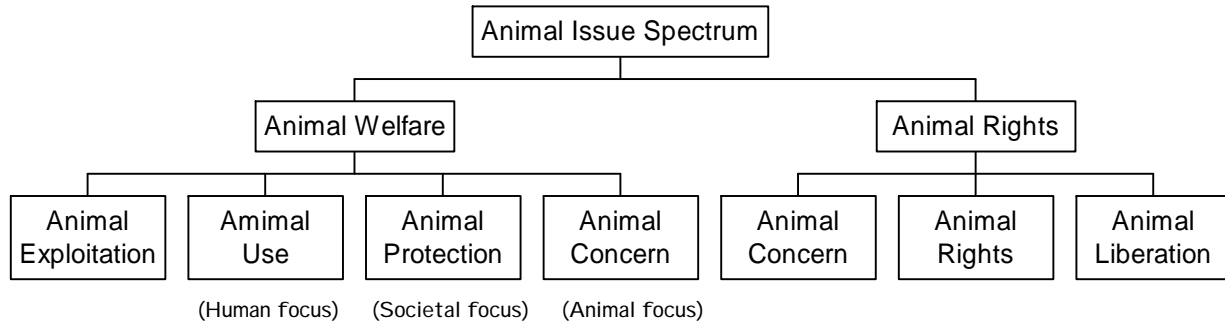
### Everyone doesn't think alike

Understanding how and why people develop opinions that are different from our own can help us to better understand our own opinions. When we understand how our background affects how we interpret the world around us, we can see what makes the views on animal welfare so diverse. The animal activist movement is based on a range of ideas on what our interaction with animals should be like. Different people have different views, from extremes on either end to a more moderate middle of the road approach. The following are examples of the different views that people have about our interaction with animals:

1. Animals should not be forced to work or produce for our benefit in any way.
2. Animals are here for our use, but we must be responsible with them to produce as much as possible.
3. Everybody should be required to treat each animal as kindly as possible for the good of the animal.
4. Animals are here for our use and abuse.
5. Animals have rights just as humans do.
6. We are here to enforce the laws and regulations made by our lawmakers.

## Animal issues spectrum

The chart below shows the range of ideas related to animal issues. Where do you think the six ideas stated above would fit? Fill the number of the idea in the box under the heading you think it matches.



<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Exploitation	Use	Protection	Concern	Rights	Liberation

## Alberta 4-H Bison Project – Member Level Two

### Where do you stand?

Having explored different viewpoints, it is now time for you to find out where you stand on these issues. Circle your response. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions posed by the US National Council for Agricultural Education.

SA = strongly agree A = agree U = undecided D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

Humans have “dominion” over every living thing that moves on Earth.

SA A U D SD

The responsible, compassionate use of animals for the betterment of society should guide our use of animals.

SA A U D SD

Animals are here for the use of humankind.

SA A U D SD

Stray and, or seriously ill dogs should never be put to sleep.

SA A U D SD

I feel bad when my parents set mousetraps.

SA A U D SD

I would not think twice about killing a mosquito.

SA A U D SD

Keeping animals in cages is wrong.

SA A U D SD

Animals feel pain.

SA A U D SD

Humans can stand less pain than most dogs, hogs and cattle.

SA A U D SD

Cowboys riding bulls in rodeos are hurting those bulls.

SA A U D SD

## Alberta 4-H Bison Project – Member Level Two

It's wrong to shear a sheep.

SA A U D SD

If I was a sheep producer, I would kill a fox or coyote rather than allow it into my herd.

SA A U D SD

Farmers treat their pets differently from food animals.

SA A U D SD

By actually touching and feeling, I can learn more about an animal than by watching a video or computer.

SA A U D SD

I would kill a rabid skunk or a coyote with mange.

SA A U D SD

The way I handle my animals can affect their behaviour and make them more or less tame.

SA A U D SD

Some animals are naturally more wild and difficult to handle than others.

SA A U D SD

### **Standing up for your position**

Recently 4-H and 4-H projects have been attacked on the basis of animal rights ideas. The showing and judging of animals at achievement days and fairs have been the focus of animal rights activists. Any livestock show or exhibit is a time when many people – some with no experience or knowledge of agriculture – will view your 4-H animals.

**As a 4-H member, you represent the agricultural industry at the show.** It is important that you provide your animal with good care and adequate comfort, and follow proper animal care at all times. Although you may not be exhibiting a live bison at a show or fair, it is still important that you inform the general public about our commitment to animal care.

## Alberta 4-H Bison Project – Member Level Two

You can be a pro-active force in educating the public about animal agriculture. Here are some pointers for speaking with the public:

**Be courteous.** Never consider a question to be silly or stupid. Use their interest as an opportunity to show pride in yourself and your 4-H project. Tell how you or other bison producers care for the animals and why producers are raising them. Explain to them what you are learning about animal agriculture and help to inform their curiosity.

**Be positive and enthusiastic about your project.** Show pride in yourself and your project by taking good care of your animals and by sharing your learning experiences.

**Answer questions honestly.** Use your own experiences to help explain your position.

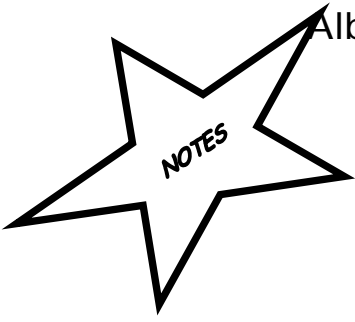
**Don't have a closed attitude.** Arguing with people who have different views from you will not get them to change their minds. Just as they won't get you to change yours. The goal is not to make others change their view, rather, it is to present our good image to the public.

**Feel comfortable.** If you don't feel comfortable answering a question – don't. Find your leader, parent, or a designated official to help you answer it.

**Talk to others.** Talk about proper care and help other youth learn correct care and handling of their project animals.

**Observe others.** Watch others caring for animals and express concerns when incorrect care is given. We all have a stake in promoting proper care of animals by all producers. We do not tolerate animal abusers.

**Help others.** Help to find facts. Sometimes when people don't understand an issue, they develop their own answers, even if they are not really informed. As 4-H members, you need to help provide people with correct information about animal care issues and benefits of production agriculture.





## Quotes

“More than the horse to the Arab, the camel to the pilgrim in the desert, the reindeer to the Laplander, the seal to the Eskimo, or the elephant to the Hindoo, was the buffalo to the trans-Mississippi Indian. History affords no other example of where a single product of nature, whether animal or vegetable, has filled so large a place in the life of a people. The self-sustenance of the tribes of the plains would have been impossible without it, and when the buffalo disappeared these tribes fell back upon the government in hopeless dependence for the very necessities of existence.” Hiram Martin Crittenden **level two passage – history**

“The hunters and frontiersmen who accomplished their destruction have handed down to us a contemptuous opinion of the size, character and general appearance of our bison. And how could it be otherwise than that a man who would find it in his heart to murder a majestic bull bison for a hide worth only a dollar, should form a one-dollar estimate of the grandest ruminant that ever trod the earth? Men who butcher African elephants for their ivory, also entertain a similar estimate of their victims.”

William T. Hornaday **level two or three – history**

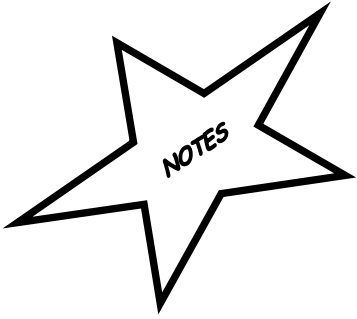
“From time immemorial, this child of the plains had lived on the buffalo. To rob him of this animal was to deprive him of his livelihood. To him the buffalo was the staff of life, the very condition of his continued existence. When, then, the white man began to come in numbers, when the buffalo were hunted for their robes, when these beasts were slaughtered in thousands in all parts of the west, the outlook became serious for the Red Man. Improvident as he was, he did not realize the inroads upon his capital, his greatest source of well-being. He joined in the great drives, the terrible slaughter, the wholesale destruction. He could not believe that there would be any end to the innumerable herds that were as numerous as the sands of the sea. But though a white man could ride through an unbroken line of these great bovines for 25 miles, though Sir George Simpson saw herds that reached as far as human eye could see in all directions, the poor Indian was to learn that such horrid wanton slaughter by white men and red men, could have but one ending.” Archibald Oswald MacRae **level two or three – history**

## Alberta 4-H Bison Project – Member Level Two

“Apparently, during the days of the great free-roaming herds, the buffalo were free of any of the serious animal diseases. However, they have been found to be highly susceptible to tuberculosis when brought in contact with that infection...

There are now about 18,000 buffalo in the Wood Buffalo Park area.

Unfortunately, the Wainwright animals appear to have carried tuberculosis infection there to. Slaughtering under federal government veterinary inspection during the period 1946 – 1955 disclosed a 40 per cent incidence of tuberculosis among the slaughtered animals... It should be noted that tuberculosis is transmissible – under favourable conditions—from animal to animal of almost any species, from infected animals to mankind, and vice versa. All species of the bovine family, the deer family, swine and all birds are susceptible.” T. Childs level two – parasites and disease





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Tolton, Gordon E. 1996. The Buffalo Legacy. Fort Whoop-Up Interpretive Society. Lethbridge, Alberta.

### **Industry magazines, newsletters and websites**

Bison Centre of Excellence. (website: [www.bisoncentre.com](http://www.bisoncentre.com) )  
4301 50<sup>th</sup> Street, Leduc, AB T9E 7H3

Bison World (Magazine)

National Bison Association Newsletter (Newsletter)

National Bison Association

4701 Marion Street, Suite 301, Denver, Colorado, 80216

## Alberta 4-H Bison Project – Member Level Two

Smoke Signals. Canadian Bison Association.  
P.O. Box 1387, Morden, Manitoba R0G 1J0

The Tracker. Cat Tail Publishing Ltd.  
#2, 15 Industrial Drive, Sylvan Lake, AB T4S 1P4

# Bison Project Level Two Evaluation

**Your input is a valuable asset to the 4-H program!**

As you go through the project year, make your comments and suggestions about the project, manual information and activities. When you have completed this project manual, mail this form to us. We want to hear from you!

Bison Project Evaluations  
 Provincial 4-H Agriculture Specialist  
 J. G. O'Donoghue Building  
 7000 113 St NW Room 200  
 Edmonton, AB T6H 5T6

**Please tell us the following: Evaluation Date: \_\_\_\_\_**

Rank	Translation of Number Ranking
1	Absolutely....Without a doubt!!!!
2	Of course....Most of the Time!?!
3	Average....Only when I had to!?!
4	Rarely....But I did?
5	Never....NO way.

1. Did you get involved in Club activities? 1 2 3 4 5
2. Do you have a sense of pride in completing your project year? 1 2 3 4 5
3. Has the Bison project helped you decide on a project for next year? 1 2 3 4 5
4. Did you participate in a communication activity this year? 1 2 3 4 5
5. Did you learn the proper technique for judging projects? 1 2 3 4 5
6. Do you feel confident in the skills that you have gained? 1 2 3 4 5
7. Did you provide a service to your community? What was it? 1 2 3 4 5
8. Do you feel more aware of what 4-H has to offer you? 1 2 3 4 5
9. Did you enjoy the 4-H year? Did you do things outside the club? 1 2 3 4 5
10. Was safety encouraged with all projects experienced? 1 2 3 4 5
11. Did you feel like an active member of the club? 1 2 3 4 5
12. Did you enjoy your 4-H project year? 1 2 3 4 5



## Alberta 4-H Bison Project - Member Level Two

Additional Comments:

Please place any additional comments in the space provided below.

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Alberta 4-H Bison Project - Member Level Two

Is there any information you would like to see added to any of the manuals?

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Thank you for the resources and financial support you have provided to the Alberta 4-H LAW program.