

**INTERNATIONAL BISON  
SYMPOSIUM  
BISON PROCESSING AND  
HANDLING**

**JUNE 25 2015**

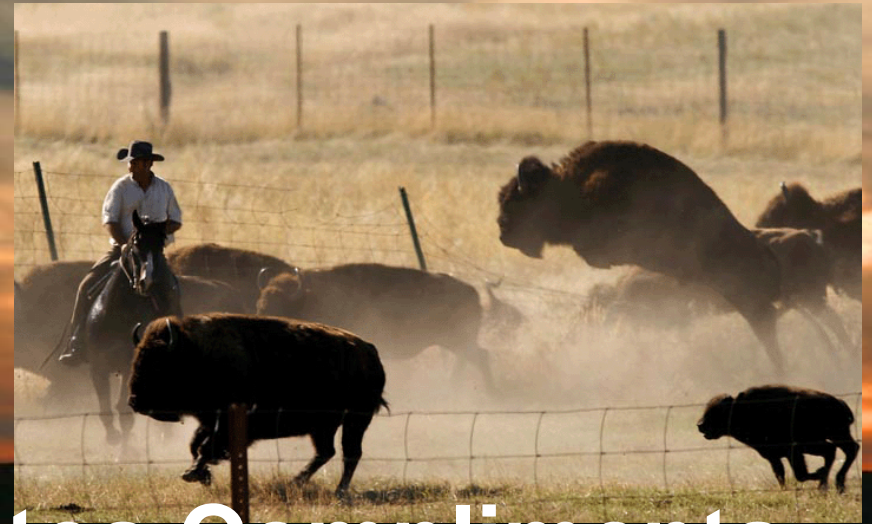
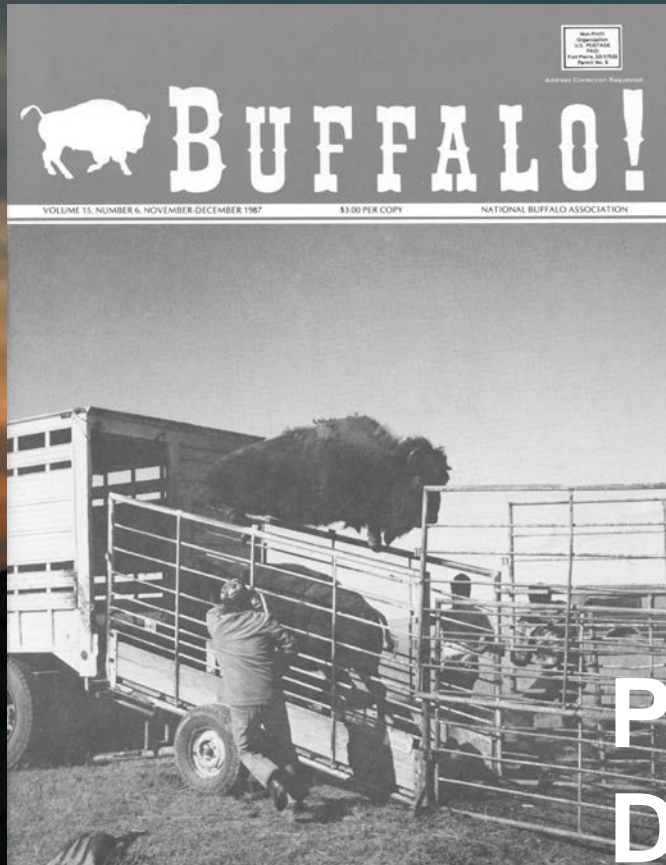
**ROY LEWIS**





- Roy Lewis DVM 1981
- Large Animal practice  
5-10 % bison & any  
species "chuteable"
- Owned up to 70 bison  
COWS
- Now work for the  
pharma industry  
Merck Animal Health
- Always a good day  
when working bison

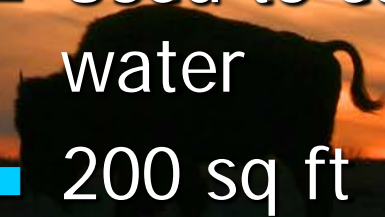
# The Way it Was!



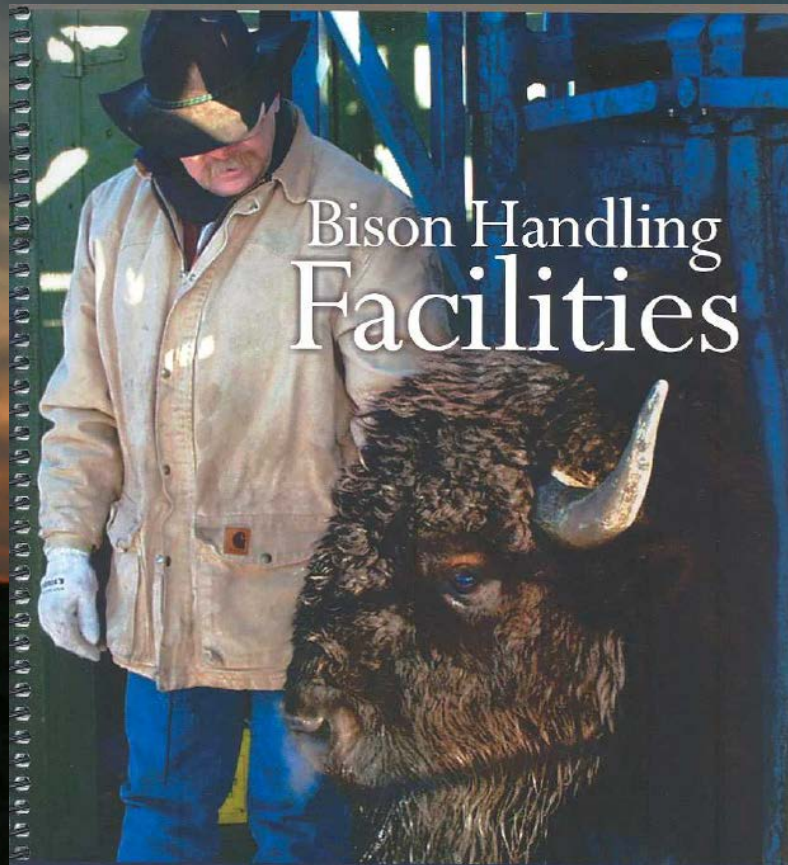
Photos Compliments  
Drs Woodbury & Burrage

# Gathering Catch Pen

- Bison are curious
- Bait bison into an area used to accessing
- Used to coming in for water
- 200 sq ft



# References Available



- Handling bison safely & effectively (DVD)
- AB Govt what's new in publications
- 1 800 292 5697
- Bison handling Facilities Agdex 492/723-1 Have a PDF version

# References

- Bison Producers Handbook Chapter 7 (CBA & NBA)
- NBA Insiders Guide to Bison handling and Management (DVD)
- Parks Canada "Bison Care & Handling"
- Dr. Shelley Pruss
- [Shelley.pruss@pc.gc.ca](mailto:Shelley.pruss@pc.gc.ca)
- Bison Code of Practise 2001 new version being worked on. Dr. Spooner new one out in 2017

# Behavioral Signs of Stress

- Raised tail
- Balking
- Frothing
- Open mouthed labored breathing
- Pushing
- Goring
- Lying down.
- Charging



# Handling Devices

Prod used  
Almost  
Never

Prod as last resort



# Facilities have changed

## High Wooden Fencing



## Fort Knox



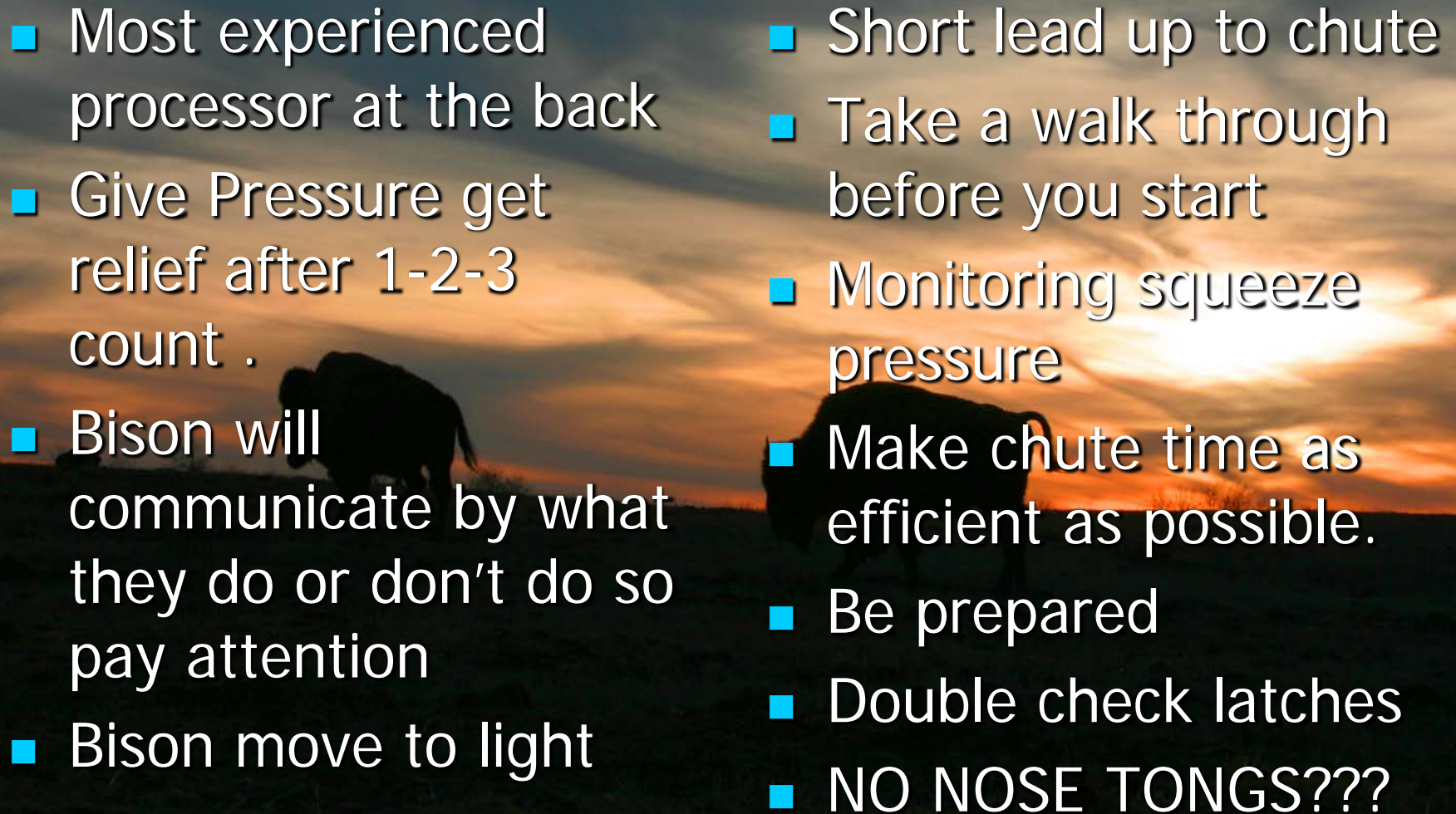
# Handling Hazards



# Improving Systems



# Handling Tips

- 
- The background of the slide features a sunset sky with a gradient from dark blue at the top to bright orange and yellow near the horizon. In the foreground, the silhouettes of two bison are visible against the bright light of the setting sun. One bison is on the left, facing right, and the other is on the right, facing left.
- Most experienced processor at the back
  - Give Pressure get relief after 1-2-3 count .
  - Bison will communicate by what they do or don't do so pay attention
  - Bison move to light
  - Short lead up to chute
  - Take a walk through before you start
  - Monitoring squeeze pressure
  - Make chute time as efficient as possible.
  - Be prepared
  - Double check latches
  - NO NOSE TONGS???

# Bison Handling or Welfare Audit

The background of the slide features a sunset sky with warm orange and yellow tones. In the foreground, the dark silhouettes of two bison are visible, one on the left and one on the right, facing each other.

- Prod Usage Minimal <5%
- Collision with Head Gate
- Injury (Broken Horn, Bloody nose, Goring (bulls & aggressive cows))
- Watch goring of vulval lips or abdomen
- Watch for sign of blood and where did it occur??
- Open mouthed breathing (Don't give anything orally)
- Let bison into the chute then open the front.
- Detailed audit in breeders handbook

# Investigate injuries

**Horn injury**



**Shoulder laceration**





# Transportation injury



# Processing

Direct Bison Out



S.C for most shots



# Preg Checking Manual or Ultrasound

Use of cage



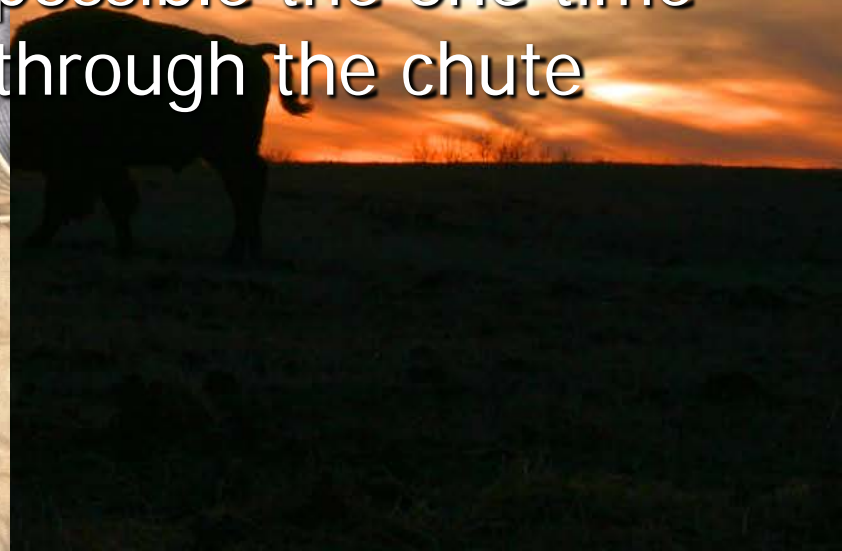
Dr. Ken Throlson





# Handling

- Semen evaluation
- Scrotal palpation and measurement!!!
- Do everything possible the one time through the chute





ming

ake sure no open mouthed breathing

# Changing Procedures

## Dehorning ????

- Pain control
- NSAIDs
- Local freezing
- Branding just eliminated to go across the line.



# Enclose Lead Up Areas



# Barriers Keep Bison Calmer

Tarp Where necessary



Solid sides



# Lead up Area Short???





# Portable Systems.



# New Advancements in Handling



Photos Ryan Howdle from Flying D



# Changing Systems



# Handling Mature Bulls Maybe!



- Take fecals
- Deworm with crumbles
- Examine with binoculars
- Medicate in grain or minerals or dart.  
(vets remember everything is extralabel in bison)

# Bison are Out? Oh No!!!

- Patience is a virtue
- Don't panic Bait back in
- Generally want to come back home
- Herd bulls can be a problem & sometimes need to be butchered or tranquilized .
- Develop a game plan
- Need neighbor Co-operation.
- Police notified
- 



# Treat in minerals ?

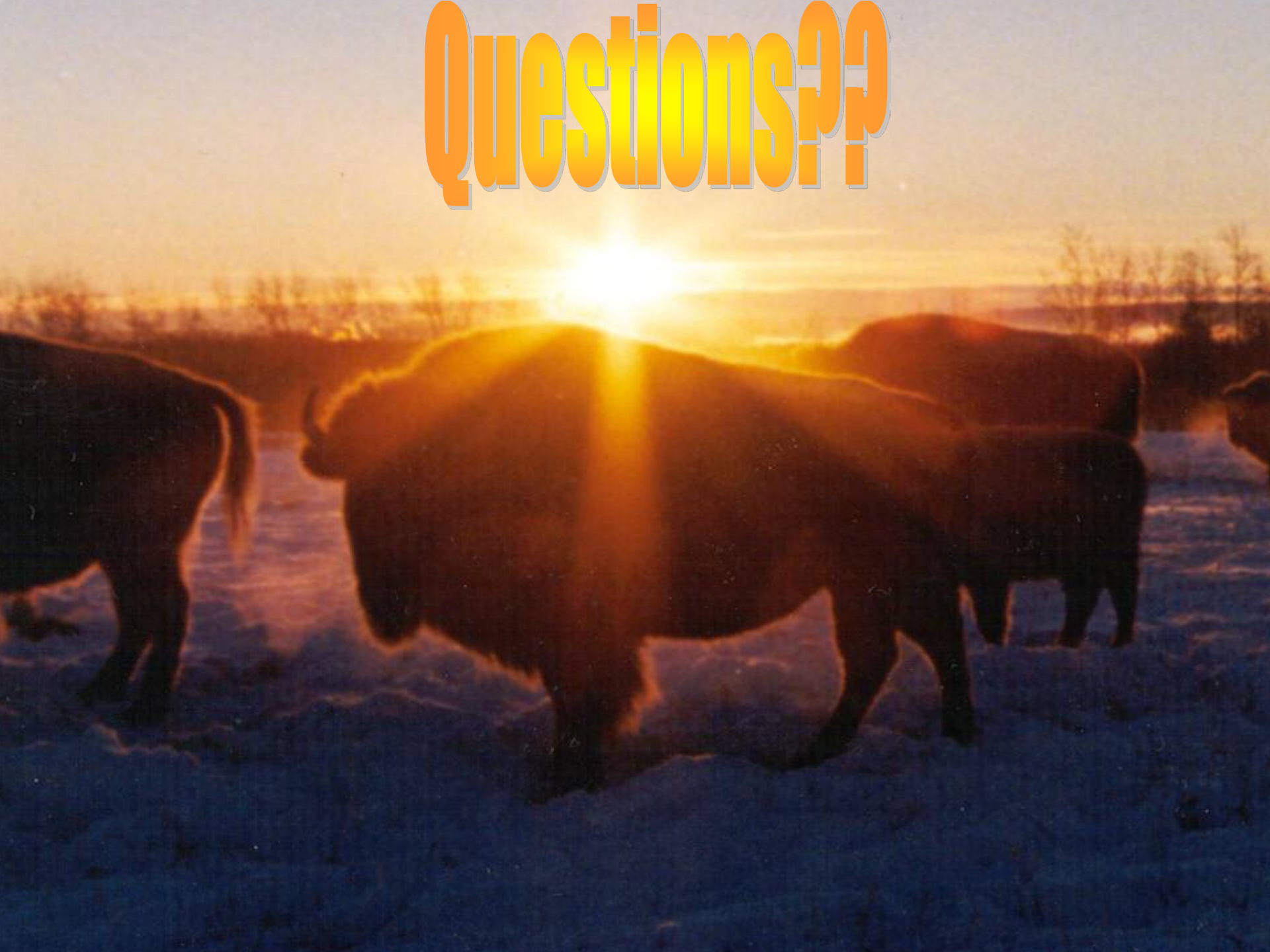


# Downers

- Can examine
- take blood
- Fecal
- Administer Medication.
- Pole syringe
- Euthanize if too thin & autopsy.



Questions??





**The End**

**Thank You**