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The Really Good Buffalo Project:
A “Values Added” Product

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If God was the creator and overseer of life, if the morning star, the moon, and Mother Earth combined their talents to give birth and hope to the Indians, if the sun was dispatcher of wisdom and warmth, then the buffalo was the tangible and immediate proof of them all, for out of the buffalo came almost everything necessary to daily life, including his religious use as an intermediary through which the Great Spirit could be addressed, and by which the Spirit often spoke to them. In short, the buffalo was life to the Plains Indians until the white man's goods and ways first eliminated and then replaced the animal.

- Text from "The Mystic Warriors of the Plains" by Thomas E. Mails

INTRODUCTION

The American Indian Higher Education Council annual meeting in Fargo, North Dakota was coming to an end. The hand games competition winners proudly wore their ribbons, and the artists from the traditional and modern arts student show were packing up. A participant openly admired a painting of a young woman fancy dancer she had just purchased. The lobby of the conference hotel was crowded with Native Americans, chatting about the conference and catching up on the news from old friends.

A group collaborating on a multi-reservation bison research project sat on circular sofas in the lobby, discussing the work and how it might restore the ‘life’ of the Plains Indians. The re-introduction of bison on the reservations had provided a unique opportunity to study prairie ecosystems and their relevance to Native Americans. Unfortunately, the price of bison meat had plummeted and bulls that once sold for \$2100 were going for \$500. Many managers were forced to reduce their herd size. The group was diverse-- in age, background, ethnicity, experience, and perspective. There were traditional Native Americans, a young tribal member struggling to establish a buffalo ranch for his family, tribal college (colleges established on Reservations whose mission was to explore tribal cultures and reinforce them using curricula and institutional settings conducive to the success of American Indians) staff members working on curriculum development, university faculty interested in bison research, non-native buffalo producers, and an indigenous spiritual leader grounded in the prayers, ceremonies, songs and stories of the ‘buffalo nation’.

The pivotal question of “What can we do?” emerged. There was research money available to study ruminants, and buffalo qualified. The “round sofa” conversation evolved into an idea about niche marketing buffalo raised by Native Americans. Immediately ‘values’ and not just ‘value’ became part of the discussion. The group parted with an idea of developing into a team that would work on a project regarding a ‘values added’ brand for buffalo raised by Native Americans. The idea offered something for everyone: a potential market for bison producers; a unique case to be

developed by educators; an opportunity for scientists interested in either ecological or marketing research; and an opportunity for cultural leaders to share knowledge with interested audiences.

The idea grew and various possibilities were imagined. Several months later, the first meeting of the ‘Really Good Buffalo Project’ was convened. As the topic of developing a niche market for premium, native raised bison was broached, the team was passionate and optimistic. One participant stressed that, “The buffalo can play a key role in rebuilding our reservation economy.” Others were quick to agree, sharing facts and experiences with other programs. The momentum for moving ahead built quickly.

As the conversation died down, a quiet Lakota man took the floor and said, “We must never exploit the buffalo nation to make money...for our own selfish interests. Tatanka is our sacred relative...he is our brother.” Tatanka (pronounced Ta-TONK-a) was the Lakota word for buffalo.

These comments amplified the magnitude and importance of the work to everyone present. This endeavor would not be just another strategic marketing session or business planning process. The team committed themselves to making sure that whatever approach was taken, the indigenous values represented in tribal peoples’ relationship with bison would be honored and integrated as the project moved forward. Work, research and conversation over the ensuing months would be devoted to identifying and articulating these values and the essence of this special relationship. But the tension between economic exploitation and spiritual reverence for the buffalo would remain a critical project dynamic. The importance of the diversity of the team, and the respect for multiple, sometimes conflicting viewpoints was paramount.

Team members left the meeting with different perspectives...somewhat confused and conflicted, and not sure which way to proceed. The upcoming months would be busy ones as they studied whether they should pursue Really Good Buffalo.

THE NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN AND BISON CULTURAL CONNECTION¹

To show respect of the Native American oral tradition, the Native American Indian and bison cultural connection should be read in full verse (Appendix A). It is based upon the story of *White Buffalo Calf Woman Brings the First Pipe*, as told by Joseph Chasing Horse. Chasing Horse explained that a White Buffalo Calf appeared to the Lakota people and changed into a woman. She brought them a sacred bundle that contained the first pipe and taught them the seven sacred ceremonies. Before she left, she promised to return for the bundle and made a prophecy that the birth of a white buffalo calf would be a sign that it was near the time of her return to purify the world. The recent birth of a white buffalo calf named ‘Miracle’ meant that an age of ensuing harmony and balance was coming. In the words of Joseph Chasing Horse, “We are praying that mankind does wake up and think about the future, for we haven’t just inherited the earth from our ancestors, but we are borrowing it from our unborn children.”

There continued to be a vital connection between the American bison and the Native American Indian, both historically and spiritually. This could be explained as follows: The American bison and the Native American Indians lived together in harmony for many years on the Great Plains before European pioneers and the railroad started to move west. The Plains Indians were almost totally dependent upon the bison. They were a source of food, shelter, utensils, and clothing and most importantly spiritual strength. The American bison sacrificed its life to keep the American Indian in existence. The bison made the people strong because of the spiritual and emotional connection. The Indians watched the herds and gained an understanding of their ways and learned from them. When the bison and Native Americans started to be an obstacle to the westward expansion, the United States government decided both had to be controlled and removed. What was almost the end of the bison was also almost the end of the Native Americans. The Plains Indians depended on the bison for food, shelter, clothing, tools and spiritual strength. Destroying the bison herds and confining Indian families to reservations destroyed the sustainability of their life and culture, and left them dependent on government support for food, housing and health. In addition, government regulations forbade the use of native languages and religious ceremonies and in some cases removed Indian children from their families to be educated in boarding schools far away from Tribal influence.

Of the country's 2.1 million Indians, about 400,000 live on reservations. In 1990, census data indicated that 31% of American Indians were living in poverty compared to 13% of all Americans. The Census data indicated an average per capita annual income of \$4,124 on the Navajo Reservation compared to \$13,461 for all of Arizona. An annual survey done by the Oglala Sioux Tribe reported that unemployment on the Pine Ridge Reservation in 1998 was 73% compared to 4.1% for all of South Dakota. To complicate matters further, there was a lack of consistent data for Indian country. Few people understood the status of American Indian and Alaska Native Nations and the 'trust responsibilities' between the federal government and Indian Tribes.

Currently, both the Native Americans and the American bison are seeing an increase in their numbers and are coming back. Again, bison were serving as a source of healthy food and spiritual strength. The bison has the potential to provide spiritual/cultural revitalization, ecological restoration, education, and economic development.

Unfortunately, the bison market has been as volatile as the population numbers themselves. Bison numbers estimated at 60 million in the mid-1800s plummeted to 1000 in the late 19th century. In the late 20th century numbers were near 250,000 and some models predicted that populations would reach pre-European settlement numbers in as little as 30 years. Buffalo ranching grew rapidly in the 1990's as demand for fancy meat cuts soared. Producers were unable to meet demands, transportation and slaughter regulations could not be met in rural areas, and a lack of central coordination led to the collapse of the newly found market. Bulls selling for \$2100 dropped to \$500 in 2000. By 2003, the market had begun to climb again. Bison meat was seen as delicious, nutritious, and environmentally sustainable, "At last, steak without guilt." In 2006, bison meat sales had grown by more than 20% and were up another 20% by August 2007.

Researchers suggested four requirements to maximize meat quality, land value, and economic return: balanced vegetation, grazing, and predation; minimal handling and artificial input; final product branding; and cooperative ownership. All of these requirements were of interest to the Really Good Buffalo team.

CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE TREATMENT OF BISON

A non-native ecological researcher shared this personal reflection on Native American treatment of bison:

“I was headed out to Mission, South Dakota on the Rosebud Indian Reservation to collect my summer plant samples from the bison range. It was a six hour drive from the University and I pulled into the gas station in Mission before heading out to the pasture. The Rosebud bison herd manager pulled in next to me with a large double cab truck pulling a flatbed trailer. Stretched out on the trailer were two huge bison bulls. The manager had slaughtered them minutes ago and was headed to the closest meat processing plant. Because of federal regulations, he had only two hours to move them from the pasture to the nearest packing plant. The trip from Mission to the processing facility in Nebraska was almost 70 miles and he had already spent time completing sacred ceremonies, loading the animals and leaving the pasture. He warned me that the remaining buffalo were frightened by what had happened, so they would be nervous.

He planned to use the buffalo loin to make jerky, which the Tribal students would sell as a fund raiser at the Tribal College Bookstore. The rest of the meat would be given away to elderly in the reservation community and donated for Pow Wows (a gathering to dance, sing, and socialize) or Give Aways (celebrations to honor someone, or for some special event that includes giving gifts).

I headed to the pasture and was glad the buffalo were not by the gate. But, when I turned toward the research plot area, I realized that the herd was clustered where I needed to take samples. I drove my small truck to the first area and got out to cut my samples. Three bulls moved toward me and stood between me and the herd. I moved to the other side of my truck and worked rapidly. The bulls were talking. I had never heard them before, or been this close to them. When I got back in the truck and headed for my next plot, the bulls followed me, always staying between me and the herd, and me always keeping on the far side of the truck. They kept talking. I finished my samples and headed back toward the gate. The bulls didn't follow me; they stayed with the herd, glad to see me leave.”

This story was an illustration of the important aspects of the Really Good Buffalo Project. First, the herd manager was rushing to the meat processing plant because United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations required that the animals reach the plant within two hours of slaughter. To meet cultural concerns, the animals had to be killed in the pasture where prayers and ceremonies could be performed. A goal of the project was to meet both cultural and market demands. Second, the experience of the non-native

researcher with the bulls gave her a sense of the spirituality that the Lakota connect with bison. The bulls were ‘talking’ and ‘protecting’ the herd.

Several factors contributed to the complexity of raising buffalo on the reservation. The bison themselves were not domesticated and often suffered injury or death when manipulated through loading chutes into transport trucks. If the buffalo was spared this trauma and was harvested on site, special rituals were performed before and after the buffalo was killed. Therefore, field harvesting facilitated the requirements of a traditional kill. If harvested in the traditional way, however, the meat was not USDA approved, and could not be sold outside of the state. The bison pastures were located in remote areas, difficult to access and isolated from meat processing facilities.

Because of the importance of the sacred connection between Native Americans in the Northern Great Plains and bison, an indigenous homeland philosophy was constructed to guide those interested in bison education work. This philosophy was as follows:

Participating tribal colleges and universities of the Northern Plains Bison Education Network believe sacred cultural connections exist between and among the bison, the land, and the people indigenous to the Northern Great Plains. Because of these unique relationships, the bison education work, advanced by NPBEN will be based on an Indigenous homelands philosophy that embraces and promotes the understandings that... a) bison are to be respected as sacred animals and relatives important to the well-being of prairie ecosystems and people, in particular, tribal nations and native people; b) bison will be sustained in a natural, compatible environment with minimal interference, restrictions, and constraints; c) human interaction with bison will be represented in a caretaker role that may be different from the traditional Euro-American or Western agriculture management model; and d) the caretaker role for bison will entail humane, low stress handling methods and resources.ⁱⁱ

THE INDUSTRY AND COMPETITION

According to 2002 USDA census data, there were 232,000 bison in the United States residing on private ranches and farms, with 4,000 private U.S. ranches and farms raising bison. The industry was very fragmented, and consisted primarily of small producers. Nationally, only 30,000 bison were slaughtered under federal inspection in 2004. This number, although small, was more than double the figure from 2000. Direct sales through the internet was a major marketing technique, for the small producers didn’t have well established distribution channels. The National Bison Association existed as a “community bound by the heritage of the American bison/buffalo and the quality of its products.” Consumers could visit their website to access a locator map to find bison meat, products and services in their area.

A major selling point of bison was that it often earned the “organic” label. According to The Buffalo Guys website, “none of their animals receive growth hormones; artificial insemination is not practiced; the estrus period of the cows is never manipulated; no animal by-products are fed to their animals and sub-therapeutic medicines are never used.

The animals breed on their own schedule; they have their calves at their own speed in open pastures, and they grow as their own genes dictate. They depend on their wild-animal-immune-systems to protect them from most illnesses. The lands they manage are rotationally-grazed and are monitored yearly to ensure the range lands health and vitality. Chemical, non-natural solutions are never used when a natural or organic solution is available.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Although treatment of bison was highlighted in various producers’ promotional materials, a values approach that respects the Native American-bison cultural relationship was not evident.

BACKGROUND OF THE REALLY GOOD BUFFALO PROJECT

For several years, an effort to ‘bring back the buffalo’ was of key interest in many American Indian communities across the country, and particularly in the Northern Plains. This region was also home to a majority of the nation’s 1994 tribal land grant colleges (a government categorization that resulted in designated research funding opportunities), several of which had developed bison curriculum, worked with private tribal producers and established their own university herds. Tribal college faculty approached colleagues at South Dakota State University during a meeting of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) with the desire to develop a niche market for Native American-raised bison (as described on page 1). The Lakota words for the concept underlying the effort are Tatanka Waste (pronounced Ta-TONK-a Wash-TAY), roughly translated as Really Good Buffalo.

Two unique factors influenced the implementation of the Really Good Buffalo project—the dynamics of collaboration between 1862 and 1994 land grant universities, and the unique historical, cultural, and spiritual relationship between American Indians and bison. These issues, and the diverse consortium of partners involved made it critically important that the project deliberately address values as part of the niche market analysis. As one tribal partner stated, “Great care must be taken when we are working with our brothers, the buffalo.”

A proposal titled ‘Tatanka Waste’ was developed by the group and funded through the larger umbrella of the Four-State Ruminant Consortium, a USDA project.

Project objectives were:

1. To define a “brand” or term that encapsulates culturally appropriate bison production and processing.
2. To utilize the diversity of the consortium members to brainstorm and define the production and processing guidelines to meet the “brand” requirements.
3. To develop and administer surveys to key producers and consumers to determine the market potential for the newly “branded” bison and bison products.
4. To organize, catalogue, and analyze the results of those surveys.

5. Based on analysis of the data and the parameters set forth in the initial conversations, to develop strategic implications for business development.

A CULTURALLY SENSITIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

Because there were contrasting values of American Indian and mainstream communities (see Appendix 2), a protocol for researchers interested in working with contemporary American Indian people was developed. Experts submitted that the research agenda be set by the community; that efforts directly involved and were respectful of Native people; that results were openly shared with subjects, and that the research had a tangible benefit for the community. Traditional western scientific methods were criticized because their colonizing methodologies were inappropriate for research with contemporary tribal people.

The project was guided by indigenous scholars with unique values, attitudes, and behaviors (see Appendix 3), and by the diverse consortium of stakeholders assembled around Really Good Buffalo. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used, including focus group discussions, interviews, and a survey with results analyzed statistically.

The initial meeting of the consortium included presentations from tribal elders; private, tribal, and tribal college bison producers/managers; and experts in marketing and agricultural finance. This meeting included facilitated focus group discussions around the following questions:

- >What essential *American Indian values* should Really Good Buffalo represent?
- >What are the implications of these values for *production* of Really Good Buffalo?
- >What are the implications of these values for *harvest and processing* of Really Good Buffalo?

Responses to these questions shed further light on the complexity and sensitive nature of the topic. Often times, economic concerns were in conflict with the cultural and spiritual values consortia members wanted reflected in the Really Good Buffalo brand. Discussions included a variety of concerns and viewpoints that ranged from, “We must never exploit the buffalo nation to make money” and “How can we sell our brother?” to “Buffalo have always been the mainstay of our people.” Among the emergent themes from the focus groups were that Really Good Buffalo should be: premium quality, nutritious, natural, environmentally friendly, chemical and hormone free, raised by American Indians, treated with respect and harvested in the field. Also discussed was the need for the niche marketing effort to ultimately benefit tribal people. For example, participants discussed selling enough Really Good Buffalo at premium prices to help support prairie restoration efforts and the distribution of Really Good Buffalo meat to reservation elderly and school nutrition programs at reduced costs. To help validate this input, a series of in-depth follow up interviews were conducted with tribal elders,

nutritionists and bison program managers on the South Dakota Cheyenne River Indian Reservation.

Interview results and the compiled focus group results were shared at a subsequent meeting of consortium members. Consensus on the elements for a definition of the Really Good Buffalo brand was reached. Input was collected for the construction of a consumer survey, and for the more formal organization of the producers on the team. Following market research approaches, a 'concept testing' methodology was used. Commonly used in developing corporate marketing campaigns for new products, concept testing was the process of using quantitative and qualitative methods to evaluate consumer responses to a product idea prior to the introduction of the product to the market.

A survey was developed and mailed to consumers of buffalo. The consumer survey included 24 items consisting of both open-ended questions and a Likert-type scale. Surveys were mailed to a nation-wide sample of 450 customers of a regional marketer of premium bison meat. These customers had been identified by the Wild Idea Buffalo Company as people who had previously purchased buffalo meat. A follow-up post card was distributed resulting in a total of 235 returned surveys, which was a 52% response rate.

Quantitative results were analyzed using SAS. Simple statistics and frequencies were calculated, as were correlations between variables. Open-ended, qualitative responses were transcribed verbatim, and data were coded and classified according to emergent themes. Results were presented and implications for a business plan were discussed at a final meeting of the consortium held in late summer 2005.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS: CONSUMERS

Demographic characteristics of consumers indicated that survey respondents were predominantly white males between the ages of 51 – 65 years old, with nearly 80% having at least a four-year degree. More than 90% of the respondents earned greater than \$40,000 per year, and 43% held a management/professional position.

Results

Surveys indicated that an overwhelming majority of the 235 respondents (92%) supported the idea to create a Really Good Buffalo concept of meat production.

More than 80% of consumer respondents indicated they would be likely or very likely to purchase the product. The mean response to this item (1 = unlikely, 2 = perhaps, 3 = likely, 4 = very likely) was 3.22. In addition, potential consumers stated that they would be interested in purchasing other, non-meat Really Good Buffalo products, including leather (43%), artwork (31%), hides (18%), and other (9%).

In ranking the importance of several Really Good Buffalo criteria, almost 89% of consumers said that environmentally friendly production practices were very important components of the brand, followed by chemical free (86%), nutrition/health benefits (83%), respectful/humane treatment of animals (82%), and supporting prairie restoration (82%). Almost 43% of respondents thought price was very important, while 28% thought the buffalo being raised by American Indians was a very important aspect of the brand (see Appendix 3).

When asked for open-ended responses to “other important factors”, 18 responded that distribution, shipping, and packaging were important concerns; 12 commented about the importance of the animals being grass-fed and not going to feed lots, and nine expressed concern over humane production and harvesting practices. Four indicated health benefits were most important, while two said product taste and quality were of prime concern.

Cost was cited (n = 25) as being an important consideration impacting consumers’ likelihood of purchasing Really Good Buffalo. One said, “It will come down to cost.” Another cited premium bison meat products currently available as being “too expensive to eat on a regular basis.” Several respondents (n=16) cited distribution concerns such as access, shipping, handling and packaging as issues that would impact their buying decision(s). Others (n = 14) indicated loyalty to existing suppliers as a reason not to purchase Really Good Buffalo, while five responded they would ‘shop around’, indicating they would try the product and would likely purchase again if they had a satisfying consumer experience. One said, “Its flavor would have to be worth the extra money.”

When asked relative to beef, how much consumers would expect to pay for Really Good Buffalo, 55% of the respondents stated that they would pay 50% more for buffalo than beef. Many respondents (48%) stated that they eat red meat 2-3 times per week, with 48% indicating that they would serve Really Good Buffalo at least 2-3 times per week.

REPORT SUMMARY

A brand definition for Native American-raised Really Good Buffalo elicited favorable responses during concept testing research among potential producers and consumers of the product. Respondents indicated positive reaction to values associated with this agricultural product, including environmentally friendly, chemical free, nutrition/health benefits, humane treatment of animals, taste, support for prairie restoration and Native American communities. This ‘values added’ approach represented an important potential niche market and affirmed production, processing and marketing approaches favored by many contemporary tribal bison producers.

Other researchers found that consumers in California wanted to know more about their food, including safety, nutrition, and ethical issues, such as treatment of animals, environmental impacts, and wages and working conditions for those who produce their food. South Dakota and other states were attempting to establish premium state-based brands in order to differentiate their products in the marketplace. The concept testing

process associated with this project aimed to determine whether or not a brand based on traditional Native American values, which guide treatment of buffalo, could translate into a niche market for Native American-raised premium bison meat and products. Preliminary results presented in the report appeared promising. Results were limited in their generalizability due to a non-random consumer sample.

CONCLUSION

The diverse group of individuals interested in the Really Good Buffalo project had listened attentively to the results of months of data gathering and concept testing. They had asked intelligent questions, and now had a much better idea of how to brand a product, and whether consumers were interested. They understood that much remained to be done. Central to future discussion would be determining what to conclude from the information they had been given. What would a Really Good Buffalo branding statement entail? What were the strategic implications of what they'd just heard? Should they go ahead with the Really Good Buffalo project? If so, what should be the next steps?

Appendix 1

White Buffalo Calf Woman Brings the First Pipe
as told by Joseph Chasing Horse
(<http://www.kstrom.net/isk/arvol/buffpipe.html> 3/26/07).

We Lakota people have a prophecy about the white buffalo calf. How that prophecy originated was that we have a sacred bundle, a sacred peace pipe, that was brought to us about 2,000 years ago by what we know as the White Buffalo Calf Woman.

The story goes that she appeared to two warriors at that time. These two warriors were out hunting buffalo, hunting for food in the sacred Black Hills of South Dakota, and they saw a big body coming toward them. And they saw that it was a white buffalo calf. As it came closer to them, it turned into a beautiful young Indian girl.

That time one of the warriors thought bad in his mind, and so the young girl told him to step forward. And when he did step forward, a black cloud came over his body, and when the black cloud disappeared, the warrior who had bad thoughts was left with no flesh or blood on his bones. The other warrior kneeled and began to pray.

And when he prayed, the white buffalo calf who was now an Indian girl told him to go back to his people and warn them that in four days she was going to bring a sacred bundle.

So the warrior did as he was told. He went back to his people and he gathered all the elders and all the leaders and all the people in a circle and told them what she had instructed him to do. And sure enough, just as she said she would, on the fourth day she came.

They say a cloud came down from the sky, and off of the cloud stepped the white buffalo calf. As it rolled onto the earth, the calf stood up and became this beautiful young woman who was carrying the sacred bundle in her hand.

As she entered into the circle of the nation, she sang a sacred song and took the sacred bundle to the people who were there to take of her. She spent four days among our people and taught them about the sacred bundle, the meaning of it.

She taught them seven sacred ceremonies.

One of them was the sweat lodge, or the purification ceremony. One of them was the naming ceremony, child naming. The third was the healing ceremony. The fourth one was the making of relatives or the adoption ceremony. The fifth one was the marriage ceremony. The sixth was the vision quest. And the seventh was the sundance ceremony, the people's ceremony for all of the nation.

She brought us these seven sacred ceremonies and taught our people the songs and the traditional ways. And she instructed our people that as long as we performed these ceremonies we would always remain caretakers and guardians of sacred land. She told us that as long as we took care of it and respected it that our people would never die and would always live.

When she was done teaching all our people, she left the way she came. She went out of the circle, and as she was leaving she turned and told our people that she would return one day for the sacred bundle. And she left the sacred bundle, which we still have to this very day.

The sacred bundle is known as the White Buffalo Calf Pipe because it was brought by the White Buffalo Calf Woman. It is kept in a sacred place (Green Grass) on the Cheyenne River Indian reservation in South Dakota. It's kept by a man who is known as the keeper of the White Buffalo Calf Pipe, Arvol Looking Horse.

When White Buffalo Calf Woman promised to return again, she made some prophecies at that time.

One of those prophecies was that the birth of a white buffalo calf would be a sign that it would be near the time when she would return again to purify the world. What she meant by that was that she would bring back harmony again and balance, spiritually.

No matter what happens to Miracle in the coming months and years, Joseph Chasing Horse says the birth is a sign from the Great Spirit and the ensuing age of harmony and balance it represents cannot be revoked. That doesn't mean, of course, that the severe trials Native Americans have endured since the arrival of Europeans on these shores are over. Indeed, the Lakota nation mounted the longest court case in U.S. history in an unsuccessful effort to regain control of the Black Hills, the sacred land on which the White Buffalo Calf Woman appeared 2,000 years ago.

Still, despite their ongoing struggles, Native Americans are heartened by the appearance of a white buffalo in Janesville, and have hope for a harmonious and prosperous future.

"Mention that we are praying, many of the medicine people, the spiritual leaders, the elders, are praying for the world," says Joseph Chasing Horse. "We are praying that mankind does wake up and think about the future, for we haven't just inherited this earth from our ancestors, but we are borrowing it from our unborn children."

Appendix 2

Model of Contrasting Values

Native American (Traditional Indian Values)		Non-Indian (Dominant Society Values)
GROUP (take care of the PEOPLE)	<i>WE MUST BECOME AWARE OF THESE CONFLICTING VALUES TO AVOID BECOMING CONFUSED, ANGRY, FRUSTRATED, OR UNBALANCED MENTALLY, PHYSICALLY, SPIRITUALLY</i>	SELF (take care of #1)
TODAY is a Good Day!		PREPARE FOR TOMORROW
A RIGHT time/ RIGHT place		TIME (use EVERY minute)
AGE (knowledge-wisdom)		YOUTH (rich, young, beautiful)
COOPERATE		COMPETE
Be PATIENT		Learn to be AGGRESSIVE
LISTEN (and you'll learn)		SPEAK UP
GIVE and share		TAKE and save
Live in HARMONY (with all things)		CONQUER Nature
Great MYSTERY /intuitive		SKEPTICAL/ Logical
HUMILITY		(Ego) SELF attention
A SPIRITUAL Life		Religion (a PART of life)

(Source: Modified from Teaching and Learning with Native Americans: A Handbook for Non-Native Adult Educators. Accessed on-line at <http://www.literacynet.org/lp/namericans/values.html> 3/20/07).

Appendix 3

Traditional Native American Values, Attitudes and Behaviors

Values	Attitudes and Behaviors
Cooperation	Agreement and cooperation among tribal members are all-important. This value is often at odds with the competitive spirit emphasized in the dominant society.
Group Harmony	The needs of the group are considered over those of the individual. This value is often at variance with the concept of rugged individualism.
Modesty	Even when one does well and achieves something, one must remain modest.
Autonomy	Value is placed on respect for an individual's dignity and personal autonomy.
Placidity	Indians are generally slow to demonstrate signs of anger or other strong emotions. This value may differ sharply from that of the dominant society, which often values action over inaction.
Patience	To have the patience and ability to wait quietly is considered a good quality among Indians.
Generosity	While the concept of sharing is advanced by most cultures, it may come into conflict with the value placed by the dominant society on individual ownership.
Indifference to Work Ethic	Adherence to a rigid work schedule was traditionally not an Indian practice.
Moderation in Speech	Many Indians find small talk unimportant. In social interactions, Indians emphasize the feeling or emotional component rather than the verbal. Ideas and feelings are conveyed through behavior rather than speech. Many Indians still cover the mouth with the hand while speaking as a sign of respect.
Careful Listening	Listening skills are emphasized, since Indian culture was traditionally passed on orally. Storytelling and oral recitations were important means of recounting tribal history and teaching lessons.

Careful Observation	Indians tend to convey and perceive ideas and feelings through behavior.
View of Time as Relative	Time is viewed as flowing, as always being with us. Time is relative; clocks are not watched. Things are done as they have to be done. Time, therefore, is flexible and is geared to the activity at hand.
Orientation to the Present	Living each day as it comes is emphasized. This value is closely tied to the philosophy that one should be more interested in being than in becoming.
Pragmatism	Most American Indians are pragmatic. Indians tend to speak in terms of the concrete rather than the abstract or theoretical.
Veneration of Age	Indian people value age. They believe that wisdom comes with age and experience. Tribal elders are treated with great respect. The Indian view of aging is at odds with the emphasis on youthfulness and physical beauty evident in the dominant culture.
Respect for Nature	Indians fashioned their way of life by living in harmony with nature. The Indian respect of nature is in opposition to the value others may place on the importance of controlling and asserting mastery over nature.
Spirituality	Religion is an integral part of each day; it is a way of life.
Importance of Cultural Pluralism	Indians resist assimilation, and instead emphasize the importance of cultural pluralism. Indian people desire to retain as much of their cultural heritage as possible.
Avoidance of Eye Contact	Most Indian people avoid prolonged direct eye contact as a sign of respect.
Importance of Bilingualism	Each Indian language contains the key to that society's view of the universe.
Caution	Indians use caution in personal encounters and are usually not open with others. Information about one's family is not freely shared, and personal and family problems are generally kept to oneself.

(Source: Modified from The American Indian: Yesterday Today and Tomorrow, A Handbook for Educators. California Department of Education, Bill Honig, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Sacramento, 1991. Accessed on-line at <http://www.literacynet.org/lp/namericans/values.html>, 3/20/07).

Appendix 4

Consumer identification of the importance of certain characteristics associated with Really Good Buffalo

Characteristics	Not Important		Somewhat Important		Very Important		N=
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Raised by American Indians	48	20.7	119	51.3	65	28	232
Environmentally-friendly production practices	1	0.4	26	11.1	208	88.5	235
Respectful/humane treatment of animals	3	1.3	39	16.6	193	82.1	235
Nutrition/health benefits	4	1.7	35	14.9	196	83.4	235
Chemical free	2	0.9	31	13.2	201	85.9	234
Produced and harvested in accordance with cultural protocols	40	17.4	85	37.0	105	45.7	230
Supports contemporary American Indian communities	3	1.3	92	39.1	140	59.6	235
Supports prairie restoration	2	0.9	41	17.4	192	81.7	235
Taste	2	0.9	40	17.0	193	82.1	235
Cost	23	9.9	110	47.4	99	42.7	232

(Source: Author survey)

Endnotes:

ⁱ Whenever possible, native authors have been used as sources of information.

ⁱⁱ Information found in the Bison Education Resource Guide.

ⁱⁱⁱ From “The Buffalo Guys” website <http://www.thebuffaloguys.com/who we are.asp>

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