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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release AUGUST 31, 1956

FWS OFFERS SURPLUS BIG-GAME ANIMALS FOR SALE

Nearly 500 buffaloes, surplus to the range capacity of the Fish and Wildlife Service's four big-game preserves in Nebraska, North Dakota, Montana, and Oklahoma are being offered for sale by the Service as a part of its bison management program, the Department of the Interior announced today.

In addition, 76 elk, 110 mule deer, and 151 longhorn cattle will also be put up for sale.

Sold under the Service's management program on the refuges, these surplus animals include only those that cannot be accommodated on the available ranges without danger of overgrazing. Big-game animals run wild on the refuges and are maintained as nearly as possible under natural conditions.

John Farley, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, assured big-game enthusiasts that the big-game herds are not being disbanded. "This sale of surplus animals is an annual event," he said.

The disposal program at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge at Cache, Oklahoma and the Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge at Valentine, Nebraska is larger than usual this season for several reasons: the herds have reached their optimum level in each area; drought conditions in the general locality of the Fort Niobrara refuge have restricted forage growth; and only 240 of the 500 animals authorized for sale at the Wichita Refuge were disposed of in the 1955-56 program.

These surplus animals may be purchased alive, or butchered, dressed, and quartered.

In selling the animals, the Service will give preference to applicants who wish to purchase them alive for propagation or exhibition. Surplus live animals not sold may be obtained by State, county, or municipal zoos, parks, or game preserves desiring such animals for propagation or exhibition at the cost of capturing, crating, and transporting.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has no authority to donate animals to private individuals or to private institutions for commercial purposes.

Persons desiring to purchase the animals alive may obtain them at the following prices which include the cost of corralling and delivering to the purchaser's truck or crate at the capturing corral on the preserve: Buffalo, mature animals, not less than two years of age, \$150; animals under two years of age, \$125. Elk, mature animals, not less than two years of age, \$90; under two years, \$80.

Because of the large number of buffaloes available for disposal at the Wichita and Fort Niobrara refuges, most of the restrictions and limitations as to the number of animals that may be purchased will be liberalized this year.

Sportsmen looking for big-game roasts and steaks for club dinners and banquets can get the butchered carcass of a buffalo, weighing about 450 pounds, for \$125 to \$150, depending on where purchased. These are mature animals not less than two years of age. A half carcass sells for \$62.50 or \$75. Orders for quarter carcasses, at \$37.50, will be accepted at the discretion of the Refuge Manager. A whole elk, weighing from 250 to 300 pounds, sells for \$90 or \$110; one-half can be bought for \$45 or \$55. All prices are f.o.b. at the refuge.

Slaughtered animals will be dressed, quartered, and wrapped in muslin, heavy cloth, or burlap to meet the requirements of transportation companies, except at the Wichita refuge in Oklahoma where meat will be processed and packed with dry ice in no-return containers. Refrigerating facilities are available only at the Wichita refuge.

A leaflet containing complete details of the annual sale of surplus animals may be obtained by writing to the Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington 25, D. C.

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