

2025-2026 Bison Harvest Terms and Rules

Please read the Terms and Rules below and then fill out the form to enter for an opportunity to harvest a bison. This year, American Prairie will conduct four separate drawings. You may be eligible to enter more than one drawing, but you are only allowed to receive one bison harvest opportunity per year.

- **Local Area Resident Drawing:** Montana residents of Blaine, Chouteau, Fergus, Garfield, Petroleum, Phillips, or Valley counties. **SIX** names will be drawn.
- **Indigenous Communities Drawing:** Members/residents of Montana's Tribal Nations may enter. **THREE** names will be drawn.
- **Montana State-Wide Drawing:** Any Montana resident may apply. **THIRTEEN** names will be drawn.
- **Worldwide Drawing:** **TWO** names will be drawn.

Terms

Eligibility:

- Meet the requirements of one or more of the drawing requirements.
- Must be 18 years of age or older to enter the drawing.
- All entrants must have completed the hunter safety course requirements for their state of residence to apply. For Montana residents, this is all those born after January 1, 1985.
- Employees of American Prairie are not eligible.

Recipients:

- American Prairie will randomly select recipients by **Thursday, July 3, 2025**. Recipients will be notified following their selection. Non-recipients will also be notified that they were not selected by that date.
- American Prairie will not release the names of recipients to others outside of the organization but may announce the hometowns of recipients.

How to Enter:

- Submit this form by **11:59 PM on June 30, 2025**.
 - You may be eligible for more than one drawing. Be sure to select only the drawings in which you are eligible. **Applying for drawings in which you are not eligible will forfeit all eligibility.**

Cost:

- Entry is **ZERO** dollars (\$0).

- Registrants awarded the opportunity to harvest a bison are required to pay a non-refundable harvest fee of \$300. The fee must be **paid in full by August 29, 2025** or the opportunity will be forfeited.
- All fees must be paid by credit card. Payment information will be emailed to those awarded a harvest.
- American Prairie recognizes the historical and cultural importance of the bison to the Indigenous Communities of Montana. Through the generosity of a donor to American Prairie and out of respect for this tribal tradition, the harvest fees are waived for the three harvest opportunities drawn for the Montana indigenous communities drawing.

Harvest Dates:

- Recipients will be assigned three consecutive calendar days from October 2025 through March 2026. The weeks including Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day will not be assigned.
- If the harvest recipient is unable to commit to the assigned dates, they lose the opportunity to harvest and a new recipient will be selected.

Rules

Failing to adhere to these rules may result in a fine, forfeiture of harvest opportunity, confiscation of harvested animal, and ineligibility to participate in future bison harvest opportunities. The recipient shall be liable for any damages to property resulting from failure to adhere to these rules.

- Pursuit of bison may only occur in areas designated on the unit map that will be provided to harvest recipients. Safety areas extend 400 yards from the nearest building or campsite. [View Map.](#)
- Harvest recipients may only attempt to harvest during their assigned harvest dates.
- **Harvest success is not guaranteed.**
- All bison harvests are restricted to one bison less than two years in age (i.e., a calf or yearling animal) unless otherwise specified or you have been selected for one of the five any age bison harvests.
 - **FIVE** bison harvests will be randomly selected for an opportunity to harvest any bison of any age or sex.
- The harvest recipient is responsible for accurately identifying the age of the bison **before** shooting a bison.
- Shooting is only permitted from ½ hour before sunrise up to a ½ hour after sunset.
- **Lead-free bullets are required.** We recommend bullets 140 grain or larger.
- Archery weapons are not allowed.
- Harvest recipient and any person with the recipient must wear hunter orange.
- Vehicles permitted only on designated roads. No off-road motorized travel. Game carts, sleds, and/or pack animals are permitted for retrieval.
- **Do not harvest a bison with pink or blue ear tags.** These bison are part of research study and cannot be consumed or have been imported for genetic management.

- The harvest recipient is required to field dress and pack out the harvested bison.
- Bison are very large and difficult to field dress. Harvest recipients are responsible for safely killing, dressing, and packing out the harvested bison.
- **No wanton waste.** All four quarters and the edible portions along the spine (loins and hump) must be removed.
- **American Prairie reserves the right to deny or end a bison harvest at any point.**
- Harvest recipients **are required to [view this Montana Fish & Wildlife Parks Bison Hunting Video](#)**. The video provides information on bison hunting and tips for success in the field before and after the shot. Information specific to the Greater Yellowstone Area is not applicable. Our bison herd is brucellosis free.
- Harvest recipients **must check-in in person** with American Prairie staff before accessing the property to review orientation packet, confirm bison harvest permission, and verify compliance with rules set forth.
- Harvest recipients **must check-out in person** with American Prairie staff to verify age and sex of harvested animal.

Helpful Information

Field dressing a bison is difficult work and recipients should plan accordingly. We recommend bringing assistance to field dress and pack out the bison. Using an outfitter is permitted. Though only the recipient may harvest the bison, they may bring other people to assist with field dressing and carry out.

- American Prairie Field Team staff will hold **mandatory** educational sessions over Zoom for all bison harvest recipients. The sessions will occur on the evening of July 22 and the afternoon of August 22. More details will be emailed to recipients.
- A Field Guide to Plains Bison - [Use this valuable resource](#) to learn how to age and sex bison in the field any time of the year.
- Tips on Shooting a bison - [Use this resource](#) from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to help you make an ethical shot on a bison.
- Local Meat Processors. Please call ahead to ensure space and time availability.
 - Hi-Line Packing (406) 654-2697
 - Hilger Meats (406) 538-2619
- Please view our website for helpful resources on [visiting American Prairie](#)

If you have additional questions, please email mail@americanprairie.org