

## **IT IS SO IRONIC**

By: ©Bob Jackson, Tall Grass Bison  
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- The larger the operation - the ones Bison should do best in - the more managers feel they have to raise Bison like cattle. Of course the logic for this phenomenon might be summarized with "The bigger the mob (segmented Bison herds), the greater the mayhem!"
- Men control the raising of the cow-calf herd when it's women who best understand raising family.
- Buffalo try to be self-supportive by putting some order to their lives while herdsmen continue to break it up.
- Here's an animal who takes very good care of itself, but we, as humans, don't understand it enough to use this advantage.
- Private domain herds are developed from individuals, whereas wild individuals are molded from the herds.
- People furthest from the live animal, the meat packers, are the ones who dictate most how these animals are to be raised.
- Uniformity and consistency, the guiding light in the meat industry, is the bane for survival in wild animals.
- In the private cow-calf industry, % calf crop is all-important for herd success. But in the wild this indicator is elevated only during the expansionist state of herd development.
- We say we raise an environmentally friendly animal, but then take away all of its inherent ability to do so.
- We advertise Bison as the ultimate animal, but then use production practices that say "GMC's" (genetically modified cattle)—lean, disease resistant, and hardy. We remove such things as longevity, social development, fertility, grazing efficiency, and intelligence, all of which

are needed for specie's survival -- and long-term economic success by its caretakers.

- We characterize this animal as stoic and slow—"it's like shooting your couch" -- when in actuality Bison are exhibiting the sophistication necessary to maintain order in a society where 80-100 animals can live in close and constant interaction 24 hours a day for all of their lives. Humans would be killing each other within 2 weeks if they had to live and interact with that many people.
- Producers think they have to control the animal to get results when Bison can meet all mans economic criteria on their own -- "Thank you Ma'am". What they can't control in today's world is their environment. I suggest we would be better off if we worked more on Bison surroundings and less with manipulating the animal.
- We try to come up with animal solutions without knowing animal theory (roots). We don't understand function of the components let alone how the components make a balanced whole. We don't understand juvenile bulls need for heroes (mature bulls) in order not to turn into delinquents (killing calves). Somehow we think herd development must end with cow nurseries. We don't know why juvenile bulls chase pre-estrus cows, and why newly released "herds" run from one end of the ranch to the other and then stand by the gate where they were released. For ever more.

HOW IRONIC