

**From:** [Syed, Omar - OSEC](#)  
**To:** [TJV](#)  
**Bcc:** [Barnett, Jonathan - OSEC](#); [Batta, Todd - OSEC](#); [Cep, Melinda -OSEC](#); [Herrick, Matthew - OC](#); [Iskandar, Christina - OSEC](#); [Johnson, Ashlee - OSEC](#); [Oden, Bianca - OSEC](#); [Reuschel, Trevor - OSEC](#); [Scuse, Michael - OSEC](#); [Thieman, Karla - OSEC](#)  
**Subject:** GENERAL READING: Monday, July 25, 2016  
**Date:** Friday, July 22, 2016 3:08:56 PM  
**Attachments:** [Puerto Rico Update.pdf](#)  
[Info Memo - Secretary Delegation of Authority Organic Cost Share.docx](#)  
[FCIC final rule Memo 07222016 final.docx](#)

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*General Reading:*

- Puerto Rico Update
- Organic Cost Share Delegation of Authority
- FCIC Final Rule



**INFORMATION MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY**

**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

**TO:** Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary

Farm and Foreign  
Agricultural  
Services

**THROUGH:** Alexis Taylor  
Deputy Under Secretary  
FFAS  
Ed Avalos  
Under Secretary  
MRP

Marketing and  
Regulatory  
Programs

Farm Service Agency

**FROM:** Val Dolcini  
Administrator  
Elanor Starmer  
Administrator

Agricultural Marketing  
Service

1400 Indep. Ave, SW  
Washington, DC  
20250-0522

**SUBJECT:** Organic Certification Cost Share Program

**ISSUE**

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) recommend the transfer of administration of the organic certification cost share programs from AMS to FSA, using a Secretarial delegation of authority. AMS and FSA agree that this transfer will improve direct outreach to customers and increase operational efficiencies, facilitating higher participation in the program. This memorandum outlines the legal, budgetary and stakeholder considerations related to such a transfer.

**BACKGROUND**

**Current Status**

AMS' Transportation and Marketing Program currently administers the Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) and the Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) Program, which reimburse organic producers and processors each year for up to 75% of organic certification fees, with a maximum reimbursement of \$750. AMS administers the programs through State departments of agriculture – AMS requests annual applications from interested States, and organic producers and processors then apply to States for reimbursement. Currently, 49 States and a few territories participate in OCCSP; and 16 States, which are identified by Congress, participate in AMA.

Cost share reimbursement is distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Available funds significantly exceed applications, and under current management, we expect that to continue through the Farm Bill expiration in 2018. Currently, \$12.5 million is available annually from two funding streams: \$11.5 million from the Farm Bill (Section 10004(c)), and \$1 million from the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1524). Farm Bill funds are no-year funds, so the unspent surplus accumulates through 2018. At the end of FY15, \$4.6 million of the \$11.5 million remained. Despite significant outreach, AMS and the States have not attracted enough demand from organic entities to expend the available funds. AMS estimates that fewer than half of organic operations in the U.S. currently participate in the program.

**Proposal for FSA Administration**

FSA proposes to administer the program through county offices, with state-level oversight. By administering the program directly, USDA could leverage FSA's field-based structure, streamline the process, and increase efficiencies. Currently, State-level implementation varies widely: Utah has never participated, whereas Maine reimburses about 95% of organic farms, ranches, and processors. Each State has a slightly different application process. FSA could offer the program nationwide for the first time, while also providing clear, consistent procedures to all organic producers and handlers. FSA is exploring the option of collaborating with State agencies as well.

Importantly, managing organic cost share would support FSA's ongoing efforts to develop a more diverse customer base and serve as a key resource for organic producers. OGC has confirmed that USDA has the legal authority to execute this change, and to utilize cost share funds to support effective administration and outreach. Both the Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services and Marketing and Regulatory Programs mission areas support this proposal.

**Benefits of Proposed Change**

FSA's State and county office structure will increase program oversight and outreach potential. By making applications available at field offices, USDA could reach more farmers locally, increase enrollment, and utilize more available funds. The organic cost-share reimbursement process is similar to existing FSA programs, and its eligibility requirements are actually simpler than many of FSA's established programs. FSA administration of organic cost share also fits well with the goals of Bridges to Opportunity and the Organic Working Group. It would bring more organic producers into FSA offices, where they could access other valuable resources. AMS would partner with FSA to support outreach, and initial implementation.

**Status of Addressing Challenges Associated with the Proposed Change**

AMS and FSA have discussed the administrative challenges involved in a potential transfer, and worked with the General Counsel and agency/departmental budget staff to resolve legal, budgetary, logistical, stakeholder and personnel issues. The attached appendix summarizes those challenges and status of addressing them.

**RECOMMENDATION**

AMS and FSA, having worked closely together to address internal and external challenges, have determined that the benefits of this transfer far outweigh the risks. We recommend transferring administration of the Organic Certification Cost Share Programs from AMS to FSA through a Secretarial Memorandum. If you concur with this recommendation, please sign the attached Secretarial Memorandum. If you have questions or concerns, we are available to discuss those further at your convenience.

# INFORMATION MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

## Appendix I

Page 1

### *Delegation authority*

The Office of the General Counsel has stated that the Secretary has the legal authority to delegate authority to FSA to implement the cost share programs. The OCCSP was first established in the 2002 Farm Bill, which stated,

“The Secretary of Agriculture (acting through the Agricultural Marketing Service) shall establish a national organic certification cost-share program to assist producers . . . .” Pub. L. 107-171, sec. 10606, codified at 7 USC 6523(a).

The AMS Administrator has been delegated authority to run the program at 7 CFR 2.79(a)(8)(lxiv). OGC does not view the “acting through” language as an impediment to FSA taking on responsibility for the program’s implementation. Giving the phrase, “shall establish” its plain meaning, the Secretary has carried out the statute’s requirement that the program be established through AMS and the program may now be administered through an agency other than AMS, through a Secretary’s Memorandum that transfers the program from AMS to FSA. The Secretary’s Memorandum would be followed by a published delegation of authority to FSA.

### *Budget*

FSA has been instructed in the past to avoid using CCC funds for salaries and expenses due to a limitation on expenditures under section 11 of the CCC Charter Act. But in this case, whether it is AMS or FSA running the cost-share program, General Provision (GP) 711 of the 2016 Appropriations Act expressly permits CCC funds to be used for S&E “without regard to” the section 11 cap. Under GP 711, the organic cost-share program falls outside of the cap because it was amended by the 2014 Farm Bill (see P.L. 113-79, section 10004) and because the program is appropriated a definite amount each year (\$11.5 million) through 2018. The relevant language is as follows:

“Sec. 711. In the case of each program established or amended by the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-79), other than by title I or subtitle A of title III of such Act, or programs for which indefinite amounts were provided in that Act, that is authorized or required to be carried out using funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation--

(1) such funds shall be available for salaries and related administrative expenses, including technical assistance, associated with the implementation of the program, without regard to the limitation on the total amount of allotments and fund transfers contained in section 11 of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714i); and

(2) the use of such funds for such purpose shall not be considered to be a fund transfer or allotment for purposes of applying the limitation on the total amount of allotments and fund transfers contained in such section.”

The cost share statutes are silent on the amount of program funds that are allowed for administrative costs. AMS currently takes 4% of program funds for USDA administration and State agriculture departments receive 10% of funds for program administration. FSA will conduct an internal analysis of the cost of administering both the OCCSP and the AMA, and its impact on workload in the field, using the 4 – 10% range as a guideline, to ensure sufficient availability of resources and good stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

*Transfer of Personnel and Cooperative Agreements*

One employee currently oversees the organic certification cost share programs. AMS and FSA plan to move the position to FSA's Farm Programs, where the programs will be housed. This will likely be accomplished first through a temporary detail, followed by a structural reorganization package (1010) to effectuate the transfer of this position.

AMS and FSA have also explored the impact of the transfer on the existing grant agreements between AMS and state departments of agriculture. FSA will likely offer cooperative agreements to state departments of agriculture interested in continuing to assist in implementing the OCCSP and AMA. OGC opined that the transfer of the program to FSA will not have any automatic impact on the existing agreements, nor must AMS cancel the agreements. The authority to award these agreements resides in the statute that establishes the program (given its express purpose of assistance to producers and handlers and its requirement that the Secretary pay a Federal share of certification costs). When the program is transferred to FSA via Secretary's Memorandum, the authority to administer existing agreements, and award new ones, will also transfer to FSA. OGC recommends executing bilateral modifications for each grant agreement in which all of the necessary edits are made to the grant and FSA and the states serve as signatories.

*Stakeholder Interests*

Some organic stakeholders are unfamiliar with FSA. AMS and FSA are working closely with stakeholder groups to build trust, and feedback is increasingly positive. Both agencies have met with NASDA and organic certifiers, and an informational session was held with the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition and the Organic Trade Association (OTA) at USDA on April 28, 2016. The stakeholder session was positive and provided constructive feedback for FSA engagement with the organic sector.

Some groups are concerned that the change will be perceived negatively by some in Congress. However, USDA notified authorizers and appropriators of the possibility of this transfer and has not received negative feedback. In fact, OTA worked with select Congressional offices to instruct USDA to expand the program to cover transitional certification and California State Organic Program fees. Interested stakeholders include: State departments of agriculture, organic certifiers, the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, the National Organic Coalition, the Organic Farming Research Foundation, and the Organic Trade Association.

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**To:** [Scuse, Michael - OSEC](#)  
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**Bcc:** [Day, Alex - OSEC](#)  
**Subject:** Reading - 7/21 and 7/22  
**Date:** Friday, July 22, 2016 4:31:04 PM  
**Attachments:** [HPA PR 7.21.16.docx](#)  
[Green Waste Memo Sec 7.20.16.docx](#)  
[GE Wheat Call Script for States-Industry 7-25-16 \(002\).docx](#)  
[072216 GE Wheat Statement Latest.docx](#)  
[072216 GE Wheat Rollout with Latest Edits.docx](#)  
[Info Memo - Secretary Delegation of Authority Organic Cost Share.docx](#)  
[FCIC final rule Memo 07222016 final.docx](#)

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Sir, please find your reading for today and yesterday, July 21-22<sup>nd</sup>, attached.

- HPA Proposed Rule memo from David Howard
- Green Waste memo from Elanor Starmer
- Updated Wheat Script for Industry Call
- Updated Wheat Statement
- Updated Wheat Plan/Rollout
- Organic Cost Share Delegation of Authority Memo
- FCIC Final Rule from RMA

Have a great weekend!

**Alex Day**

Scheduler to the Deputy Secretary

U.S. Department of Agriculture

202.720.6159 (o) | (b) (6) (c)



**INFORMATION MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY**

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**TO:** Thomas J. Vilsack  
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Farm and Foreign  
Agricultural  
Services

**THROUGH:** Alexis Taylor  
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Marketing and  
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**FROM:** Val Dolcini  
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**From:** [Cochran, Catherine - OC](#)  
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**Cc:** [Reuschel, Trevor - OSEC](#); [Batta, Todd - OSEC](#); [Cep, Melinda - OSEC](#); [Herrick, Matthew - OC](#); [Thieman, Karla - OSEC](#); [Peters, Joanne - OC](#); [Caron, Hillary - OC](#); [McKalip, Doug - OSEC](#); [Oden, Bianca - OSEC](#); [Johnson, Ashlee - OSEC](#)  
**Subject:** The Hagstrom Report | Friday 07.29.16  
**Date:** Friday, July 29, 2016 7:14:35 PM

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## The Hagstrom Report

Friday, July 29, 2016 | Volume 6 Number 135

- Clinton acceptance uses garden metaphor from 'Hamilton'
- Obama to promote TPP during Singapore state visit
- Dairy lawmakers ask USDA for assistance
- ARC-PLC signup deadline Monday
- Maryland crab, Texas beef, Ohio tomatoes on menu at Singapore state dinner



2016 0729 ClintonSpeech



*Hillary Clinton on stage at the Democratic National Convention Thursday night after delivering her acceptance speech. (Hillary for America)*

## Clinton acceptance uses garden metaphor from 'Hamilton'

PHILADELPHIA — In what appears to be the only high-level reference to agriculture or food at the Democratic or Republican conventions this year, Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton Thursday evening employed a reference to planting a garden from the hit Broadway musical “Hamilton” to explain what keeps her fighting for the causes in which she believes.

Toward the end of her speech, Clinton noted, “We lost our mother a few years ago, but I miss her every day. And I still hear her voice urging me to keep working, keep fighting for right, no matter what. That’s what we need to do together as a nation.”

“And though ‘we may not live to see the glory,’ as the song from the musical ‘Hamilton’ goes, ‘let us gladly join the fight.’ Let our legacy be about ‘planting seeds in a garden you never get to see.’”

The lyrics are from a scene in which the character of Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr sing about their duel in which Burr killed Hamilton.

In the song, “The World Was Wide Enough,” the Alexander Hamilton character sings,

*Legacy. What is a legacy?*

*It’s planting seeds in a garden you never get to see.*

“Hamilton” has been praised for its hip-hop music, unusual for Broadway, and its portrayal of Alexander Hamilton as an immigrant story. Hamilton was born out of wedlock in the West Indies, orphaned, and rose to become U.S. Treasury secretary and an aide to President George Washington.

The song also contains these lyrics, which Clinton did not use:

*I wrote some notes at the beginning of a song someone will sing for me*

*America, you great unfinished symphony, you sent for me*

*You let me make a difference*

*A place where even orphan immigrants*

*Can leave their fingerprints and rise up.*

2016 0729 ClintonHamilton

*Hillary Clinton, center, with Lin-Manuel Miranda behind her with the cast of "Hamilton: An American Dream" on stage after the Clinton fundraising event this month. (Hillary for America)*

*Bustle*, a website news service that bills itself as “for and by women who are moving forward as fast as you are,” pointed out late Thursday that the cast of “Hamilton” gave a special performance on July 12 as a fundraiser for Clinton, and that author and star Lin-Manuel Miranda gave Clinton an endorsement.

At the event, he asked the crowd, “Are you going to vote for the guy who wants to build a wall, or for someone who’s building bridges?”

According to *Playbill*, Miranda left the production on July 9, but returned for the special July 12 matinee to introduce Clinton to a crowd who paid up to \$100,000 for a special fundraising performance to benefit her campaign.

In a post-show speech that touched on the musical’s themes, Clinton said, “It really is true that it matters whose stories are told and heard, and this powerful depiction of an immigrant’s story being told should remind all of us how many tens of millions of stories in our country deserve to be told and heard.”

Quoting from the score, Clinton added, “America’s best years are still ahead of us and that is really up to us to make sure that hope becomes a reality, so let’s not throw away our shot.”

The fundraiser took place the same day that Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., endorsed Clinton, and *Bustle* suggested that, in addition to raising money, Clinton’s obvious affection for “Hamilton” may increase her appeal to millennial voters.

- *Bustle* – Hillary Clinton’s ‘Hamilton’ Quote At The DNC Is Glorious In Its Own Right
- “The World Was Wide Enough” (audio) – “Hamilton” Original Broadway Cast
- – Lyrics
- *Playbill* – Hillary Clinton Gets Powerful Endorsement from Lin-Manuel Miranda at Hamilton Benefit

▪ Clinton acceptance speech transcript



WH Krittenbrink



*Daniel Krittenbrink, the senior director for Asian affairs, speaks with reporters at the White House. (Jerry Hagstrom/The Hagstrom Report)*

### **Obama to promote TPP during Singapore state visit**

President Barack Obama will use the official visit on Tuesday of Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Long to promote congressional approval of the Trans Pacific Partnership agreement, a key White House official said today.

At a preview for reporters of the state dinner to be held Tuesday evening (*see story below*), Daniel Krittenbrink, the senior director for Asian affairs, noted that Lee has been a strong advocate for the TPP and said that both Obama and Lee would talk publicly about the importance of the agreement that involves 12 countries.

“TPP presents a crucial opportunity” because it will eliminate 18,000 tariffs on American exports,” Krittenbrink told reporters during the preview in the State Dining Room of the White House.

TPP “will be good for the United States, the region and the world,” he said.

Asked afterward by *The Hagstrom Report* whether Obama will continue to promote the agreement even though Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton and Republican presidential Donald Trump are both opposed to it,” Krittenbrink said, “Yes. You’re going to hear a lot about it next week.”

TPP is part of Obama’s program to “rebalance” the U.S. relationship with the Asian

Pacific countries, Kritenbrink said. “The president has stated he is committed to the agreement” and wants Congress to approve it before his term ends, Kritenbrink added. “The Asia Pacific is going to represent the future in the 21st century.”

Obama’s plan to promote TPP next week signals that he will not defer to Clinton on TPP even though he gave her a ringing endorsement at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia this week and is planning to campaign for her. Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., the Democratic vice presidential candidate, and Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, the Republican vice presidential candidate, have agreed to follow their respective presidential candidates and oppose it.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has campaigned vigorously for TPP, but told *The Hagstrom Report* this week in Philadelphia that the agreement is no longer the responsibility of either the president or the presidential candidates, and that it is time for Congress to act on it.



### **Dairy lawmakers ask USDA for assistance**

A bipartisan coalition of senators and House members from dairy producing areas have written Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack to ask for emergency assistance for dairy farmers.

In the letter, the senators and House members asked Vilsack to use his emergency powers under the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act to expand and maintain U.S. domestic markets.

In a joint statement, Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., and Rep. Peter Welch, D-Vt., said, “Our dairy farms and the hardworking families that keep them running in communities in Vermont and across the nation are enduring an extremely tough summer as prices have plunged to a nearly 10-year low, well below the cost of production.”

“This comes on the heels of a very challenging spring, and we are deeply concerned that the current price forecasts remain dire for our farmers,” the letter said.

“That is why we have come together today, Democrats and Republicans from across the country, to call on USDA to act with urgency, using every tool and authority at their disposal, to help our struggling dairy farmers. They cannot wait. They need our help now.”

The signers include House Agriculture Committee ranking member Collin Peterson, D-Minn., the basic author of the Margin Protection Program, which has turned out not to make payments to dairy producers when both the milk price and the price of inputs go down.

Peterson had proposed a somewhat different program but the International Dairy Foods Association, which represents processors, and then-House Speaker John

Boehner, R-Ohio, opposed it.

- [Dairy letter to Vilsack](#)



### **ARC-PLC signup deadline Monday**

Crop farmers and ranchers have until Monday to enroll in Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and/or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2016 crop year at their local Farm Service Agency offices, the Agriculture Department has noted.

Producers have already elected ARC or PLC, but must enroll for the 2016 crop year by signing a contract before the August 1 deadline to receive program benefits, FSA said in an announcement.

The programs trigger financial protections for participating agricultural producers when market forces cause substantial drops in crop prices or revenues.

Nationwide, more than 1.76 million farmers and ranchers are expected to sign contracts to enroll in ARC or PLC. Covered commodities under the programs include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain and sweet rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

- [USDA Farm Service Agency – ARC/PLC Program](#)



### **STATE DINNER PREVIEW**



## WH Flowers2

*When Singapore Prime Minister and his wife are honored at a state dinner at the White House on Tuesday, the centerpieces will be composed of yellow flowers including Singapore orchids and American roses. (Jerry Hagstrom/The Hagstrom Report)*

## **Maryland crab, Texas beef, Ohio tomatoes on menu at Singapore state dinner**

President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama will honor Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and his wife on Tuesday with a state dinner for 200 people in the East Room celebrating 50 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The flowers, including Singapore orchids and American roses, will be yellow signifying friendship, and the food will celebrate “an endless array of various summer bounties in the United States,” according to a program distributed to reporters at a preview today.

Canapes to be served before dinner will include Maine lobster.

## WH Flowers



*The yellow flowers signify friendship.*

## WH Comerford



*Chris Comerford, the White House executive chef, shows reporters the Maryland Blue Crab salad that will be the first course at the state dinner.*

## WH Crab



*This closeup shows that the crab salad is a complicated design edged in cucumbers.*

Crab is the most popular dish in Singapore, and the first course will be a Maryland blue crab salad tossed in a citrus curd made from calamansi, a hybrid of a citrus fruit and a kumquat.

The salad course “celebrates summer with a nod to the savory flavors of Singapore cuisine.” It features tomatoes and lime basil from the White House kitchen garden, but Chris Comerford, the White House executive chef, said the tomatoes will also come from Ohio.

The salad will be accented with pickled green mangoes, cucumbers, green papaya and soursop, an acidic fruit with white fibrous flesh, sorbet. The meal will not include durian, a smelly fruit that is popular in Singapore, but Comerford said soursop is similar to it.

The wine served with the salad will be Margerum sauvignon blanc from Santa Barbara, Calif. It will be crisp, light and low in alcohol, designed for “summer sipping,” White House usher Daniel Shanks told *The Hagstrom Report*.

The main course will be American Wagyu beef tenderloin from Texas, which the menu noted is also known as American-style Kobe beef.

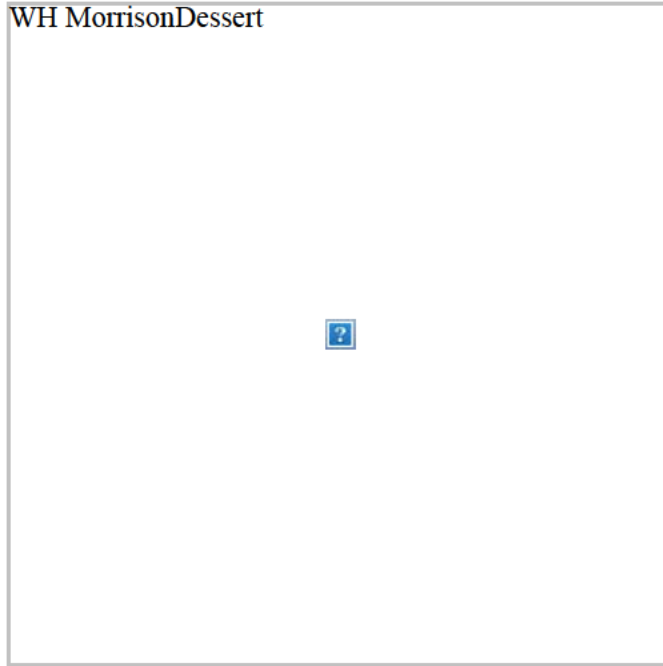
The meat will be seared in Vermont butter and topped with a silken bone marrow crust. It will be paired with California-grown Asian yams roasted in palm sugar and Sichuan peppercorns. The dish is then garnished with wilted baby kale and young carrots and drizzled with a light lemongrass-infused demi-glace sauce.

The beef will be served with a pinot noir from Waits-Mast, a California winery that gets its grapes from Mendocino County. The wine is “floral” and is strong enough to “carry” the main course, Shanks said.

Comerford, who is of Philippine heritage, said she had enjoyed creating the dinner

because Singapore is “such a melting pot” and she could use such a variety of ingredients. Comerford said she has not visited Singapore, but noted its cultural mix is similar to the Philippines, and said she looks forward to going there.

#### WH MorrisonDessert

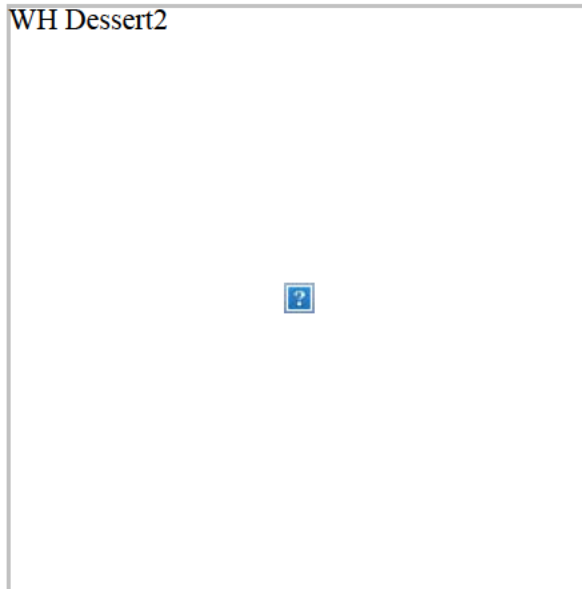


*Susie Morrison, the White House pastry chef, shows off the desserts.*

The dessert course created by White House pastry chef Susie Morrison features layers of peach sangria cake accented with palm sugar, coconut milk and kaffir lime leaves, a citrus fruit native to Asia.

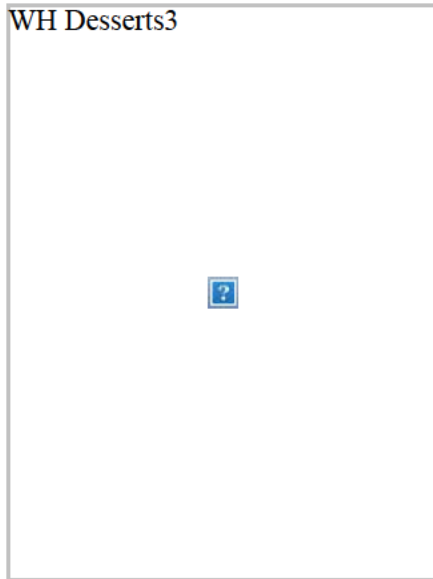
Bright yellow peaches from California and Virginia farms will be marinated in a blend of American wines. The dish is enhanced with orange and pomegranate juices, a light chamomile anglaise cream sauce and infused with dried chamomile from the White House kitchen garden. It will be garnished with honey from the White House beehive made into brittle and a fluffy honey meringue.

#### WH Dessert2



*Each of the 200 dinner guests will be presented with a dessert of peaches from California and Virginia topped with a peach sangria cake.*

### WH Desserts3



*Each table will also be presented with a display of miniature pastries.*

### WH CandyFlowers



*Morrison and an assistant made the candy flowers and ribbons over a five-day period.*

A handmade creation of caramelized almond nougat and orchids, rose and ribbons made of sugar honoring prominent flowers from both the United States and Singapore will be presented to each table, along with an assortment of miniature pastries.

A rosé wine from the Wölffer Estate on Long Island, N.Y., will be served with the dessert course and was picked because it is “dry, but fruit flavored” and will go with the peaches, Shanks said.

Following the dinner, the White House will host a performance in the State Dining Room featuring entertainer, singer and songwriter Chrisette Michele. On her newest album, “Milestone,” Chrisette collaborates with Rick Ross, Jay Z, Nas, the Roots and Wale.

- [Margerum Wine Company](#)
- [Waits-Mast Family Cellars](#)
- [Wölffer Estate Vineyard](#)

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## USDA Clips

Monday, August 1, 2016

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### *Top Stories*

#### **USDA Awards \$2.2M to Remote Native Villages (Indian Country 8/1)**

Once, rural Native communities were cut off from the rest of the world. Isolation and lack of opportunities drove many Natives to nearby cities where they often felt lost and out of place. But now, for the first time in history, the modern world is providing the means for Native people to remain in their homelands while also receiving the same high quality education and healthcare enjoyed by people in large cities. On July 14, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture awarded \$23.4 million in grants to 81 communities in 32 states for Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) programs. Eight of those grants, totaling over \$2.2 million, are to Native groups. Of the states receiving grants for Native people, Alaska received the most money, with four groups awarded a total of over \$4 million, while Native groups in California, Minnesota, New Mexico and Oklahoma received a total of nearly \$800,000. "Using technology for educational opportunities and medical care can provide services that are often unavailable in rural areas," Vilsack said. "USDA's Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program helps communities better meet the needs of their residents." U.S. Department of Agriculture-Rural Development (USDA-RD) Alaska State Director Jim Nordlund also praised the program. "The DLT program delivers educational and medical opportunities that are urgently needed in remote, rural areas. These investments mean that students in rural Alaskan schools will have educational opportunities often not available outside urban areas. This funding also means that people who live and work in rural areas will not have to travel long distances for specialized health care services." [Link](#)

#### **Obama signs historic GMO labeling bill (Agri-Pulse 7/29)**

President Barack Obama quietly signed into law legislation that prevents states from requiring on-package labeling of genetically modified ingredients, capping an historic win for farm groups, food companies and the biotech industry. The Senate gave final congressional approval to the measure on July 14 with backing from a majority of both Republicans and Democrats. Senate Agriculture Chairman Pat Roberts called the bill the most important farm legislation in 20 years. USDA has already formed a working group to write rules needed to implement the legislation. The bill was one of 20 the president signed into law late on a Friday afternoon. Most of the other measures were bills officially naming Post Office facilities. The Agriculture Department, which is charged with implementing the disclosure standard, issued a statement saying that a working group has already been working to "develop a timeline for rulemaking and to ensure an open and transparent process for effectively establishing this new program. We are committed to providing multiple opportunities for engagement, and will have more information about this very soon." AMS has already established a website for the new biotech program. [Link](#)

### **Buffalo High student, agriculturist speaks up on farming, local food (Charleston Gazette-Mail 7/31)**

Kelly Irvine, 15, had a much better behaved steer to show at the Putnam County Fair this year than last year. Robert, an almost-2-year-old, 1,209-pound Angus cross, was the perfect gentleman as she showed and sold him during this year's fair in early July. Last year, her steer got a little nervous, and she took the brunt of it. Quite literally. "They can be very dangerous. Last year, my steer was a little bit skittish, and I got four bruised ribs due to a head butt in the side. But it was OK, we got him out into the ring and sold him," she said... Kelly won first place in the nation at the 2015 National Future Farmers of America (FFA) convention in Louisville, Kentucky, in the agri-science competition, for her research project, How Do Agriculturalists Obtain Land? In June, at Fair Oaks Farm in Fair Oaks, Indiana, she joined U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack and Land O'Lakes, Inc. CEO Chris Policinski to discuss the opportunities that exist for young people in the industry. It's a pertinent topic. While nearly 60,000 agriculture-related jobs are expected to be available by 2020, many teenagers are not, by and large, inclined to think of a future in the field, literally or figuratively. According to a survey of 500 teens conducted by Land O'Lakes and CarbonView, only 19 percent expressed an interest in agriculture, and even fewer — 16 percent — in a career as a farmer. [Link](#)

### *Farm & Foreign Agricultural Services*

#### **Presidential race brings uncertainties to trade outlook (The Packer 7/28)**

No matter who is elected, the 2016 U.S. presidential election will bring fresh uncertainties for agricultural and fresh produce exporters. It will be difficult to get much traction to ratify trade deals such as the Trans Pacific Partnership until the presidential election occurs and even after that their future is cloudy, said Chris Schlect, president of the Northwest Horticultural Association, Yakima. "Right now if you listen to the rhetoric out of both parties, it is not positive toward trade negotiations or even some of the agreements we think are good such as the North American Free Trade Agreement," he said July 26. For most of the past few decades, the political leadership has been pro-trade, but Schlect said that sentiment seems to be shifting. "(Hillary) Clinton is not excited about the Trans Pacific Partnership that President Obama's administration has negotiated," Schlect said.

Still, given her past track record, she may be more likely to enter into international trade agreements than her opponent, he said. "If (Donald) Trump gets elected, he has promised to tear up some agreements or renegotiate them, like NAFTA, which is very important with our major trading partners." [Link](#)

#### **USDA Helping Veterans Get Involved In Farming (Fox Illinois 7/29)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is aiming to help veterans get involved in farming. The program is giving veterans a financial headstart by allowing veterans to apply for farm loans with fewer stipulations. Officials say with so many veterans being from rural areas, this program is a great way to ensure financial stability. "In the 2014 farm bill there was some language introduced to help us get passed some of the eligibility criteria for veteran farmers. So it's been a recently... a new push to get veterans back to farming," Steven Thursby with the USDA said. Some of the initiative's benefits include: lower interest rates, a break on experience requirements, and a mentorship program to help guarantee success. [Link](#)

#### **USDA help available to fire-affected farmers, ranchers (Ag Net 7/31)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency Wyoming Executive Director, Gregor Goertz, reminds farmers and ranchers affected by recent wildfires that USDA has programs to assist with their recovery efforts. The Farm Service Agency can assist farmers and ranchers who lost livestock, grazing land, fences or eligible trees, bushes and vines as a result of a natural disaster. FSA administers a suite of safety-net programs to help producers recover from eligible losses, including the Livestock Indemnity Program, the Livestock Forage Disaster Program, the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program, and the Tree Assistance Program. In addition, the FSA Emergency Conservation Program provides funding and technical assistance for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters and for carrying out emergency water conservation measures in periods of severe drought. Producers located in counties that received a primary or contiguous disaster designation are eligible for low-interest emergency loans to help them recover from production and physical losses. Compensation is also available to producers who purchased coverage through the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, which protects non-insurable crops against natural disasters that result in lower yields, crop losses or prevented planting. [Link](#)

#### **New Rules Aim to Reduce Farmworkers' Exposure to Pesticides (NJTV 7/28)**

Farmworkers picked blueberries under a hot sun in Hammonton. That's tough enough. It's potential exposure to toxic pesticides that worries advocates even more. When victims don't call out sick, it's a hard problem to manage. "They don't report it for fear of losing their jobs or losing the day's wages, if

they're ill. So they go to work when they're ill, whether it's rashes or respiratory problems or anything of that nature," said John Gorman, regional chief of pesticides and toxic substances for the EPA. Government officials gathered at the Atlantic Blueberry Company to unveil tougher regulations aimed at protecting U.S. farmworkers from pesticide poisoning. It's the first federal rules update in 24 years. Among the upgrades: farm labor must be trained before working in fields where pesticides were used — no more five-day grace period. And that training must happen every year. New Jersey now mandates only once every five years. [Link](#)

#### **Schools nurture students' agriculture interests (USA Today 7/30)**

A dozen students in Meagan Slates' plant sciences class at Penn Manor High School in Millersville, Pa., cluster in small groups in the school's greenhouse. In a previous class, they'd trimmed the meristems of coleus plants, and now they're measuring new growth with rulers. The coleus are among the few plants in the greenhouse after the school's annual plant sale, but a week earlier, it had been teeming with flowers, vegetables and bedding plants that the students had grown themselves. "They started at the beginning of the semester planting seeds, transplanted things into different containers and grew them for our plant sale," says Slates. "They got a feel for how a greenhouse would run."... The U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2015 Farm to School Census surveyed more than 42,500 schools in 5,254 districts nationwide. Forty-two percent of those districts reported participating in some farm-to-school activities, such as school gardens, local-food sourcing for students' meals or curriculum integration. The roughly 200 students in Penn Manor's Ag-Ed program also belong to its chapter of the National FFA Organization (formerly Future Farmers of America). While Penn Manor's and FFA's goals are to raise the next generation of farmers — the average age of American farmers is 58 years old, and getting older, according to the USDA's 2012 Census of Agriculture — the field of agriculture affords more than just one career path. [Link](#)

#### **COLUMN: Cotton subsidies: Gifts that keep on giving (The Times & Democrat 8/1)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has awarded cotton producers "one-time only" payments that cover "cotton ginning costs" based on their 2015 production. Anyone with experience with policy history, an attribute most farmers possess, knows that temporary subsidies have a strong tendency to become permanent in one form or another. It is therefore valuable to consider the background and implications of this new program. The new cotton ginning cost subsidies grew out of cotton industry dissatisfaction with the subsidies to which they have had access for the last couple of years compared to cotton policy history. Before the price spikes of about a decade ago, for about 70 years cotton farms had traditionally relied on government payments for half or more of their annual revenues. As a part of the settlement of a WTO dispute, the 2014 Farm Bill offered cotton farmers a new, heavily subsidized county-based revenue insurance program (named STAX) to replace long-standing price-based subsidies. But despite an 80 percent subsidy on the insurance premiums, most cotton farms (accounting for about 70 percent of aggregate cotton acreage) have chosen not to sign up for STAX. Simply put, despite the heavy subsidy, STAX has failed to satisfy the subsidy habits of the cotton industry. [Link](#)

#### **Farmer defeats long-time Georgia representative (Times Free Press 7/28)**

A farmer defeated a 12-year veteran to join the Georgia House of Representatives on Tuesday night. Jason Ridley beat Tom Dickson for the 6th District seat with about 54 percent of 3,400 votes. Dickson, a retired educator representing Whitfield and Murray counties, was the chairman of the House Appropriations Education subcommittee. He had been in office since 2005. Dickson received about \$185,000 during this election cycle, campaign contribution reports show. By comparison, Ridley received about \$1,800, though his disclosures are one month behind Dickson's on the Campaign Finance Commission's website. Ridley, 39, believes he won because of a more conservative stance on gun rights, Georgia's "religious freedom" bill and education reform. [Link](#)

#### **Prolonged Drought Hitting State Farmers Hard (Hartford Courant 7/28)**

Weeks of bone-dry weather and searing temperatures have left most of David Fusiek's cornfields stunted and starved for moisture. The farm's 100-acre hay crop isn't doing any better, and its 90 dairy cows are giving less milk in this heat. "In the last month, we probably had a quarter-inch of rain," Fusiek said this week as he looked out across a dusty cornfield. He figures the drought will cost his family's farm about half of the 25 tons of corn it normally provides for silage to feed the dairy herd over the winter. Summer thunderstorms this year have been fickle, hitting some farms but missing others just a few miles away. Connecticut's drought has been going on so long that even a soaking rain — like the one possible for Friday — isn't likely to be enough to offer more than temporary relief. [Link](#)

#### **Drought hitting local farmers hard (Madison Journal Today 7/30)**

Drought is the main topic at the breakfast tables at Gina Belle's Restaurant in Danielsville these days as it's the gathering place for a number of local farmers before they begin their day. Keith Lord said it's hard not to think about how dry it is as they begin each new day of work. "We're really beginning to hurt," Lord

said standing in one of his dried up soybean fields last week. He said there are basically two things against he and other farmers in the area this year – lack of rainfall and the deer population. “The deer are hungry, the foliage is not there in the woods for them so they’re out in the fields looking for food,” he said. And they’re finding it – somewhat – in Lord’s soybean fields, the ones that have managed to get a few tender shoots out of the ground. “Come along here about sunset and you’ll see 10, 15 deer grazing,” he said about a field he leases on Friendship Church Road in the northern part of the county. “They eat the green tender tips off the top of the plants and leave the tougher stalks.” He said even the infamous “pigweed” plant is having a hard time growing this year, and that’s something. And there’s at least one other “good thing” – the fire ants that usually plague him are nowhere to be seen. “Don’t know if they’ve went underground or what,” he said. [Link](#)

### **ROUNDS: Drought puts the heat on ag producers (Rapid City Journal 7/30)**

Agriculture in South Dakota accounts for more than half of our economic output each year and is our state’s number one industry. We are one of the nation’s leading producers of sunflowers, corn, wheat and soybeans. Unfortunately, our ag producers have been hit hard this summer with abnormally dry conditions. Farmers across the state are struggling to keep their crops healthy. According to the National Weather Service, parts of South Dakota are experiencing extreme drought conditions that will likely worsen or remain the same through the summer and into fall. For farmers and ranchers, this means water is limited for irrigation and livestock needs, hay production is at a standstill. Producers experiencing hardship due to the drought do have options available to them if they live in a county that has been designated as a primary or contiguous disaster area. To receive a disaster designation, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has outlined a specific set of conditions: the county must meet a D2 “severe drought” intensity for eight consecutive weeks or more, as reported by the U.S. Drought Monitor. [Link](#)

### **Battle over 'Right to Farm' heats up (Tulsa World 7/31)**

The fight over a state question to enshrine the rights of farmers and ranchers in the state constitution is heating up. State Question 777 is called “Right to Farm” by supporters and “Right to Harm” by critics. Lawmakers put it on the ballot, where it will appear Nov. 8. A recently released position paper on the issue points out a host of problems with the measure. The paper was prepared at the request of critics of the proposal. Bud Scott, campaign manager for Oklahomans for Food, Farm and Family, said the measure has not been vetted, impacts several areas and was not well thought out... Meanwhile, the Oklahoma Stewardship Council, which opposes the measure, on Friday said Oklahoma Farmers Care received more than 90 percent of its money from entities tied to corporate agriculture. “The ‘right to farm’ moniker is blatantly misleading,” said farmer Paul Muegge, Oklahoma Stewardship Council co-chair and a former state senator from Tonkawa. “Naming its political organization Oklahoma Farmers Care is equally misleading. Industrial agriculture’s claims that this state question is about Oklahoma’s rural heritage are inaccurate. [Link](#)

### **South Dakota land stays in man's family for nearly a century (Associated Press/Sioux City Journal 7/31)**

At the end of a long day of working on his 20,000-acre ranch, Ron Brownotter has one more place to go before the sun sets on the wild prairie. “I’m going to show you my favorite spot,” he tells the Aberdeen American News It’s a steep, short drive, and when Brownotter reaches the top of the hill, a breathtaking view of the Grand River valley awaits. The miles of rolling hills look untouched by civilization, and buttes can be seen far in the distance. “This is where my grandmother’s allotment ends,” he said, pointing toward an old fence line to his right. Brownotter raises his hand and traces the horizon above the entire valley. “And this is all mine.” Ron Brownotter is the third generation in his family to grow up on the parcel of land 10 miles southwest of Bullhead on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation. The Dawes Act of 1887 allowed American Indians to have sole ownership over land within reservations. Before, all land within a reservation belonged to tribes. Brownotter’s grandmother purchased the first 320-acre allotment in 1917, which was passed down to his father, who passed it down to him. [Link](#)

### **Lawmakers Want USDA to Boost Domestic Milk Sales (Dairy Agenda 7/31)**

A group of U.S. Senators and House members are asking the USDA for assistance to help dairy producers struggling with declining milk prices. In a letter to U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, the lawmakers urged the agency to use its authority under the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act to expand and maintain U.S. domestic markets. The letter noted that farm milk prices have dropped 40 percent since 2014, which they blame on an increase in U.S. milk production levels and changes in the European Union’s regulation of milk production. They also claim that Vilsack has the authority to expand and maintain U.S. domestic markets through the CCCC program. “By taking such action, the USDA can make an immediate market injection to directly and equally support struggling dairy farmers nationwide,” the letter stated. The memo was co-authored by Sens. Patrick Leahy of Vermont, Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin and Bob Casey from Pennsylvania, and Rep. Joe Courtney, Connecticut. There were also dozens



of other lawmakers from across the country who co-signed the letter. [Link](#)

### **WASHINGTON D.C.: Support grows for Oregon dairy assistance (Elkhorn Media Group 7/30)**

Today, a letter signed by 57 members of Congress from both the House and Senate was sent to USDA Tom Secretary Vilsack asking for assistance for dairy producers struggling with declining milk prices. Specifically, the members are asking for the USDA to use its authority under the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act to expand and maintain U.S. domestic markets. "Oregon's dairy farmers are struggling with the 40% decline in milk prices we are receiving today. The Oregon Dairy Farmers Association championed this Bi-Partisan, Bi-Cameral effort and especially appreciate the support from four of Oregon's Congressional Members: Senators Merkley and Wyden together with Congressman Schrader and Congresswoman Bonamici", said ODFA President Chad Allen. Oregon was home to more than 1,000 dairy farms at its prime. Today, only 228 dairy farms remain in business in 21 of Oregon's 36 counties. Oregon's Dairies are family businesses. These businesses contributed more than \$650 million dollars to Oregon's economy in 2014. Unfortunately, the decline in milk price is putting tremendous pressure on these farmers. "We are anxiously awaiting the signal from Secretary Vilsack that he will bring to bear all of his statutory authority to address the issues to bring meaningful relief," said Tammy Dennee, ODFA Legislative Director. [Link](#)

### **These New Yorkers Quit Their Desk Jobs to Run a Farm—On a Brooklyn Rooftop (Fortune 7/31)**

When you hear the word "entrepreneur," what image comes to mind? A hoodie-clad Stanford grad pitching his new tech app? An ex-investment banker opening his own shop? What about a thirtysomething woman growing vegetables on a rooftop? Anastasia Cole Plakias, co-founder and vice president of Brooklyn Grange, fell into farming somewhat serendipitously. An aspiring food journalist, she met the founders of the soon-to-be-legendary pizzeria Roberta's in 2009 while reporting on the blossoming Brooklyn food scene. At the time, she recalls, the restaurateurs were working on turning two shipping containers into a small farm for growing herbs and vegetables... Flanner, the CEO and co-founder of the 2.5-acre enterprise, is considered a pioneer in urban farming circles for his system of growing food using existing green roof technology. An engineer by training and a former consultant, Flanner spends much of his time figuring out how to make the operation as lean as possible. "There are obviously some logistical challenges to farming on a roof," he says. "Some forms of mechanization aren't available to us that would save us time and effort...and there are little things, like, after our harvest, we have to load up a freight elevator." Despite the hurdles, Brooklyn Grange has managed to be profitable (though the founders declined to share to what extent), largely thanks to the creative ways in which they use their space. [Link](#)

### **The quest to keep San Joaquin Valley's wine industry growing (Fresno Bee 7/30)**

Behind every glass of California wine there is a vineyard, a farmer, sunlight – and someone like Lindsay Jordan. To keep California's wine flowing, the University of California Cooperative Extension area viticulture adviser to Madera, Merced and Mariposa counties is working to create options for vineyard sustainability and act as a resource for the region's grape growers. "My love of wine drives a lot – what can I say," Jordan laughed. "I don't know about you, but I want to keep drinking wine until the day I die, so I really want to do my part to ensure the sustainability of drinking California wine." Her mission is simple: to keep the wine-making and viticulture industries happy and healthy in California, which accounts for nearly 85 percent of total U.S. wine production, according to the Wine Institute. [Link](#)

### **SC hop farm hopes to fuel East Coast craze for craft beer (The State 7/31)**

There's a refreshing simplicity in visiting Larry Feller's outdoor "man-cave." He keeps a well-maintained barn adjacent to his ranch-style home. He oversees acres of forest in which to hike or pick walnuts. A pair of goats greet visitors at the top of his gravel driveway. But Feller, a longtime chemical manufacturer for agrochemical company Syngenta, devotes all of his spare time after work to a side project: He's helping to create the beer of the future. "I never had any aspirations of being a hop grower," said Feller, flanked by his friend and farm manager Russ Smith. "But when we started to see microbreweries popping up around us, we knew it could be good." Inspired by the success of hop growers in the Pacific Northwest, where Feller once worked for his company, he and Smith have spent two years converting just over an acre and a half of clear pasture into a thriving hop farm called Persimmon Hill Hops in Smyrna. The pair produced about 90 pounds of finished product in 2015, and project much higher yields by next summer, when many of their vines should reach maturity. Hops are combined with yeast, grain and water to compose some of the basic ingredients in beer brewing. The bitterness of hops can counter with the sweetness of certain malts to create a balanced taste and also act as a preservative. [Link](#)

### **Russia's Acres, if Not Its Locals, Beckon Chinese Farmers (The New York Times 7/31)**

Perched in the cabin of a clunky Russian tractor, Li Chengbin, a 62-year-old peasant farmer from China, drove round and round in ever widening circles, plowing a field to get it ready for planting — and rejoicing at the opportunities offered by untamed lands in the Russian Far East almost empty of people. Back home in China, he said, he never had a plot anywhere near as big as the 82-acre spread that he and his son

now farm in Russia. The vast majority of China's 300 million peasants have barely two acres. Mr. Li's family farm in China is even smaller. "In China, this much land would make me the biggest farmer in the country," Mr. Li said, yanking a rusty lever to try to get his puffing tractor to go faster. He and his son had bought the tractor, along with other decrepit farming equipment, from the remnants of a defunct Soviet-era collective farm. They got their land through an arrangement with a local woman who leases the formerly state farm property and lets Mr. Li and his son, Li Xin, farm it in return for cash. The weather, scorching in summer and well below freezing in winter, is not much worse than what they are used to in northern China. But because most of the swampy land on the Russian side of the nearby border has never been drained, the area is infested with giant mosquitoes and other bothersome bugs. A swarm of hornets, attracted by the heat generated by Mr. Li's tractor, enveloped the vehicle in a black cloud. [Link](#)

#### **Venezuela's new decree: Forced farm work for citizens (CNN Money 7/29)**

A new decree by Venezuela's government could make its citizens work on farms to tackle the country's severe food shortages. That "effectively amounts to forced labor," according to Amnesty International, which derided the decree as "unlawful." In a vaguely-worded decree, Venezuelan officials indicated that public and private sector employees could be forced to work in the country's fields for at least 60-day periods, which may be extended "if circumstances merit." "Trying to tackle Venezuela's severe food shortages by forcing people to work the fields is like trying to fix a broken leg with a band aid," Erika Guevara Rosas, Americas' Director at Amnesty International, said in a statement. President Nicolas Maduro is using his executive powers to declare a state of economic emergency. By using a decree, he can legally circumvent Venezuela's opposition-led National Assembly -- the Congress -- which is staunchly against all of Maduro's actions. [Link](#)

#### **'Food crisis' hits 10,000 laid-off Indians in Saudi Arabia (BBC 7/31)**

More than 10,000 Indian nationals laid off in Saudi Arabia are facing a "food crisis", India's foreign minister says. Sushma Swaraj said "large numbers" of Indians had lost their jobs in the kingdom, leaving them with not enough money to buy food. The Indian community in Jeddah, with the government's help, has distributed food to those in need at the weekend. Growth has slowed in Saudi Arabia as the country suffers the effect of lower oil prices. Ms Swaraj appealed on Twitter for the three-million-strong Indian community in the country to "help your fellow brothers and sisters". "I assure you that no Indian worker rendered unemployed in Saudi Arabia will go without food," she wrote. A government minister is travelling to Saudi Arabia, Ms Swaraj said. He is expected to help with arranging an airlift of laid-off Indians who are unable to afford the air fare home. [Link](#)

#### **Why young Africans are swapping the office for the farm (BBC 7/30)**

Farming has an unglamorous image across Africa. But this might be changing - the BBC's Sophie Ikenye met some young professionals who packed in their office jobs and moved back to the family farm. Six years ago Emmanuel Koranteng, 33, gave up his job as an accountant in the US and bought a one-way ticket to Ghana. He now has a successful business growing pineapples in a village one-and-a-half hours away from the capital, Accra. He says that even when he was far away from the farm, it was always in his thoughts. Across the continent, Dimakatso Nono, 34, also left her job in finance to return to the family farm in South Africa. 'Always a market for quality' She left her lucrative job five years ago and moved from Johannesburg to manage her father's 2,000 acre farm three hours away in Free State Province. She says she wanted to make an impact. "I knew that if I came to assist my father, I would be able to actually make meaningful change." She began by counting his cows. [Link](#)

#### *Research, Education & Economics*

#### **Despite Drought, California Farming Prospered (News Deeply 8/1)**

IT MIGHT NOT be what you expect to hear about California agriculture in the throes of drought: After four years of historic water shortages, farm earnings in the state increased 16 percent, and total employment increased 5 percent. Yet those are real numbers gathered by federal agencies that track economic data. Average wages for farm employees also increased an impressive 13 percent since the drought began. In short, California's farm economy is thriving and growing overall, despite the worst drought ever recorded in the state. Particular crops and counties have not fared so well, notes Jeffrey Michael, an economist at University of the Pacific in Stockton. But overall, the drought did not keep California agriculture down, reflecting great resilience among the state's farmers. "The actual results have been surprisingly strong," Michael said. The data on income from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis show that total earnings (revenue minus expenses) on California farms were up about \$2.6 billion, to \$18.6 billion, from 2012 to 2014, the most recent year available. Total earnings did decline slightly in 2014 compared to 2013, although revenues increased 6 percent. Both wages and employment in agriculture increased annually from 2012 to 2015, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, reaching \$12.7 billion and 421,213 jobs in 2015. Average annual wages per employee reached \$30,266 in 2015, an increase of 13.6 percent over the four-year drought period. The Pacific Institute, a nonpartisan think tank based in Oakland,

released a report in August 2015 that is one of the only comprehensive reviews so far of agricultural data on the drought. It confirms that California agriculture as a whole continues to prosper, although it has also changed significantly. [Link](#)

### **Lack in a Land of Plenty: Advocates Seed Solutions in Food Deserts (Equal Voice 7/29)**

At one of only two grocery stores in this village with about 1,200 residents, there is no produce aisle – just a few shelves between the packaged goods. There are no green beans, no lettuce. The grapefruits feel soft inside their plastic netting. Apples cannot be located; asparagus spears, dry as twigs, splinter at the touch. Outside the supermarket, the rural Northern Michigan landscape is dotted with groves of trees, fields where deer poke their heads up, and a river filled with trout. But, the woods here hold mostly trailers, many of them rentals; the fields are not being farmed; and inside the supermarket, the produce is old and in short supply. Even if customers had the money to buy fresh fruits and vegetables, there is little available. In Letcher County, Kentucky, many families live half a mile or more from the nearest grocery store. This might not be a problem, but almost 14 percent of all households in the rural county do not have access to a vehicle to get to a store, and public transportation is difficult to come by... About 23.5 million people live in food deserts in the United States, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Economic Research Service, and 2.3 million people are housed in impoverished areas more than 10 miles from a grocery store. "To qualify as a food desert," according to the USDA, "at least one third percent of a geographic tract's population, or a minimum of 500 people, must have low access to a supermarket or large grocery store." The USDA defines "low access" as "more than one mile from a supermarket or large grocery store in urban areas and more than 10 miles in rural areas." [Link](#)

### **Few people aware of health benefits of mushrooms, reveals national survey (Medical News 7/28)**

Relatively few people are aware of the health benefits of mushrooms, according to a new national survey by University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences researchers. Only 18.5 percent of survey respondents said they knew the health benefits of mushrooms, according to the online survey of 674 consumers. "Potentially, increasing knowledge about health benefits would be useful to the mushroom industry," said Lisa House, a UF/IFAS professor of food and resource economics and an investigator for the study. Sue Percival, a UF/IFAS professor and chair of the department of food science and human nutrition and principal investigator for the study, published a study last year that documented how shiitake mushrooms can boost immunity. They're also low in calories, fat-free, cholesterol-free, low in sodium, and they're the leading source of the antioxidant selenium in the produce aisle, according to the National Mushroom Council. [Link](#)

### **Anger, suspicions remain after water vote (Tallahassee Democrat 7/30)**

People suspicious of Gov. Rick Scott's environmental agenda were hardly surprised last week when the Environmental Regulation Commission signed off on controversial new limits for toxic compounds that can go into Florida's surface waters. They say the deck was stacked when the Department of Environmental Protection took the standards to the commission for approval, the latest step in a years-long effort to modernize out-of-date limits under the federal Clean Water Act... Voting against it were Adam Gelber, a Miami Beach biologist and senior project manager for Atkins North America, and Joe Joyce, director of the Center for Leadership at the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. Linda Young, executive director of the Florida Clean Water Network, said the outcome of the vote probably would have been different had the commission been operating with all seven members. "I'm feeling like that was deliberate, to have those seats empty," she said. "People not only feel like their waters are being threatened but also that that's not democracy. That's not what we expect from our government. And people are mad." [Link](#)

### **Grain sorghum could see best yield in years (Standard-Times 7/30)**

Grain sorghum harvest is underway across the Concho Valley and parts of the Big Country, and some early predictions suggest it could be the best crop in years. Kenny Gully, who farms in the "golden triangle" of Eola, Vick and Vancourt, 21 miles east of San Angelo, is excited about the crop. "We are about a week out from harvest, but it looks good and might exceed average yields this year," he said. He said the heat, which reached triple digits the past three weeks, brought some stress to the grain sorghum — also called milo or maize — but it was far enough along in its growing cycle that it should be OK. Donnie Schwertner, owner of Kasberg Grain Co. at Miles, 17 miles northeast of San Angelo, said the firm took in a few loads of milo last week... According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service, about 30 percent of the milo crop has been harvested in Texas, with 80 percent headed and 50 percent mature and awaiting harvest. The sorghum harvest was near completion in the Coastal Bend last week, with normal yields reported. Meanwhile, NASS reports 82 percent of the Lone Star State's cotton is squaring, with 36 percent setting bolls and 6 percent of bolls opening. Cotton is looking good but could have used a rain the past week, Gully said Friday. Dryland cotton — crops that depend solely on rainfall — is holding up despite excess afternoon heat. It just started blooming and is in the flowering stage, and can hold on for several

weeks before the next rain. [Link](#)

### **Chicken and Egg Update (Lancaster Farming 7/22)**

United States egg production totaled 8.21 billion during June 2016, up 9 percent from last year. Production included 7.10 billion table eggs, and 1.11 billion hatching eggs, of which 1.02 billion were broiler - type and 96 million were egg - type. The total number of layers during June 2016 averaged 359 million, up 8 percent from last year. June egg production per 100 layers was 2,285 eggs, up 1 percent from June 2015. All layers in the United States on July 1, 2016 totaled 358 million, up 8 percent from last year. The 358 million layers consisted of 300 million layers producing table or market type eggs, 54.4 million layers producing broiler - type hatching eggs, and 3.70 million layers producing egg - type hatching egg s. Rate of lay per day on July 1, 2016, averaged 76.1 eggs per 100 layers, up 1 percent from July 1, 2015. [Link](#)

### **Virginia Apple and Peach Production Down (Lancaster Farming 7/31)**

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has announced that peach production in Virginia in 2015 was 5,120 tons — 10.2 million pounds — down 180 tons from 2014. Utilized production totaled 10.2 million pounds, an increase of 160,000 pounds from 2014. Value of utilized production totaled \$6.83 million, an increase of 16 percent from 2014. The average price received per ton was estimated at \$1,340, an increase of \$170 per ton from 2014. Bearing acres were estimated at 1,200 acres, unchanged from 2014, with an average yield of 4.27 tons — 8,540 pounds — per acre, down 0.15 tons — 300 pounds — from 2014. Based on utilized production, Virginia ranks 14th in the nation for peach production. These figures were compiled by the Virginia Field Office of the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. The NASS Agricultural Yield Survey, conducted at the beginning of July, queried 125 farms. [Link](#)

### **Cattle on Feed, Cold Storage but no Cattle Inventory report (Stillwater News Press 7/31)**

The July Cattle on Feed report confirms that the feedlot situation continues to improve in 2016. Feedlot placements in June were up year over year but less than expected at 103 percent of last year. June marketings were as expected at 109 percent of last year; the largest June marketing level since 2012. The July 1 feedlot inventory was 101 percent of last year, up slightly less than expected as a result of the smaller placements. The result of herd expansion in 2014 and 2015 was a Jan. 1, 2016 estimate of a 5.3 percent year over year increase in feeder cattle supplies. Since February, feedlots have placed 572,000 more cattle compared to the same period last year. However, over the same period feedlots have accelerated marketings to clean up the backlog that crashed fed cattle markets in late 2015. Feedlot marketings since February have increased 478,000 head compared to one year ago. With the increase in marketings nearly matching the increase in placements, feedlot inventories are growing only slowly. In the latest weekly data, steer carcass weights were 875 pounds, 10 pounds less year over year, with heifer carcass weights down five pounds at 798 pounds. [Link](#)

### *Food, Nutrition, & Consumer Services*

#### **Audrey Rowe: Ending Summer Hunger: A Team Effort (3BL Media 7/28)**

A staggering 15.3 million American children live in food insecure households. Right here in our own country, maybe even in your own neighborhood, there are children who have become used to living with the sounds of a growling stomach. These are kids who aren't lucky enough to be picky eaters; who don't have the luxury of asking "What's for dinner tonight?" but instead, ask "Are we having dinner tonight?" Summer can be a particularly difficult time for these families. Ensuring children have consistent access to nutritious meals is even more challenging when school is out and kids and teens no longer receive free and reduced-price meals through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. The issue of food insecurity is incredibly complex and the solution, even more so. But we are making great strides in the fight against summer hunger, and one thing is overwhelmingly clear: Coordination and collaboration are key. They say it takes a village to raise a child. I say it takes a village to feed a child. USDA's summer meals programs provide balanced meals at no cost to kids and teens. Sites are located across the country in areas with a high population of families who receive free and reduced-price meals. This helps fill the gap for children who rely on school meals throughout the year. [Link](#)

#### **Audrey Rowe: Summer Meals: Giving Families the Support They Need (USAg Net 7/29)**

As a mother and grandmother, I understand the importance of ensuring that America's children are provided with nutritious meals every day. My grandchildren, who are 5 and 8, are just like all children -- infinitely curious and filled with energy, love, and joy. Young children should be playing and learning -- not worried about where their next meal will come from. But for many children, school meals are their only source of nutrition, which is why USDA's Summer Meals Programs are so important. Summer Meals provide kids with the nutrition they need when school is out, and a safe haven where they can play and

learn to keep their minds and bodies active during the summer months. The availability of these meals, which are served at no cost to children 18 and under, also reduces the financial burden on caretakers when school is out of session. In the summer of 2015, nearly 191 million meals were served to children and teens at more than 66,000 sites across the country. With the help of our partners, we pulled off an amazing feat-- roughly 3.8 million children and teens were served by the program. This summer we are striving to reach even more children in our quest to build stronger, healthier communities and ensure all kids have the opportunity to thrive when school returns in the fall. [Link](#)

### **USDA Puts the Final Touches on Michelle Obama's School-Nutrition Legacy (Take Part 7/29)**

A theory: The reason processed, perfectly packaged Lunchables, full of things such as watery ham, crackers, and cheese, became so popular is that they looked and tasted better than what school cafeterias served up in the 1990s. In middle school, my own choices were between old heat-lamp-warmed fries, wobbly chicken tenders, and pizza. Somehow, I survived off a diet of Flamin' Hot Cheetos and water, which the lunch powers that be at my school allowed me to eat five days a week for years. Kids aren't so unlucky today. School lunches now might include produce from a playground garden, fresh vegetables, cafeteria-made soups, and more. As for Lunchables? They may still be around, but many children have developed more discerning tastes. Much of this is due to the success of the 2010 Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, which sparked the first major school food reform in more than a decade. In addition to \$4.5 billion in funding, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act sought to end childhood hunger by making school lunch free for more low-income kids, stopping childhood obesity with an improved wellness policies, paying better attention to all foods—including snacks—sold during the school day, and providing better training for food service professionals, many of whom reheated foods more often than they cooked them. Now, the USDA has finalized the last major rules of this program. "Until this administration, school food was in the backwater," said Toni Liquori, executive director of School Food Focus, a national advocacy group. "It wasn't a concern to many people, but Michelle Obama made it hit center stage." As the Obama administration and the first lady prepare to leave the White House, they are putting the finishing touches on their school food legacy. On July 21, the USDA announced four new final rules that codify many of the school food policies Obama has championed. These rules build on the same goals of the original Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. One finalized rule, the Smart Snacks in School rule, defines nutritional standards foods will have to meet to be sold or marketed in schools. (States, however, will maintain the ability to "allow limited exemptions to school-sponsored fundraisers during the school day," according to a USDA statement.) [Link](#)

### **WOMEN IN AG: FEEDING KIDS IN THE SUMMER (Successful Farming 7/28)**

The temperature gauge is north of 90°F. The air is thick with humidity and the buzzing of insects. Yet two ladies wait, under the stingy shade of a picnic shelter, at a community park. Armed with coolers full of green beans, pears, sweet potato fries, chicken sandwiches and milk, these school nutrition professionals are waiting for children to come eat lunch. Summer vacation is often thought of as a carefree time for kids. A time to sleep late, play with friends, and not have to worry about homework... The U.S. Department of Agriculture oversees the Summer Food Service Program. Federally funded and administered by each state, the summer meals program reimburses schools or other sponsors who serve free, healthy meals to children under age 18 in low-income areas during the summer. In addition to providing oversight and funding, USDA also provides promotional materials to help children know where summer feeding sites are located. The Southeast United Dairy Industry Association has also been a supporter of summer meals. Both the banner advertising the summer feeding site I visited (pictured above) and the cooler carrying the food were provided to the school nutrition program from SUDIA. School Nutrition staff are leading the charge, preparing and serving meals during the summer months in schools or off-site. The site I visited in a rural eastern North Carolina county had been moved from a school to the community park because it was closer to neighborhoods. Still, in a rural county, many kids live too far from town to walk to lunch. [Link](#)

### **Toll-free hunger hotline allows struggling Hoosiers to access local food help (Madison Courier 7/28)**

Hunger Free America has launched a new campaign to make it easier for Americans to obtain food and for anyone to volunteer in the most effective ways to end hunger. In Indiana, nearly one in seven adults and one in four children live in households that can't always afford enough food. The United States Department of Agriculture funds a toll-free hotline to make it easier for them to access food from both private and governmental resources... Hunger Free America is operating the hotline nationwide as part of a USDA National Hunger Clearinghouse contract. The National Hunger Hotline staff connects callers with emergency food providers in their community, government assistance, nutritional assistance programs, and various services that promote self-sufficiency. During summer months, the hotline provides information about meal sites where children 18 years old and under can get free, nutritious meals through the USDA Summer Food Service Program. Free summer meals are offered in all 50 states at participating schools, libraries, pools, and other local sites, funded by the federal government. In 2015, a total of 164

million meals and snacks were served to typically low-income children. Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services Kevin Concannon highlights the importance of the hotline in the fight against hunger. "USDA's nutrition assistance programs provide a nutrition safety net, helping to put food on the table in households across America. And the toll-free hotline is there for those in need to access this assistance, as well as help provided by private resources." [Link](#)

### **Welfare Fraud Pilot Program Could Save Hundreds of Millions (Maine Public Broadcasting 7/29)**

Five states have been running a welfare fraud prevention pilot program that supporters say could save taxpayers across the country hundreds of millions of dollars a year. Two members of Maine's Congressional Delegation say they would like to the system used nationwide. The National Accuracy Clearinghouse compares databases of food stamp recipients in five southern states, searching for applicants who are trying get benefits in more than one state. In the first year the savings were reported at over \$5 million, even though only a very small fraction of recipients have claimed benefits in two or more states. But with more than 45 million Americans now receiving benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, it's estimated that the fraud prevention program could save more than \$100 million a year if adopted in all states. Independent U.S. Sen. Angus King of Maine says he supports the program. "I think it makes sense, I mean nobody is for fraud, and we are talking about scarce taxpayers dollars here and to the extent we can diminish fraud, we should," he says. The five states using the pilot program say it also reduces mistakes, as the database is updated daily, allowing eligibility screeners to respond quickly. [Link](#)

### **New Mexico studies inefficiencies in aid dispersal to poor (Associated Press/KOB4/News Times/Greenwich Time/News Channel 10/KRWG/KRQE/Deming Headlight/The Hour/Stamford Advocate 7/29)**

Advocates for recipients of food aid and Medicaid health care are urging the New Mexico Legislature to keep tabs on wasteful bureaucratic problems that can cause aid beneficiaries to submit applications repeatedly and unnecessarily. An attorney for the New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty that represents aid beneficiaries on Friday briefed members of a legislative committee that oversees the state Human Services Department. The center says the Legislature can help monitor the agency's progress in accurately and efficiently disbursing Medicaid health care benefits and emergency food aid under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, previously known as food stamps. Separately, a federal judge recently has recommended the Human Service Department be held in contempt and pay for a court-appointed monitor to ensure better handling of federally funded benefits. [Link](#)

### **State partially lifts ban on drug felons applying for food stamps (KTOO Public Media/Alaska Public Media 7/28)**

People with drug felonies can now apply for food stamps in Alaska. With the signing of Senate Bill 91, the state's criminal justice reform bill, the state partially opted-out of the 1996 federally-imposed lifetime ban. Individuals can now apply, but they have to prove that they are complying with parole and substance abuse treatment requirements.

Ivory Mack, 61, committed a drug felony nearly 20 years ago. These days, she works at Bean's Cafe, a soup kitchen in downtown Anchorage. Standing in a small office, Mack handed out vitamins and socks through a half-open door. "Your uncle?" she asked one of the clients as he looked through a box of socks. "What about your uncle? He need a pair, too? Well, take two pair." She used to be on the other side of that door. Mack said she spent about six years hanging out at Bean's and the Brother Francis Shelter when she was fighting a nearly four-decade-long drug addiction. "Started as a kid taking speed," she said. "No one wants to be fat, you know. So I was on that. Body image. I was anorexic, I went through it all."

[Link](#)

### **State to exempt homeless from SNAP requirements (Charleston Gazette-Mail 7/30)**

Homeless people in West Virginia will not have to find work or training to receive food-stamp benefits, the state Department of Health and Human Resources has decided. The state plans to exempt homeless people by October from a requirement in nine West Virginia counties stating a person must work or train 20 hours per week, or lose food stamps after three months, said Allison Adler, a spokeswoman for DHHR. "This issue has been discussed with the USDA [Food and Nutrition Service] and the homeless population is expected to be exempted from the changes in SNAP for Able Bodied Adults without Dependents," Adler wrote in an email to the Gazette-Mail. The DHHR announced late last year it would reinstate a federal requirement that recipients of the state's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program meet a monthly work or training requirement of 20 hours per week, or lose benefits after three months. The work or training requirement took effect in January and affects recipients in counties with the lowest unemployment: Berkeley, Cabell, Harrison, Jefferson, Kanawha, Marion, Monongalia, Morgan and Putnam. It affects those who fall into the category of "able-bodied adults without dependents" — those who are between the ages of 18 to 49, are not disabled, don't have dependents and don't qualify for an exemption. SNAP recipients who don't comply with the guidelines after three months are removed from

the program. Adler said Wednesday the state will exempt those who are residents of homeless shelters and those who don't stay at the same place for more than 90 days. The state does not have an estimate for how many homeless people will regain SNAP benefits because of the exemption. [Link](#)

#### **Program doubles SNAP dollars spent at farmers' market (The Southern Illinoisan 7/31)**

The Downtown Community Farmers Market is making local food more accessible through a program called Double Up Food Bucks that doubles the value of SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits, formerly known as food stamps, to spend on fresh, locally grown produce. "It's a win-win-win situation," Angie Kuehl, Plan4Health educator with Jackson County Health Department, said. "It's a win for the SNAP shoppers, who see their food dollars go farther. It's a win for farmers who sell more products, and it's a win for the community when people are both eating fruits and vegetables and shopping local." Participating in Double Up Food Bucks is easy. Shoppers take their Illinois LINK card to the market information table, swipe their card using an electronic card reader, and receive tokens to spend on fresh local food. The Double Up Food Bucks program means that SNAP shoppers receive double the amount in tokens, with up to \$20 in SNAP benefits being matched through this special incentive program. For example, a family that spends \$10 in SNAP benefits at the Downtown Community Farmers Market receives an additional \$10 in Double Up Food Bucks, giving the family \$20 of tokens to spend at the farmers market. [Link](#)

#### **Las Cruces WIC Program Celebrates World Breastfeeding Week (KRWG 7/29)**

The New Mexico Department of Health's Las Cruces Women, Infants, Children program (WIC) will host its annual World Breastfeeding Week celebration Friday, August 5th from 1:30-4:00 p.m. at the Las Cruces Central Public Health Office, 1170 N. Solano Dr. The no cost celebration will include raffles, games, goodies and snacks & refreshments. SaferNM will also be providing free car seat safety checks. Olympian University College of Hair will be on hand to provide moms some much-deserved pampering and hair care. The event aims to strengthen local support for breastfeeding and to improve the health of children and women in the community. It is one of many similar events that take place annually during World Breastfeeding Week (August 1st – 7th). "This and similar events statewide raise awareness of breastfeeding, encourages the formation of support networks between breastfeeding women, and aims to normalize breastfeeding as a part of daily life," said Department of Health Secretary Designate Lynn Gallagher. "Our New Mexico WIC program is helping make those goals a reality on daily basis in our state." [Link](#)

#### **Finding time for breast-feeding in the workplace (Spokane Journal 7/28)**

For many Spokane-area mothers, returning to work also means finding both the time and privacy to be able to breast-feed their newborn, or to express breast milk during work hours. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention's most recent Breast Feeding Report Card, released in 2013, showed that 77 percent of new mothers were breast-feeding their babies, up from 71 percent a decade ago. Of those, almost half were continuing to do so for at least the recommended six months. The CDC lists the ability to accommodate breast-feeding as beneficial for both mothers and their employers in terms of improved productivity and staff loyalty. Additional listed benefits include an enhanced public image of the employer, as well as decreased absenteeism, health care costs, and employee turnover... Brewer says all six Spokane-area WIC locations offer free breast-feeding classes, either weekly or monthly. The program also helps women obtain breast pumps and provides breast-feeding consultations, support groups, and weight checks for newborns, along with other hands-on support services. Briana Loveall is one Spokane-area mother who says she has found WIC to be a helpful resource for information and services. [Link](#)

#### **Report: State high on food insecurity list (Portales News-Tribune/Clovis News Journal 7/29)**

One-in-three children in New Mexico struggles with food insecurity, according to Presbyterian Healthcare Services Director of Community Health Leigh Caswell. The 2016 "Map the Meal Gap" report by Feeding America shows that as of two years ago, New Mexico had the second highest child food-insecurity rate in the nation — 27.2 percent — while 17.8 percent of people in Curry County were faced with hunger. These statistics were the motivation behind Clovis' Plains Regional Medical Center staff joining the effort to prevent child hunger. "I'm really passionate about this community," said PRMC Support Services Manager for Food and Nutrition April Goff. "Whenever I learned the statistics about how many kids are receiving and qualifying for these meals here in Clovis, I think we just knew we had to do something to help out the community and felt it was a really great opportunity to get involved." [Link](#)

#### **Free meals for all elementary students at Tulsa Public Schools (KTUL 7/29)**

Parents and guardians of elementary students at Tulsa Public Schools no longer have to apply for free and reduced meal applications. Under the USDA's Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), all students enrolled in elementary grades at TPS are eligible to receive breakfast and lunch free of charge during the 2016-2017 school year. "We are so pleased to be able to offer nutritious meals to all of our elementary school students at no cost to families," said Superintendent Deborah Gist. The Community Eligibility Provision is

effective for TPS elementary students for the next five years. "This is our pilot year for district participation in the Community Eligibility Provision, so we're building strong foundations by starting with our youngest learners in year one," said Gist. [Link](#)

### **Summer meal programs in county serve 10,000 kids (Associated Press/Daily Herald/The Republic/Pharos-Tribune/Journal-Gazette 7/29)**

Cass County schools and churches served more than 10,000 meals to local students during the summer months, filling a need and stomachs of many area kids. The county had a total of six locations for free meals through the federally funded Summer Food Service Program, where kids 18 years old and younger could come and eat a free lunch or breakfast during June and July. The program wrapped up last week. Kelley Lease, food service director at Logansport Community School Corp., said workers gave out almost 4,400 lunches and served 2,300 breakfasts to corporation students during the month of June. The program, which serviced summer school students and walk-ins at the three open locations, lasted until July 8. Close to 56 percent of Logansport students and nearly 41 percent of kids at Southeastern School Corp. received free or reduced-priced meals last school year. That number is even higher at some LCSC schools, such as Columbia elementary and middle schools on the city's north side. "(We're) just making sure they have access to healthy meals all summer long," Lease said. "That's what we're trying to accomplish." At Southeastern's three summer lunch sites, 2,554 kids received free meals. Even though that's lower than last year's total of about 2,700 students, the program lasted seven days less than last summer and ended on July 21, the corporation's food service director, Lisa Adams said. [Link](#)

### **Summer food programs expand as child poverty increases (Cape Cod Times 7/30)**

On a typical summer day, it looks as though the basement kitchen at the Church of the Holy Spirit is about to pack up for a giant picnic. Boxes of fruit snacks and bananas take up space in the classrooms, while dozens of coolers line the basement halls. It is a feast, indeed, but one with a secular mission — using federal funds to bring free lunches to the lower-income children of the Lower and Outer Cape. The Summer Food Service Program on the Lower Cape started in 2013 with five sites in Truro, Wellfleet, Eastham and Chatham, organizer Ruth Campbell said. "We have 17 sites now," Campbell said. "We started all of these new. We kind of started from scratch." More established in other locations on the Cape such as Hyannis, summer food service programs fill in the gaps left by the closing of free and reduced price school lunches in the summer. Unlike school lunch programs — for which individual families must qualify economically — the summer lunch program is available to youngsters in census blocks and tracts where 50 percent of the children live in households making at or below the federal poverty level. [Link](#)

### **Warren meals program provided fuel for summer activities (The Northern Virginia Daily 7/31)**

A growing number of kids have been eating lunch through Warren County Public Schools' summer food service program. SueAnn Fox, food and nutrition services coordinator for WCPS, said the program has fed about 150 children daily since schools let out for the summer. Any youth 18 or younger could come to E. Wilson Morrison Elementary School for lunch Monday through Thursday. Fox said the program saw 10 to 15 walk-ins each day. "We wanted to make it so that any child who was hungry can come in and eat," she said. Parents could accompany their kids and eat with them for a few dollars, and Fox said the atmosphere was friendly and relaxed. She said a good number of participating children were taking part in programs like School's Out, the district's 21st Century Learning program. Each meal served would be balanced and nutritious. "We try to make sure there's two fruits, two vegetables, milk, a grain ... and then a protein," she said. "It's the same formula as the National School Lunch Program." [Link](#)

### **Summer school improves literacy skills (Journal-Advocate 7/29)**

It may be summer vacation, but some students are still getting an opportunity to learn. For the past three weeks RE-1 Valley School District has been offering a summer school program at Ayres Elementary for kindergarten through fourth grade students. This is the third year in a row the district has received a grant from the state to offer a developmental summer school program. All English Language Learner students were invited to participate in this year's program, which has an Olympics theme and a focus on literacy. There are approximately 121 students with varying reading abilities attending the program, which is held in the mornings Monday through Friday. The students are split up into small groups amongst 22 different teachers... Throughout the program, the district provided transportation to the school for students who need it. Also, for the last three weeks Ayres Elementary was one of the sites for RE-1's Summer Food Service Program offerings with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. A morning snack and lunch was provided for the students. [Link](#)

### **Students discover fruits and vegetables (Desert Dispatch 7/30)**

Wael Elatar remembers the first days after Barstow Unified School District implemented new nutrition standards required by the subsidized national school lunch program. "We had some students look at the cauliflower and said 'what is that?' " the district's business manager and chief business official said. "They never seen cauliflower. It's not something they were seeing for many years at home," he said. "You know



we live in a world right now, everything is fast food. Not necessary a good healthy type of food." Not only were some students not eating the right foods, some students in the district were possibly facing hunger on a daily basis. About 42 percent of annual household income in Barstow falls within \$10,000 to \$35,000, according to recent San Bernardino County data. And 23 percent of Barstow residents fall under the poverty level. A recent homeless counts suggests that about 100 of students in the school district do not have a permanent roof over their head during after school hours. [Link](#)

### **Teacher-turned-entrepreneur takes on healthy snack business (Sun Sentinel 7/29)**

Former elementary school teacher Gigi Twist, who developed grab-and-go snack Upfront Granola, admits she used to bring donuts or other sweet treats as a reward for her 5th graders. "It was the '80s," she said. "I knew I should be doing something healthier." After she left teaching and experienced some health problems, Twist searched for a new breakfast food but found most were loaded with chemicals. So she developed her own granola, packaging it for gifts. A friend suggested she sell the granola, and in 2011, Boca Raton-based Upfront Foods was born. Upfront Foods makes single-serving granola with organic and natural ingredients. The product is sold online through Amazon and at 26 Whole Foods Market stores in Florida. In 2015, Upfront Food reached its goal of more than \$100,000 in sales. "Upfront Granola has been selling very well in our stores, especially when the granola is cross-merchandised near the yogurts in the dairy department," said Chris Perez, regional grocery merchandiser for Whole Foods. In late June, Twist was named winner of the Entrepreneur Magazine/Jim Moran Institute entrepreneurial competition in Fort Lauderdale. After pitching her business in a video, Twist was one of five finalists invited to make a live pitch in front of Entrepreneur Magazine editor-in-chief Amy Cosper and local judges. [Link](#)

### **Hunger Free America launches hotline awareness campaign (Daily Times 7/29)**

Hunger Free America has launched new campaigns to make it easier for hungry Americans to obtain food and for anyone to volunteer in the most effective ways to end hunger. [Link](#)

### **10 Common Myths About Nutrition Debunked Once & For All (Bustle 7/28)**

Is it just me, or in this day and age does everyone seem to have an opinion on foods you're eating and their nutrition value? Perhaps it's just the circles I run with, but I don't think I can pick up a fork without someone offering up some myths about nutrition that are just that — myths. Likely, you are used to hearing rumors about nutrition, too, whether you've realized they're rumors yet or not. That's why I rounded up some facts on the topics backed by expert commentary in order to help expose these inaccuracies and get us all on the right track with the right information. You know those people I'm talking about right? You sit down at a table in the office cafeteria and the colleague next to you immediately says something in the order of, "You're going to eat *that*? Do you know how bad that is for you?" Then, you're left sitting there questioning the meal, and your entire diet in general. The truth might have been that your lunch was a perfectly fine one — perhaps you were eating something a little heavy on the carbs, but they were the right carbs — but now you're skipping the lunch altogether and sulking (not to mention, *so hungry*). [Link](#)

### **U.S. rejects Whole Foods' trademark claim as 'World's Healthiest Grocery Store' (Chicago Tribune 7/28)**

Whole Foods Market says it's "America's Healthiest Grocery Store." Now, the grocery chain is looking to update its slogan to reflect a loftier moniker: "World's Healthiest Grocery Store." Unfortunately for the grocer's efforts, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office recently rejected its application to register that slogan. Whole Foods will have six months to update and refile the case and may choose not to do so, although that seems unlikely.

On top of that, Whole Foods's attempts to break into the global market has been slow. It launched its first international outlet 14 years ago and has opened just 19 since, in just three countries. [Link](#)

### **Fort Smith Family Accused of Food Stamp Fraud Focus of Additional Investigations (Arkansas Business 8/1)**

You may have heard that the feds seized nearly \$157,000 from the father-and-son pair who have been accused of running an elaborate food stamp fraud that involved 94 beneficiaries. The U.S. government recently filed a civil lawsuit in U.S. District Court in the Western District to keep the money it took from Raja Zaman and his son, Haroon "Harry" Zaman, who owns several Fort Smith convenience stores. But did you know the Zamans are part of an ongoing criminal investigation by the FBI, the IRS and the U.S. Department of Agriculture? If you recall, the feds also seized the family's 2002 Dodge Ram, 2007 Acura and 2010 Acura and filed a civil suit to have the property forfeited. Federal prosecutors asked in July that the civil case be put on hold for three months or until the "related criminal investigation is resolved," whichever is sooner. An attorney for Harry Zaman didn't have a problem with the delay, and U.S. District Court Judge P.K. Holmes III agreed to it. [Link](#)

### **Timeline on fraud investigation hazy, HSD says (New Mexico Tribune 7/29)**

An attorney for the state Human Services Department told state lawmakers Friday he wasn't sure how long an internal investigation of alleged systemic fraud within his agency would take to complete. But he offered his best guess. "My understanding is that the inspector general plans to have more by this fall," HSD General Counsel Christopher Collins told lawmakers in response to a question from state Sen. Jacob Candelaria, D-Albuquerque. Collins made the comments in an interim Legislative Health and Human Services Committee hearing where lawmakers examined the food stamp scandal that has rocked headlines for the past three months. In May, HSD's inspector general announced an investigation into allegations that department officials falsified emergency food aid applications to deny benefits to qualified applicants. Collins also said the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of the Inspector General is helping HSD and is not conducting its own investigation of the matter. "The USDA inspector general is working with the state office of the inspector general with this investigation," Collins said, adding that the federal department "accepted the methodology" used in the state investigation. Paul Feeney, deputy counsel with the USDA Office of the Inspector General, would not confirm the extent of the federal agency's role in the investigation. [Link](#)

### *Food Safety*

#### **USDA rules for humane handling (Agriview 7/29)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service has announced changes to improve humane-handling inspections at facilities that produce veal-calf meat. With the change, the service will begin to require that veal calves brought to slaughter, but which cannot rise and walk, be promptly and humanely euthanized — and prohibited from entering the food supply. Previously, the service allowed veal calves that are unable to rise from a recumbent position to be set aside and warmed or rested, and presented for slaughter if they regained the ability to walk. The service has found that the practice may contribute to inhumane treatment of veal calves. The change will improve compliance with the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act by encouraging improved treatment of veal calves, as well as improve inspection efficiency by allowing the service's inspection-program personnel to devote more time to activities related to food safety. Additionally, after review and consideration of comments to the proposed rule, the service is amending the regulations by removing a provision that required ante-mortem inspection to be conducted in pens. The final rule makes clear that Food Safety and Inspection Service inspectors have the authority to conduct ante-mortem inspection and condemn non-ambulatory disabled veal calves the moment they arrive on establishment premises. [Link](#)

#### **How would Costco treat chickens? Latest technology is in plans for birds, workers at Fremont-area plant (Omaha World-Herald 7/31)**

Opponents have lodged a long list of complaints against the chicken-processing operation Costco wants to build in Fremont, pushing back with concerns about pollution, illegal immigrant workers and whether farmers will get a fair shake. But there has been little talk about the welfare of the birds or of the people who will slaughter them, areas where activists nationally have been agitating for change — and having some recent success. The Fremont plant will face scrutiny from activists and Costco shoppers alike, as Costco makes its first move into owning and slaughtering its own livestock. Activists are fighting major U.S. chicken processors on many fronts, including a push to end a common slaughter process in which workers hang live, flapping birds by their feet, then send them down a line where they are stunned in water with an electric current, have their throats slit and are dunked in scalding water to loosen their feathers. The process sometimes fails, sending chickens to be scalded alive — more than 675,000 last year, according to USDA records, still a small fraction of the 8.8 billion chickens slaughtered in the U.S. annually. [Link](#)

#### **Lesson From General Mills Flour Recall? Don't Eat Raw Cookie Dough Or Batter (Tech Times 7/31)**

Flour is one of the most basic ingredients in baking, but federal health investigators are advising residents in the United States to steer clear of it. Why? The product is currently in close scrutiny because it has reportedly been contaminated with a potentially deadly microbe that is often found in animal feces, investigators say. Indeed, in early June, American food company General Mills announced the recall of approximately 10 million pounds of flour amid suspicion of E.coli contamination. One month later, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) warned customers not to swipe a bite of dough or lick batter from a bowl because it may cause infection. As of July 31, about 46 people in 21 states have been sickened by the E.coli-tainted flour, with 45 million pounds of it expected to be recalled, officials report... Officials say the recall is a small fraction of the 2.5 billion pounds of flour produced by General Mills every year. The following unbleached, all-purpose and self-rising batches of flour were recalled: varieties from Gold Medal, General Mills, Signature Kitchens and Wondra flour brands. Several cake mixes, a pancake mix and a biscuit mix from General Mills were also withdrawn. Meanwhile, a statement from General Mills says the company does not believe that the facility in Kansas City is the main source of the contamination. Still, the company has increased cleaning protocols out of caution. "Only a small sub-set of flour produced at

the Kansas City plant has been traced back to individuals who have become ill," General Mills tells The Associated Press. "To date, E. coli has not been found in testing of the manufacturing facility." [Link](#)

### **Hemp Dawgs break food barrier at Kentucky State Fair (11 Alive Atlanta 7/31)**

Sizzling on grills at the Kentucky State Fair, Kentucky Hemp Dawgs will be served as a first-time competitor with commodity beef hot dogs, rib eye sandwiches and hamburgers trucked in from out-of-state. A dash of hemp oil lends "roasted nut flavor," while a sprinkling of crushed hemp hearts adds bite to the quarter-pound bratwurst to be sold for around \$6. "Some people will assume it tastes like marijuana, but there is a major difference," said Webb's Butcher Block manager Trey Webb, who is overseeing production of 2,000 Hemp Dawgs from two Henry County steers at the family business in Paynesville. "It has a nice, roasted nut flavor to it." The Hemp Dawg represents a breakthrough for Kentucky cattle farmers, whose young steers are shipped out west to be fattened in feed lots. For decades, fairgoers have chomped on conventional beef trucked in by Sysco from all over the U.S. to grills manned by 40 workers at Kentucky Cattlemen's food outlets. Hemp contains no THC, the high-inducing compound in marijuana... This week, farmer David Neville got help from the office of U.S. Rep. Thomas Massie, R-Ky., to navigate U.S. Department of Agriculture guidelines for USDA inspectors' approval required to process hemp hearts and hemp oil into new meat products. [Link](#)

### **Santana Black Label Beef Jerky Recalled for Lack of Inspection (Food Poisoning Bulletin 7/31)**

Santana's Black Label Gourmet Beef Jerky of Glendale, Ariz. is recalling approximately 295 pounds of beef jerky products for lack of inspection. Consumers who have purchased these products should not eat them... The recalled products are marked with a false establishment number "EST. 090115" inside the mark of inspection, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. They were shipped to distributors and retail locations in Arizona. [Link](#)

### **Hardwick farm beef products part of recall (Telegram & Gazette 7/29)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has ordered a New Hampshire farm to recall around 8,800 pounds of raw beef products, including beef sold last month by Chestnut Farms in Hardwick, that may be contaminated with E. coli, the agency's Food Safety and Inspection Service announced this week. The recall was issued after the FSIS was notified of a cluster of E. coli illnesses affecting 14 people - 10 from New Hampshire, two from Massachusetts, one from Maine, and one from Vermont. The illnesses were traced back to the PT Farms, a Haverhill, N.H., slaughterhouse and beef processor. The raw, intact and non-intact beef product items, including ground beef, ground beef patties, and other sub-primal cuts were produced between June 6 and June 16, according to the USDA. Various weights and sizes of raw and raw non-intact beef products, packed in cardboard boxes, from the following farms are subject to the recall: Chestnut Farms, PT Farm, Miles Smith Farm and Robie Farm. The products bear establishment number M8868 inside the USDA mark of inspection. Consumers who have purchased these products are urged not to consume them; they should be thrown away or returned to the place of purchase. [Link](#)

### **CDC: Salmonella from backyard chickens cases double (Dayton Daily News 7/31)**

Salmonella cases linked to chickens raised in backyards have more than doubled in the U.S. this year and are expected to continue to increase as more people turn to raising their own poultry, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The trend that has led to the increase - people raising chicken in backyard coops - is happening locally. Several Dayton area communities are considering allowing their residents to keep chickens in their yards. Dayton used an online survey to poll residents on the issue. Earlier this month, the city shared the results online which showed 79 percent, out of 1,799 respondents, said they were in favor of changing Dayton's zoning code to allow chickens to be raised in the city... Young children who live in homes with live poultry have the greatest risk for developing salmonella, Nichols said. "We start to see these cases pop up in late spring and early summer every year," said Erica Hawkins, a Ohio Department of Agriculture spokeswoman. "Usually they start to occur after the Easter season when a lot of interaction with young baby chicks happens. Folks like to play with the baby chicks and have their kids play with them." Baby chicks are cute and adorable, so most people don't think about them being a health threat. "They are still livestock so you still need interact with them the way you would with any other farm animal," she said. [Link](#)

### **Sen. Schumer calls out FDA for taking too long to issue food recalls (New York Daily News 7/31)**

The feds are taking too long to get tainted food off the shelves, Sen. Chuck Schumer said. Schumer (D-NY) called for the Food and Drug Administration to overhaul its food recall process, saying potentially dangerous food can remain on sale for months before the agency issues mandatory recalls. Another 15 million pounds of flour was recalled this week amid an outbreak of E. coli in 21 states - but the first mandatory recall wasn't issued until May, even though the first illnesses from the outbreak happened last December, Schumer said. He said a recent inspector general report suggests the FDA takes too long to start food recalls. [Link](#)

### **Schumer raises stink over FDA recall delays (New York Post 8/1)**

Sen. Charles Schumer said Sunday it takes too long for dangerous food to be taken off shelves, and demanded that the FDA rework its recall guidelines. New York's senior senator was particularly peeved that a 21-state E. coli outbreak linked to tainted flour began in December — but the recall wasn't issued until May. "Thousands and thousands and thousands got sick because of the delayed recall," said Schumer, who described the FDA's recall process as "shockingly lax." "Earlier this summer, New Yorkers were directly impacted in massive beef recalls that had E. coli contamination," Schumer said. [Link](#)

### *Natural Resources & Environment*

#### **Cover Crops, Weed Control Featured at Field Day (Growing Louisiana 8/1)**

Rain moved presentations by LSU AgCenter specialists and researchers indoors during a recent field day in northeast Louisiana. "If you want to break the back of a drought in northeast Louisiana, plan a field day," said West Carroll Parish AgCenter agent Bruce Garner. "This is the second year in a row we've planned rolling field demonstrations, and Mother Nature prevented us from actually getting into the fields." At the first stop, north of Lake Providence on the Howard farm, Robbie Howard told about his no-till and cover crop operation. "Mr. Howard has definitely seen a benefit from using cover crops," said R.L. Frazier, AgCenter agent in Madison Parish. "Even in the fields where he planted sun hemp two years ago, it's still having a positive effect." Cover crops help because they provide protection to the soil during rainy winter months, said Steve Nipper with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service. "There's better root penetration," Nipper said. "With no-till and cover, the roots go past the few inches of depth of conventional planting." Nipper said producers should go beyond just one species of cover crop and use a variety. [Link](#)

#### **Providing pollinator habitat (American Agriculturist 8/1)**

Pollinators, including bees and butterflies, are essential to agriculture. One in three bites of food in the U.S. is dependent on pollinators. According to the USDA, \$15 billion worth of crops, including more than 130 fruits and vegetables, are pollinated every year. Honey bee numbers have been on the decline during the past 50 years. Since 2006, 30% of honey bee hives in the U.S. have been lost each winter to diseases, parasites, poor nutrition and pesticide exposure. To address the concerns, NRCS in Wisconsin has dedicated more than \$2 million through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, for practices to increase and improve honey bee food sources. Monarch butterfly populations have been declining in the U.S. for the past two decades. One of the many factors contributing to this decline is the shrinking number of milkweed plants. Milkweed is a critical component in the monarchs' reproduction cycle... Because monarchs are always on the move, they need to have the right plants at the right time along their migration route. Caterpillars need to feed on milkweed to complete their lifecycle and adult butterflies need nectar producing flowers in bloom for energy. In 2015, NRCS began working with farmers to combat the decline of monarchs by planting milkweed and other flowers on farms. To accelerate conservation to benefit monarch butterflies, NRCS is targeting conservation efforts at the heart of the butterfly's migration route. Assistance is available to producers in 10 states in the Southern Plains and Midwest including Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma and Texas. [Link](#)

#### **Feds, Florida bicker over who is responsible for poor water quality (news-press 7/29)**

Federal and state agencies are bickering over who exactly is responsible for poor water quality conditions that have gripped much of the state for most of this year.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is essentially telling the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to speed up Everglades restoration projects. The Army Corps says it could speed up projects aimed at storing water south of Lake Okeechobee if it had a state partner, which is required in the 50-50 cost split Everglades restoration. That partner would have to be the South Florida Water Management District, but officials there say part of the problem is the Fish and Wildlife Service is constraining water management options by enforcing the Endangered Species Act. [Link](#)

#### **In Meeteetse, ferret fans welcome endangered species home (Casper Star Tribune 7/30)**

It's the stuff of legend around Meeteetse. A ranch dog brings a strange-looking animal home to its owners. The ranchers take it to a taxidermist, who recognizes it as a black-footed ferret — a creature thought to be extinct. The rest is history. This week, the rest of the country was introduced to this piece of local lore as 35 black-footed ferrets were released on the Pitchfork and Lazy BV ranches, the same place their last-surviving wild ancestors were captured in the 1980s. The event marked the first time in more than 10 years that black-footed ferrets have been released in Wyoming, and required the combined efforts of state and federal agencies and the ranch owners. More than a year ago wildlife managers began a program to vaccinate prairie dogs in the area against plague, which has decimated the ferrets' primary food source. In late 2015, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued a special designation for the state that protects ranchers and landowners if they accidentally harm a ferret released on their property. [Link](#)

### **EPA appeals board upholds cancellation of Bayer's Belt (Agri-Pulse 7/29)**

EPA's Environmental Appeals Board has upheld the cancellation of flubendiamide, a Bayer CropScience insecticide sold under the trade name Belt, but will allow existing stocks to be sold by retailers. The EAB decision, issued late this afternoon, upheld an earlier ruling by an administrative law judge who said Bayer and fellow registrant Nichino America willingly agreed with the terms of conditional registrations they received in 2008: that if EPA determined flubendiamide caused "unreasonable adverse effects" on the environment, then the companies would have to voluntarily cancel their registrations. When EPA made the "unreasonable adverse effects" determination on Jan. 29, however, the companies decided to file an administrative challenge. In its decision, the three-judge EAB said that under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, Bayer and Nichino could not challenge the conditions of the registration. [Link](#)

### **Nevada tribal town no longer threatened by wildfire (Associated Press/OA Online 7/31)**

A western Nevada wildfire was deterred Sunday from burning a tribal town that had evacuated hundreds of residents. Scott Carey, spokesman for the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, says the 11-square-mile blaze was now north of Sutcliffe and no longer threatening structures on the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation. "We think the threat is gone, and we're working toward a recovery effort," Carey said. About 600 people were ordered to leave Sutcliffe and 200 were evacuated from the beaches around Pyramid Lake on Saturday night, Carey said. Most evacuees stayed with family or friends in other parts of the reservation. Between 20 and 30 people took advantage of a shelter at a gym in the nearby community of Nixon. [Link](#)

### **Virginia Mountains Complex Fires Burn 38,000 acres North of Reno (KTVN 7/28)**

Firefighters continue to battle multiple brush fires north of Reno. According to the Bureau of Land Management, several fires that make up the Virginia Mountains Complex fires have now burned 38,384 acres as of Sunday evening... According to the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, 600 people from the Sutcliffe area and 200 people from several beaches at Pyramid Lake were evacuated on Saturday, but mandatory evacuations have since been lifted. Residents can return to their homes. At this time, the Tribe confirms 1 home, 3 mobile homes, 2 vehicles and 6 structures at the Hardscrabble Ranch have all have been destroyed by this wildfire. All structures and vehicles were unoccupied. Several outbuildings have all have been destroyed by this wildfire as well. There have no injuries reported. As a result of the damage, Pyramid Lake remains closed to recreation and all beaches are closed to the public. Tribal permits will not be issued until further notice and the public is advised to stay away the lake. Don Pelt, the emergency response coordinator with the Paiute Tribe said firefighters made a lot of progress through Saturday night. He has confidence that fire is not going to sweep over more homes. The Tule Fire is progressing, but at slower rate due to the weather. [Link](#)

### *Rural Development*

#### **Gaps in 4G network hinder high-tech agriculture (The Bulletin 7/31)**

Vineyard management consultant Alan Campbell set out to fine-tune irrigation across the Pacific Northwest with a system that relays soil-moisture data from the field to the computing cloud and back to the grower in real time. His company, SmartVineyard, is trying to make it easy for wine-grape producers, plus other crop growers, to practice precision irrigation, but the system won't work without a high-speed, or 4G, cellular connection. As anyone who travels outside the Willamette Valley knows, there are still plenty of gaps in the high-speed network, and Campbell said that was a concern when he started the Portland-based business three years ago. "We're relying in the long-run on those gaps being filled in," Campbell said. As the Federal Communications Commission writes the rules on a second round of funding for the Mobility Fund, which subsidizes the build-out of high-speed wireless networks, politicians representing rural areas urge the agency to look beyond population measures to farm fields and grazing ranges in support of precision agriculture... Wyden believes more companies will bid on the Mobility Fund if the coverage gaps are measured accurately, Stern wrote in his email. "Senator Wyden signed this letter to ensure the FCC is moving quickly to develop that much clearer picture of those rural coverage gaps, given concerns from rural Oregon communities and their residents are frustrated by slow internet connections for their work and communications needs, as well as understandable worries about gaps in cell coverage that can leave them vulnerable in an emergency," he said. [Link](#)

#### **USDA offers funding for Advanced Biofuels and Biobased Products (Biofuels Digest 7/31)**

In Washington, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture is seeking applications for funding to help support the development of advanced biofuels, renewable chemicals and biobased products. Funding is being provided through the Biorefinery, Renewable Chemical and Biobased Product Manufacturing Assistance Program, formerly known as the Biorefinery Assistance Program. Congress established the program in 2008 to encourage the development of biofuels that use renewable feedstocks. The 2014 Farm Bill expanded the program to include renewable chemicals and

biobased product manufacturing. The program now provides loan guarantees of up to \$250 million to develop, construct and retrofit commercial-scale biorefineries and to develop renewable chemicals and biobased product manufacturing facilities. USDA has provided \$844 million in loan commitments to 10 businesses in the Biorefinery, Renewable Chemical and Biobased Product Manufacturing Assistance Program since the start of the Obama administration. Companies receiving these commitments are projected to produce 159 million gallons of advanced biofuels. In 2011, under this program, USDA provided Sapphire Energy a \$54.5 million loan guarantee to build a refined algal oil commercial facility. Sapphire's "Green Crude Farm" in Columbus, N.M., is an example of how USDA funding and partnerships with the private sector are helping to support the development of biorefineries. [Link](#)

#### *Marketing & Regulatory Programs*

##### **Unapproved wheat found in Washington state (Agri-Pulse 7/29)**

An unapproved strain of genetically modified wheat has been found growing in a U.S. field, but it has not been detected anywhere in the nation's wheat supply. In a statement released Friday, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) confirmed that 22 plants were discovered by a farmer "in an unplanted agricultural field in Washington State." The field had not been planted since the spring of 2015. The detected strain is resistant to glyphosate, the Monsanto weed killer sold as Roundup. No biotech strains of wheat are approved for sale or cultivation in the United States. A similar strain of GMO wheat was detected in 2013 in a field in Oregon. That strain (MON71800) is a "sister event" to the MON71700 strain that was discovered in Washington. According to a Monsanto release, the two strains have the same inserted DNA, "just in a different genomic location." The farmer's full wheat harvest is being tested for the presence of any genetically enhanced material, and APHIS says it has taken "prompt and thorough action" in response to the discovery and has "no evidence of GE wheat in commerce." In 2013, the discovery of the unapproved strain in Oregon led trading partners including South Korea and Japan to cut off imports of U.S. wheat for concerns of bringing in the biotech grain. Monsanto has developed a test that would identify MON 71700 in commercial grain shipments, and USDA says the test has been validated and trading partners could use it to screen their imports should they so choose. [Link](#)

##### **New GMO labeling law fails to meet activists' standards (Blasting News 7/31)**

President Obama recently signed a bill which will require genetically modified foods to be labeled, but many #food safety activists are unhappy with the legislation. The bill requires all food packages to display a label signifying whether the product contains #GMOs. The label could consist of text, a symbol, or an electronic code. The specifics will be determined by the Department of Agriculture, who will be in charge of writing the rules for this law. According to the Associated Press, this bill has received broad support from the food industry. But many food safety activists say that this bill is not adequate to protect consumers, and could undermine the protections that states have already put in place. The Center for Food Safety, a non-profit environmental advocacy group, released a statement this week criticizing the new law. The organization pointed out that the law does not require the GMO label to be in plain text. Companies are allowed to use QR codes to label their products, or to display telephone numbers that the consumers would have to call in order to find out whether the product contains GMOs. These types of labels are difficult to decipher, and the QR code is only useful if the consumer has a smart phone with which to scan it. [Link](#)

##### **DNA Study Reveals the One and Only Wolf Species in North America (New York Times 7/27)**

The first large study of North American wolf genomes has found that there is only one species on the continent: the gray wolf. Two other purported species, the Eastern wolf and the red wolf, are mixes of gray wolf and coyote DNA, the scientists behind the study concluded. The finding, announced Wednesday, highlights the shortcomings of laws intended to protect endangered species, as such laws lag far behind scientific research into the evolution of species. The gray wolf and red wolf were listed as endangered in the lower 48 states under the Endangered Species Act in the 1970s and remain protected today, to the periodic consternation of ranchers and agricultural interests. In 2013, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service recognized the Eastern wolf as a separate species, which led officials to recommend delisting the gray wolf. Conservationists won a lawsuit that forced the agency to abandon the plan. [Link](#)

#### *Market Watch*

##### **[Audio] Cattle herd expansion expected to continue (Agri-Pulse 8/1)**

The nation's cattle inventory could be on track to grow by nearly 700,000 head by the end of 2016, according to CattleFax Senior Analyst Kevin Good. [Link](#)

#### *Other*

##### **These 4 States Are Doing Something Truly Revolutionary With Food (Huffington Post 7/29)**

The mind-boggling amount of food Americans throw away is the kind of problem that seems ripe for nationwide reform. But while federal legislation lingers in Congress, some states have found promising ways to keep edible items out of the trash. As much as 40 percent of the food produced in the U.S. never gets eaten, wasting resources and money, filling landfills and harming the environment. More urgently, there are millions of families who struggle to afford food, while there are mountains of it decaying in the trash. But these states are changing that, using strategies to keep food out of landfills and get it to hungry families. Their policies signal that officials are recognizing the economic, social and environmental benefits that come with making food waste reduction a priority. [Link](#)

### **Vote with your fork: A national food policy could be really sweet for the economy (Salon 7/27) [VIDEO]**

On Wednesday's Salon live at the Democratic National Convention, host Josh Zepps talked to food policy advocate Evan Hanczor about the importance of a national food policy that reduces sugar consumption. "The economy, security, human civil rights, economic and general social inequality all connect to food in some way," Hanczor explained. "And food could also be a huge driver for change in all those areas." Zepps noted that the Food and Drug Administration, which regulates food policy, answers to the USDA, which is in charge of "subsidizing the increased production of sugar," according to Hanczor. "They have this schizophrenic existence that I don't think is helping anyone," Hanczor said. [Link](#)

### **Cows break free, defecate on neighboring organic farm's crops, spur \$210,000 lawsuit (The Oregonian 7/28)**

An Aurora organic farm is suing a co-founder of New Seasons and his son, saying they failed to stop their dairy cows from escaping and defecating on the farm's crops. The \$210,000 lawsuit states that the cows belonging to Chuck Eggert and his son, Charlie Eggert, forced neighboring Simington Gardens to throw out its contaminated winter squash and leafy greens and shut down the field for 120 days because of the exposure to manure.

The cows got out of a gated enclosure about midnight on April 16, 2014, according to the suit filed last month in Marion County Circuit Court. [Link](#)

### **'Agritainment' saves the family farm in Montco (Philadelphia Inquirer 7/31)**

Twenty-five years ago, developers offered Fred Seipt millions of dollars for his struggling Freddy Hill Farms in Lansdale. He said no. Instead of taking the money and watching his three-generation farm become yet another Montgomery County subdivision, Seipt gambled on building two lavish miniature golf courses, a driving range, a pro shop, and baseball batting cages. He bet the farm, and he won... Agriculture plus entertainment equals "agritainment," which has meant survival for endangered family farms the likes of Freddy Hill nationwide. Of Pennsylvania's 62,000 farms, approximately 800 have invited the public in for a good time, and that number is trending upward, especially around urban areas such as Philadelphia, said John Berry, a former dairy farmer who is an agricultural marketing educator at Penn State Extension. "Being in Pennsylvania is different from being in Nebraska or Kansas," Berry said. "The average consumer here is at least three generations removed from actually having lived on a farm. So you're selling the opportunity for people to come to your farm and traipse around a little bit." In this region, Merrymead Farm in Lansdale has daily cow-milking demonstrations. Shady Brook Farm in Yardley has pick-your-own festivals, Uncle Dave's Homemade Ice Cream, and a Summer Wine Concert Series on Friday nights. [Link](#)

#### *Editorial and Opinion*

### **A snappier way to use food stamps (The Washington Post 7/31)**

ON JULY 1, the Agriculture Department was supposed to announce the results of a pilot program that could help the poorest Americans eat healthier, The Post's Rachel Premack reported. The only problem? The program had not even begun. Instead, the long-overdue initiative to accept food stamps in some online grocery services will launch in the fall. If all goes well, the department should implement it nationwide. Online grocery delivery services are becoming more popular among Americans who want to skip the hassle of trekking to a brick-and-mortar supermarket. But they're not an option for the 1 in 7 Americans who pays for food through the department's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Those are the people who need online grocery delivery services most. Low-income shoppers struggle to find affordable, high-quality food: About 11.5 million poor Americans — many without a car — live at least one mile from the nearest supermarket in food deserts home to some of the highest levels of obesity in the country. That can prevent some shoppers from getting out of the house to grocery stores. The closest stores often stock their shelves with a limited — and often unhealthy — slate of items. Low-income people are already at an above-average risk for chronic health problems. The challenge to eat well and affordably at the same time does not help. [Link](#)

### **Crop Insurance: Priority #1 (Agri-Pulse 7/31)**

No matter who wins this November's presidential election, one of the first items facing a new Secretary of Agriculture will be developing a 2018 Farm Bill, a process sure to begin early in 2017. As we start that effort, its worth noting that for all its rich diversity, American agriculture seems to be united behind a few large overarching issues: coordinated and scientific regulatory policy by EPA, FDA and USDA; healthy trade promotion; biotechnology; and, farm labor issues, including immigration. But at the individual farmer level, no issue is more important than defending and improving Federal crop insurance. All farm groups agree that crop insurance is critical to the future of agriculture, leveling out the booms and busts. Crop insurance has deep roots in America. As noted above, Benjamin Franklin first raised the idea back in the 1780's as a way of applying good Yankee sense to agriculture. The Federal program itself dates back almost 80 years to 1938. Crop insurance remained a small program limited mostly to Midwest row crops, though, until the 1990's when the disastrous 1993 flood prompted Washington leaders to fundamentally re-think how best to respond to emergencies. [Link](#)

### **Poverty in the midst of plenty: Hunger persists in U.S. (The Tidings 7/31)**

As U.S. nutritionists cringe over the prospect of an overweight nation indulging in a two-month binge of "season's eatings" --- from Halloween candy to Thanksgiving dinners to Christmas feasts to New Year's parties --- there are millions of Americans who aren't sure they're going to get enough to eat this day or the next. The problem is made worse by lack of access to nutritious food, as residents of America's poorest cities and neighborhoods have little choice but to make do with fast food or convenience stores that don't stock fresh produce. And even if they were the food-savviest consumers in the country, the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program --- the new name for food stamps --- doesn't stretch far enough to let each member in the household eat a healthy meal three times a day, seven days a week. Earlier this year, SNAP benefits were cut to pay for a boost in school lunch programs. Hunger isn't the only issue. A Catholic Charities USA third-quarter "snapshot" of its member agencies issued Nov. 22 found that 88 percent of the agencies either had to turn away people or maintain a waiting list for at least one service, 64 percent couldn't meet the need for emergency financial assistance, and 56 percent couldn't meet requests for utility assistance --- including 67 percent in Southern states dogged by heat waves and an extended drought. [Link](#)

### **Jeffrey Smith admits GMO labeling was never his goal (Food Science Institute 7/31)**

In a letter sent out yesterday, anti-GMO activist Jeffrey Smith admits what we have suspected all along. "Labeling GMOs was never the end goal for us. It was a tactic. Labels make it easier for shoppers to make healthier non-GMO choices. When enough people avoid GMOs, food companies rush to eliminate them. Labeling can speed up that tipping point—but only if consumers are motivated to use labels to avoid GMOs."... And noting that President Obama's signing S.764 restricts states from requiring stringent (and meaningless) GMO labels, he writes: Although this is clearly a defeat in our campaigns for getting mandatory labeling in the United States, we are still winning the bigger, more important effort to ELIMINATE GMOs from the market altogether. In other words, the whole edifice of moral claims that "we have the right to know what we are eating" has just collapsed! Smith admits that his goal was to eliminate a perfectly safe breeding technology, presumably forcing people towards the more expensive organic products whose producers support Smith's scare campaign. [Link](#)

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### *Top Stories*

#### **U.S., Brazil Agree to Resume Two-Way Beef Trade (The Wall Street Journal 8/1)**

Agriculture Department officials on Monday said they had relaxed a ban on imports of Brazilian beef, adding pressure on U.S. ranchers already contending with a slump in cattle prices to five-year lows. The U.S. Department of Agriculture and officials from Brazil agreed to drop bans in place for years following outbreaks of deadly cattle-borne diseases, allowing two-way trade in beef to resume between two ranching-intensive nations. "We are pleased that Brazil, a major agricultural producing and trading country, has aligned with science-based international standards," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, adding that Brazil was the 16th country in the past year to drop such bans on U.S. product. Brazil had put the ban in place in part over concerns about the spread of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or "mad cow" disease, after a cow with the disease was found in the U.S. state of Washington in 2003. Foot-and-mouth disease discovered in Brazil's herds also triggered a ban by the U.S. and other countries. Now, the USDA said, Brazil has improved the regulation of its beef processing industry to match U.S. standards. Some public health groups said Monday they still had concerns about Brazil's level of food-safety monitoring. [Link](#)

#### **U.S. and Brazil agree to let the beef flow (Agri-Pulse 8/1)**

The U.S. and Brazil have agreed to allow access to each other's beef markets after more than a decade of negotiations. Brazil's Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply has agreed to imports of U.S. beef for the first time in 13 years, USDA announced today. And the U.S. will accept Brazilian beef for the first time since 1999. "Brazil's action reflects the United States' negligible risk classification for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and aligns Brazil's regulations to the OIE's scientific international animal health guidelines," USDA said in a news release... NCBA didn't mention the opening of Brazilian markets to U.S. beef in its statement, but when asked, spokesperson Shawna Newsome said NCBA is "glad to see Brazil recognize the United States' negligible risk status." At the same time, that development does not lessen NCBA's concerns about the FSIS announcement. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said that "since last year alone, USDA has eliminated BSE-related restrictions in 16 countries, regaining market access for U.S. beef and pumping hundreds of millions of dollars into the American economy." "The Brazilian market offers excellent long-term potential for U.S. beef exporters," he said, taking note of the 200-million-plus consumers in Brazil. This year, U.S. beef also has gotten access to the Saudi Arabian, Peruvian and South African markets. [Link](#)

### *Farm & Foreign Agricultural Services*

#### **Klobuchar, Franken, Peterson Call on the U.S. Department of Agriculture to Protect U.S. Dairy Farmers from the Dairy Industry Financial Crisis (Voice of Alexandria 7/29)**

U.S. Senators Amy Klobuchar and Al Franken, along with Representative Collin Peterson, have called on the U.S. Department of Agriculture to protect U.S. dairy farmers from the dairy industry financial crisis. Farm milk prices have dropped forty percent since 2014, and in May, the nation's cheese stocks were recorded at their highest level since the data was first recorded in 1917. Low farm milk prices have resulted in sharply reduced incomes, which is placing our nation's dairy industry in a vulnerable position. In a letter to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Klobuchar, Franken, and Peterson urged the agency to use its secretarial authority to protect the nation's dairy farmers from further crisis to aid in the expansion and maintenance of domestic markets. "We are deeply concerned that U.S. dairy farmers, who are a key part of our agriculture community and agriculture economy, are in greater need of stability and support as they face these significantly lower prices, which for some are below their actual cost of production," the lawmakers wrote. "As this industry is reeling from low prices, a glut of imports, challenges in our export markets, and poor economic growth projections we urge the USDA to use its secretarial authority under the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714c), Section 32 of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1935 (7 U.S.C. 612c), and look to past precedent for how to take action to protect all of our nation's dairy farmers from further crisis and to aid in the expansion and maintenance of domestic markets. We encourage USDA to take any and all actions available in order to make an immediate market injection and offer financial assistance that will directly support U.S. dairy farmers equally, while being cautious to not stimulate overproduction further." [Link](#)

#### **Members of Congress Ask U.S. Department of Agriculture to Render Assistance to Dairy Farmers (Top News New Zealand 7/31)**

Dairy farmers in the U.S are going through a bad patch as dairy product prices have dropped to record lows but milk production is in full swing with no signs of a slowdown. Since 2014, milk prices have dropped forty percent. Afraid that the dropping prices will lead to a collapse in the dairy industry, the concerned Congress members are calling on the U.S. Department of Agriculture to render further assistance to the farmers at this difficult juncture. Vermont Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy and sixty one other senators and congressman are asking Tom Vilsack, the USDA secretary to extend added federal subsidies and loans to the farmers. On Thursday, Leahy sent a letter to Vilsack stating that; the USDA should "take action to protect all of our nation's dairy farmers from further crisis and to aid in the expansion and maintenance of domestic markets." It also says that at times when the dairy market struggles with the low product prices, jobs in farms all over the country are also at risk. Apart from the standard subsidy programs, USDA assisted dairy farmers last in December 2009 when Vilsack had started tenure as agriculture secretary. A 2010 Agricultural Appropriations Bill made \$290 million available to dairy farmers to make up for losses. The amount of subsidies that's paid to dairy farms differs from year to year. [Link](#)

#### **Conaway, Stabenow vow support for U.S. sugar policy (Agri-Pulse 8/1)**

The American Sugar Alliance's (ASA's) annual Sweetener Symposium got off to a rousing start Monday morning with a strong show of support for U.S. sugar policy from two lawmakers who will play crucial roles in forging the next farm bill. Speaking by video, House Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway said it's easy for him to "defend" U.S. sugar policy, which includes price supports, import quotas and domestic market allotments to influence the amount of sugar available to the U.S. market... Conaway was followed by Michigan's Debbie Stabenow, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Ag panel, who also spoke by video. Stabenow noted that the \$20 billion U.S. sugar industry is an "essential part of the rural economy," supporting 140,000 jobs, many in her home state, a major sugarbeet producer. "We don't have an economy or a middle class, for that matter, if we don't make things or grow things. And that's what each of you do," Stabenow said. "America's great sugar industry is an essential part of the rural economy and our nation's agricultural economy." [Link](#)

#### **US agriculture dept supports increased Pakistani agricultural exports (Daily Times 8/1)**

Approximately 30 Department of Plant Protection officials and other agricultural professionals from across Pakistan participated in a two-day training July 30-31 designed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to support the Government of Pakistan's efforts to expand agricultural trade. The training aims to increase Pakistani exports by informing officials how to comply with international plant health standards. Pakistan currently exports approximately \$585 million of fresh fruits and vegetables annually, said a statement issued here today. "This training and similar ones serve the dual purpose of helping expand the Pakistani export market and building closer ties between our governments and people," US Embassy Agricultural Counselor David Williams said. "We look forward to continuing our cooperation with the Government of Pakistan to help increase fruit and vegetable exports to the US market." "Learning about sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures from a team of USDA, Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International, and other learned experts was a unique experience," said Dr. Muhammad Anjum Ali,

Director General for Extension and Adaptive Research in the Punjab Agriculture Department. "I have gained a lot from the trainers and methodology." [Link](#)

### **US department of agriculture conducts two-day training session (ARY News 8/1)**

Agricultural professionals from across Pakistan including at least 30 officials of the Department of Plant Protection participated in a two-day training session designed by the United States Department of Agriculture. The training program conducted on July 30 and 31 was designed in a bid to support the PML-N lead government for growing its agricultural trade. Officials were confident that the program would the agriculture sector of Pakistan as it was aimed at informing the officials concerned on how to fulfil the international plant health standards, said a statement issued on Monday. "This training along with other programs serves a dual purpose of helping expand the Pakistani export market and building closer ties between our governments and people," said US Embassy Agricultural Counsellor David Williams. He added that "We look forward to continuing our cooperation with the Government of Pakistan to help increase fruit and vegetable exports to the US market." Currently, Pakistan exports some \$585 million of fresh fruits and vegetables annually, the statement said. "Learning about sanitary and phytosanitary measures from a team of USDA, Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International, and other learned experts was a unique experience," said Director General for Extension and Adaptive Research in the Punjab Agriculture Department Dr Muhammad Anjum Ali. [Link](#)

### **People remember spark that led to Chicano farm workers movement (Corpus Christi Caller Times 7/31)**

Fifty years after 800 supporters gathered in the Peoples Street T-head to fight low minimum wages for farm workers, many gathered to remember a march that inspired change. Sunday marked the 50th anniversary of the 1966 Farm Workers March and area residents paid tribute at Sherrill Park. The protest started in Rio Grande City and marched through Corpus Christi to reach Austin. "It was the spirit of the workers who finally had enough of working in those hot fields for 40 cents an hour," Nancy Vera, president of Corpus Christi American Federation of Teachers said. Field workers struggled with low wages and through rough working conditions for growers. One of the marchers 50 years ago was present and painted a stark picture about life as a farm worker. "I came to pick cotton in Tivoli, Texas, when I was six," Efrain Carrera said. "We were paid \$1.25 for a 100 pounds of cotton. We slept in the dirt." [Link](#)

### **Seven Questions with Denise O'Brien, Farmer and Founder of Women, Food Agriculture Network (The Daily Meal 7/30)**

Food Tank, in partnership with the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, is hosting the 1st Annual Chicago Food Tank Summit on November 16, 2016. This event will feature more than 40 different speakers from the food and agriculture field. Researchers, farmers, chefs, policymakers, government officials, and students will come together for interactive panels, networking, and delicious food, followed by a day of hands-on activities and opportunities for attendees. Food Tank recently had the opportunity to speak with Denise O'Brien, farmer and founder of Women, Food Agriculture Network, who will be speaking at the summit... I would like to see the next president give priority to the people who are raising healthy, nutritious food while working to build the soil and making the land healthy. Farmers, who are raising food for people to eat, as opposed to commodities, should have a status equal to that of a doctor. Farmers are the ones that grow the food that can make our bodies healthy; they should at least be able to make a living doing this work. Small farmers can help mitigate the influence of climate change on our planet. [Link](#)

### **U.S. House Agriculture Committee chairman visits region (West Central Tribune 7/31)**

When he works on the federal 2018 Farm Bill, U.S. Rep. Mike Conaway says he will be thinking about moms on food stamps and how changes in farm policy will affect their food costs. Conaway, R-Texas, chairman of the U.S. House Agriculture Committee, visited Minnesota late last week. One of his stops was at Hultgren Farms in rural Raymond, just west of Willmar Saturday afternoon. Conaway said he looks forward to working with U.S. Rep. Collin Peterson, D-Minn., the ranking minority member on the committee on the next Farm Bill... "We've got to figure out a way to enlist urban Americans into the fight for a good solid production agriculture safety net," he said. "They benefit at the grocery store and every time they go to a restaurant. They pay less for food than any other developed country in world." He urged farmers to tell the story "over and over and over, and then you've got to tell it some more." People in urban areas "don't know what a good deal they're getting off your hard work, your sweat equity and your risk-taking." It's right to provide a safety net for farmers when times are bad, he added. [Link](#)

### **What it means to be a 4H'er (Daily Times 8/1)**

For most, the fair means nothing more than amusement rides, greasy fried-foods and entertainment. But for 4H participants, there is no better time of the year. It's hard to imagine that sweating under the August sun in a barn all day could provide fun, but for 4H participants, that's the reality. And it's one that they enjoy. "I loved 4H. Today I notice the responsibility I learned just from having market animals alone.

But 4H touched so many aspects of my adult life from public speaking to business and how to care for animals along with how to interact with others. 4H gave me confidence in myself as a child, a feeling of accomplishment after every project, show or day was finished. I gained many friendships through 4H peers, and advisors. I'm proud to say both of my daughters are still actively involved in 4H," said former 4H'er Bobbie Donahoe. [Link](#)

#### **Farm Day lets visitors see ag operations up close (Quad City Times 8/1)**

Visitors drove to the country to take in the sights of horses, harvesters and hay Sunday during the seventh annual Farm Day in Davenport and Blue Grass. The annual event began in connection with Jennifer Ewoldt's column for the Quad-City Times, Robb Ewoldt said. "We wanted people to come out and see what she's writing about," he said. Children love to climb around on the huge farm implements — including, this year, a combine and a self-propelled forage harvester — and see the animals, while grownups ask a lot of questions, Robb Ewoldt said. "We just want to have a connection with the urban people," he said. The event is closely linked with the Ag in the Classroom initiative, which shows students the importance of farming, said Bob Braden, of Scott County Farm Bureau, which sponsors Farm Day. [Link](#)

#### **Wisconsin doubles down on dairy distinction with goat farms (Associated Press/The Star Democrat 8/1)**

Wisconsin has long been as one of the nation's leaders in cow dairies, farm after pastoral farm tucked into the state's rolling hills. It's earning another milk laurel in the face of increasing demand for goat cheese and milk: the most dairy goats in the U.S. That distinction will only stand to increase when two of the largest goat dairies in the world soon begin operating in northeast Wisconsin. It's something Larry and Clara Hedrich didn't expect when they started raising dairy goats in the 1970s as a hobby. They now milk 800 dairy goats, make award-winning cheese from cow, sheep and goat milk and boast enough capacity to process triple what they currently do. "We're competing in our farm here in Pipe, Wisconsin, with the world," Larry Hedrich said. The growth in Wisconsin — as well as California, which is No. 2 in goat- and sheep-milk sales — is due to both existing infrastructure and growing appreciation for goat milk in the U.S. Chefs are using it more frequently, consumers are seeking out its unique taste and growing immigrant populations from places like East Africa and Latin America are looking for the familiar products, according to Norm Monsen, dairy economic development consultant at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. [Link](#)

#### **USDA program deadlines approach (Magic Valley Times-News 8/1)**

Several farm program deadlines are approaching. The 2016 ARC/PLC farm program contract signing deadline is Monday. However, Idaho Farm Service Agency county offices have been given authority to accept signatures and contracts through Aug. 31... The Dairy Margin Protection program signup ends Sept. 30. All dairies that participated in 2015 or 2016 are required to participate for 2017. Any dairy which has not signed up previously may also signup for 2017. [Link](#)

#### **With nearly half its food imported, who will feed Britain after 'Brexit'? (Los Angeles Times 8/1)**

At the Borough Market here, the stalls showcase Spanish hams, French and Dutch cheeses, Croatian fig cakes, Italian truffles and other delicacies from across the European Union. The market recently was packed with tourists taking advantage of the British pound's slide against other currencies in the wake of the country's vote to leave the European Union. But the vendors were not celebrating. "Brexit" has sown deep uncertainty in Britain's food system, which for the last 43 years has been entwined with the rest of Europe's, relying heavily on the EU for everything from pork to peaches to farm subsidies to the labor that picks its tomatoes. Now, the country is going to have to rethink how it feeds itself, from farm to fork. "Food is the biggest sector of engagement with Europe," said Timothy Lang, a professor at City University London's Center for Food Policy. "It's hundreds of thousands of contracts, all woven into long supply chains." [Link](#)

#### **Beef Export Bonanza for Brazil as Chinese Eat More Foreign Steak (Macau Daily Times 8/1)**

Chinese consumers are eating more beef than the country can produce, and that's led to a sales bonanza for exporters in Brazil. About a year after recovering from a mad-cow scare, Brazil has supplanted Australia as the biggest seller of beef to China, where a production deficit is widening and imports are heading for a record. Brazil's ample supplies and low prices helped companies including JBS SA, Minerva SA and Marfrig Global Foods SA to boost exports to China by 65 percent in the first half of the year. While the Chinese eat far more pork than any other meat, consumption per-capita is falling while beef demand rises. Only the U.S. imports more beef than China, where rapid growth over the past decade created the world's second-largest economy and an expanding middle class that can afford more protein in their diets. At the same time, Brazil has plenty of surplus beef, as domestic demand stagnates, and the country's exports are appealing to buyers after its currency plunged last year... Per-capita consumption of beef in China will reach a record 3.864 kilograms (8.5 pounds) this year, compared with 3.029 kilos a decade

ago, according to estimates by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development. But production hasn't kept pace, so imports this year will jump 22 percent to 1.225 million metric tons, including purchases by Hong Kong, U.S. Department of Agriculture data show. That's an almost fourfold increase from 2012, and imports now account for 36 percent of demand, up from 25 percent last year. [Link](#)

#### **Pakistan: Afghanistan's Unreliable Breadbasket (The Diplomat 8/1)**

Afghanistan spends hundreds of millions of dollars each year in importing wheat and wheat flour from Central Asia and Pakistan to meet its excess demand. Mostly used in flatbread, wheat is an important staple food in Afghanistan, accounting for about 60 percent of the daily caloric intake of the population. Although wheat constitutes about 70 percent of the cultivated land area and a quarter of agricultural GDP, domestic production does not meet national demand. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Afghanistan's wheat consumption is estimated to be 7.5 million metric tons for the period 2016-2017. Of this total, Afghanistan imports about 30 percent, primarily from Pakistan and Central Asia, to meet its deficit. Because Pakistan accounts for almost half of the wheat and wheat flour imported into Afghanistan, Pakistan's agricultural policies have a direct effect on Afghan food security. Pakistan occasionally disturbs the wheat market through domestic policies designed to meet the procurement target of Provincial Food Departments (PFDs), thus restricting wheat movements from surplus areas to millers. These policies cause inconsistent supplies and price shocks in Afghan wheat markets—in 2008, for example, Pakistan totally banned wheat and flour exports to Afghanistan. Furthermore, due to extended storage times in Pakistan, wheat stocks lose quality and it is a common practice to dump old stocks to the Afghan market. Afghanistan has no quality control on wheat and flour, meaning that grade 2 and 3 flour from Pakistan is considered standard or even grade 1 in Afghanistan. [Link](#)

#### **Vietnam still relies on ag imports (Fresh Plaza 8/1)**

Eighty percent of Vietnam's population lives in rural areas and the country is largely agriculturally based, even so the country is still spending several billion dollars every year importing agricultural products. Statistics show that the Vietnamese have been importing peanuts for several years, primarily from India, Senegal, and China. According to numbers from the General Department of Vietnam Customs, Vietnam has imported 12,000 metric tons of peanuts over the last six months. In 2015, Vietnam imported 35,000 metric tons, a 146 percent increase compared to 23,000 metric tons in 2014. Surprisingly, China has been Vietnam's number-one source of peanut imports in the last three years, but peanuts are still being exported the other way round every harvest season. The price of peanuts that Vietnam imports from China is unexpectedly cheap, only VND5,500 to VND6,000 a kg, relative to the rate of those shipped from other countries, which are around VND15,000 to VND22,000 (US\$1) a kg... The U.S. Department of Agriculture said in a report that the area of peanut-growing land in Vietnam is only around 220,000 ha, with an output of 550,000 metric tons a year, merely meeting 75 percent of demand. [Link](#)

#### **Vietnam increases pork feed imports (Northwest Arkansas Democrat Gazette 7/31)**

The people of Vietnam are eating so much more pork these days that the country has become one of the world's biggest importers of the soybean meal it needs to feed an ever-expanding herd of pigs. New feed mills are being built by foreign companies including commodity giant Cargill Inc. and domestic conglomerates such as steelmaker Hoa Phat Group JSC, all hoping to profit as meat becomes a bigger part of daily diets. Per-capita consumption of pork has more than doubled since 2000 and will be the most of any country in the next seven years, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development estimates. With local farmers unable to grow enough animal feed, imports of meal next year will be twice what they were in 2012, U.S. Department of Agriculture data show. A global crop surplus over the past few years has kept prices low, and rising incomes in Vietnam's export-led economy mean people have more money to spend on meats and proteins in traditional dishes like bun cha, a meal of grilled pork and noodles. [Link](#)

#### *Research, Education & Economics*

#### **USDA Begins Project to Quantify Ag Conservation (Michigan Ag Connection 8/1)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service is contacting 450 Michigan farmers to take part in a survey that will more accurately measure the environmental benefits associated with implementation and installation of conservation practices on agricultural land. The results of the Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) survey will help further develop the science-based solutions for managing the agricultural landscape to improve environmental quality. "The survey gives farmers and ranchers the power to provide a more complete and accurate picture of the conservation practices on their operations," said NASS Administrator Hubert Hamer. "If contacted, I encourage farmers and ranchers to participate. Their collective responses can directly benefit themselves and all producers by helping leaders focus on what producers need to install conservation practices that are best for their operations environmentally and financially." The results of the survey will demonstrate the work of

America's farmers to conserve natural resources while producing the food, fuel and fiber the world requires, participating farmers and ranchers support our cause for continued science-based conservation programs that protect natural resources while supporting farm-related jobs. Survey results will guide USDA conservation policy and program development and help conservationists, farmers and ranchers more efficiently and effectively conserve natural resources. [Link](#)

### **Finding the Right Path to a Career in Agriculture (Successful Farming 8/1)**

When it comes to choosing a college major, farm kids and city kids alike would be wise to take a good look at agriculture. According to a recent report from the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture and Purdue University, there are 57,900 high-skilled agricultural job openings in the U.S. each year, while only 35,400 ag students graduate with a bachelor's degree or higher annually. "Those receiving degrees in agricultural fields can expect to have ample career opportunities," says Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack. "Not only will those who study agriculture be likely to get well-paying jobs upon graduation, they will also have the satisfaction of working in a field that addresses some of the world's most pressing challenges." According to projections in the report, opportunities in food, agriculture, renewable resources, and environment occupations are expected to grow more than 5% between 2015 and 2020 for college graduates with bachelor's or higher degrees. The strongest job markets are predicted for plant scientists, food scientists, sustainable biomaterials specialists, water resources scientists and engineers, precision agriculture specialists, and farm animal veterinarians. The market also looks strong for e-commerce managers and marketing agents, ecosystem managers, agriscience educators, crop advisers, and pest control specialists. [Link](#)

### **USDA: Half of consumers' food budgets spent on convenience (Food Dive 8/1)**

Determining the best ways to improve convenience will be key to snagging a larger share of the average household food budget. Consumers dedicated about half of their household food budget to the most convenient foods purchased from fast-food and sit-down restaurants during the study's time frame. Ready-to-cook and ready-to-eat meals and snacks comprised more than one-quarter (26%) of the average household food budget between 1999 and 2010, according to the report. And with the continued growth of snacking and demand for convenience since then, it's likely that percentage is even higher today. RTE meals and snacks saw their portion of the average household food budget begin to increase across all geographic regions in 2007. RTC products' share of that budget remained fairly constant, USDA reported. This shows how far manufacturers need to consider going to incorporate convenience into product formulations, packaging and marketing messages. RTC products are still desirable to consumers, but RTE products are where more growth opportunities lie. This includes segments like RTE snacks and liquid meal replacements, the latter of which are becoming increasingly preferred for morning meals when consumers are often on the go.

### **Nuts, by the truckload, make appetizing targets for thieves (CNN 8/1)**

Almonds, pistachios and other high-value nuts are an appealing commodity for not only health nuts, but also more recently to highly sophisticated criminal organizations in the San Joaquin valley. A cargo theft specialist describes the motivation behind a crime wave hitting California's lucrative tree nut industry: "It's not easy to track a nut." It's also not easy to immediately detect the criminals strategically robbing millions of dollars in nut cargo. But that's what's facing growers, the industry and authorities in California, where nut production brought in \$9.3 billion in 2014. "It hit us right between the eyes," said Roger Isom, CEO of the Western Agricultural Processors Association. "This is not anything we've really seen before ... we've experienced 30 thefts in the last six months," he said in April... California produces the most tree nuts in the United States, growing almost all the nation's almonds, walnuts and pistachios. It is second to China in world production of tree nuts and is hit the hardest by theft, according to the USDA. But nut thefts also have been spotted in Georgia and Arizona, Cornell said. The monetary value of the nuts has risen due to both popular demand for their health benefits and California's drought, said Bob DeMallie, senior director of communications at Travelers Insurance. [Link](#)

### **How A 'Sperm Bank' Is Saving Honey Bees (KPLU 8/1)**

Think of it as a sperm bank for honey bees. That is essentially what you'll find at Washington State University's apiary lab. There's even a "fertility clinic" where researchers artificially inseminate the queens. If all that sounds like sticky business, try explaining it to a customs agent at the airport. Once a year, researchers bring the sperm home in metal canisters full of liquid nitrogen to keep it frozen. They fly it in from far-flung places like Kazakhstan. This delicate work is all about improving the genetic diversity of the species – making sure honey bees adapt to changes in the environment. There's been a ban on importing bees and their semen since the '20s, because they aren't native. But WSU has a special permit. It's hands-on work, and not as difficult as you might think, given the males don't have stingers. "You just squeeze them, basically and out pops the tiny little drop of semen. And then we collect that with a syringe under a microscope and so we just do that over and over and over again until we have 200, 300 microliters of semen," said associate researcher Brandon Hopkins. That's just about a couple drops of

liquid. The donor bee dies, but it works the same way during the natural process of mating; when drones mate with virgin queens in nature they also die from the event. [Link](#)

### **U.S.: Cal Poly takes natural approach to stamping out HLB vector (Fresh Fruit Portal 8/1)**

Cal Poly Pomona is using biological controls in an attempt to better tackle the problem of Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP), the pest that spreads citrus greening disease. While the pest is in containment zones in parts of California and the disease – also known as Huanglongbing (HLB) – has not wrought havoc there yet, it has been very damaging in Florida and other parts of the world such as Brazil. Abc7.com reported Cal Poly Pomona researchers were breeding sting-less wasps in a greenhouse to help contain ACP populations. “Parasitic insects will eat the insects that carry the disease or feed on the insects that carry the disease and minimize the problem in that manner,” Cal Poly Pomona professor Valerie Mellano was quoted as saying. The wasps in question are ‘Tamarixia, which feed on the pest and “go where pesticides cannot”, the broadcaster reported. “There are a lot of people that have citrus trees in their backyards. It’s very hard to control with pesticides from the point of view of gaining access,” Mellano was quoted as saying. [Link](#)

### **Ag notebook: Lakota people take 350 mile trek, crop updates in Colorado, Nebraska sees little moisture (The Fence Post 8/1)**

Colorado Corn staff and board members encourage farmers and any others interested to attend an upcoming District 3 and 4 meeting, where attendees will hear updates about the two Colorado Corn organizations and issues affecting the industry... During this meeting, Colorado Corn staff will be joined by representatives of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, to discuss producer surveys and the NASS data used in factoring payments to farmers for certain programs, such as the Agriculture Risk Coverage County Option Program. In recent months, some farmers questioned the accuracy of the county yield data initially used to calculate farmers’ Agriculture Risk Coverage County Option Program eligibility, stressing some yields appeared too high, which would impact program payments now and in the future. In response, the Colorado Corn Growers Association reached out to lawmakers, federal and state officials, held meetings with Colorado producers, and traveled to Washington, D.C., St. Louis and elsewhere to discuss the issue, among other efforts. [Link](#)

### **Changing hazelnut industry complicates forecast (Associated Press/The Baytown Sun/Washington Times 8/1)**

Agricultural statisticians are cautiously preparing Oregon’s annual hazelnut crop forecast after last year’s forecast overestimated by more than 25 percent. The Capital Press reports that the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service hasn’t figured out exactly what went wrong in 2015. NASS state statistician Dave Losh says the Oregon’s rapidly changing hazelnut industry and an early crop are likely to blame for skewed results. Losh says one complication is the fungal disease that is gradually destroying old orchards while farmers plant new cultivars resistant to the blight. Chris Mertz, regional director for the Northwest, says NASS is focused on making sure its crews are following the model for collecting data. Mertz says the agency wants to make sure it’s covering all its bases before changing the model. [Link](#)

### **2016 Cotton Crop Progress (Cotton Farming 8/1)**

Our cotton crop is much improved going into July compared to its status the first of June. The July 11 National Agricultural Statistics Service Crop Progress and Condition Report for Arkansas reported cotton flowering or setting bolls ahead of the five-year average. Forty-eight percent of the cotton is in good condition, 25 percent excellent and 19 percent fair. Another measure of crop condition is nodes above white flower (NAWF). The NAWF value at first flower gives a good indication of the horsepower of the plant or its ability to supply the needs of a fruit load. In Arkansas, we target 9 to 10 NAWF at first flower and define cutout as NAWF=5. [Link](#)

### **Growing Organs on Apples (The Atlantic 7/27)**

In the high-ceilinged basement lab, the ear lies flat, encapsulated in a dish on a sheet-metal cabinet. It’s actually a piece of apple carved to look like an ear, yet it’s not really an apple either; the cellulose has been washed of its apple cells and populated instead with human ones. They are HeLa cells, the infamously ubiquitous cultured offspring of a long-ago cervical cancer. I am looking at an ear made of cervix, held together by apple. “Biohacking is the new gardening,” says Andrew Pelling, who leads the Pelling Laboratory for Biophysical Manipulation at the University of Ottawa. Pelling eschews the current vogue for genetic and chemical biological manipulation, investigating instead the ways in which cells behave when their physical surroundings change. The apple ear was created as an artistic statement, referring to a famous case of a human ear that was grafted onto a mouse’s back, and its choice of HeLa cells was intentionally provocative. But the fusion of plant and animal it represents holds promise for regenerative medicine, in which defective body parts may be replaced by engineered alternatives. [Link](#)



### *Food, Nutrition, & Consumer Services*

#### **City Ready to Spend Millions to Make Food Deserts Bloom, But Will It Work? (Dallas Observer 8/1)**

Sanders, who lives near Justin F. Kimball High School in Oak Cliff, has lived in south Dallas since 1980, when she came from east Texas to attend SMU. For years, she's been traveling the nearly 30 minutes it takes to get to this location, now a Sun Fresh Market, because grocery stores are nonexistent near her neighborhood. The term "food desert" became popular in the late '90s and early 2000s, and they have been common in parts of southern and western Dallas before there was a chic term for it. For the U.S. Department of Agriculture to qualify some place as a "low-access community," at least 500 people and/or at least 33 percent of the census tract's population must reside more than one mile from a supermarket or large grocery store. The majority of food deserts within the city of Dallas are in the south, despite the fact the populations of the northern and southern sector are about 50-50. There are incredibly few high-quality, but not necessarily high-end grocery store options (think Albertson's caliber) in the southern sector of the city: There are three Minyard Food Stores, one Kroger and one Tom Thumb. But that's about it. Southern Dallas' food options are primarily limited to Save-a-Lots, Family Dollar and Dollar General stores, convenience stores and gas stations. In contrast, there are six Krogers, four Minyard Sun Fresh Markets (the nicer version of Minyard Food Stores), and 11 Tom Thumbs in the northern sector, according to the food locators on each individual company's website. [Link](#)

#### **Healthy retail: Helping America gain access to healthy foods (The Christian Science Monitor 7/31)**

Healthy retail programs in urban areas are helping change the way people eat across the United States. From DC Central Kitchen's Healthy Corners to the Long Beach Healthy Market Partnership, health agencies, community organizations, and small businesses are teaming up to increase food access in underserved communities. These partnerships can help small corner stores increase their healthy offerings by providing a toolbox of resources and guidance. Studies from PolicyLink and The Food Trust show that low-income neighborhoods and communities of color have limited access to full-service grocery stores and the fresh produce they offer. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that 23.5 million people live in low-income areas that are more than a mile from a supermarket. These households are significantly less likely to have a vehicle available for food shopping, forcing many residents to rely on neighborhood convenience stores as their major food source. Unfortunately, many of these stores stock mainly processed, high-calorie, and low-nutrient foods, finds a report in Community Development Investment Review. What's more, the fruits and vegetables which are available are often lower quality and expensive, according to a study published last year. [Link](#)

#### **Reclaiming the Food Desert (Chronogram 8/1)**

On a recent Saturday at the Heart Street homeless shelter in Kingston, Sharon Mary "Chiz" Chisholm becomes excited as she and her volunteers unpack fresh onions, eggplant, peppers, and zucchini, and began preparing ratatouille. "We used to make all our meals with canned goods," she says. "We don't do that anymore." For 10 years, Chisholm says, she made three meals a day with almost no vegetables. Then she heard about the Hunger Project... Despite this herculean effort, the region's food insecurity has continued to grow. As federal and state-funding for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) and similar resources have decreased, residents have expanded their efforts to alleviate the hunger experienced by so many of their neighbors. In 2014, the Local Economies Project awarded a three-year grant to the Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley. With the help of the grant and an anonymous donor, Foundations established the Hudson Valley Farm Fresh Initiative, which has funded major components of this effort and brought them together to focus on long-term goals. [Link](#)

#### **The Financial benefits of Breast-feeding (New Delhi Times 8/1)**

If one had to write about the benefits of breast milk, the list would be endless. Breast milk helps protect babies from a list of chronic and acute diseases including diarrhea, pneumonia, diabetes, ear infections and sudden death syndrome (SIDS). In fact studies have shown that breast-fed babies have much higher IQ's at age 7 than formula fed babies. Because of its unparalleled positive effect on the baby's health, breast milk drastically cuts down medical costs and is easier on the pocket, right from the government to individual households. While it is beneficial for all babies, premature or preterm babies especially benefit from breast milk... In 2001, a study commissioned by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), titled "The Economic Benefits of Breastfeeding: A Review and Analysis" found out that if breastfeeding rates were increased to 75 percent at birth and 50 percent at six months, it would lead to a national government savings of a minimum of \$3.6 billion. According to another study, in the US the cost of treating respiratory viruses resulting from not breastfeeding is \$225 million a year. [Link](#)

#### **DuPage Health Department Teaches Mothers The Benefits of Breastfeeding (The Chicago**

### **Tribune/The Doings Oak Brook 8/1)**

In celebration of World Breastfeeding Week, the DuPage County Health Department is reminding mothers that the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Supplemental Food and Nutrition Program, offers support, encouragement and education to eligible mothers about the numerous benefits of breastfeeding their babies. The DuPage County Health Department's WIC program, funded through a grant program from the Illinois Department of Human Services, strives to educate and make new mothers comfortable with breastfeeding. Many new mothers have questions and concerns about breastfeeding. Trained specialists on staff conduct breastfeeding classes and counseling. The class gives first-time mothers a chance to talk to other WIC mothers who have breastfed. The Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program provides pregnant and breastfeeding women with breastfeeding education throughout their pregnancy and after delivery. Breastfeeding Peer Counselors visit moms during their hospital stay to provide encouragement and peer support... The WIC Program is offered across the United States through the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The goal of the WIC program is to safeguard the health of low-income women, infants, and children up to age 5 who are at nutritional risk by providing nutritious foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care. [Link](#)

### **Report: Work-Load Requirements Keep Students From Getting Food Assistance (News Wise 8/1)**

College students face significant barriers when it comes to accessing federal food assistance programs because of outdated state and federal requirements. Aligning the criteria can make it easier for students to get food assistance. These findings, along with recommendations to ease access to aid programs, are shared in SNAP and the Federal Work Study Rule: Increasing College Student Success for Low-Income Students, a white paper recently published by recent HSU graduate Heather King ('15, Social Work), M.S.W., and HSU Social Work Professor Jen Maguire, M.S.W., Ph.D. Students are automatically disqualified from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) unless they meet one of a few exemptions, like having at least 20 hours of paid employment per week or participating in a work-study financial aid program. California's Department of Health & Human Services interprets these requirements slightly differently, allowing students to qualify for work study—but not necessarily participate—and still meet the exemption to qualify for CalFresh, the state's implementation of SNAP. Even then, it's up to individual counties to begin the lengthy process of activating the work-study exemption, meaning the exemption is not applied consistently throughout the state. [Link](#)

### **Dannon Danimals® and Fuel Up to Play 60 Renew Commitment to Build Healthy Habits and Inspire Kids with a Chance to Win an Epic School Field Day with NFL Players (Business Wire 8/1)**

Dannon Danimals, the leading yogurt brand for kids, and Fuel Up to Play 60, the nation's largest in-school wellness program, announced their renewed collaboration to inspire kids to fuel up with nutritious choices and get active for at least 60 minutes a day, building on the success of their inaugural promotion in 2015-16. Focused around a national back-to-school retail promotion, parents and kids across the country are encouraged to search for one of five "golden" Danimals Bongo smoothies and/or Danimals Squeezables low fat yogurts for a chance to win a field day for their school with NFL players. As part of its mission to bring health through food to as many people as possible, Dannon is awarding a total of \$30,000 to the winning schools (\$6,000 each) to help make their schools and communities healthier environments... Fuel Up to Play 60 is an in-school nutrition and physical activity program launched by National Football League (NFL) and National Dairy Council (NDC), which was founded by America's dairy farmers, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The program encourages youth to consume nutrient-rich foods (low-fat and fat-free dairy, fruits, vegetables and whole grains) and achieve at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. As a result of the program, 13 million students are making better food choices by selecting nutritious options like low-fat and fat-free dairy products, fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Additionally, 16 million students are getting more physically active during the school day as a result of the program. [Link](#)

### **Smart Snacks Rule Brings Eggs To The Table (Perishable News 8/1)**

Hard-boiled eggs provide a nutrient dense option for healthy snacks and a la carte offerings in schools, according to the final guidelines issued recently by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service under its Smart Snacks Rule<sup>1</sup>. In a change from its earlier renditions of the rule, this final decision exempts whole eggs from limits on both total fat and saturated fat. In fact, the final rule's preamble specifically cites the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans<sup>2</sup> (DGA) that identifies eggs as "nutrient dense" and includes eggs in its recommended healthy eating patterns. Schools can include hard-cooked or hard-boiled eggs as snacks or menu items, as long as no fat has been added to them. [Link](#)

### **Education Department Releases Updated School Lunch Eligibility Guidelines (Indiana Public Media 8/1)**

Schools across Indiana are gearing up to welcome students back for a new academic year, with some

already in session. As students return to school, it also means it's time for school meals to begin again. Just in time, the Indiana Department of Education has released new statewide guidelines for free and reduced price school meals. Families who use food stamps, have a child in a Head Start program, have foster children or have a child enrolled in the Migrant Education Program are automatically eligible for the program. Families who meet federal income requirements are also eligible for free or reduced lunch. A family of four making an annual income of under \$45,000 would be eligible... As we've reported earlier, U.S. Congressman Todd Rokita, R-Indiana, proposed legislation this May that would ease nutrition standards for a federal school lunch program and impose tighter restrictions for schools to offer free meals schoolwide. Rokita says funds saved from reducing the number of federal school-wide lunch programs could be used for breakfast or summer meal programs instead. [Link](#)

### **State Expands Groundwork Center's Local School Lunch Program (The Traverse City Ticker 8/1)**

More local food will be on the menu at schools this fall thanks to the state's expansion of a Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities program that adds up to 10 cents per lunch to provide local fruits and vegetables in school lunches. In this week's Northern Express - sister publication of The Ticker - writer Patrick Sullivan explores the promising potential the expansion offers to both schools and farmers. One dime per meal might not sound like much, but it can have a drastic impact on the quality of food and on the local farm economy, according to Diane Conners, a Groundwork senior policy specialist. Consider that the amount spent on food for each school lunch is just \$1.20, and that of that amount, roughly 20 or 30 cents goes toward fruits and vegetables. That means a 10-cent increase to each meal's fruit and vegetable budget boosts that budget by 33 to 50 percent — offering a tasty opportunity for school, farmers, and students. Launched in 2013 by Groundwork Center and its partners to promote the farm-to-school movement in the northwest lower Michigan region, the success of 10 Cents a Meal recently caught the eye of a legislator who wanted to expand it. [Link](#)

### **Siouxland elderly nutrition and school lunch menus (Sioux City Journal 7/31)**

Persons 60 years of age and older and their spouses may participate in the elderly nutrition program in Siouxland. In Sioux City, meals are served Tuesday-Friday at Riverside Lutheran Church, 1817 Riverside Blvd.; on Monday at Riverside Gardens' Community Room, 715 Bruner Ave., Monday through Friday at Fairmount Park, 210 S. Fairmount St. A suggested contribution of \$3.75-\$6.50/meal or what each person can afford without causing a financial hardship. Reservations are required a day in advance by calling the Connections Area Agency on Aging nutrition office at 279-6900 ext.2026. or for more information about other available meal sites. [Link](#)

### **[Video] Program tries to stop 'summer slide' for kids (MSNBC 7/31)**

For some Americans, summertime is about vacation and fun in the sun. But for millions of low-income families, it can be a serious hardship. [Link](#)

### **Summer Food Service Program keeps kids fed during summer months (Olean Times Herald 7/31)**

Most kids' nutritional needs are taken care of during the school year with free or reduced-price lunches. About 3,500 kids take advantage of such lunches in Cattaraugus County alone, where 25 percent of children live below the poverty line. But what happens during summer? Cattaraugus Community Action, through the federal Summer Food Service Program, has provided free lunches to children during summer months for more than 20 years. On Friday, it was back in action again for one of the final times this summer — handing out packed lunches of sandwiches, oranges and milk cartons to a group of about 15 kids in Oak Hill Park, as U.S. Rep. Tom Reed and Mayor Bill Aiello made special appearances. "As many people think about school lunch programs and what happens during the school year, we often forget that there is a summer," Reed said. "To be able to have access to a nutritious lunch, food during the summer is critical... because so much of what we see across the district, and across the country — it's a real issue getting food to some of these students in the summer months." [Link](#)

### **MPS expands free lunch program (McAlester News-Capital 7/31)**

Lunchroom economics usually revolve around the exchange rates between pizza slices and pudding cups. However, a free lunch program at McAlester Public Schools is expanding to all students through 4th grade — easing financial burdens on many parents and ensuring students a hot meal during the school day. Students from Pre-K through 4th grade are eligible to receive a free lunch everyday this year due to funding from a federal program called Community Eligibility Provision. The funding is awarded to low-income areas, MPS Child Nutrition Services Director Donna Green said, but any student through the 4th grade can receive a free lunch — regardless of family income. "It eases the expense," Green said. "With all the other expenses for school — clothes, school supplies — it's one less expense to worry about." This is the third year MPS is offering the service, but it's the first year it included 1st through 4th grades. The district was able to expand the service because it is federally funded. Significant cutbacks in state funding

have curtailed spending in other areas, but child nutrition operates under its own budget. Last year the budget was \$1.45 million, with approximately \$900,000 of the budget going toward the food required to feed a district of hungry kids. The remaining funds pay for equipment replacements and the salaries of 39 employees spread across nine schools and 10 different kitchens. [Link](#)

### **18,000 KCKPS students to receive free breakfast and lunch this school year (Wyandotte Daily 8/1)**

The Kansas City, Kan., Public Schools will begin offering free breakfast and lunch to its 5,000 middle school students this school year through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program. CEP is a program of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 that allows schools with high poverty rates to provide free breakfast and lunch to students. This is the second group of KCKPS students to receive free school meals. Last school year, KCKPS began providing free meals to its 13,000 elementary students through CEP. This means that a total of 18,000 students will have the opportunity this year to receive free healthy meals during their school day. KCKPS receives reimbursement from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for its school meals program. "It's just absolutely a blessing for our community. It's another group of students who have had barriers removed from them for being able to access healthy foods," said Josh Mathiasmeier, director of nutritional services. "We know that good nutrition and learning go hand in hand so this is a win-win opportunity for our students, staff and families." [Link](#)

### **2 polygamous leaders are arrested while awaiting trial on food-stamp-fraud charges (The Salt Lake Tribune 8/1)**

Two leaders in the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints were arrested Monday on suspicion of violating the terms of their release from jail as they await trial in a food-stamp-fraud case. Seth Jeffs — brother to imprisoned FLDS leader Warren Jeffs — and John Wayman, a business owner and former bishop for the polygamous sect, were booked into Washington County jail after being accused of violating their pre-trial release conditions, said Melodie Rydalch, spokeswoman for the U.S. Attorney's Office in Salt Lake City. The men were ordered to wear GPS ankle monitors and remain in Utah, though Seth Jeffs was given limited travel release to South Dakota, where he leads an FLDS congregation. Rydalch did not say which conditions the men are suspected of violating. Jail records indicate Seth Jeffs was arrested by a Washington County sheriff's deputy, while Wayman was arrested by a federal agent. [Link](#)

### **Fort Smith Family Accused of Food Stamp Fraud Focus of Additional Investigations (Arkansas Business 8/1)**

You may have heard that the feds seized nearly \$157,000 from the father-and-son pair who have been accused of running an elaborate food stamp fraud that involved 94 beneficiaries. The U.S. government recently filed a civil lawsuit in U.S. District Court in the Western District to keep the money it took from Raja Zaman and his son, Haroon "Harry" Zaman, who owns several Fort Smith convenience stores. But did you know the Zamans are part of an ongoing criminal investigation by the FBI, the IRS and the U.S. Department of Agriculture? If you recall, the feds also seized the family's 2002 Dodge Ram, 2007 Acura and 2010 Acura and filed a civil suit to have the property forfeited. Federal prosecutors asked in July that the civil case be put on hold for three months or until the "related criminal investigation is resolved," whichever is sooner. An attorney for Harry Zaman didn't have a problem with the delay, and U.S. District Court Judge P.K. Holmes III agreed to it. [Link](#)

### **A South Carolina county is the nation's 4th most-obese (The State 8/1)**

The American Medical Association defines obesity as a disease. That means 35.7 percent of Americans — those with BMIs over 30 — are considered ill. That's a lot of sick people. Whether you agree with the AMA's definition or not, it underscores the gravity of the condition. The World Health Organization even considers it a global epidemic. Worldwide, the relationship between wealth and obesity follows a positive trend: as wealth goes up, so too does obesity, according to Dr. James A. Levine of the Mayo Clinic. In keeping with this trend, the United States is the wealthiest country in the world, and one of the most obese, at no. 18 out of 230 in obesity. Within the United States, however, this relationship flips. Counties with lower average incomes tend to see higher rates of obesity. Though this obesity-income relationship seems quite paradoxical, explanations for it exist. Lack of access to nutritious food and outdoor space for exercise are two of the more popular theories. Some point to the geographic scarcity of grocery stores in many poor areas as a primary cause of the malnutrition, but this reasoning has recently come into question. A study done by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture found that differences in proximity of grocery stores explained less than 10 percent of the variation in healthy food consumption and that when new supermarkets opened, they had little effect on what nearby residents ate. [Link](#)

### **More Coca-Cola Ties Seen Inside U.S. Centers For Disease Control (Huffington Post 8/1)**

In June, Dr. Barbara Bowman, a high-ranking official within the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention, unexpectedly departed the agency, two days after information came to light indicating that she had been communicating regularly with - and offering guidance to - a leading Coca-Cola advocate seeking to influence world health authorities on sugar and beverage policy matters. Now, more emails suggest that another veteran CDC official has similarly close ties to the global soft drink giant. Michael Pratt, Senior Advisor for Global Health in the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at the CDC, has a history of promoting and helping lead research funded by Coca-Cola. Pratt also works closely with the nonprofit corporate interest group set up by Coca-Cola called the International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI), emails obtained through Freedom of Information requests show... During Bowman's tenure, in May 2013, ILSI and other organizers invited Bowman and the CDC to participate in a project ILSI was engaged in with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to develop a "branded foods database." Travel costs for Bowman would be paid by ILSI, the invitation stated. Bowman did agree to participate and the CDC provided funding, at least \$25,000, Harben confirmed, to support the database project. The 15-member steering committee for the project held six ILSI representatives, documents show. [Link](#)

### **McDonald's to Remove High-Fructose Corn Syrup From Sandwich Buns (The Wall Street Journal 8/1)**

McDonald's Corp. said Monday it will replace high-fructose corn syrup in its sandwich buns with sugar as part of an effort to simplify its ingredients and satisfy increasingly conscientious customers. The fast-food giant also is rolling out Chicken McNuggets and some breakfast items free of artificial preservatives and said it has curbed the use of chicken raised with antibiotics that are also commonly used on humans... [Link](#)

#### *Food Safety*

### **Feds channel The Stones: You can't always get what you want... (Food Safety News 8/2)**

Neither of the top U.S. food cops on stage here had the moves of Mick Jagger, but they borrowed the sentiment from one of The Stones' greatest hits when they summed up federal progress on the food safety front. "You can't always get what you want," Jagger said in 1969. But, if we try real hard, and work together, we might get what we need, Al Almanza and Stephen Ostroff said Monday afternoon. Almanza is the deputy under secretary for food safety at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which is responsible for the safety of meat, poultry, dairy and, as of earlier this year, catfish. Ostroff is deputy commissioner for foods and veterinary medicine at the Food and Drug Administration, which has jurisdiction over pretty much all other foods and beverages in the United States. "You can do all the right things and still not get what you need," Almanza said. "Government can't do it on its own. ... It takes government, science, industry, academia and consumers to protect and advance food safety." The USDA is already working with many of those entities on Almanza's list, including the FDA, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the FBI. The latter collaboration relates to things such as food safety at major stadium venues, he said. [Link](#)

### **The Salmonella question isn't easily answered (Food Safety News 8/2)**

A scientist, a retiree and a lawyer walk into a seminar room. There's no punchline. They're no joke. They came to talk Salmonella and they are deadly serious. The three-part session Monday afternoon at the annual conference of the International Association for Food Protection was headlined with a question in the program book: "Is Salmonella an adulterant in raw meat and poultry?"... Stearns said the significance of specificity as it relates to Salmonella and its official status as an adulterant or non-adulterant centers on the case of Supreme Beef Processors Inc. v. the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The bottom line of the case that many people miss, Stearns said, is that the USDA only lost on one front when a federal appeals court in 2001 upheld a lower court's ruling in favor of the beef company. The courts said the USDA couldn't shut down a meat-processing plant that repeatedly failed tests for Salmonella contamination at its facility. That's why many people believe that Salmonella cannot be considered an adulterant, Stearns said. However, the USDA only argued the point under one section of the federal Meat Inspection Act. Stearns contends there is still room for a legal challenge under another section of the law. [Link](#)

### **United States to open doors to beef from Brazil (The Weekly Times 8/1)**

AUSTRALIAN cattle producers should not panic over news Brazil has been granted access to the United States beef market, industry leaders say. The Brazil Government last week announced it could export to the US after being banned from sending meat due to Foot and Mouth disease outbreaks. And while the US is yet to announce any ground rules, Australian producers and industry analysts are watching the situation closely. The US has been Australia's largest beef export market for the past two years, and last year Australia exported a record 415,951 tonnes to the US. Chilled grass-fed exports to the US also set a new high in 2015 reaching 74,260 tonnes. Australian Meat Industry Council national processing director Steve Martyn said any exports from Brazil would need to fit into a US quota for "other countries" of 64,800 tonnes. [Link](#)

### **US, Brazil Agree to Increase Fresh Beef Trade (The Cattle Site 8/1)**

Brazil's Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply (MAPA) announced on Friday the completion of negotiations between Brazil and the US to increase trade in fresh beef between the two markets. It is expected that shipments start in 90 days after the completion of administrative procedures by the health authorities of both countries. MAPA said the conclusion of the negotiations is important for Brazil not only for buying potential of that market but also because the US is a reference to other importers of fresh beef. Agriculture Minister Blairo Maggi said: "The mode of trade will be by "pre-listing", so both MAPA and the US Department of Agriculture may indicate a list of establishments for export. However, only those establishments that meet all specified requirements on the agreed certification shall be allowed to export by the US and Brazilian official services." [Link](#)

### **Catfish inspection isn't 'cronyism,' but about protecting consumers (The Hill 8/2)**

In his recent piece in The Hill's Contributors section, Neil Siefring claims that the food safety "threat posed by catfish" is "microscopic" because catfish are not typically linked to cases of salmonellosis. But Siefring neglects to mention all of the other food safety concerns associated with catfish, including dangerous levels of antibiotic residues. For example, an astounding 9 percent of imported catfish products tested positive for the antimicrobial malachite green in recent samples taken by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Malachite green is banned for use in aquaculture under U.S. law, as are many other powerful, broad spectrum antibiotics that foreign producers often rely on to raise seafood in unsanitary conditions. [Link](#)

### **CDC Spending \$67 Million to Fight Antibiotic Resistance (Food Poisoning Bulletin 8/1)**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is going to spend \$67,000,000 to help fight the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. That money will go to health departments across the country in all 50 states and Puerto Rico, and to local health departments in six major cities. Those six cities include New York City, Houston, Chicago, D.C., Los Angeles, and Philadelphia. The money will be available to jurisdictions starting today, August 1, 2016. That money will help labs test for multidrug-resistant bacteria and will aid in whole genome sequencing (WGS) of Salmonella, Shigella, and other intestinal bacteria. Officials hope that this funding and new testing will help the government respond more quickly to food poisoning outbreaks. [Link](#)

### **Tips for practicing back-to-school lunch food safety (The Atlanta Journal-Constitution 8/2)**

Thrown in a locker, stuffed in a backpack or stashed under a desk, lunch foods can linger too long at room temperatures; the bacteria-friendly "danger zone" is between 40 and 140 degrees F. Researchers at the University of Texas in Austin found that 95 percent of packed lunches were kept at an unsafe temperature. Forget paper bags and metal lunch boxes sporting Barbie and Bieber. The latest and safest "lunch kits," as they're called now, are insulated with a space to add ice packs, and also feature an easy-to-clean plastic lining with an antimicrobial treatment to help prevent bacteria buildup. Registered dietitian Jo-Ann Heslin suggests: "If you pack lunch in the morning, chill the lunchbox in the refrigerator overnight. If you pack lunch at night, put the food in the lunchbox and refrigerate both overnight. This helps keep all foods cooler longer." [Link](#)

### **MU Extension offers canning safety tips (Ozark Radio News 7/31)**

It's that time of the year again, when fruits and vegetables from the garden are arriving in abundance. Canning is one of the best way to preserve your food and let you enjoy your garden favorites all year long. Fresh foods can spoil for many reasons. Bacteria, molds and yeasts cause damage and so do food enzymes and exposure to air. Using proper techniques when canning will stop the growth of microorganisms and can prevent spoilage and quality loss. Use the following tips to get safe and high-quality results: Only use tested recipes from Cooperative Extension, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) or Ball Blue Book (dated 1989 or later). Follow canning procedures from the same sources dated 2009 or later. When canning safety, should be the number one priority. Botulism is a deadly bacteria that does not have a taste or smell, even a small amount could be deadly. Pressure canning low acid foods such a meats and some vegetables, for the proper time will destroy the bacteria and ensure that you have a safe finished product. Water bath canning these foods will not kill the bacteria and cause be deadly to you and your family. [Link](#)

### *Natural Resources & Environment*

#### **USDA to conduct aerial seeding across Massachusetts (MassLive 8/1)**

A statewide aerial seeding initiative is slated to begin next week in an effort to improve and protect farmland across the commonwealth. Beginning Aug. 10, a helicopter will take to the air to drop winter rye grass seed on cropland from Westfield in Hampden County to as far southeast as Dartmouth in Bristol County, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service in

Massachusetts. USDA officials say the goal is to improve soil health by establishing a "cover crop" that will protect soils after main crops are harvested. Cover crops can improve a soil's organic matter content, water-holding capacity, and resilience to climate change, the officials said. The aerial seeding will last through mid-September, roughly following a west-to-east pattern from Berkshire County to coastal Bristol County. Farms are participating on a voluntary basis and will receive financial and technical assistance from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. [Link](#)

### **Crime In The Fields: How Monsanto And Scofflaw Farmers Hurt Soybeans In Arkansas (NPR 8/1)**

When agricultural extension agent Tom Barber drives the country roads of eastern Arkansas this summer, his trained eye can spot the damage: soybean leaves contorted into cup-like shapes. He's seeing it in field after field. Similar damage is turning up in Tennessee and in the "boot-heel" region of Missouri. Tens of thousands of acres are affected. This is no natural phenomenon of weather or disease. It's almost certainly the result of a crime. The disfigured leaves are evidence that a neighboring farmer sprayed a herbicide called dicamba, probably in violation of the law. Dicamba has been around for decades, and it is notorious for a couple of things: It vaporizes quickly and blows with the wind. And it's especially toxic to soybeans, even at ridiculously low concentrations. Damage from drifting pesticides isn't unfamiliar to farmers. But the reason for this year's plague of dicamba damage is unprecedented. "I've never seen anything like this before," says Bob Scott, a weed specialist from the University of Arkansas. "This is a unique situation that Monsanto created." The story starts with Monsanto because the St. Louis-based biotech giant launched, this year, an updated version of its herbicide-tolerant soybean seeds. This new version, which Monsanto calls "Xtend," isn't just engineered to tolerate sprays of glyphosate, aka Roundup. It's also immune to dicamba. [Link](#)

### **Rotational grazing's economic and environmental benefits showcased during Pope County field day (Pope County Tribune 8/1)**

Farmers and conservation professionals got a firsthand look recently at how an innovative grazing system can produce more income for farmers while improving wildlife habitat and protecting water resources. During the Land Stewardship Project (LSP) field day in partnership with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), farmers, land managers, and conservation professionals visited two livestock operations near Terrace on July 19. They saw first-hand how farmers are utilizing high-tech portable fencing, pasture improvement techniques and cover cropping to raise more cattle on less land utilizing a system called managed rotational grazing. "Two years into this I've already added 25 more cows on the same amount of acres," Dan Jenniges told the more than 40 participants who visited his recently renovated pasture near the east branch of the Chippewa River. Jenniges was talking about moving his cattle at heavier density through smaller paddocks for shorter durations as compared to open grazing the entire acreage as he had in the past. Jenniges has been working with the NRCS to put in place an 18-paddock grazing system on approximately 189 acres. This layout makes it so he can rotate his beef cows every few days, allowing the grass to recover throughout the growing season and distributing manure evenly across the landscape. Such a paddock system is at the core of managed rotational grazing, which an increasing number of farmers are using to extend their grazing season while building soil health. [Link](#)

### **As corn devours prairies, greens reconsider biofuel mandate (Bloomberg/Daily Gazette 7/30)**

Environmentalists who once championed biofuels as a way to cut pollution are now turning against a U.S. program that puts renewable fuels in cars, citing higher-than-expected carbon dioxide emissions and reduced wildlife habitat. More than a decade after conservationists helped persuade Congress to require adding corn-based ethanol and other biofuels to gasoline, some groups regret the resulting agricultural runoff in waterways and conversion of prairies to cropland -- improving the odds that lawmakers might seek changes to the program next year. "The big green groups that got invested in biofuels are tacitly realizing the blunder," said John DeCicco, a research professor at the University of Michigan Energy Institute who previously focused on automotive strategies at the Environmental Defense Fund. "It's really hard for the people who really -- shall we say -- hate oil viscerally, to think that this alternative that we've been promoting is today worse than oil." [Link](#)

### **Honey bees topic of Cradle Coast NRM workshop (The Advocate 8/1)**

Where would we be without honey bees? They are essential for much of our food, fibre and agricultural production success, providing vital pollination services for imported crop-varieties that native bee species cannot match. So when bee populations are threatened, it's important for all of us to take notice and play a part in their protection. Last summer's noticeable increase in European wasp numbers triggered alarm bells for many commercial fruit, berry and canola producers in Tasmania who rely on bees to boost crop yields. European wasps threaten healthy bee hives by bringing in parasites and decimating young bee populations... Mr Trafford was joined recently by Natural State environment manager Matt Rose at a beekeeping and wasp management evening hosted by Cradle Coast NRM in Burnie. Mr Rose explained the

triple threat of European Wasps to the region's economy, environment and social values. "Not only are the wasps threatening bee populations and food production, they also attack iconic native species such as the endangered Ptunarra Brown Butterfly caterpillar and are a growing nuisance to people enjoying summer outdoors," Mr Rose said. [Link](#)

#### **Drought climate could hurt fall tourism season (The Telegram 7/31)**

The light rain hitting Greater Nashua late last week was not enough to quell concerns about the upcoming autumn tourism season, nor did the precipitation quiet the irrigation pumps working overtime at many farms in the region. Federal drought monitor maps show Hillsborough and Rockingham counties have been particularly dry over the past month, making some in New Hampshire's agriculture and tourism industries somewhat nervous. [Link](#)

#### **A Look At This Year's Raging Wildfires -- From Space (The Huffington Post Australia 7/30)**

Climate change has not only sent global temperatures spiraling out of control, it has breathed fire into Earth's wild lands. Fire seasons are an average 78 days longer than they were in 1970, and the number of acres scorched each year has doubled since 1980, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. If the start of the 2016 fire season is any indication, this alarming trend won't be extinguished anytime soon. NASA is providing a unique view of the destruction by using satellites to help track and monitor fires — valuable information for fire managers on the ground — as well as look at how these blazes are affecting air quality and releasing greenhouse gases. Lesley Ott, a scientist at NASA'S Goddard Space Flight Center, said the technology provides scientists with "the best view that we've ever had of the global picture." "Satellites give us a really unique perspective on fires," Ott said in an interview posted to the space agency's website. "We can see the hot spot while the fire's going on, we can see the smoke that's pouring off. And then after the fire's completed, we can actually look at the burn scar and see the impact on vegetation, and even the vegetation regrowth in the year's to come." [Link](#)

#### **Wyoming establishes Tree Commission in effort to become 'Tree City USA' (Michigan Live 8/1)**

The city of Wyoming is on its way to becoming a "Tree City USA." The City Council recently established a Wyoming Tree Commission as a first step in earning the Tree City USA certification. Officials said the Tree Commission's mission is to promote healthy tree coverage and a variety of tree species throughout the city... Along with a Tree Commission, municipalities must have a tree-care ordinance, Arbor Day proclamation, and a community forest program with a \$2-per-capita operating budget to receive the title of Tree City USA. The Arbor Day Foundation, in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters, awards the Tree City USA certification. The move to establish the city as a Tree City USA comes after officials last year planted 20 new trees in Ideal Park to help replace trees damaged from a 2014 tornado. [Link](#)

#### **Issues in wolf recovery program have been addressed (Albuquerque Journal 8/1)**

The July 16 Albuquerque Journal editorial "IG's report reveals lies and manipulation on wolves" does not represent current operations within the Mexican wolf recovery program. As the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's southwest regional director, I would like to set the record straight. In 2013, I recognized that we were falling short in some key functions pertaining to wolf team operations and made decisive management changes to address those shortcomings, including personnel moves and hiring additional field staff. Three years later, the inspector general's report recognizes and validates the appropriateness of those changes. The Journal does not acknowledge that the report simply did not substantiate the most egregious complaints, and further implies that many programmatic issues still exist, when in fact the majority have been resolved or were not substantiated. Recovery of a predator that has long been absent from a working landscape has understandably been met with resistance. Successfully recovering the Mexican wolf on a working landscape requires that we work closely with local residents, stakeholders and public leaders. We also work hard to communicate effectively and have taken definitive steps to improve our communication protocols... The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services has the responsibility for making depredation determinations. The council acts to provide compensation for wolf-related livestock losses once a determination has been made. [Link](#)

#### **August "Outta the Woods" (Florida Sportsman 8/1)**

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is looking to hunters to help monitor the state's deer herd this coming season for chronic wasting disease, or CWD as it's more commonly called. And any Florida hunter planning to hunt deer, moose or elk out of state this year needs to be aware of certain laws and regulations aimed at preventing CWD from entering our state. What is CWD? CWD belongs to a group of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies. Scientists still have much to learn about CWD, which appears to occur only in the deer family, but is believed to be caused by an abnormal protein called a prion... Should a CWD outbreak occur in Florida, the keys to effective management will be detecting it early and taking swift action to limit its spread. Because of this, the FWC has a CWD action team made up of veterinarians, biologists, law enforcement officers and media folks, in



place and ready to respond along with other government agencies, such as the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Link](#)

- **BLM released mining, conservation plans for eastern Alaska (Associated Press/The Washington Press/San Francisco Chronicle/Dothan Eagle/The Daily Progress 8/1)**

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management has announced plans to open up about one-quarter of the 6.5 million acres it manages in eastern Alaska to possible mining or oil and gas development. As part of the plan revealed Friday, officials will also designate about 1 million acres as areas of critical environmental concern. The designation would protect the area by limiting off-road vehicle use and resource development, according to The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner. The new areas being considered for mining or oil and gas operations are located outside the region's existing protected areas, which include the White Mountains National Recreation Area and the Steese National Conservation Area. Rivers designated as Wild Scenic River corridors would also remain closed to resource extraction. The federal agency plans to give three areas the critical environmental concern designation. About 623,000 acres in the Salmon Fork area will get the designation, along with 362,000 acres in the Fortymile area and 37,000 acres in the Mosquito Flats area. [Link](#)

*Rural Development*

**In rural Dallas County, a clash over the role of government (Dallas News 8/1)**

The journey for water starts early, before the heat gets smothering. Under trees outside his house, Stephen Nevil fastens a trailer carrying two empty 700-gallon tanks to his green pickup. The Army veteran wheezes with emphysema and has to sit every few minutes to catch his breath... Like Price, Jenkins also grew up in the country. In Waxahachie, his family relied on wells for water. He remembers the rural lifestyle fondly, though now he lives far from it, in Highland Park. Jenkins' philosophy on the issue differs fundamentally from Price's. Jenkins says he sees the government's role as one that should try to help people. Many of the residents probably wish they could afford to move somewhere with tap water, he says. "We have a particular duty to those in the unincorporated areas," Jenkins says, "because we're the only layer of local government for them." Jenkins says he wants to help if he can. He's already working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which helps provide rural areas water, to study Sandbranch. He's willing to make similar efforts for the other residents, too. Jenkins disagrees with Ronald Reagan's famous quip about the nine most terrifying words in the English language. "We can be the government," Jenkins says, "and we can be there to help you." [Link](#)

**Bristol, USDA agree on water system loan (Addison Independent 8/1)**

Bristol officials will pursue a deal with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for a combined total of \$1.1 million in loans to cover a major improvement and expansion of town water system infrastructure in the western part of the village. Local select board members had hoped the USDA would provide 45 percent of the \$1.1 million in the form of a grant, but ultimately reasoned that a loan of 2.25 percent — in the absence of a grant — is a better deal than Bristol could have negotiated with a bank. [Link](#)

**Rural Infrastructure Summit to be held in Ames, IA (Agri-Pulse 8/1)**

The Association of Equipment Manufacturers, in conjunction with Agri-Pulse Communications, is sponsoring a Rural Infrastructure Summit on Monday, August 29 at the Iowa State Center's Scheman Building, in Ames, IA. The summit will be held from 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm followed by a networking reception. The Summit will address how we develop new, innovative ideas to solve the infrastructure challenges that rural America faces today and in the future; both in the day-to-day operations of the agriculture economy and in simply getting products moving around the world. A cross-section of leading companies and organizations will be participating in the program that is structured for maximum discussion and input by the speakers and attendees. Leif Magnusson, AEM Chairman and President, CLAAS Global Sales - Americas will kick off the event... Following the summit, the Association of Equipment Manufacturers and other organizations such as CoBank, CHS, Inc., National Corn Growers Association, National Grain and Feed Association, Rural Broadband Association, Soy Transportation Coalition, US Grains Council, and the Waterways Council will sponsor a seven-part follow up series "Keeping Rural America Competitive". This special editorial series launches September 12th on Agri-Pulse.com. [Link](#)

**Obama signs condo bill into law (Scotsman Guide 8/1)**

It will soon get easier for condominium buyers to obtain Federal Housing Administration (FHA) loans. President Barack Obama last week signed into law H.R. 3700, also known as the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act, that will require regulators to rewrite several rules that determine FHA eligibility for condo developments. Current rules disqualify buyers from seeking FHA loans if less than 50 percent of the condominium units are owner-occupied. The law lowers that requirement to a 35 percent

owner-occupied ratio. FHA also would have to relax a hard rule banning transfer fees when a condo is sold to allow condominium associations to collect fees that support community improvements. That policy is consistent with Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac's existing policy... The law will also allow the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to delegate to preferred lenders its approval authority for USDA loans, and the agency to charge a \$50 fee to lenders per loan for using the automated underwriting system. [Link](#)

### **A Place to Learn the Do-It-Yourself Arts (The Wall Street Journal 8/1)**

"This is what the recipe does not tell you," Deborah Gordon told the students in her Hudson Valley jam-making class. "You need to have a plate in your freezer." Once the jam comes to a full boil—in this case it was strawberry basil—you put a teaspoon of it onto the frigid plate. "Draw your finger through it. If the jam starts to creep into the inroad you made with your finger, it's not done."... However, in classes such as hers may also lie the secret to saving rural America. Ms. Gordon's class is part of a bold experiment called Behold! New Lebanon. The name refers to a down-at-the-heels town three hours north of the city that in recent years was perhaps best known for a speedway that has been a source of noise complaints... Behold! New Lebanon is supported by grants, Ms. Abram said, the sponsors including the U.S. Department of Agriculture. "The USDA is really worried," Ms. Abram said. "Small towns are dying everywhere. It would be lovely if this grows into something with real jobs for lots of people." [Link](#)

### *Marketing & Regulatory Programs*

#### **President Obama Signs Controversial Bill Requiring GMO Labels (Eater 7/31)**

President Barack Obama has signed a controversial bill into law requiring the labeling of genetically modified ingredients, The Associated Press reports. The legislation requires that companies include labels on packaging for food containing GMO ingredients and preempts laws in states like Vermont with individual requirements. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will have two years to develop the rules. Under the new law, companies will be required to disclose genetically modified ingredients through text labels, symbols, or scannable QR codes. The new labeling standard is unprecedented in the United States where food companies and the agriculture industry have long fought to prevent labels that they argue mislead consumers with bad science. Proponents of the bill say that the federal law will help streamline regulations and avoid a complex web of individual state regulations. The new federal labeling law will supercede strict GMO regulations that recently went into effect in Vermont. Critics of the national law — including Senator Bernie Sanders — say the standards don't go far enough. Not all consumers, they argue, have access to QR code-reading technology. The law has also been accused of lacking teeth, with few or no penalties for companies that violate the labeling standards. [Link](#)

#### **Sorry Food Industry, The Historic GMO Food Labeling Bill Is Anything But (Forbes 8/1)**

It is official, President Barack Obama has signed into law federal legislation, supporting H.R.1599 – Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act of 2015 sponsored by Rep. Mike Pompeo (R-Kan.) and the Roberts-Stabenow Biotech Labeling Act, introduced by Sens. Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.) and Pat Roberts (R-Kan.) – the bipartisan agreement can be found here mandating the labeling of food containing any genetically modified material. This has been a long and hard fought battle between the pro GMO and the anti GMO factions where according to EWG, over \$100,000,000 has been spent to thwart statewide legislation – except in Bernie Sanders' state of Vermont (sanders by the way was one of the few candidates that posted a statement on agriculture). Vermont's law challenged food companies with much stricter labeling requirements and led some food companies to stop selling their products on Vermont's supermarket shelves in order to avoid the extra costs of labeling, or segregating stocks from their other distribution. This new bill pre-empts the Vermont law that went into effect July 1, 2016, which would require items be labeled "produced with genetic engineering." Many of the food trade associations are thrilled with the result issuing statements that this move will eliminate confusion and help consumers understand more fully what GMOs are and are not. I'm not so sure. According to Packaged Facts, 56 percent of American adults actively seek out nutritional information and guidelines on food labels. [Link](#)

#### **President Signs National GMO Labeling Law, Nullifying Vermont Law (Vermont Public Radio 8/1)**

President Barack Obama signed the federal GMO labeling law on Friday. The national law mandates that food manufacturers label most foods with GMO ingredients. It has been criticized by supporters of Vermont's law and others for allowing food manufacturers the option to use a scannable bar code instead of a text label. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has two years to write the new rules, but Vermont's law is nullified immediately. "Honoring consumers' right to know is the heart and soul of Vermont's law. Letting powerful corporate interests get by with doing as little as possible is the motivation behind this so-called 'deal,'" says Sen. Patrick Leahy in an email statement. "I remain concerned that this is a very bad deal for consumers." Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-Michigan) and Sen. Pat Roberts (R-Kansas), who drafted the bill, say that creating a national law helps avoid a patchwork approach to labeling rules. Vermont's Attorney General has said that his office researched various options, but as of late July had decided not to

sue the federal government over its labeling law. [Link](#)

#### **Bioengineered wheat found in Washington state (Baking Business 8/1)**

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (U.S.D.A.) on July 29 confirmed the discovery of 22 genetically engineered (G.E.) wheat plants growing in an unplanted agricultural field in Washington state. The bioengineered wheat found on the Washington farm was developed by Monsanto to be resistant to the herbicide glyphosate, also known as Roundup. APHIS said it has taken "prompt and thorough action" in response to the discovery and has found "no evidence" of bioengineered wheat in commerce. The bioengineered wheat is being referred to as MON 71700, containing the CP4-EPSPS protein. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (F.D.A.) previously evaluated crops containing the CP4-EPSPS protein for safety through its voluntary biotechnology consultation process. "Due to the small number of affected plants, and based on the available information about MON 71700 and CP4-EPSPS, F.D.A. concluded it is unlikely that the wheat would present any safety concerns if present in the food supply as a result of this incident," APHIS said. [Link](#)

#### **Unapproved GMO Wheat Found Growing in Washington State (Organic Authority 8/1)**

Unapproved GMO wheat has been found growing in Washington State, the USDA said Friday. The 22 GMO wheat plants, which were found in a field that has not been planted since 2015, were tested and identified as being one of Monsanto's experimental varieties, MON 71700. This variety was developed to withstand Monsanto's glyphosate-based Roundup herbicide. This is the third such discovery in the past three years. This discovery prompted a federal and state investigation, and grain from the farmer's other wheat fields is being tested to ensure that no GMO wheat is sold. Importers of American wheat were notified on Thursday, and the USDA says that there is no evidence that the wheat has entered the market. "It is unlikely that the wheat would present any safety concerns if present in the food supply," the FDA told Seattle Times. The first case of GMO wheat was discovered in 2013 in Oregon, a case that prompted certain international buyers to stop purchasing American wheat, including Japan and South Korea, the fifth largest market for the wheat. South Korea said Friday that it was planning to inspect American wheat imports for GMO wheat. [Link](#)

#### **Bioengineered wheat found in Washington state (World Grain 8/1)**

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on July 29 confirmed the discovery of 22 genetically engineered (GE) wheat plants growing in an unplanted agricultural field in the U.S. state of Washington. The bioengineered wheat found on the Washington farm was developed by Monsanto to be resistant to the herbicide glyphosate, also known as Roundup. APHIS said it has taken "prompt and thorough action" in response to the discovery and has found "no evidence" of bioengineered wheat in commerce. The bioengineered wheat is being referred to as MON 71700, containing the CP4-EPSPS protein. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) previously evaluated crops containing the CP4-EPSPS protein for safety through its voluntary biotechnology consultation process. [Link](#)

#### **GMO wheat found in Washington state (My Columbia Basin 8/1)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has confirmed that a farmer in Washington state has found 22 genetically-engineered wheat plants growing in an unplanted field. The USDA does not specify where the GMO wheat was found. The USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service reports it has taken "prompt and thorough action" and has no evidence that genetically-engineered wheat has entered commerce. The wheat in question was developed by the Monsanto Company and is referred to as MON 71700. It is resistant to the herbicide glyphosate, commonly referred to as Roundup (R). APHIS states that due to the small number of affected plants it concludes that the wheat is unlikely to present any safety concerns if it is present in the food supply as a result of the accident, but the agency feels confident that it won't enter the marketplace. APHIS is testing the farmer's full wheat harvest for the presence of any genetically-engineered material. The farmer's harvest is complete and is being held while that testing is completed. "So far all samples continue to be negative for any GE material," a release from APHIS states. "If any wheat tests positive for GE material, the farmer's crop will not be allowed in commerce." [Link](#)

#### **Mich. farmer: Dumping perfectly good cherries is rotten (USA Today 7/30)**

A Michigan tart cherry farmer is leaving 14% of his crop this year to rot on the ground to comply with an industry marketing agreement intended to keep cherry prices stable. And he's not happy about it. A frustrated Marc Santucci, who grows about 30 acres of cherries on his 80-acre Traverse City farm, put a photo of the dumped cherries, thick on the ground, on Facebook Tuesday — and the photo had been shared nearly 38,000 times as of Thursday afternoon. "These cherries are beautiful!" Santucci posted with the photo. "But, we have to dump 14% of our tart cherry crop on the ground to rot. Why? So we can allow the import of 200 million pounds of cherries from overseas! It just doesn't seem right." Contacted Thursday, Santucci said limitations on the amount of cherries he can sell are "a vain attempt to prop up the price of cherries." "My concern is, we're trying to limit the supply here, but all that does is increase

imports," he said. At issue is a marketing order imposed through the U.S. Department of Agriculture as part of the federal Agricultural Agreement Act of 1937. But that law only applies to the tart cherry industry because growers and processors opted into the order in 1995. [Link](#)

### **Farmer Forced To Dump Insane Amount Of Gorgeous Cherries (The Huffington Post 7/31)**

A bountiful harvest seems like a good thing. But not for a farmer in Michigan who says a federal regulation forced him to let 40,000 perfectly good tart cherries go to waste. Marc Santucci, who owns Santucci Farm in Traverse City, shared a picture on Facebook this week of tart cherries he dumped. "These cherries are beautiful! But, we have to dump 14 percent of our tart cherry crop on the ground to rot," Santucci wrote. "Why? So we can allow the import of 200 million pounds of cherries from overseas! It just doesn't seem right." The photo was shared over 55,000 times, with many commenters bemoaning piles of fresh food going to waste while so many people go hungry. Tart cherries are a unique fruit. They are only grown in a few states, with most coming from Michigan. Their shelf life is only a couple of days, and therefore they require processing right after harvesting. They're either frozen or used for products like pie filling, cherry concentrate and jam. Crop yield also varies significantly from year to year. That's one of the reasons the U.S. Department of Agriculture imposes an order on the industry, which growers and processors regularly agree to, that limits the amount of cherries that can be sold each year to match demand. The goal is to keep prices more stable for farmers. [Link](#)

### **Hunting for the emerald ash borer in South Jersey's shade tree town (The Philadelphia Inquirer 7/31)**

After 30 years of helping to turn Riverton Borough into a wonderland of shade trees, Barry Emens still grows and guards his creation. "This is a white ash in trouble," he said one morning last week, pointing through his windshield as he turned from Second Street onto Linden Avenue. Crickets were chirping in the muggy heat as Emens, chairman of the borough's shade tree board, parked his SUV. He pulled a long pole from the truck and strode toward a scraggly, nearly barren tree on the southeast corner. "OK, what have we got here?" he mused as he hoisted his pole toward a three-sided purple rectangle hanging from a low branch, and brought it down. It was, he explained, an insect trap that will tell him if this mile-square Burlington County borough is yet home to the devastating beetle known as the emerald ash borer... For 42 years Emens, who grew up in neighboring Palmyra, used his forestry degree from the University of New Hampshire as an agent of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, based in Trenton. Among his proudest accomplishments, he said, was serving as director of the USDA's program to exterminate the longhorned beetle, a voracious destroyer of maples, willows, poplars, and ash. [Link](#)

### **Pests New To U.S., Philadelphia, Discovered At Philadelphia Seaport (CBS Philly 7/29)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced the discovery of two pests, one new to the Philadelphia area and one that is new to the United States. The bugs were found in shipments of produce from other countries that came into the Philadelphia seaport. The announcement was made on Wednesday and officials confirmed that the pests could "pose a significant threat to the U.S. agriculture industry as they can feed on various crops thereby reducing quality and yield." U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) found a type of shield bug, known as *Brachyplatys subaeneus* Westwood, back in June in a shipment of pineapples from Costa Rica. The bug is known to be from Asia and officials say it is new to the U.S. They add that the also discovered a moth in June, inside a shipment of kiwi from New Zealand, known as *Thysanoplusia orichalcea*. The bug is known to occur in Borneo, India, New Zealand, Spain, West Africa and Australia, according to experts. They say the bug is brand new to the Philadelphia area. [Link](#)

### **Feds Fine South Texas Research Facility For 13 Primate Deaths in 2014 (San Antonio Current 8/2)**

A South Texas research lab will have to pay \$31,500 in fines for the deaths of 13 primates that overheated in quarantine rooms two years ago. The United States Department of Agriculture fined Covance Research Products, Inc., which has a lab in Alice, Texas, about 125 miles south of San Antonio, for the deaths of 13 crab-eating macaques. The first fatalities occurred after a thermostat malfunctioned and two primates died, according to a USDA inspection report, which notes that the lab did take corrective measures by installing an over-ride switch. However, exactly one month later, that switch failed and it happened again, according to the inspection report. This time, 11 crab-eating macaques died. [Link](#)

### **Vending Machine Candies Get More Time for Calorie Labels (U.S. News & World Report 8/1)**

Makers of gum, mints and roll candy sold in vending machines will have about 19 more months to comply with a government requirement for how they label calories, the Food and Drug Administration announced Monday. The original deadline was December 2016, and will still apply to other foods sold in vending machines. The FDA said it was granting the extension, set for July 2018, to certain foods because their manufacturers said they needed more time to comply with requirements. During the extension, the FDA will also reconsider how large the calorie text should be on packaging, as trade groups have complained that abiding by the requirements is technically difficult for them. Their packaging, they point out, is

smaller than those of other snacks sold in vending machines, like chips or cookies. [Link](#)

#### *Market Watch*

#### **SOYBEANS SINK 28¢ ON FAVORABLE RAINS MONDAY (Successful Farming 8/1)**

On Monday, the CME Group's soybean market has fallen hard on rainy August weather. At the open, the September corn futures are 5¼¢ lower at \$3.29, December futures are 5¢ lower at \$3.37 per bushel. August soybean futures are 24¼¢ lower at \$10.08, while November soybean futures are 28¢ lower at \$9.75. September wheat futures are unchanged at \$4.07. August soy meal futures are \$10.50 short ton lower at \$339.50. August soy oil futures are 0.34¢ lower at 30.01¢ per pound. In the outside markets, the Brent crude oil market is 79¢ per barrel lower, the U.S. dollar is higher, and the Dow Jones Industrials are 27 points lower. [Link](#)

#### **Crouching Tiger, Hidden FMC (Bloomberg 8/1)**

While its biggest rivals compete for deals, insecticide maker FMC Corp. is biding its time. You'd think its digestible \$6.4 billion market value would make it an easy target at a time when just about everyone in the industry is drawing interest. (Quick recap: Dow and DuPont are merging, ChemChina is buying Syngenta and Monsanto, Bayer and BASF all seem to be holding deal talks of one sort or another.) But FMC's name hasn't come up much. There's a reason for that: The company's limited R&D pipeline and relative lack of blockbuster products make it a less-than-ideal strategic fit for the industry's giants. Also, FMC isn't just an agricultural company; its health and nutrition business makes coatings for drugs and chemicals that help give food texture, and its lithium division serves the electric-car industry. That makes it a tougher sell for a suitor that's primarily looking to bulk up in agriculture. [Link](#)

#### **Could Chinese demand signal dairy market recovery? (FG Insight 7/31)**

In a recent forecast, the department said: "Global export prices of skimmed milk powder and whole milk powder have been rising recently, suggesting global milk powder markets may be in the early stages of a recovery. "These recent increases in milk powder prices may be the first sign of a realignment of markets which are slowly coming into balance as the milk over-supply situation is corrected." But the USDA warned of heavy stocks of skimmed milk powder, which would 'likely temper any significant recovery in prices'. Chinese whole milk powder imports have increased by 20 per cent in May, compared to last year. The USDA lifted its forecast for 2016 Chinese whole milk powder imports by 15,000 tonnes, to 375,000t, with the bulk of imports coming from New Zealand. Chinese liquid milk imports were seen sharply up at 650,000t, with most imports coming from the EU. In Europe, the USDA expected EU milk production to 'slow significantly' due to low farmgate milk prices. Despite milk prices falling, dairy product prices in Europe are booming. [Link](#)

#### **Dark clouds loom for farmers and their bankers as crop prices languish (Star Tribune 8/1)**

Midwest farmers and bankers face a reckoning this fall as low crop prices and a projected bumper harvest will produce financial losses for the second consecutive year. After nearly a decade of boom times, farmers in the Upper Midwest lost \$58 per acre on corn last year and almost \$3 per acre on soybeans. Despite that, bankers around the region refinanced farmers' debt and lines of credit on favorable terms. But with a second year of losses ahead for many farms, patience among lenders is running thin. A credit crunch now looms that would mark a decisive turn in the farm economy. "One bad year, you can overlook that," said Brent Gloy, an agricultural economist at Purdue University. "When it starts to be multiple years, the stakes get higher." [Link](#)

#### **U.S. soybeans must ship at breakneck pace to hit USDA target (Reuters 8/1)**

Although U.S. soybeans got a slow start to the 2015/16 marketing year, sales and shipments have picked up in the second half of the season. But it will be an unprecedented feat if the United States can ship the full forecast. For the week ending July 21, the U.S. Department of Agriculture reported that the world's second-largest soybean supplier had shipped 45.56 million tonnes of soybeans since Sept. 1. As it stands, this figure falls far short of USDA's 2015/16 soybean export target of 48.85 million tonnes, especially with just 40 days left in the current marketing year. This means that in the final six weeks of the 2015/16 campaign, the United States must ship a blistering 575,752 tonnes of soybeans per week. Never before has this pace been achieved at this time of the year. [Link](#)

#### **Chicago Agriculture Commodities Finished Mixed Friday (Live Trading News 7/31)**

Chicago Board of Trade (CBOT) Soybean futures rose Friday on continued signs of demand for US supplies and on expectations that hot temperatures will return to the US Midwest this week, prices for Corn rose while Wheat fell. The most active Corn contract for December delivery closed up 4 cents, or 1.18%, to 3.4275 bu. September Wheat delivery fell 2.5 cents, or 0.61%, to 4.0775 bu. November Soybean rose 25 cents, or 2.56%, to 10.03 bu. All 3 agriculture commodities marked steep monthly losses on the final trading day of July and wheat futures fell to the lowest levels in about a decade before trimming declines.

Soybean prices rallied to their session highs after the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) reported that exporters sold 129,000 tonnes of US Soybean to unknown destinations, the 3rd sale of at least 100,000 tonnes in as many days. [Link](#)

### **Oil takes breather from losses but oversupply concerns remain (Reuters 8/2)**

Oil edged higher on Tuesday after falling by up to 10 percent in just one week, but investors remained concerned about oversupply weighing on prices. Global benchmark Brent crude was trading up 49 cents at \$42.63 a barrel at 1031 GMT (0631 EDT). U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude was up 38 cents at \$40.44 a barrel, after briefly dipping below \$40. "There is much talk about the product glut replacing the oil glut, and this is a worrisome indicator for crude demand," said Frank Klumpp, oil analyst at Stuttgart-based Landesbank Baden-Wuerttemberg. [Link](#)

### *Other*

### **One Way to Help Native Americans: Property Rights (The Atlantic 8/1)**

It's May, but snow is falling in southeastern Montana as Ivan Small drives me around the Crow and Northern Cheyenne Indian reservations. Small is the principal of a local Catholic school—his mother was Crow and his father Cheyenne—and over the course of three days, he shows me the land where he grew up. "It didn't used to be this bad," he says. He didn't have indoor plumbing, "but at least there wasn't so much crime." This is the grinding poverty on some of America's Indian reservations, many of which resemble nothing so much as small third-world countries in the middle of the wealthiest nation on earth. The 2 million Natives in the U.S. have the highest rate of poverty of any racial group—almost twice the national average. This deprivation seems to contribute not only to higher rates of crime but also to higher rates of suicide, alcoholism, gang membership, and sexual abuse. As of 2011, the suicide rate for Native American men aged 15 to 34 was 1.5 times higher than for the general population. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among Natives aged 10 to 34... Instead, Washington continues to send checks and micromanage these communities. The two primary agencies charged with overseeing the activities of Indians who live on reservations—the Bureau of Indian Affairs, or BIA, and the Bureau of Indian Education, or BIE, both part of the Department of the Interior—together have a total of 9,000 employees. That's one employee for every 111 Indians on a reservation. According to a report from the Cato Institute, federal funding for these agencies' various programs—which support education, economic development, tribal courts, road maintenance, agriculture, and social services—was almost \$3 billion in 2012. About \$850 million of this goes to BIE to provide for its 42,000 students, although most children on reservations don't attend BIE schools. This amounts to about \$20,000 per pupil, compared to a national average of \$12,400. [Link](#)

### **This At-Home 3D Food Printer Could be a Game Changer in the Kitchen (Food & Wine 8/1)**

Professor Hod Lipson of Columbia University is developing a coffeemaker-sized 3D food printer that has practical applications in the home kitchen, for nutrition and health benefits, and for special needs populations. At the Creative Machines Lab at Columbia University, Professor Hod Lipson is hot on the heels of one of the biggest trends in home and office technology—3D printing—and he wants to make it accessible from the comfort of your own home. The multi-disciplinary lab, which comprises talent from departments including engineering, computer science, physics, math, and biology, is dedicated to taking ideas from abstract models to working systems—and their latest endeavor feels like it's straight from the future. Say hello to professor Lipson's coffeemaker-sized 3D food printer, destined (fingers crossed) for a kitchen countertop near you. [Link](#)

### **Impossible Foods' Vegan 'Bloody Burger' Hits NYC Food Scene (Triple Pundit 8/1)**

Impossible Foods, the Bay Area fake meat start-up that's received millions in Silicon Valley venture funding, is now making a splash within the New York food scene. The completely plant-based burger that oozes a primal red color when squeezed is on the menu at one of Momofuku's restaurants, the foodie blog Eater reported last week. David Chang, the celebrity chef and cookbook author, was "blown away" when he tried the re-engineered fake burger that tastes, apparently, just like beef. The 'bloody burger' made its debut at Nishi, Chang's fusion eatery in the Chelsea neighborhood on Eighth Avenue. Nishi's menu makes it clear that, for now, the burger is available only in limited quantities on a first-come, first-serve basis. Chang touted the burger on his Tumblr page. The edgy chef, known for his "no reservations, no vegetarian options" ethos and penchant for F-bombs in his cookbook, repeated the same environmental statistics that Impossible Foods cites about this patty. The company claims its burger uses 95 percent less land, 74 percent less water and emits 87 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions than its cattle-derived counterpart. [Link](#)

### **Michael Pollan and His Faddish Foodie Followers, Ten Years After The Omnivore's Dilemma (National Review 8/1)**

Penguin Books is releasing a special tenth-anniversary edition of *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, by Michael

Pollan, with a new foreword by the author. The target market for this release must be post-Millennials — most of the Millennials who matriculated in the past decade spent the summer before college reading the book. Ten years on, it is hard to think of a book that has influenced the public conversation on food more, and Pollan in his foreword is too modest about the impact of his masterpiece. As a farmer, I've participated in this discussion, in the same way a pig participates in a pig roast, though I should be clear that the pig roast is a metaphor, because no dedicated disciple of Pollan would ever attend such an event — unless the pig had a backstory complete with pastures, bucolic nature, local origins, and a life worthy of E. B. White's Wilbur. In the wake of Pollan's blockbuster success, the main course on the food movement's menu has become the "industrial" farmer, a farmer like me, who specializes in only a couple of crops or animals and uses the latest technology to grow his wares economically. Although identified with the political Left, the movement Pollan inspired is profoundly conservative, if one defines conservatism as a nostalgia for a romanticized past that existed only in children's storybooks and in the reminiscences of forgetful farm wives. [Link](#)

#### *Editorial and Opinion*

#### **[Opinion] On Biomass Energy, Green Activists Miss The Forest For The Trees (The Daily Caller 8/1)**

Environmental leaders have stood alongside the Obama Administration on virtually every issue since day one. Yet on biomass energy, the two groups couldn't be further apart. In a recent letter to his British counterpart, Agriculture secretary Tom Vilsack wrote glowingly of biomass — wood, grasses and other organic matter that can be used for fuel. Biomass, Vilsack notes, "increases our forested area, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and improves U.S. forest management practices." At the same time Obama Administration officials have been singing its praises, green groups such as the Natural Resources Defense Council have been irresponsibly vilifying biomass as environmentally disastrous. The reason for this tension? The NRDC and other environmental activists put politics over science. Their misinformation campaigns aren't just dishonest; they go against the interests of our climate, our forests and our economy. The biomass under the heaviest attack is wood pellets. Made from wood that has been dried out, ground down, and formed into small cylindrical pieces, these pellets can be fed into a power plant's furnaces to generate electricity. Critics claim the wood pellet industry is destroying America's forests. The Dogwood Alliance, a major anti-pellet extremist group, has promotional material showing large swaths of forest supposedly wiped out because of wood pellets. [Link](#)

#### **R-CALF USA: USDA's action to allow raw Brazilian beef imports is purely political and terribly reckless (KXLO 8/1)**

Today's announcement by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack stating he is reopening the U.S. market to raw Brazilian beef and Brazil is reopening its market to U.S. beef is a political tit-for-tat that will expose U.S. consumers and the U.S. cattle herd to an unnecessary and avoidable risk of disease," said R-CALF USA CEO Bill Bullard. Bullard said Vilsack's announcement for the nearly simultaneous market reopenings reads like talking points created by high-paid, multinational meatpacker lobbyists. Vilsack stated in his announcement: "The Brazilian market offers excellent long-term potential for U.S. beef exporters. The United States looks forward to providing Brazil's 200-million-plus consumers, and growing middle class, with high-quality American beef and beef products." "This is absurd," said Bullard adding, "Brazil produces far more beef than it can consume. This is why, with the world's second largest cattle herd, which far and away dwarfs the size of the U.S. herd, Brazil is the world's third largest beef exporter, behind only India and Australia. And like India and Australia, Brazil's imports of U.S. beef for longer than a decade before it closed its borders to U.S. beef in 2003 were miniscule. "To say that the Brazilian market affords U.S. cattle producers with economic opportunities would be laughable if not for the significant risk associated with Vilsack's weakening of our longstanding import restrictions for countries like Brazil that continue to battle foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) and other dangerous livestock diseases." [Link](#)

#### **Money Where Our Mouths Are (Forbes 7/31)**

This being my maiden flight of shared ideas with this audience here at Forbes- delighted, by the way- I trust you will permit me a few words of orienting introduction. I am a public health physician. Perhaps predictably, then, my inclinations and I tend to lean a bit left from the center. However, I am natively non-partisan, and the furthest thing from an ideologue. My favored party is humanity. As for ideology, I think epidemiology should predominate every time. I strive to follow epidemiology and the weight of evidence wherever they lead, even when to a verdict toward which I have a native antipathy. Like it or not, the truth is the truth. In that context, then, I declare my support for the program once known to all as "food stamps," and now called SNAP, standing for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. I support it because of what SNAP is intended to do for nearly one American household in seven: attenuate overt food insecurity, alleviate genuine hunger, and allow for a pattern of sustenance the more fortunate among us would deem reasonable. I support SNAP, but I no more like seeing my hard-earned money burned up in the bonfire of someone else's vain ineptitudes than does the staunchest fiscal conservative.

I, too, work hard for the taxes I pay; I don't much enjoy paying them; and at a minimum, I want them well spent. [Link](#)

**Trans-Pacific Partnership will provide opportunities for Kentucky (Messenger-Inquirer 8/1)**

There has been a great deal of discussion in the news lately about trade agreements, specifically the Trans-Pacific Partnership. As with any contract, trade agreements between multiple countries take years to complete with hundreds of people in the negotiation process. Each side must give and take with the ultimate goal of opportunities and benefits provided for all parties involved. The TPP has gotten a lot of attention in the press and debates, but I thought it would be interesting to explain what it's about, the countries involved, the opportunities it will provide for Kentucky and its potential impact on agriculture. The following is information compiled by the International Trade Administration within the Department of Commerce. [Link](#)

**What food, packaging and agribusinesses need to know about the first-ever nationwide GMO labeling law (Lexology 8/1)**

On Friday, July 29, the President signed into law a bill amending the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.), to insert a provision requiring disclosure (i.e., labeling in some manner) of bioengineered foods. The new law, the National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Standard, defines a bioengineered food as containing "genetic material . . . modified through in vitro recombinant deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) techniques" and "for which the modification could not otherwise be obtained through conventional breeding or found in nature." The term "food" is as defined in the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321). The USDA has two years from enactment to establish a nationwide mandatory disclosure standard for bioengineered foods and the procedures for labeling. This means that the law itself does not define the standard, but instead gives the USDA significant discretion to define and implement the required disclosure. [Link](#)

USDA Releases: <http://www.usda.gov>

**Press Release: [USDA Announces Reopening of Brazilian Market to U.S. Beef Exports](#)**

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**Subject:** FW: Correspondence Digest  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 03, 2016 2:25:19 PM  
**Attachments:** [WednesdayDigest 8-3-2016.pdf](#)

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## **To: Subject:** Correspondence Digest

Please find attached the priority correspondence received today in the Office of the Executive Secretariat Wednesday, August 3, 2016. The WednesdayDigest\_Cong\_Gov includes correspondence from Members of Congress and Governor.

### **Congressional**

Senator Patrick Leahy and 59 others writes with concern about the troubling economic challenges facing U.S. dairy farms and the entire U.S. dairy industry. 7-28-16

### **Governor**

Governor Terence R. McAuliffe writes to request a waiver for Virginia's representation on the national Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board, request that the Secretary modify the current recommended reappointment plan and afford Virginia a second seat on the Board. 7-29-16

Paula

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# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Terence R. McAuliffe  
Governor

July 29, 2016

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

As Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, I am writing to request a waiver for Virginia's representation on the national Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board. It is my understanding that the current reapportionment plan has been recommended to you for approval. I respectfully request that you modify the current recommended reapportionment plan and afford Virginia a second seat on this Board.

Historically, Virginia has maintained at least two seats on this Board, which, as you know, oversees the national Beef Checkoff Commodity Promotion Program as provided in the Farm Bill. During the 2015 review of cattle census numbers, reported January 1, 2016, by the National Agriculture Statistics Service, Virginia's cattle inventory for 2015 was 1.487 million head, a mere 13,000 head short of the 1.5 million head threshold for maintaining two seats on this prestigious board. Virginia has traditionally reported in excess of 1.5 million head of cattle; however, 2014 saw unusually high live cattle prices, resulting in the dramatic sale of cattle and calves and, in turn, a downturn in overall cattle population. In 2015, the repopulation trajectory was positive and continues through this year.

The cattle industry is the second largest sector of Virginia's agricultural economy, accounting for \$714 million in farm cash receipts. As a large producer and beef consumer population center targeted by many beef checkoff funded promotions, this 2015 Virginia inventory census report of 1.487 million head is an anomaly. I, along with Virginia's cattle industry, am confident that Virginia will exceed 1.5 million head of cattle in time for the next triannual review in 2018, as historical cattle numbers can support.

This request is not without precedent. In 2012, Texas requested—and received—a waiver of the reapportionment recommendation.

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack  
July 29, 2016  
Page 2

It is for these reasons that I believe Virginia should be granted a waiver for the reapportionment recommendation. I respectfully request that you grant Virginia this waiver and allow us to keep a second seat on the USDA Cattlemen's Beef Board. Should you have any further questions, Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Todd Haymore can be reached at [Todd.Haymore@governor.virginia.gov](mailto:Todd.Haymore@governor.virginia.gov) or 804-692-2511.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terence R. McAuliffe", written in a cursive style.

Terence R. McAuliffe

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

July 28, 2016

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
Secretary of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

We write today to express our concern about the troubling economic challenges facing U.S. dairy farmers and the entire U.S. dairy industry. We have seen farm milk prices drop forty percent since 2014 and in May the nation's cheese stocks were recorded at their highest level since the data was first recorded in 1917. Current expectations are that the dairy market will continue to struggle with depressed prices and we seek your help as we search for ways to swiftly assist our nation's struggling dairy farmers.

Our dairy farmers have been hit extremely hard by low farm milk prices that have resulted in sharply reduced incomes, which is placing our nation's dairy industry in an extremely vulnerable position. A number of factors have contributed to this crisis. U.S. milk production has increased almost two percent above last year's level, while global milk production is up significantly, partly as a result of the European Union's decision to remove its milk production quotas and the loss of their export market to Russia. Furthermore, we are seeing an increase in production in other major milk-producing countries that have led to these depressed prices globally. All of this comes as our dairy farmers are still adjusting to the new Farm Bill, and the many changes that were made to our dairy support programs.

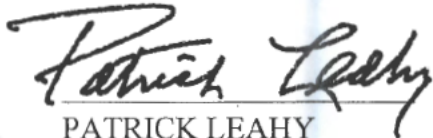
We are deeply concerned that U.S. dairy farmers, who are a key part of our agriculture community and agriculture economy, are in greater need of stability and support as they face these significantly lower prices, which for many are below their actual cost of production. As this industry is reeling from low prices, a glut of imports, challenges in our export markets, and poor economic growth projections we urge the USDA to use its secretarial authority under the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714c), Section 32 of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1935 (7 U.S.C. 612c), and look to past precedent for how to take action to protect all of our nation's dairy farmers from further crisis and to aid in the expansion and maintenance of domestic markets. We encourage USDA to take any and all actions available in order to make an immediate market injection and offer financial assistance that will directly support U.S. dairy farmers equally, while being cautious to not stimulate overproduction further.

The family business of dairy farming has long been woven into our nation's agricultural history. Across the country, in all 50 states, dairy farms large and small are economic drivers providing local jobs and local products. During the 2009 dairy collapse, we saw far too many families have to sell off their cows and close the doors for good. Through the support of USDA, we can

hopefully prevent many farms from needing to make that same difficult decision today and we hope you will work to support all of our dairy farmers across the country.

We look forward to working closely with you in determining the best course of action to take in managing the current dairy industry financial crisis. Thank you for taking the time to address this important matter.

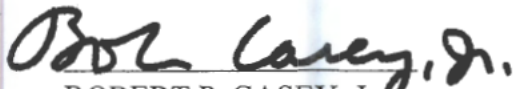
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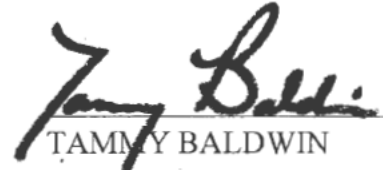
PATRICK LEAHY  
United States Senator



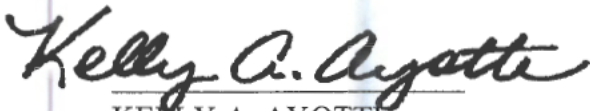
JOE COURTNEY  
Member of Congress



ROBERT P. CASEY, Jr.  
United States Senator



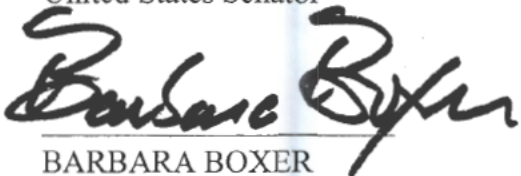
TAMMY BALDWIN  
United States Senate



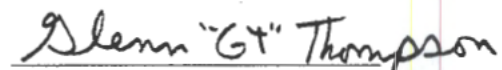
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Member of Congress



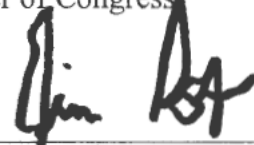
BARBARA BOXER  
United States Senator



GLENN 'GT' THOMPSON  
Member of Congress



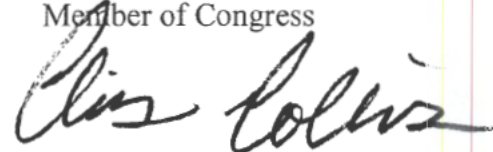
SUSAN M. COLLINS  
United States Senator



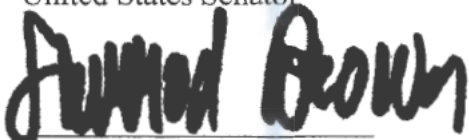
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RICHARD BLUMENTHAL  
United States Senator



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CHRISTOPHER P. GIBSON  
Member of Congress

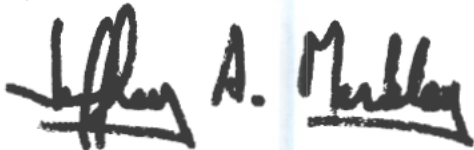
EDWARD J. MARKEY  
United States Senator

ANDY HARRIS  
Member of Congress

CLAIRE MCCASKILL  
United States Senator

JOHN KATKO  
Member of Congress





JEFFREY A. MERKLEY  
United States Senator



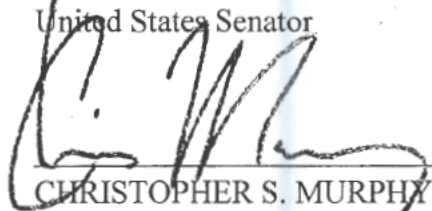
MIKE KELLY  
Member of Congress



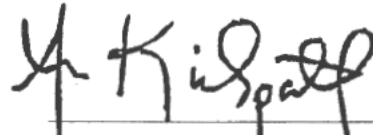
BARBARA A. MIKULSKI  
United States Senator



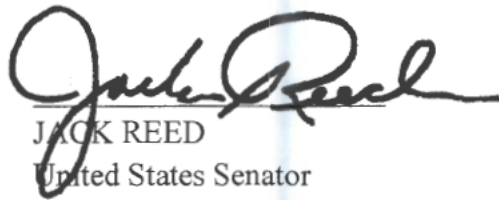
RON KIND  
Member of Congress



CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY  
United States Senator



ANN KIRKPATRICK  
Member of Congress



JACK REED  
United States Senator



ANN McLANE KUSTER  
Member of Congress



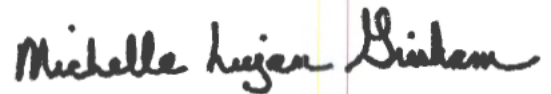
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United States Senator



JAMES R. LANGEVIN  
Member of Congress



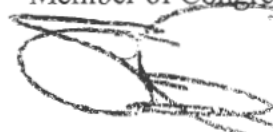
CHARLES E. SCHUMER  
United States Senator



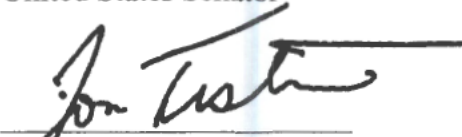
MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM  
Member of Congress



JEANNE SHAHEEN  
United States Senator



SEAN PATRICK MALONEY  
Member of Congress



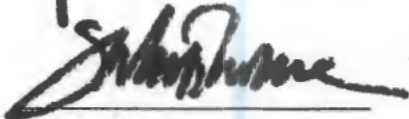
JON TESTER  
United States Senator



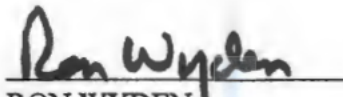
TOM MARINO  
Member of Congress



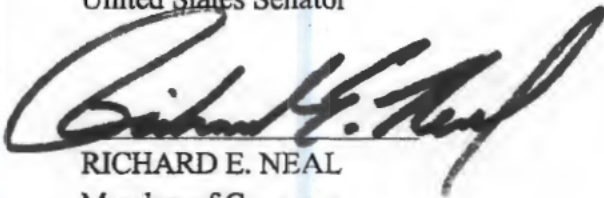
ELIZABETH WARREN  
United States Senator



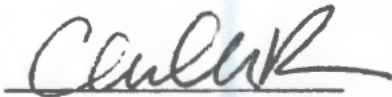
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE  
United States Senator



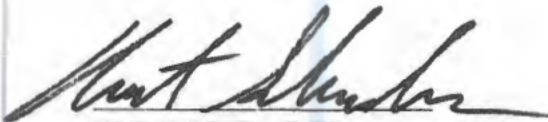
RON WYDEN  
United States Senator



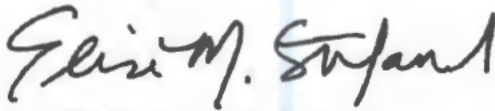
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Member of Congress



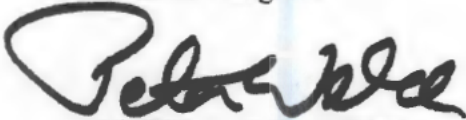
CHELLIE PINGREE  
Member of Congress



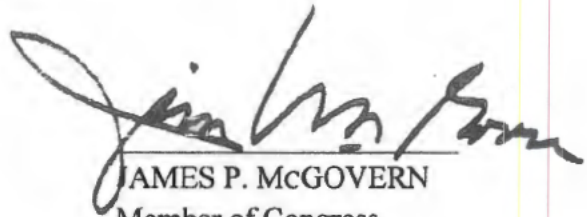
KURT SCHRADER  
Member of Congress



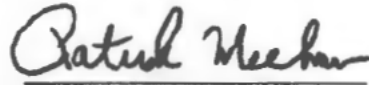
ELISE M. STEFANIK  
Member of Congress



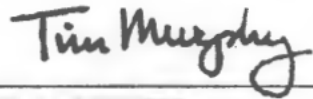
PETER WELCH  
Member of Congress



JAMES P. MCGOVERN  
Member of Congress



PATRICK MEEHAN  
Member of Congress



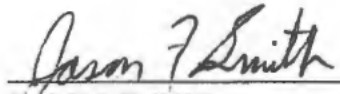
TIM MURPHY  
Member of Congress



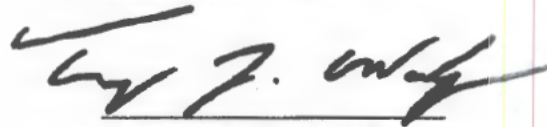
RICHARD M. NOLAN  
Member of Congress



MARK POCAN  
Member of Congress



JASON SMITH  
Member of Congress



TIMOTHY J. WALZ  
Member of Congress

**From:** [Cochran, Catherine - OC](#)  
**To:** [TJV; Scuse, Michael - OSEC](#)  
**Subject:** USDA News Clips 8.24.16  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 24, 2016 10:23:41 AM

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## USDA Clips

Wednesday, August 24, 2016

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### *Top Stories*

#### **U.S. to Buy 11 Million Pounds of Cheese to Boost Dairy Prices (Bloomberg/Chicago Tribune/Hartford Courant/Salt Lake Tribune/Tulsa World 8/23)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture plans to buy \$20 million of cheese to distribute to food banks and pantries nationwide, attempting to boost dairy prices that plummeted in the midst of a global milk glut. The purchase of about 11 million pounds of cheese, which the USDA reported Tuesday in a statement, comes in addition to \$11.2 million in subsidies for dairy producers announced earlier this month. Dairy lobbyists had asked the USDA for up to \$150 million in cheese purchases. "We understand that the nation's dairy producers are experiencing challenges due to market conditions and that food banks continue to see strong demand for assistance," Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said in the statement. [Link](#)

#### **USDA to Purchase Surplus Cheese, Continue to Assist Dairy Producers (AgNet West 8/23)**

As the U.S. Department of Agriculture announces plans to purchase approximately 11 million pounds of cheese from private inventories and to extend the deadline for enrollment in the dairy Margin Protection Program, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack talks with AgNet West News Director Sabrina Hill to explain the programs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced plans to purchase approximately 11 million pounds of cheese from private inventories to assist food banks and pantries across the nation, while reducing a cheese surplus that is at its highest level in 30 years. The purchase, valued at \$20 million, will be provided to families in need across the country through USDA nutrition assistance programs, while assisting the stalled marketplace for dairy producers whose revenues have dropped 35 percent over the past two years. [Link](#)

#### **USDA buys surplus cheese, extends MPP date (Brownfield Ag 8/23)**

Some help is coming for US dairy producers from the USDA. Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack says he's taken action to help struggling dairy producers by dealing with the surplus of cheese, which he tells Brownfield Ag News is at its highest level in 30 years, "So in an effort to try to provide help and assistance and to complement the work that we've done with the Margin Protection Program, we're announcing a purchase of about 11-Million pounds of cheese that will be used for food banks and pantries to help struggling families who are struggling financially with their food assistance and food help." [Link](#)

#### **Hopefully Some Relief For WI Dairy Operators (WI Farm Report 8/24)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced on Tuesday, after the markets closed, plans to

purchase approximately 11 million pounds of cheese from private inventories to assist food banks and pantries across the nation, while reducing a cheese surplus that is at its highest level in 30 years. The purchase, valued at \$20 million, will be provided to families in need across the country through USDA nutrition assistance programs, while assisting the stalled marketplace for dairy producers whose revenues have dropped 35 percent over the past two years. Farm Director, Pam Jahnke, spoke with U.S. Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack just before the announcement was made public. Vilsack said the voice of the nation's dairy producers, organizations, and processors was heard loud and clear [Link](#)

### **Making Farm Careers Cool: USDA Wants You to Think Drones, Engineering (Military Times 8/23)**

Federal officials have spent the last few years developing new resources to help put veterans into agriculture jobs. Now, they're working to make those jobs look cool. Officials from the Department of Agriculture on Tuesday unveiled new plans to better explain and market a host of industry jobs to recently separated service members, calling it a growth area that fits nicely with the skills and training of those veterans. "People need to know this is about more than just handling livestock," said Lanon Baccam, deputy undersecretary for agricultural services at USDA. "This is about engineering, drone technology, data analysis and more. Breaking down the walls is key." [Link](#)

### **Vilsack Says Next Farm Bill should Expand Outreach to Veterans (Agri-Pulse 8/23)**

Recruiting military veterans and youth into farming should be a major goal of the next farm bill, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack said today at a U.S. Chamber of Commerce event to highlight its Hiring our Heroes program. It's vitally important to get younger people involved with agriculture as the average age of farmers in the U.S. rises, he said, and veterans can play a significant role. [Link](#)

#### *Farm & Foreign Agricultural Services*

### **USDA Will Buy \$20 Million of Cheese to Reduce Surplus (TIME 8/23)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will buy \$20 million of cheese from private inventories to reduce a cheese surplus currently at an all-time high. The cheese, which amounts to about 11 million pounds, will go to food banks and pantries across the country to assist families in need, the USDA said on Tuesday. The purchase also helps dairy farmers who have asked the government to assist with the massive cheese glut, which has left more than a billion pounds of cheese locked away in storage, the Wall Street Journal reported. The cheese surplus is at its highest level in 30 years, the USDA said. [Link](#)

### **USDA to buy \$20 million of cheese to aid dairy industry (Agri-Pulse 8/23)**

USDA announced today it will spend an estimated \$20 million to take about 11 million pounds of cheese off the market and reduce the surplus that has helped keep prices low. We understand that the nation's dairy producers are experiencing challenges due to market conditions and that food banks continue to see strong demand for assistance," Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said in a release. "This commodity purchase is part of a robust, comprehensive safety net that will help reduce a cheese surplus that is at a 30-year high while, at the same time, moving a high-protein food to the tables of those most in need. USDA will continue to look for ways within its authorities to tackle food insecurity and provide for added stability in the marketplace." The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) was quick to thank USDA for the purchase. On Aug. 12, the group had requested that the department spend as much as \$150 million to take 90 million pounds of cheese off the market. [Link](#)

### **USDA to purchase \$20 million in cheese (Politico Pro 8/23)**

The USDA says it plans to purchase \$20 million worth of cheese products to assist dairy producers struggling with low prices and a surplus that has risen to its highest level in three decades. The department will distribute about 11 million pounds of cheese to federal nutrition programs and food banks, a move designed to raise prices for dairy farmers whose revenues have dropped 35 percent over the past two years, USDA said in a statement today. [Link](#)

### **USDA to Spend \$20 Million Buying Surplus Cheese (Modern Farmer 8/23)**

While the phrase "cheese surplus" sure sounds like a good thing, record low prices and high production in America's dairies have put a serious dent in profits. The surplus is due to a variety of reasons; the past two years just happen to have been spectacular for dairy production both in the US and in Europe. And with a Russian embargo of European cheese, Europe has had to slash prices in their exports to the US, which has further flooded the market with cheap varieties and driven the prices of American cheeses down as well. This all adds up to a surplus this country hasn't seen in a whopping 30 years. The USDA today announced a plan to help out the dairy farmers: it will purchase 11 million pounds of surplus cheese, at a cost of around \$20 million. That'll help American dairy farmers to make ends meet and clear out some of the excess cheese in storage. Even better, the USDA has a simple plan for what to do with its newly purchased millions of pounds of cheese: donate it. That cheese will be distributed throughout the

country via the USDA's nutritional aid programs, which include food banks. [Link](#)

#### **USDA to purchase cheese to help hungry and dairy farmers (Farm Futures 8/23)**

USDA today announced plans to purchase approximately 11 million pounds of cheese from private inventories to assist food banks and pantries across the nation, while reducing a cheese surplus that is at its highest level in 30 years. The purchase, valued at \$20 million, will be provided to families in need across the country through USDA nutrition assistance programs, while assisting the stalled marketplace for dairy producers whose revenues have dropped 35% over the past two years. [Link](#)

#### **Federal cheese purchase to help dairy farmers, the poor (Grand Forks Herald 8/23)**

Federal officials plan to buy cheese to help poor Americans who need food assistance and dairy farmers who are suffering from low prices. Tuesday's announcement that the U.S. Department of Agriculture will spend \$20 million to buy 11 million pounds of cheese from private companies comes as the dairy industry experienced a 35 percent revenue drop in the past two years. The USDA also announced it will extend the deadline from Sept. 30 to Dec. 16 for dairy producers to enroll in a safety net program known as the Margin Protection Program. It provides financial assistance to some dairy farmers. On Aug. 4, the USDA added \$11 million to the program. [Link](#)

#### **USDA to spend \$24M buying surplus cheese (CNN/WMOV 8/24)**

Too much cheddar apparently is a problem for U.S. dairy farmers right now. Cheese surplus is at a 30-year high due to factors like higher milk production, more European exports and sluggish demand. Dairy farmers have seen revenues drop by 35 percent in the last two years. The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced it's going to step in and buy \$20 million worth of excess cheese from private inventories. [Link](#)

#### **The government is buying \$20 million in surplus cheese (CNN Money/WPTZ 8/23)**

The United States currently has a massive cheese stockpile. And Uncle Sam is stepping in to help buy up the excess. The Department of Agriculture said on Tuesday that it will spend \$20 million on 11 million pounds of cheese from private inventories and then give it to food banks and pantries across the U.S. Increased milk inventories, higher European exports, low prices, sluggish demand and shifting consumption habits have helped to create the huge cheese reserve, pushing the surplus to a 30-year high. [Link](#)

#### **America Gives Big Cheese A \$20 Million Bailout (Buzzfeed 8/23)**

UPDATE: The bailout is on — a small bailout. The US Department of Agriculture announced on Tuesday, Aug. 23 that it plans to purchase 11 million pounds of surplus cheese for \$20 million for food banks and pantries nationwide. The department noted the cheese surplus is at its highest level in 30 years and dairy producers' revenues have dropped 35% over the past two years. [Link](#)

#### **The U.S. Government Is Buying 11 Million Pounds of Cheese (Slate 8/23)**

Behold: cheese mountains. No longer mere tasty figments of your most sumptuous daydreams, giant stockpiles of cheese have been amassing all over the country for months. And now, the U.S. government is going to buy them. According to a press release from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the cheese surplus is "at its highest level in 30 years." Why is there so much cheese? As Slate's Jordan Weissmann explained in May, "U.S. dairies have been losing sales to competition from Europe, where an oversupply of milk has driven down the price of cheese and butter and a falling euro has made exports more competitive." [Link](#)

#### **The US government is buying 11 million pounds of cheese because no one else will (Business Insider 8/23)**

There is way too much cheese in America, so the US Department of Agriculture is buying a massive amount of it. According to a release from the USDA, it will purchase 11 million pounds (worth roughly \$20 million by their estimate) and distribute it to food banks around the country. The US cheese market has had a significant oversupply problem for most of the year because foreign buyers have looked elsewhere for their dairy products as a result of the strong dollar. Previous to this slowdown in exports, many farmers had ramped up their production due to record high prices. [Link](#)

#### **USDA To Buy Cheese Worth Nearly \$20M To Help Dairy Farmers (International Business Times 8/24)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced Tuesday that it will buy nearly \$20 million worth of cheese from private inventories for food banks and pantries all over the country. The purchase is expected to help reduce a cheese surplus that is at its highest in 30 years. [Link](#)

#### **Feds stacking cheddar: USDA to purchase 11 million surplus pounds of cheese (AZ Republic/WKYC/KHOU 8/23)**

The federal government has announced a plan to buy literally all the extra cheese. The U.S. Department of Agriculture said today that the feds will purchase about 11 million pounds of cheese for "private inventories." Before you get in line, though, know that basically this means the cheese will be given to food banks and charity groups. [Link](#)

#### **USDA to spend \$20M buying surplus cheese (NBC 26 8/24)**

Too much cheddar? Apparently that's a problem for U.S. dairy farmers right now. Cheese surplus is at a 30 year high due to factors like higher milk production, more European exports and sluggish demand. Dairy farmers have seen revenues drop by 35% in the last two years. The government announced it's going to step in and buy \$20 million worth of excess cheese from private inventories. It then plans to give the cheese to food banks and pantries across the country. [Link](#)

#### **Courtney: USDA Cheese Deal a 'Modest First Step' Toward Local Dairy Market Assistance (Patch 8/24)**

U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney on Tuesday hailed a Tuesday U.S. Department of Agriculture announcement that it will purchase \$20 million worth of cheese off the domestic dairy market, but added it is only a first step toward alleviating pressure in the industry. [Link](#)

#### **Helping dairy farms, USDA buys \$20 million worth of cheese (CNHI/Daily Item/Eagle Tribune 8/24)**

Moving to bolster dairy farmers who are struggling to cope with price declines, the Agriculture Department announced Tuesday it is spending \$20 million -- on 11 million pounds of cheese. A taxpayer watchdog group complained that the deal smells. "It's yet another example of USDA caving to the demands of an agricultural special interest wanting taxpayers to foot the bill for lower-than-desired prices," said Joshua Sewell, senior policy analyst for Taxpayers for Common Sense. [Link](#)

#### **Large USDA Cheese Purchase Aims to Spur Dairy Prices (WI Ag Connection 8/24)**

It appears that the U.S. Department of Agriculture is ready to take action to help struggling dairy farmers. Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack announced on Tuesday that his agency plans to purchase approximately 11 million pounds of cheese from private inventories to assist food banks and pantries across the nation. The move is expected to reduce a cheese surplus that is at its highest level in 30 years. [Link](#)

#### **USDA purchases \$20m in cheese (Feedstuffs 8/23)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced plans to purchase approximately 11 million lb. of cheese from private inventories to assist food banks and pantries across the nation while reducing a cheese surplus that is at its highest level in 30 years. The purchase, valued at \$20 million, will be provided to families in need across the country through USDA nutrition assistance programs while assisting the stalled marketplace for dairy producers, whose revenues have dropped 35% over the past two years. [Link](#)

#### **USDA plans to buy 11 million lb. of cheese, extends MPP deadline (Dairy Herd 8/23)**

Dairy farmers will receive additional assistance from the government following today's announcement by U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to purchase approximately 11 million pounds of cheese and extend an application deadline. The cheese purchase will come out of private inventories and will be donated to assist food banks nationwide. The value of the cheese comes to \$20 million. [Link](#)

#### **USDA to buy \$20 million worth of surplus cheese (Capital Press 8/23)**

In response to requests from Congress and agricultural organizations to assist struggling dairy farmers, USDA announced this afternoon that it will spend \$20 million to purchase approximately 11 million pounds of surplus cheese. The move is meant to aid dairy producers, whose revenues have dropped 35 percent over the past two years, by reducing cheese inventories that are at their highest level in 13 years, the agency stated. The cheese will be purchased from private inventories and distributed to food banks across the U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said the commodity purchase is part of a "robust, comprehensive safety net" for dairy producers, adding that USDA will continue to look for ways to provide added stability in the marketplace. [Link](#)

#### **USDA TO PURCHASE SURPLUS CHEESE WITH NMPF STATEMENT (Nebraska Rural Radio/KTIC/KRVN 8/23)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced plans to purchase approximately 11 million pounds of cheese from private inventories to assist food banks and pantries across the nation, while reducing a cheese surplus that is at its highest level in 30 years. The purchase, valued at \$20 million, will be provided to families in need across the country through USDA nutrition assistance programs, while assisting the stalled marketplace for dairy producers whose revenues have dropped 35 percent over the past two years. [Link](#)

### **US Government Agrees to Buy Cheese to Support Dairy Farmers (The Cattle Site 8/24)**

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has announced plans to purchase approximately 11 million pounds of cheese from private inventories to assist food banks and pantries across the nation. The purchase, valued at \$20 million, will be provided to families in need across the country through USDA nutrition assistance programs, while assisting the stalled marketplace for dairy producers whose revenues have dropped 35 per cent over the past two years. [Link](#)

### **USDA to Purchase Surplus Cheese for Food Banks and Families in Need, Continue to Assist Dairy Producers (Growing Louisiana, 8/24)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced plans to purchase approximately 11 million pounds of cheese from private inventories to assist food banks and pantries across the nation, while reducing a cheese surplus that is at its highest level in 30 years. The purchase, valued at \$20 million, will be provided to families in need across the country through USDA nutrition assistance programs, while assisting the stalled marketplace for dairy producers whose revenues have dropped 35 percent over the past two years. [Link](#)

### **USDA Assisting #Dairy Producers (AgWired 8/24)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced plans to purchase millions of pounds of surplus cheese to aid both hungry families and dairy producers. The purchase of approximately 11 million pounds of cheese, valued at \$20 million, will assist food banks and pantries across the nation, while reducing a cheese surplus that is at its highest level in 30 years. The cheese will be made available through USDA nutrition assistance programs, while the action is also intended to help boost the stalled marketplace for dairy producers whose revenues have dropped 35 percent over the past two years. USDA also announced that it will extend the deadline for dairy producers to enroll in the Margin Protection Program (MPP) for Dairy to Dec. 16, 2016, from the previous deadline of Sept. 30. [Link](#)

### **The USDA Bought 11 Million Pounds of Surplus Cheese for Food Banks (Jezebel 8/23)**

All cheese news is good cheese news (unless of course that cheese news is, "Hey cheesehead, we're all outta cheese!"), but Tuesday's biggest cheese news is particularly exceptional. Not only is it about an abundance of cheese, it's about putting that cheese to good use. Because dairies in the United States have been steadily "losing sales to competition from Europe," our nation has too much cheese. In May, it was reported that our stockpiles of cheese (I'm imagining Scrooge McDuck's golden swimming pool right now) "have reached a 30-year high of 1.2 billion pounds." As a way of "assisting the stalled marketplace for dairy producers" and feeding hungry families, the USDA has decided to spend \$20 million on 11 million pounds of the stuff and donate it to "food banks and pantries across the nation." [Link](#)

### **USDA Buying 11 Million Pounds From Cheese Surplus For Food Pantries (Consumerist 8/23)**

Earlier this year, we shared the news that there's too much cheese in this country: enough that every person in the United States would have to eat three pounds to get rid of it all. Instead of distributing it that way, the U.S. Department of Agriculture plans to distribute it to people in need of nutritious food through pantries and through its own programs. The most familiar food distribution programs to most Americans would be WIC, which provides food and formula to pregnant women and families with young children, and school lunch and breakfast programs. The USDA also distributes commodity foods to low-income senior citizens and families. [Link](#)

### **Feds to cut the cheese surplus (Washington Examiner 8/23)**

The federal government is planning to buy \$20 million worth of cheese to cut a nationwide surplus. The United States Department of Agriculture announced Tuesday that the approximately 11 million pounds of cheese will be taken off the market after the dairy industry experienced a nearly 35 percent decrease in revenues over the past two years. The cheese will be donated to food banks across the country. "We understand that the nation's dairy producers are experiencing challenges due to market conditions and that food banks continue to see strong demand for assistance," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack in a press release. "This commodity purchase is part of a robust, comprehensive safety net that will help reduce a cheese surplus that is at a 30-year high while, at the same time, moving a high-protein food to the tables of those most in need. USDA will continue to look for ways within its authorities to tackle food insecurity and provide for added stability in the marketplace." [Link](#)

### **Government Buys \$20 Million Of Cheese From Surplus Stockpiles (Daily Caller 8/23)**

The government will buy \$20 million worth of cheese from private stockpiles to aid the struggling dairy industry, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced Tuesday. The USDA will purchase about 11 million pounds of cheese from private inventories and distribute it to food pantries, the department said in a statement. "We understand that the nation's dairy producers are experiencing challenges due to market conditions and that food banks continue to see strong demand for assistance," Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said in the statement. [Link](#)

**A tale of two bailouts: Cheese vs. TARP (MarketWatch 8/23)**

On Tuesday, the Agriculture Department announced a \$20 million bailout for cheese producers ravaged by a swoon in prices. The cheese surplus is at a 30-year high, the government said, and dairy producers have seen a 35% drop in revenue over the past two years. Here's a side-by-side comparison from a more well-known bailout, that of the U.S. financial system. (We're only using the Troubled Asset Relief Program here, though the financial system's rescue could also be said to include the Federal Reserve's emergency lending programs.) [Link](#)

**Stacking cheddar: Agriculture Dept buys 11 million pounds of cheese (RT 8/24)**

Talk about government cheese! The feds have announced a plan to buy 11 million pounds of cheese and distribute it to food banks and charity organizations. The cost of this plan is valued at \$20 million and is billed to help US dairy farmers as well. The nation's biggest crisis is coming to an end. Yes, it's true: the nightmare of the cheese surplus may be solved, thanks to the US Department of Agriculture. Their answer was extremely simple: just buy cheese – and so they did. The cheese surplus hit a 30-year high in 2016, which was bad news for dairy farmers. The American Farm Bureau Federation and a coalition of lawmakers approached the USDA on Tuesday to seek assistance. [Link](#)

**Loans Available for Local Farmers (Monadnock Ledger-Transcript 8/22)**

"...Qualified farm operators in the counties will be eligible for low interest emergency loans from USDA's Farm Service Agency, provided eligibility requirements are met. Farmers will have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for loans to help cover part of their actual losses." [Link](#)

**Warren FFA to Host Free Farm Safety Day (Journal Standard 8/23)**

"...Registration will take place from 9 to 9:30 a.m. Stateline Farm Rescue will give a grain bin extraction demo, and sessions in tractor and lawn mowers, grain bins, chemicals, skid loaders, combine machines and all-terrain vehicles will be featured. Sessions will be presented by agricultural industry safety professionals from John Deere, the Farm Service Agency and Southwest Wisconsin Technical College..." [Link](#)

**China may Exempt Some U.S. Farm Exports from Zika Rules (Capital Press 8/22)**

"...Within the U.S., local transmission of Zika through mosquitoes has only occurred in Florida, but China has imposed its shipping regulations on all U.S. shipments, creating the potential for trade disruption. China's Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine, or AQSIQ, will conduct a risk assessment "to determine whether to apply a regional approach in its Zika response," according to USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service..." [Link](#)

**Vilsack Says Next Farm Bill Should Expand Outreach to Veterans (Agri-Pulse, 8/23)**

Recruiting military veterans and youth into farming should be a major goal of the next farm bill, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack said today at a U.S. Chamber of Commerce event to highlight its Hiring our Heroes program. [Link](#)

**Farm Bill Income Cap for Program Payment Eligibility Affects Few Farms (NSAC, 8/23)**

The use of means tests in federal entitlement programs, using income levels to determine eligibility for funds, is a common –if not controversial– practice. For decades, federal farm commodity subsidy programs have stood out as one of very few federal entitlement programs that employed no means tests or income caps to determine eligibility. [Link](#)

**Drought Conditions in Four Nebraska Counties Prompt Emergency Action (Nebraska Radio Network, 8/23)**

Severe drought in four Nebraska counties is opening up Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land to haying and grazing for a limited time. [Link](#)

**USDA to Measure Kentucky Small Grains (US Ag Net, 8/23)**

During the first two weeks of September, growers of small grains around the country will receive survey forms from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). The agency is taking a comprehensive look into the 2016 production and supply of small grains, which includes winter wheat for Kentucky. [Link](#)

**Free Trade Makes Good Sense for U.S. Ag (Roundup Web, 8/23)**

America's farmers and ranchers support free trade. And when you look at the numbers it's not hard to see why. [Link](#)

**The Newest Challenge to Family Farms: Low Milk Prices (Cable One, 8/23)**



Arden Tewksbury has been a dairy farmer in northeast Pennsylvania for most of his 83 years. He's also an agricultural activist who's part of a movement to try to stop the loss of family-owned dairy farms across the country due to record-low milk prices, a glut of milk on the world and U.S. markets, and reduced federal subsidies. [Link](#)

- **USDA Funds Ag Wetland Mitigation Banks in 10 States (Ag Pro, 8/23)**

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief Jason Weller today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture is investing more than \$7 million to fund agricultural wetland mitigation banks in 10 Midwest and Northern Great Plain states. [Link](#)

- **Thousands of South Carolina Flood Victims Still Need Help (Insurance Journal, 8/24)**

Thousands of people in South Carolina still need home repairs, while the state has submitted a plan for using almost \$100 million in federal housing aid almost a year after historic rains inundated the state. The state is now also reviewing applications from farmers for state help. [Link](#)

- **White Mold is Impacting Farmers (KIMT, 8/23)**

Harvest season is right around the corner and while many crops are looking better than average, some farmers are seeing a type of fungus on their soybeans. It's called white mold. [Link](#)

- **For Decades, the USDA Was Black Farmers' Worst Enemy. Here's How It Became an Ally (ImDiversity, 8/24)**

Cather Woods, 74, rises early to start the day before the Texas heat has a chance to wake up. She smiles as she steps onto the soil she's nurtured for years. Inhaling the fresh air, she looks at the young pines under the rising sun, and, finally, she greets the cows excited by her arrival. [Link](#)

- **Helena's Academics, Faith and Philanthropy Meet in East Africa (Independent Record, 8/24)**

A budding relationship between a Ugandan priest, parishioners of the Cathedral of St. Helena and the Carroll College Chapter of Engineers without Borders is working to help hundreds of Ugandans access clean water. [Link](#)

- **Producers Should Consider Available Assistance (Echo Press, 8/24)**

The Minnesota State Fair is one of the biggest and best examples of the wide variety of agriculture that we are blessed with as Minnesotans. It is also a sign that summer is nearing an end. For me, I simply wonder where it has gone. [Link](#)

*Research, Education & Economics*

**USDA Center in Wyndmoor Quietly Expands Knowledge of Agriculture and Nutrition (Chestnut Hill Local 8/23)**

The Eastern Regional Research Center was built because of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938. Among other things, the act required four agricultural research centers to be built in strategic locations around the country. The research centers are part of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), which is the principal research agency for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Along with the other three research centers, the Eastern Regional Research Center was created to research agriculture, nutrition, food safety and conservation and sustainability. [Link](#)

- **The Newest Challenge to Family Farms: Low Milk Prices (Star-Telegram 8/23)**

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the price of milk in June was about \$15 per 100 pounds – more than a 40 percent drop from 2014. Meanwhile, the USDA estimated milk production costs were about \$22 per 100 pounds. [Link](#)

- **Rising Land Values Mean Pitfalls for Rock County Farmers (GazetteXtra 8/22)**

If personal property rises in value, it's usually good news for the owner. For some farmers, however, a recent increase in the value of their farmland could be financially problematic at a time when prices are already low for crops such as corn and soybeans. In three of the past four years, agricultural land sales in Rock County have netted an average of more than \$7,000 per acre. That benchmark had never been reached before 2012, according to data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service. [Link](#)

- **U.S. Cattle Futures Fall to Four-Week Lows on Cold-Storage Data (NASDAQ 8/23)**

"...A U.S. Department of Agriculture cold-storage report released Monday showed 599.9 million pounds of pork and 456.5 million pounds of beef had been socked away in the nation's freezers through July 31, up 2% and 3% from the previous month, respectively. Analysts surveyed by The Wall Street Journal on average forecast a drop in both supplies, as the summer grilling season typically gives sales of hot dogs

and hamburgers a boost..." [Link](#)

#### **Iowa Crops and Weather Report (KMA Land 8/23)**

Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey commented on the Iowa Crops and Weather report released by the USDA National Agricultural Statistical Service. The report is released weekly from April through October. "In general crops remain in good condition, with 83 percent of corn and 82 percent of beans rated good or excellent, and are ahead of the five-year average for maturity," Northey said. [Link](#)

#### **Mushroom volumes up, on track for more growth (The Packer 8/23)**

Mushroom volumes were up in the 2015-16 season, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and they'll likely continue to go up in the 2016-17 season, shippers and industry officials say. About 946 million pounds of mushrooms were produced in 2015-16, up 2% from last season, according to an annual mushrooms report from the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. That will likely keep increasing because of increased acreage, said Kevin Donovan, national sales director for Phillips Mushroom Farms, Kennett Square, Pa. [Link](#)

#### **Area USDA August cattle on feed reports (Farm Forum 8/24)**

South Dakota feedlots, with capacities of 1,000 or more head, contained 220,000 cattle on feed on August 1, according to the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. This inventory is up 5 percent from last year. Placements during July totaled 18,000 head, up 6 percent from 2015. Fed cattle marketings for the month of July totaled 32,000 head, down 6 percent from last year. Other disappearance during July totaled 1,000 head, down 2,000 from last year. [Link](#)

#### **Heavy rain falls in southeast part of state (High Plains Journal 8/24)**

Heavy rain fell in the southeast portion of the state last week. There were 4.5 days suitable for fieldwork for the week ending Aug. 21, USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, Heartland Regional Field Office, Missouri. Temperatures averaged 74.2 degrees, 2.2 degrees below normal. Precipitation averaged 1.43 inches statewide, 0.73 inches above normal. Topsoil moisture supply was rated 2 percent very short, 9 percent short, 77 percent adequate, and 12 percent surplus. Subsoil moisture supply was rated 2 percent very short, 9 percent short, 81 percent adequate, and 8 percent surplus. [Link](#)

#### *Food, Nutrition, & Consumer Services*

#### **Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services Opens DSNAP Sites in 8 Parishes (WDSU 8/23)**

As families across South Louisiana continue to assess the damage from last week's historic flood, Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program sites opened in eight parishes on Monday. Department of Children and Family Services officials said emergency food stamps will be available to residents who do not normally receive stamps. [Link](#)

#### **Students at 59 EPISD Campuses will get Free School Lunch, Breakfast**

Students 59 El Paso Independent School District campuses will get free school lunches and breakfasts thanks to national program aimed at providing more nutritious meals students. Laura Durán, EPISD's Director of Food and Nutrition Services, announced that the District once again will participate in the Community Eligibility Program from the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. [Link](#)

#### **Rise in SNAP-authorized farmers markets (AgriNews-Pubs 8/23)**

... More Hoosier families are getting access to fresh food at farmers markets, U.S. Department of Agriculture undersecretary Kevin Concannon says. In 2010, there were six farmers markets in Indiana that were authorized to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits. Since 2010, there has been a jump, thanks to the grassroots efforts of the Hoosier Farmers Market Association and other local partners, as well as a USDA ...[Link](#)

#### **Business owner allegedly accepts \$5 million in Food Stamps, all fraudulent (Daily Caller 8/23)**

... Zuhger Mohammud, would accept blank food stamps checks at his stores, even though he was not an approved vendor for the program, according to the Illinois state attorney's office in Cook County. The Women, and Infants and Children (WIC) program is part of the federally funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), administered by each state, and dispenses a special type of check designed to be used for certain food items. ... [Link](#)

#### **A Buffalo deli owner is facing welfare fraud charges for allegedly purchasing food stamps from people who were willing to take cash for them (The Daily Gazette 8/24)**

... A Buffalo deli owner is facing welfare fraud charges for allegedly purchasing food stamps from people

who were willing to take cash for them. Thirty-seven-year-old Ahmed Alshami has been charged with criminal possession of public benefit cards, misuse of food stamps and criminal use of a public benefit card. He was arraigned on Tuesday and pleaded not guilty. ... [Link](#)

#### **140 Inner City Chicago Stores Charged with Food Stamp Fraud (Breitbart 8/23)**

... grows, so, too, do fraud and abuse. Food stamp trafficking, in particular, has grown so much that 140 stores in Chicago's inner city have been cited for food stamp fraud, many of them shut down as a result. With African Americans suffering badly during the Obama administration, the number of Americans on SNAP, or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, is at an all-time high, having increased by around 19 million Americans since Obama took office. According to the National Review, the number of black households on food stamps has risen 58.2 percent since 2008. And while the U.S. government has been cracking down on ... [Link](#)

#### **Fewer Receive Food Stamps as States Change Rules (Pew Trusts 8/23)**

... As more states require adults to work or get job training in order to receive food stamps, the number of people receiving the benefits is falling at an unprecedented rate, according to new data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The number of people receiving food stamps fell by about 773,000 in April alone, in part because 22 states changed their rules in January for adults receiving food stamps ... [Link](#)

#### **Food stamp use on the rise in Nebraska, unlike in Iowa and rest of U.S. (Omaha 8/23)**

... Food stamp use in Nebraska — like in Iowa and elsewhere — skyrocketed after 2008 in the wake of the Great Recession. As the economy cratered, rules enacted across the U.S. to expand access to benefits also pushed usage higher: From 2008 to 2013, the number of Nebraskans who received food stamps jumped nearly 50 percent — from 120,800 to 180,000. By 2013, Nebraskans were receiving a total of \$265 million in food stamps, a program ... [Link](#)

#### **2M people off food stamp benefits in last year (The Hill 8/23)**

... The number of Americans who receive food stamps has dropped by more than 2 million over the last year, according to new data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, as states begin to reintroduce work rules relaxed during the recession. Nationally, 43.5 million Americans received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in May, the Agriculture Department (USDA) said this month. That's down from 45.5 million who received those same benefits in May 2015, and down from a peak of 47.8 million beneficiaries in December 2012. The decline reflects a recovering economy ..." [Link](#)

#### **The end of welfare in 1996: Good then, vindication now (Orlando Sentinel 8/23)**

... program targeted at working-age households, according to the Tax Policy Center. Nor was welfare reform a cure-all. In the wake of the Great Recession came a sharp increase in the number of people applying for federal disability benefits, which don't carry the same work mandate. The federal food stamp program, known as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, has grown considerably, partly due to more generous eligibility rules and partly to hardship. Even some advocates of welfare reform say it has sometimes been implemented badly. Some states have used their federal block grants, which were set at a fixed amount in 1996. [Link](#)

#### **Farmers giving food to pantries want tax credit (The Toledo Blade 8/23)**

... \_Unfortunately, it is often prohibitively expensive for farmers to donate their food due to steep harvesting, processing, and transportation costs.\_ An estimated 2.3 million New Yorkers - more than a third of them children - rely on emergency food programs. Nearly 3 million households in the state participate in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known as SNAP. Research by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have shown poorer families are less likely to have access to fruits and vegetables, a cornerstone of a healthy diet. ... [Link](#)

#### **Expert to oversee state SNAP, Medicare compliance (Albuquerque Journal 8/24)**

... and Medicaid eligibility determination processes. Gonzales' six-page order defines the duties and the authority of the yet-to-be-named special master, who will be independent of both HSD Secretary Brent Earnest and attorneys at the New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty, who brought the lawsuit over state compliance with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as food stamps. Center attorneys Gail Evans and Sovereign Hager sought to have the court place the SNAP program in a receivership, arguing that the department's consistent failure to comply with terms of a consent decree in the 1988 lawsuit meant the ... [Link](#)

#### **SNAP clients may be eligible for disaster related benefits (KALB-TV 8/24)**

... Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients who reside in an impacted area and suffered an adverse effect or food loss may request supplemental or replacement benefits. The Louisiana

Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has received approval from the federal Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) for eight parishes to receive automatic disaster supplements for SNAP and 10 parishes to receive automatic replacement SNAP benefits. ... [Link](#)

### **10 charged with government benefits fraud totaling more than \$6M (Don Wade & Roma Show - WLS-AM 8/23)**

... to indigent pregnant and post-partum women and children under the age of 5, according to a statement from the Cook County state's attorney's office. Muhammad, who owns several businesses in the Chicago area, is accused of accepting blank WIC checks from customers in exchange for goods that were not authorized by the WIC program. He redeemed \$5.2 million in WIC benefits between 2011 and 2014, despite the fact that he was never an authorized vendor under the program, prosecutors said. He is charged with theft of government property, WIC fraud, continuing a financial crimes enterprise and public aid wire fraud. 'This brazen ... [Link](#)

### **State employees process thousands of applications for emergency food stamps in Louisiana (One News Page 8/23)**

... News Page \_Probably the fastest-access news portal in the world\_ State employees process thousands of applications for emergency food stamps in Louisiana Duration: 01:37s - Published: 34 minutes ago ');\_> Embed As families across South Louisiana continue to assess the damage from last week's historic flood, Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program sites opened in eight parishes on Monday. ... [Link](#)

### **Twenty years since the Clinton welfare 'reform' (Axis of Logic 8/23)**

... currently provides less than half the income deemed necessary by the government to avoid poverty. In one-third of the states, the benefits are less than 20 percent of the official poverty level. The 1996 law also cut food assistance to the poor. The tightening of eligibility for food stamps, now called the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), has had devastating consequences. As a result of the lowering of maximum benefits enacted at that time, a working household of three people today receives nearly \$400 less a year—or \$33 a month—than it would have received had the 'reform' not been enacted. So draconian ... [Link](#)

### **Recovering economy: 2 million off food stamps in past year (ALAN 8/24)**

... sign of how the economy is improving is the number of people no longer needing food stamps. Nationally, 43.5 million Americans received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in May, the Agriculture Department (USDA) said this month. That's down from 45.5 million who received those same benefits in May 2015... [Link](#)

### **More Georgians slated to lose food stamps (Better Georgia 8/23)**

... An additional 10,000 Georgians across 21 counties may become ineligible to renew their food stamps, beginning in early 2017. Earlier this year, over 5,000 folks living in the metro Atlanta area lost their food stamps, officially called SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program . Georgia joins 39 other states that are slowly switching back to the... [Link](#)

### **Louisiana Residents Stunned By Flood Losses (KAWC 8/24)**

... In the small flood-ravaged town of Springfield, Louisiana, Rachel Moriarty waited more than a week for a center where she could apply for emergency food stamps to finally open in this AM-Vets hall. But now she's been turned away at the door. This week they are only processing those with the last names beginning with A through D. ... [Link](#)

### **New Mexico Program Nationally Recognized for Supporting Breastfeeding Mothers (KRWG 8/23)**

... nationally for supporting breastfeeding mothers. New Mexico's program was one of only eight in the nation to receive the Loving Support Award of Excellence from the United States Department of Agriculture. To receive the award, programs have to go above and beyond in their support of mothers and their children. The WIC Program in New Mexico serves more than 51,000 mothers and children each month. The rate of New Mexico mothers in the WIC program breastfeeding their newborns reached 80.6 percent in 2015, which was the first time the statewide rate exceeded 80 percent. The 2015 rate is just shy of the Surgeon General's ... [Link](#)

### **Food service workers get a taste of the school year (Black Hills Fox 8/22)**

... Food service workers from across the school district gathered at Central Monday to learn new recipes from two professional chefs and to get them excited to make healthy meals for students with the school year approaching. The goal is to get kids to 'eat the rainbow' with fruits and vegetables. ... [Link](#)

### **Food Bank of Iowa offers food delivery at schools (Radio Iowa 8/22)**

... The backpack program sees kids through on days when they are not in school. "Our backpack program is a great way for kids who lack the resources of those school meal programs over the weekend to take a sack of food home and have the sustenance that they need throughout the weekend and then return to school on Monday ready to learn," Akright says. Akright says donations supply the food that's used. ...

[Link](#)

### **Des Moines Public Schools Expands Free Meal Program (WHOTV 8/23)**

... Des Moines Public Schools is once again expanding its free meals program called Community Eligibility Provision. "It is troubling for students to concentrate when their tummies are rumbling," said Chad Taylor, Chef with Des Moines Public Schools. "The school is a great opportunity for them to receive meals... [Link](#)

### **Giant Food introduces fresh meal kits in some D.C.-area stores (The Packer 8/23)**

... meals kits are a way for us to make our customers' lives easier,' Gordon Reid, president of Giant Food, said in the release. 'Giant is excited about the launch of these kits, which will save our customers time while also providing them with a healthy, well-rounded delicious meal the whole family can enjoy together.' The summer meal varieties include salmon risotto with spring vegetables; Asian-style pork stir fry with white rice; Black 7 feta cheese-stuffed chicken breasts with roasted broccoli and potato wedges; and lemon thyme chicken with zucchini, cherry tomatoes and white rice... [Link](#)

### **USDA Services Can Help Individuals and Small Businesses Affected By Flooding In Louisiana (Farms 8/23)**

... Food Assistance and Food Safety The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) coordinates with state, local and voluntary organizations to provide food for shelters and other mass feeding sites. Under certain circumstances, states also may request to operate a disaster household distribution program to distribute USDA Foods directly to households in ... [Link](#)

### **Gov. Brown approves \$5 million match for Nutrition Incentive program (Ukiah Daily Journal 8/24)**

... that basic cornerstone of health—eating right,' says Ecology Center Executive Director Martin Bourque. 'The preliminary survey results clearly show that Californians on tight budgets who don't already shop at farmers markets are becoming regular customers and buying more fresh produce through Market Match, which also helps local businesses and rural farming communities thrive.' Last year, the Ecology Center led California nonprofits, without help from the state, to raise \$3.7 million in private funds and in-kind contributions to secure the federal FINI dollars. This enabled the Ecology Center to expand the number of ... [Link](#)

### **How Do Rent-Burdened New Yorkers Cope? (NYTimes 8/24)**

... "I have practically nothing left for the basics. I learned to clean with vinegar. I can buy that with food stamps." "Today I'm staying in the house not to spend money. It's difficult to have a quality of life." "Sometimes I go to my senior center, but I'm pre-diabetic, and the centers serve a lot of food that's not healthy. ... [Link](#)

### **Checking the National 'Dashboard' (Town Hall 8/24)**

... · More people using food stamps. In 1970, the number of Americans receiving food stamps was below 10 million. It began rising after that, but as recently as 2005, it was still below 30 million. Between then and 2015, food-stamp participation grew by about 20.1 million people. Those tempted to blame the "Great Recession" may not be aware that the federal government created several waivers in the program, one of which allows able-bodied ... [Link](#)

### **Vilsack Hopes Next Administration Continues USDA's Diverse Scope (KUNI-FM 8/23)**

... it impacts – and that it has an impact and effect on every single American,\_ Vilsack says, \_not just Americans in one part of the country or growing one type of commodity.\_ Vilsack is the only remaining member of President Obama's original cabinet, and has been at the helm of USDA since 2009. In that time, the department has expanded programs for local foods and farmer's markets, school meals and nutrition, and rural development. He noted that soon the agricultural sector and a new Congress will begin work on the next farm bill, which covers everything from crop safety nets to the food stamp program. \_My hope is that the ... [Link](#)

### *Food Safety*

### **USDA's Food Safety Tips for Louisiana Flood Victims (Food Poisoning Bulletin 8/23)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has compiled some food safety tips for residents of Louisiana affected by the flood and those living in parishes currently under flood warning... After a flood, don't eat

any food including raw fruits and vegetables, or cartons of milk or eggs, that may have come into contact with flood water. Throw away these foods and any others that are not in waterproof containers such as food packaged in plastic wrap, foods and beverages with screw-caps, snap lids, pull tops, and crimped caps or foods packaged in cardboard including cereals, cookies, crackers, and cartons of milk, juice or baby formula. Flood waters, which contain dangerous bacteria, can seep through these types of packaging and contaminate foods. [Link](#)

### **CCOF Applauds Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) for Guidance on Non-GMO Label Claims (CCOF / Perishable News 8/22)**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced the availability of new guidance on use of the term “non-GMO” to label meat, poultry, and egg products. The guidance clarifies that FSIS now considers organic certification to be sufficient documentation to support any claim related to the non-use of GMO ingredients. CCOF applauds this guidance and anticipates imminent FSIS-approval of CCOF’s “Organic is Non-GMO & More” seal. [Link](#)

### **ICYMI: The USDA created milk-based cling wrap (Engadget 8/23)**

Today on In Case You Missed It: MIT's Self Assembly Lab came up with a phone that can be put in something that looks like your old rock tumbler and snap together by itself, with the force of magnets. And scientists at the US Department of Agriculture created food packaging clingwrap made of milk protein that's both biodegradable and edible. [Link](#)

### **New Regs for Wednesday: GMO Labels, Sharks, Dolphins (The Hill 8/23)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is moving forward with new GMO labeling guidelines for food manufacturers. The USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service on Tuesday issued new guidelines for food manufacturers that claim they do not use genetically modified organisms or other bioengineered ingredients in their meat and eggs. The public has 60 days to comment. [Link](#)

### **USDA Recalls Nearly a Ton of Venezuelan Snacks from North Miami Beach Manufacturer (Miami New Times 8/23)**

The United States Department of Agriculture is recalling nearly 2,000 pounds of prepared food distributed by a North Miami Beach company that failed to secure inspections and approval to sell items ranging from ham-filled cachitos to chicken empanadas. All told, the recall covers 1,951 pounds of products packed by Panna Café Express to Go Inc. between June 2 and August 17, the USDA said in a news release earlier this week. There have been no reports of anyone being sickened. [Link](#)

### **The System for Catching Dangerous Pathogens in America's Food Supply is Finally Working (Quartz 8/23)**

“...Foodborne pathogens are tricky to pin down. They're true shape shifters—creepy little threats that can find their way to a person through almost any food that hasn't been fully cooked or processed. They could travel as easily via cheeseburger as in a box of supermarket cake mix...” [Link](#)

### **Meat, Poultry Inspectors Verified 1.7M Procedures in 3 Months (Food Safety News 8/23)**

They use to say breaking up is hard to do. For USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), it's not really that difficult or uncommon. If FSIS decides there are reasons that it should not be providing meat, poultry or egg inspections at a specific company, it simply files a complaint — usually in the nearest federal district court — and those USDA meat and poultry inspectors can go elsewhere. No USDA inspectors means, a company is out of business because federal law requires the continuous inspection of meat, poultry and eggs to sell human food across state lines. In its third quarter enforcement report for 2016, FSIS moved to withdraw or deny inspections to four businesses. [Link](#)

### **Lab-on-a-Stick: Miniaturized Clinical Testing for Fast Detection of Antibiotic Resistance (Science Daily 8/23)**

The new test termed Lab-on-a-Stick is an inexpensive microfluidic strip -- comprising of tiny test tubes about the size of a human hair -- capable of identifying bacteria found in urine samples and checking if they are resistant to common antibiotics. Simple to use and cheap to manufacture, the Lab-on-a-Stick is a 'dip and read' method using a transparent microcapillary film suitable for naked eye detection or measurement with portable, inexpensive equipment such as a smartphone camera. [Link](#)

### **USDA Issues Guidance Greenlighting “Non-GMO” Claims for Meat and Poultry (National Law Review 8/23)**

Non-GMO” claims — i.e., claims advertising the non-use of genetic modification (GM) in food production — have become increasingly popular and desirable from a marketing standpoint. Until now, no clear regulatory definition or oversight of such claims existed. Effective immediately, however, USDA's Food Safety & Inspection Service (FSIS) will begin approving “Non-GMO” claims for meat, poultry and egg

products that do not contain bioengineered ingredients or that are derived from livestock that do not consume bioengineered feed. FSIS will now permit the use of the terms “genetically modified organism” or “GMO” even if the claim is not approved by a third-party certifier as long as the term is truthful and not misleading. This new Agency policy stems directly from the passage of the new federal GMO labeling law which mandates USDA to develop and implement a national bioengineered food disclosure standard within 2 years. [Link](#)

### **Good Hygiene: A Critical Component of your Store’s Food Safety (CSP Daily 8/23)**

“...According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, gloves should be worn by foodservice workers when handling ready-to-eat foods. Gloves should be used for one task only; food workers must change gloves when switching tasks. Be sure they wash their hands before and after donning gloves...” [Link](#)

### **Seven Ways You Can Avoid Food Poisoning (Health at 60 8 /24)**

There’s nothing worse than enjoying a nice meal and later finding yourself making friends with the toilet bowl. Food poisoning can cause you a world of pain, and even land you in hospital seriously ill. It doesn’t have to be that way though. [Link](#)

### **China Extends Duties on U.S. Poultry for Five More Years (UPDATED) (Meatingplace 8/23)**

China will continue to levy anti-subsidy duties on broilers from U.S. sources for another five years, according to several media reports, including the China Daily website. The Ministry of Commerce announced it intends to extend the duties through August 2022 after a probe indicated that ending the tariffs – which expired last year – would hurt the domestic poultry industry. China initially imposed duties on U.S. poultry in September 2010 after accusing the U.S. of subsidizing the poultry products that were then dumped in China at below-market prices.

### **Baltimore Processor to Build New Poultry Plant, Create 100 Jobs**

Baltimore-based Holly Poultry is building a brand-new, USDA-inspected poultry processing plant that will bring 100 new jobs to that city once the facility is operational in January 2017. The 37,500-square-foot plant will allow Holly — a further processor of poultry products and a wholesale distributor of poultry, pork, beef and other refrigerated products — to separate its processing business from its wholesale commodity business. Doing so will help the company further penetrate existing markets, explore new ones and accelerate growth, the company said in a news release.

## *Natural Resources & Environment*

### **Lawsuit Over Fireline Seeks to Curb Forest Firefighting Tactics (Emergency Management)**

The rush by the U.S. Forest Service to cut a fireline through critical fish and wildlife habitat to fight a fire that never came anywhere near has spurred a lawsuit in federal court. Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics (FSEEE), a Eugene, Ore.-based nonprofit, filed the lawsuit last week in U.S. District Court in Spokane. It seeks to rescind a 2008 regulation that allows the Forest Service to suspend all environmental laws when it fights fire, if fire managers declare a state of emergency. [Link](#)

### **The US Forest Service is being overwhelmed by all the Fires it must fight (PRI 8/23)**

The US Forest Service, which is part of the US Department of Agriculture, was established to manage America’s 193 million acres of national forests and grasslands. However, in recent years, a large amount of effort and money has gone into fighting fires, not preserving the land. According to a 2015 fire budget report from the USDA, as wildfires increased over the last two decades, cost diversions have taken a toll on recreation, restoration and other activities. [Link](#)

### **Could anyone have stopped the Canyon Creek Fire? (Wallowa County Chieftain 8/24)**

On Aug. 14, The Oregonian distributed a special 20-page report, the culmination of a year-long investigation into the Canyon Creek Fire. That fire destroyed 43 homes and nearly 100 other structures Aug. 14, 2015 near the town of Canyon City in Grant County. It was a journalistic endeavor that produced a fascinating product. Two reporters for the newspaper, Laura Gunderson and Ted Sickinger, spent nearly a year digging through documents, conducting interviews and questioning the U.S. Forest Service’s initial response to the small, lightning-caused fires that two days later united into a conflagration that could not be stopped. [Link](#)

### **1988 Yellowstone Fire: A Policy Goes Up in Smoke (RealClearPolitics.com 8/24)**

Twenty-eight years ago today, two U.S. Army battalions arrived in Yellowstone to confront an old enemy. By mid-September, those soldiers would be joined by 4,000 uniformed members of the United States Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Wyoming National Guard. These troops supplemented hundreds of U.S. Forest Service rangers and National Park Service personnel already on the ground -- all of whom had met their match in the summer of 1988. Their foe? The fires raging through America’s oldest national

park. [Link](#)

### **USFS facility in Missoula works on better ways to fight wildfires (KRTV-TV 8/24)**

Hundreds of square miles in California have been overcome by wildfires this summer, in part fueled by a prolonged drought. And while firefighters in Southern California work around the clock to control the flames, scientists hundreds of miles away are waging a different sort of battle - the one to fully understand how these fires spread. "There is an expression that everyone uses here in the U.S., 'spreads like wildfire,' yet we don't even know how wildfires spread," said Mark Finney, a scientist with the U.S. Forest Service. [Link](#)

### **Feds lack funds to manage a monument (Durango Herald Online 8/24)**

Public lands in San Juan County, Utah, are already "managed" by the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service. Some parts of the proposed Bears Ears National Monument are wilderness. But none of these agencies have the funds to adequately do their job. Why, all of a sudden, do people think a national anything will do a better job of protection – especially when the designated property holder is already over \$18 trillion in debt? [Link](#)

### **Outdoor recreation: Bicycles will cause damage to national forests (Seattle Times 8/23)**

The proposed legislation (S. 3205 Human-Powered Travel in Wilderness Area Act) is not a good ["Bill opening wilderness areas to bikes also opens new conservation debate," Local News, Aug.20] Who would pay for the repair of fragile wilderness trails? [Link](#)

### **Historic August Flooding will cost Louisiana Agriculture at Least \$110 Million (ArkLatex 8/22)**

Heavy rains that recently caused historic flooding in south Louisiana will cost the state's agriculture industry at least \$110 million, according to preliminary estimates from the LSU AgCenter. That figure is expected to grow as farmers realize the full extent of flood damage, said AgCenter economist Kurt Guidry. Many factors — including crop yield and quality reductions, increased production costs, infrastructure damage and loss of stored commodities — are not immediately clear. And daily rains that are typical of summer weather patterns could slow the fall of floodwaters, delay harvest and cause even more damage to crops and animals. [Link](#)

### **Blue Cut Fire Fully Contained, Acreage Drops Slightly (The Desert Sun 8/23)**

"...The U.S. Forest Service announced Tuesday morning that the fire had been contained and its acreage had dropped from the previously reported 37,020 acres. All evacuations have been lifted and all major roads are open, save for a small number of dirt roads in the area, said Forest Service spokesman John Miller. Crews are still patrolling for hot spots within the perimeter of the fire, which wiped out 105 homes and 216 outbuildings since it broke out in the San Bernardino Mountains, west of Interstate 15..." [Link](#)

### **U.S. Forest Service's Beth Lund at the Top of her Game (KBOI 2 News 8/23)**

There are 16 type-one incident commanders in the U.S. Forest Service: only two are women and Beth Lund is "it's true," said Lund. "There aren't that many women that feel inclined towards this business. A lot of things come into play there. Personal choices." Lund is essentially the top fire boss on the 100,000-acre Pioneer Blaze, now in its sixth week. She's in control of all aspects of this complicated struggle and her strategy is simple, but serious. [Link](#)

### **Pentagon Conservation Efforts Protect Rare Species — and Troops' Training Grounds (WUNC 8/22)**

In the past two decades, the U.S. military has quietly built a huge national conservation network by developing formal -- and once unlikely -- partnerships with environmental groups, universities, local governments, zoos, and even prison systems. [Link](#)

### **Pilot Project Takes on Ag-Friendly Wetland Preservation (Bismarck Tribune 8/21)**

Bunches of cattails stick up like an island in the middle of Denny Ova's stubble field north of Cleveland. Nearby, boggy mud sucks boots into the ground. [Link](#)

### **Exhibit Offers Path to Improve Water Quality (AgriNews 8/22)**

Protecting the quality of drinking water in Indiana is something in which every Hoosier can take part. The Pathway to Water Quality exhibit, which is managed by the Indiana Conservation Partnership and is on the Indiana State Fairgrounds, is a walkthrough model of a watershed that teaches individuals ways they can help improve water quality at their own home. "The pathway teaches people things they can do at their homes and on agriculture, as well as pastureland, to help improve their soil, which will be beneficial to water quality," said Kris Vance, public affairs specialist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service. [Link](#)



### **Man Tells Story of Warship (Fergus Falls Journal 8/22)**

By day, Clayton Johnson is a soil scientist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Albert Lea, joining the staff last year. By night, he is a modeler. Every day for five years, Johnson diligently crafted a model ship. This isn't just any model ship, however. Johnson spent time each day constructing his scratch-built 1:50 scale model Vasa, which will eventually be featured in the Vasa Museum in Stockholm, Sweden. It's a scratch-built 1:50 scale model of the 17th century warship the Vasa. And now that he's finished, it is to be put on display at the Vasa Museum in Stockholm, Sweden, which attracts nearly one million visitors per year. [Link](#)

#### *Rural Development*

### **Arvest Bank Recognized by USDA as Top 3 Producer (Harrison Daily 8/23)**

The Rural Development division of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently recognized Arvest Bank as a "Top 3 Producer in the Guaranteed Rural Housing Program of Obligation Dollars for Arkansas" during the 24-month period from Oct. 1, 2013, to Aug. 30, 2015. Arvest was recognized for both the number of units and the dollar amount of loans closed with the USDA in Arkansas. [Link](#)

### **Prosser City Council to Fill Vacant Seat Tuesday (Tri-City Herald 8/23)**

"...This is the first vacancy since the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development office recommended the city take steps, such as advertising openings in Spanish, to encourage women and minorities to apply. The USDA's civil rights attorneys based the recommendation on a 2015 audit of the city, when its seven-member council was solely comprised of non-Hispanic white men..." [Link](#)

### **Emergency Room Renovation a GO (Des Moines Register 8/23)**

"...USDA Rural Development Under Secretary Lisa Mensah was at the hospital for a tour of the current emergency room facility on Tuesday, Aug. 16. Given the tour of the facility by Todd C. Linden, president and CEO of GRMC, along with Doris J. Rindels, vice-president of operations, Mensah was shown the current emergency room and met with emergency room personnel. According to Bill Menner, Iowa State Director, USDA Rural Development, a rural economic development grant was awarded in 2015 to T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative of Brooklyn with funds from the grant assisting with renovations at the hospital..." [Link](#)

#### *Marketing & Regulatory Programs*

### **American Heart Association Urges Strict Added Sugars Limit for Kids (Politico 8/23)**

"...Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack says USDA officials will be pondering creative ways to use technology while implementing the new GMO labeling law — including, perhaps, adding QR scanners in grocery stores for people who don't have smartphones. "We have to address the issue of, what do you do for folks that don't have smartphone capacity?" Vilsack said on Agri-Pulse's Open Mic podcast. "What do you do for those folks? Do you have scanners in the grocery store, or what other options are there? I think that's why Congress gave us flexibility on what should be required." [Link](#)

#### *Market Watch*

### **Weekly Outlook: Corn and Soybean Storage (Agriculture.com)**

The current USDA projections indicate that U.S. corn and soybean supplies will be record large for the 2016-17 marketing year that begins September 1. The corn supply (production, carryover stocks, and imports) is projected at 16.909 billion bushels, 1.512 billion bushels larger than last year's supply and 1.43 billion bushels larger than the record-large supply two years ago. The soybean supply is projected at 4.346 billion bushels, 201 million larger than the record supply of last year. [Link](#)

#### *Other*

### **Farmers Gather in Cobden to Discuss the Future of Agriculture (Southern Illinoisan 8/23)**

Farmers and others interested in agriculture gathered Sunday evening at the Old Feed Store in Cobden to start a conversation on the future of farming. The event was the third and final installment of "Seeding Change," a series of conversations on the future of farming. Matt Meacham, program coordinator for Illinois Humanities, facilitated the event. [Link](#)

#### *Editorial and Opinion*

### **Vilsack needs to confront ethanol's role in water quality (DMR 8/24)**

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack was right to stress the urgency of addressing water-quality issues in Iowa when visiting his home state last week, but he left out one of the significant contributing causes of the problem — a mandate to grow corn for fuel that has encouraged farmers to plant more and more corn on poor quality lands that require more fertilizers to be productive. The nitrogen-rich farmland runoff from those fields continues to pollute state waterways and causes trouble downstream in the Gulf of Mexico, which is now home to an annual nitrogen-fed algal bloom — an area of depleted oxygen often referred to as the “dead zone” — now expected to grow to the size of Connecticut. [Link](#)

USDA Releases: <http://www.usda.gov>

**Press Release: [USDA to Purchase Surplus Cheese for Food Banks and Families in Need, Continue to Assist Dairy Producers](#)**

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**OPERATIONS CENTER  
OVERNIGHT NEWS HIGHLIGHTS  
November 7, 2016**

**Hot Topics**

**Quake near Oklahoma oil hub prompts infrastructure concerns**

(AP) Cushing, Okla., November 7, 2016 - A magnitude 5.0 earthquake centered near one of the world's key oil hubs brought down building facades and shattered windows, triggering fears the temblor may have damaged key infrastructure and rendered century-old buildings unsafe in the latest Oklahoma town rattled by increasingly strong quakes... a few minor injuries were reported... the damage appeared to be contained to downtown, where piles of debris sat at the base of some commercial buildings... The Oklahoma Department of Transportation reported Sunday night that no highway or bridge damage was found within a 15-mile radius of the earthquake's epicenter... Cushing's oil storage terminal is one of the world's largest. As of Oct. 28, tank farms in the countryside around Cushing held 58.5 million barrels of crude oil... two pipeline companies had reported no trouble as of late Sunday but that the community hadn't heard from all companies... there have been 19 earthquakes in Oklahoma in the past week. When particularly strong quakes hit, the Oklahoma Corporation Commission directs well operators to seize wastewater injections or reduce volume...

[http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/U/US\\_EARTHQUAKE\\_OKLAHOMA?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2016-11-07-02-37-16](http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/U/US_EARTHQUAKE_OKLAHOMA?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2016-11-07-02-37-16)

**Iraq peshmerga attack Islamic State town as army battles in Mosul**

(Reuters) November 7, 2016 - Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga forces attacked an Islamic State-held town northeast of Mosul on Monday, trying to clear a pocket of militants outside the city while Iraqi troops wage a fierce urban war with the jihadists in its eastern neighborhoods. As the campaign against Islamic State's Iraqi stronghold entered its fourth week, fighters across the border launched an offensive in the Syrian half of the jihadist group's self-declared caliphate, targeting its base in the city of Raqqa. The assault on Raqqa, held by Islamic State for nearly three years, will be spearheaded by armed groups backed by the United States and supported by U.S.-led air strikes. Unlike in Iraq where the army is leading the assault, however, it not being coordinated with President Bashar al-Assad or the Syrian army... Islamic State fighters have sought to slow the offensive on their Mosul stronghold with waves of suicide car bomb attacks. Iraqi commanders say there have been 100 on the eastern front and 140 in the south...

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN1320PQ>

**Zika Virus**

## **Zika cases continue rising in Philippines**

(Saigon-gpdaily) November 6, 2016 - The Philippines has recorded six more Zika virus infection cases, bringing the total number of locally-transmitted cases to 23... 10 localities where people with Zika virus were found, including Iloilo, Bacoor, Cavite, Mandaluyong, Muntinlupa, Antipolo, Quezon, Calamba, Las Pinas and Cebu... all patients have recovered...

<http://www.saigon-gpdaily.com.vn/International/2016/11/121492/>

## **Avian Influenza**

### **9 ducks die due to [H5N1] avian flu in Hisar's bird complex as Haryana govt fears breakout of epidemic [India]**

(India Today) November 6, 2016 - The laboratory at Jalandhar has confirmed that the ducks died due to avian flu. We have sent the sample to Bhopal for reconfirmation and it has found positive H5N1 virus... Alarm bells are now ringing loud in the region: the Gurugram wildlife department has shut down the Sultanpur National Park and Bird Sanctuary. Mass culling of birds has been ordered by the administration... Following the lab report, Jakhar directed mass culling of ducks, hens, cocks and other birds within the radius of... [.6 mile] from the tourist complex... the wildlife and animal husbandry officials have culled 929 birds, including 120 ducks, 598 hens/cocks and other birds,"... the situation is of epidemic proportion in Hisar. The departments are doing everything so that the disease doesn't spread among the birds in other parts of the state...

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/haryana-bird-flu-hisar-epidemic/1/803568.html>

### **Bird flu: 3 lakh more birds likely to be culled [India]**

(The Hindu) November 6, 2016 - The government has stepped up efforts to contain the bird flu outbreak reported in Alappuzha and Kottayam districts, with 180,000 ducks culled in the affected areas. Rapid Response Teams deployed by the Animal Husbandry Department wrapped up the culling operations at the Thakazhy, Ramankari, Cheruthana and Chambakulam areas and began sanitizing the locations... It is estimated that at least 300,000 more birds would have to be culled as part of the containment measures... officials from Ernakulam, Idukki, Pathanamthitta, and Kollam were being drafted for the massive operation scheduled to be completed in three days. Many teams have reportedly encountered difficulties in culling and disposal of birds due to the lack of cooperation from local panchayats... Dr. Sasi said he had spoken to the Panchayat Director seeking the support of the local bodies to complete the culling operations...

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/bird-flu-3-lakh-more-birds-likely-to-be-culled/article9311241.ece>

## **Screwworm**

**They have come from all over to help a small deer survive flesh-eating worm**

(Miami Herald) November 6, 2016 - Since news broke last month of a New World screwworm outbreak in the Florida Keys, aggressive efforts have been taken to fix the crisis. Behind the scenes are workers from state and federal agencies who have traveled to the Lower Keys from all over the United States... The U.S. Department of Agriculture set up its command center in a former passenger departure area at Florida Keys Marathon International Airport. There, multiple people quietly work behind laptop computers like Amy Sepero, chief of logistics who works for the state Department of Agriculture. One of 88 workers from multiple agencies on a rotating schedule, she's from North Florida and has been working at the airport since Oct. 26. She will leave by Nov. 15, when someone else steps in to her position... Sepero's job is to coordinate equipment, like the transport of millions of sterile screwworm flies from Panama that have been released in the Lower Keys every Tuesday and Thursday since Oct. 11. There are 25 locations in the Lower Keys and four in Marathon where sterile screwworm flies are released...

<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/florida-keys/article112900863.html>

## Food Recall

### Milk Chocolate Recalled in Canada for Undeclared Wheat

(Food Poisoning Bulletin) November 5, 2016 - Chocolat de Luxe Inc. is recalling their Chocolate with Crunchy Caramel and Almonds in Canada because it may contain wheat... No reactions have been reported to date... The chocolate was sold in Ontario and Quebec and may have been sold nationally...

<https://foodpoisoningbulletin.com/2016/milk-chocolate-recalled-in-canada-for-undeclared-wheat/>

## Listeria

### Second Ice Cream Company recalls products made by Dr. Bob's

(Food Safety News) November 5, 2016 - A second ice cream company is recalling its branded products — made by Dr. Bob's of Upland LLC - because of potential Listeria contamination from the manufacturing plant. McConnell's Fine Ice Creams of Santa Barbara, CA, recalled seven flavors of its ice cream pints from 41 states Friday, reporting that the Food and Drug Administration had found Listeria monocytogenes at the Dr. Bob's plant and in finished ice cream packaged under another brand... No illnesses had been reported in relation to the AC Creamery or McConnell's ice cream...

[http://www.foodsafetynews.com/2016/11/second-ice-cream-company-recalls-products-made-by-dr-bobs/#.WB\\_-IH10OUk](http://www.foodsafetynews.com/2016/11/second-ice-cream-company-recalls-products-made-by-dr-bobs/#.WB_-IH10OUk)

## Hepatitis A

## **Hawaii reports one additional hepatitis A case in outbreak linked to raw scallops**

(Outbreak News Today) November 5, 2016 - The Hawaii Department of Health (HDOH) reported one additional hepatitis A case this week, bringing the outbreak total to 292. The hepatitis A outbreak, primarily focused on the island of Oahu, was earlier linked to raw scallops served at Genki Sushi restaurants on Oahu and Kauai. The product of concern is Sea Port Bay Scallops (Wild Harvest, Raw Frozen) that originated in the Philippines (states "Product of the Philippines" on the box), distributed by Koha Oriental Foods and True World Foods... HDOH ordered this product embargoed (not to be sold, purchased, or consumed) throughout the state, and the temporary closure of all Genki Sushi restaurants on Oahu and Kauai. The outbreak investigation is ongoing. It continues to be challenging because of the long incubation period of the disease (15 to 50 days) and the difficulty patients have in accurately recalling the foods consumed and locations visited during the period when infection could have taken place...

<http://outbreaknewstoday.com/hawaii-reports-one-additional-hepatitis-case-outbreak-linked-raw-scallops-94470/>

## **2 Weld County restaurants possibly served hepatitis A-tainted strawberries**

(Denver Post) November 5, 2016 - Health officials in Weld County are warning that two restaurants possibly served strawberries tainted with hepatitis A. The Weld County Department of Public Health and Environment says evidence indicates frozen strawberries imported from Egypt are the likely source of a multistate outbreak of foodborne hepatitis A. A recall has been issued that affects all frozen strawberries and frozen strawberry products imported into the United States by the International Company for Agricultural Production & Processing since Jan. 1. The products were not offered for sale in retail stores, health officials say, such as grocery stores or food warehouses. The frozen strawberries were only distributed to restaurants... Fat Albert's restaurant in Greeley served the strawberries on top of dessert items as recently as Oct. 24, the department says. The Red Rooster restaurant in Longmont served the strawberries atop breakfast items as recently as Oct. 28...

<http://www.denverpost.com/2016/11/05/2-weld-county-restaurants-possibly-served-hepatitis-a-tainted-strawberries/>

## **Vibrio vulnificus**

### **Florida Vibrio vulnificus tally hits 40, death reported in Putnam County**

(Outbreak News Today) November 6, 2016 - An individual from Putnam County, between the cities of St Augustine and Gainesville in northeastern Florida, is the eighth death reported in the state this year due to Vibrio vulnificus infection... In addition to Putnam County, fatalities have been reported in Broward, Citrus, Lake, Palm Beach, Pinellas, Santa Rosa and Sarasota counties. In addition, four additional cases were reported in the past week, bringing the case tally in 2016 to date to 40...

<http://outbreaknewstoday.com/florida-vibrio-vulnificus-tally-hits-40-death-reported-putnam-county-78031/>

## Dengue/Chikungunya

### Solomon Islands: Dengue outbreak in Honiara tops 1400

(Outbreak News Today) November 6, 2016 - A month after an outbreak of dengue fever was declared in the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific, health officials report in excess of 1700 cases. The capital city of Honiara on Guadalcanal Island has seen more than 1400 dengue cases. Another 200 dengue cases have been reported elsewhere on the island. Dozens have been hospitalized and at least one dengue related fatality has been recorded...

<http://outbreaknewstoday.com/solomon-islands-dengue-outbreak-in-honiara-tops-1400-1400/>

### 130 dengue cases reported from tri-city [India]

(Tribune India) November 6, 2016 – As many as 130 cases of dengue and seven of chikungunya were reported from the tri-city and its surrounding areas... These included 120 dengue cases from Mohali district alone. No fresh cases of chikungunya was reported from the district. Of 120 dengue cases, 73 were reported from Mohali city. As many as 10 cases of dengue and seven of chikungunya were reported from Chandigarh...

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/chandigarh/community/130-dengue-cases-reported-from-tricity/319433.html>

### Dengue on the rise [Pakistan]

(The News) Rawalpindi, November 6, 2016 - The incidence of Dengue Shock Syndrome and Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever has been recording a great increase this year among patients of dengue fever being tested positive and it is alarming that nearly 30 per cent of all patients tested positive for dengue fever... suffered either from DHF or DSS... a total of 2,601 confirmed patients of dengue fever of which as many as 782 suffered DHF, while 51 contracted DSS. The on-going severe outbreak of dengue fever has claimed at least seven lives... this year. The cases of DHF are differentiated from dengue fever on the basis of history of bleeding from gum or skin while the mortality rate of DSS is much higher as compared to dengue fever. The health experts believe that rare complications of dengue fever, DHF and DSS are more fatal forms of the infection. The DHF occurs usually by day 3-5 of the fever...

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/162685-Dengue-on-the-rise>

### Over 200 cases of dengue reported in Damak [Nepal]

(Kathmandu Post) November 6, 2016- Over 200 cases of dengue... have been reported in Damak, Jhapa, in a month's time... More than 30 dengue patients were admitted to local hospitals for treatment on Friday and Saturday alone... the health facility handles eight to 10 dengue cases every day. "The disease is spreading in epidemic proportion," said Baral... The infection has also been found in some health workers... Some patients have reached as far away as Dharan and Kathmandu for treatment... At least three dozen people are found to have been infected with dengue in Bardiya in two weeks... more than a dozen people are suffering from dengue in Rajapur area... 13 cases were reported in Baniyabhar...



<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-11-06/over-200-cases-of-dengue-reported-in-damak.html>

### **Six more test positive for dengue [India]**

(Times of India) Vadodara, November 6, 2016 - A day after 20 tested positive for dengue in the city, six more citizens fell ill due to the viral fever on Saturday... 13 samples were sent to the SSG Hospital on Saturday of which six tested positive... the largest number of cases from the city came from the north zone where three had tested positive for the fever that had raised a scare in the city ... the total number of dengue cases reported this year has risen to 1,252. Twelve persons have died so far due to dengue...

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/vadodara/Six-more-test-positive-for-dengue/articleshow/55268496.cms>

### **Vietnam reports 97 percent increase in dengue in 2016**

(Outbreak News Today) November 5, 2016 - While the dengue fever data coming out of Vietnam is months behind, we can see that dengue is up in the Southeast Asian country year-to-date... Vietnam reported 63,504 cases of dengue including 20 deaths, in 44 out of 63 provinces in the country. This is an increase of 16,500 cases in August alone. The cumulative number of cases increased by 97% with a decrease of three deaths compared to the same period in 2015. Compared to the median in 2011-2015 period, the cumulative number of dengue cases has increased by 99.7%...

<http://outbreaknewstoday.com/vietnam-reports-97-percent-increase-dengue-2016/>

## **Equine Herpes**

### **LA County Equine Herpes update [California]**

(Outbreak News Today) November 5, 2016 - In a follow-up to a recent report concerning Equine Herpesvirus-1 (EHV-1) in horses in Los Angeles County, three additional horses were confirmed positive for the non-neuropathogenic strain of EHV-1 on the Los Angeles County index premises Friday... two of the three affected horses display neurologic signs and the third horse is febrile and all three are in isolation. Two of these newly confirmed equine cases attended the Las Vegas horse show last week. At this time, no additional EHV-1 cases have been confirmed in horses that exhibited at the Las Vegas horse show on October 27 – 29, 2016. Exposed horses on the Los Angeles index premises continue to have their temperatures monitored twice daily and enhanced biosecurity measures remain in place. CDFA Animal Health Branch veterinarians continue to monitor the quarantine and situation on-site...

<http://outbreaknewstoday.com/la-county-equine-herpes-update-40544/>

## **Chronic wasting disease**

### **Bucks are center of CWD outbreak, new study shows [Wisconsin]**

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(Journal Times) November 5, 2016 - As concerns increase about the spread of chronic wasting disease through Wisconsin's deer herd, new research has found that CWD is deadliest for the animals most valued by many hunters - bucks. The findings suggest new and more aggressive measures should be used to slow CWD's growth, including eliminating large numbers of bucks in two southern Wisconsin areas with high infection rates, said Mike Samuel, a UW-Madison researcher who co-authored the study... "We will lose a bunch of these older males anyway, so it makes sense to shoot them and control the disease," Samuel said. Otherwise, CWD prevalence in the outbreak areas will keep growing, eventually leading to a significant decline in deer numbers and detection of more cases across the state, Samuel said... The study conducted jointly by the university and the state Department of Natural Resources found that bucks are much more susceptible to the disease than previously believed...

[http://journaltimes.com/bucks-are-center-of-cwd-outbreak-new-study-shows/article\\_fa1ad9ae-828d-5090-b88c-73f0bf530e6c.html](http://journaltimes.com/bucks-are-center-of-cwd-outbreak-new-study-shows/article_fa1ad9ae-828d-5090-b88c-73f0bf530e6c.html)

## **Feral Hogs**

### **Congaree National Park fights war on pigs [South Carolina]**

(The State) Columbia, SC, November 5, 2016 - During the past year, federal trappers have killed more than 100 wild hogs at Congaree National Park under a program they hope will keep pigs from menacing visitors and destroying rare plants at the nationally acclaimed preserve southeast of Columbia. South Carolina's only national park for years has had trouble with wild pigs that managers say are damaging the 27,000-acre woodland and flood plain... in November 2015, the National Park Service brought in another federal agency to make it a full-time effort. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's wildlife services division put out traps and began slamming the doors on pigs that wandered into the agency's enclosures... Studies show that pigs are causing problems by rooting up the soil, which threatens native plants and makes the ground suitable for the spread of invasive species... As of this past week, federal officials had killed 112 pigs since November 2015... Combined with a major flood in 2015, the agriculture department's work appears to have reduced the number of hogs... the \$65,000 program will continue next year...

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article112857233.html>

## **Invasive Species**

### **Denver planting 72 new trees in downtown area [emerald ash borer]**

(Denver Post) November 6, 2016 - Denver's downtown corridor is now home to dozens of new trees after the city recently began replacing some that were dead or dying. The trees are being replaced as part of the city's Be A Smart Ash program, which launched earlier this year to educate the public about ash trees and the threat of invasive species, especially the emerald ash borer. The goal is to get more trees planted before the borer makes its way to Denver.

<http://www.denverpost.com/2016/11/06/denver-planting-72-trees-downtown/>

### **First detection of emerald ash borer in Oklahoma**

(Tahlequah Daily Press) November 5, 2016 - ... **The first official record of this devastating insect in Oklahoma occurred in Delaware County on Oct. 13...** Now that we have confirmed the presence of EAB in our state, we need to know how to deal with this invasive species. Although the ash-elm-cottonwood species complex represents only 7 percent of Oklahoma's natural forests, 10 percent of the urban forests in Tulsa and Oklahoma City are comprised of ash. Thus, these municipalities and other urban areas stand to lose the most from the EAB invasion... **a quarantine was enacted for all of Delaware County, prohibiting the movement of potentially infested articles such as firewood of any hardwood species, ash nursery stock, and ash lumber containing bark out of the county...** At this time, those living in Delaware County and surrounding counties should remain vigilant and take a wait-and-see approach to the invasion. The U.S. Department of Agriculture and Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry are working to delineate the extent of the infestation in Oklahoma...

[http://www.tahlequahdailypress.com/news/business-farm/first-detection-of-emerald-ash-borer-in-oklahoma/article\\_f3b60185-e6f7-5545-a062-332d24195a72.html](http://www.tahlequahdailypress.com/news/business-farm/first-detection-of-emerald-ash-borer-in-oklahoma/article_f3b60185-e6f7-5545-a062-332d24195a72.html)

## **Agriculture**

### **Fires wrap Chattanooga in smoky haze [Tennessee]**

(Chattanooga Times Free Press) November 7, 2016 - **Smoke continued to hover over parts of the greater Chattanooga area Sunday as a nearly monthlong battle against drought-induced fires in the region continued with no signs of stopping.** WRCB-TV meteorologist Nick Austin said there is a slight chance of rain Wednesday but that it likely would not be enough rain to extinguish lingering fires like those that continued burning on Signal, Mowbray and Lookout mountains this weekend... **A fire in the Flipper Bend area of Signal Mountain, between Falling Water and Soddy-Daisy, grew to 65 acres by Sunday afternoon as state parks and forestry personnel worked to contain it. The Air National Guard made water drops on the fire from a helicopter, and a plane from the U.S. Forest Service was expected to drop fire retardant over a portion of the fire by dusk...** no homes were threatened by the fire, which is expected to burn for several days under the watch of state forestry personnel. **A fire on Lookout Mountain in Dade County, Ga., also contributed to the overall smokiness of the area.** Crews from the Georgia Forestry Commission and West Brow Volunteer Fire Department continued working to contain that blaze into Sunday evening...

<http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/local/story/2016/nov/07/fires-wrap-city-smoky-haze/396432/>

### **Wildfires burn in Western North Carolina after months of drought conditions**

(WITN) November 6, 2016 - ... **the USDA Forest Service says over 2600 acres are on fire in the Nantahala National Forest in Southwestern North Carolina. Fires have been starting and spreading in several different counties since October 23rd, with several starting as recently as November 3rd.** On Sunday, Governor Pat McCrory visited Clay County to speak with local fire officials about their efforts to combat the blaze, which McCrory says is the result of drought conditions... **No homes are threatened at this time...**

<http://www.witn.com/content/news/Wildfires-burn-in-Western-North-Carolina-after-months->

[of-drought-conditions-400197731.html](http://www.lancasterfarming.com/farming/dairy/ny-senators-push-help-for-dairy-farmers-wants-usda-to/article_3a129d77-bfcd-5316-aed8-5d14685f68f0.html)

## **NY Senators Push Help for Dairy Farmers Wants USDA to Refund Dairy MPP Premiums**

(Lancaster Farming) November 5, 2016 - U.S. Sens. Charles E. Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand have taken the lead in trying to secure federal funding for dairy farmers in the 2017 budget. Specifically, they are trying to obtain authorization for the USDA to refund \$73 million that farmers paid into the Dairy Margin Protection Program in 2015. The action is in response to dramatic milk price declines, coupled with severe drought in some regions, which threatens to force struggling dairies out of business. "The Dairy Margin Protection Program has not provided the safety net for farmers that was anticipated when the program was created," Schumer and Gillibrand wrote in a joint letter to Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Thad Cochran, R-Mississippi... The letter was co-signed by a bipartisan group of more than a dozen senators from all parts of the country... New York Farm Bureau applauded the senators' stance... The senators also called on the Appropriations Committee to provide emergency assistance to dairy farmers and to take greater action to support farmers by excluding any provision preventing the USDA from implementing clause 3 of Section 32 of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1935, or from engaging in surplus removal and price support activities under section 5 of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act. They also asked that \$3 million in the National Agricultural Statistics Service budget be designated for a survey of average feed costs by state...

[http://www.lancasterfarming.com/farming/dairy/ny-senators-push-help-for-dairy-farmers-wants-usda-to/article\\_3a129d77-bfcd-5316-aed8-5d14685f68f0.html](http://www.lancasterfarming.com/farming/dairy/ny-senators-push-help-for-dairy-farmers-wants-usda-to/article_3a129d77-bfcd-5316-aed8-5d14685f68f0.html)

## **Farmers, ranchers deal with unrest in ND [North Dakota] protest**

(TSLN) November 5, 2016 - Human roadblocks, police escorts, masked onlookers. North Dakota ranchers don't expect to encounter them. For some farmers and ranchers in the St. Anthony, North Dakota, area, these situations are now a part of their daily lives. Ranchers and farmers in Morton and Sioux Counties have become collateral damage in the midst of a protest movement attempting to stop Energy Transfer's completion of a pipeline... Local Impact... farmers and ranchers have encountered challenges moving cattle, hauling hay and harvesting crops. Protesters park on approaches, preventing access in and out of fields and pastures... Morton County Commission chairman Cody Schulz said the county estimates around 2,000 individuals are camping at the protest sites. "Around 300 to 350 are what we call trouble makers. They use intimidation. The rest are truly peaceful and prayerful. There is sympathy for those individuals but the agitators are painting them with a broad brush."...

<http://www.tsln.com/news/farmers-ranchers-deal-with-unrest-in-nd-protest/>

## **Nearly Half of South Sudan's Population Could Face Famine, UN Says**

(ABC News) November 5, 2016 - Nearly half of South Sudan's population could face famine in the coming months as the ongoing conflict displaces residents and threatens harvests, according to the United Nations World Food Program. South Sudan's deteriorating food situation is compounded by more than two years of fighting, a collapsing economy, soaring food prices and erratic rainfall. The World Food Program projects the African nation is headed for the worst lean season since it gained independence five years ago, with around 5 million

people facing severe food insecurity in the next three months when hunger traditionally worsens. The World Food Program said it urgently needs almost \$230 million to provide food and nutrition assistance over the next six months in South Sudan... The latest upsurge in violence has brought the mass exodus of South Sudanese refugees to neighboring countries since December 2013 to more than 1 million, according to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. Nine-tenths of them are women and children. Estimates indicate that 295,000 South Sudanese refugees have streamed into neighboring Uganda since July...

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/half-south-sudans-population-face-famine/story?id=43327536>

## National News

### Islamic State calls for attacks on Election Day voters

(USA Today) November 5, 2016 - The Islamic State is calling for the "slaughter" of U.S. voters on Election Day and demanding Muslims not participate in the democratic process, according to a U.S.-based terrorist monitoring group. Ritz Katz, director of the SITE Intelligence Group, said Saturday on Twitter that the threats appear in an essay carried by the Islamic State's Al Hayat media center that declares militants "have come to slaughter you and smash your ballot boxes." May Allah make this year's U.S. presidential election a dreadful calamity like no other to have struck America throughout its pathetic history," the seven-page manifesto, entitled "The Murtadd Vote" read. Murtadd is an apostate who turns his back on Islam. The essay, which uses lengthy religious arguments in an effort to justify such attacks, also declares there is no difference between the Republican and Democratic parties in their "policies against Islam and Muslims"... the Islamic State, also known as ISIS or ISIL, was inciting attacks on Election Day "in an attempt to disrupt the election process and gain media attention."... Federal authorities are reviewing information about al-Qaeda's potential interest in conducting attacks in the U.S. on the eve of Tuesday's elections...

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2016/11/05/islamic-state-calls-attacks-election-day-voters/93352238/>

### 3 men connected with anti-capitalist protest arrested in incidents near White House, FBI, Trump hotel

(WTOP) Washington, November 6, 2016- ...three men connected with the Million Mask March were arrested in Washington, D.C., on Saturday in separate incidents. On Saturday morning, D.C. Metro Police arrested two men for vandalizing several buildings along Pennsylvania Avenue, including the FBI Building and the Trump Hotel, as well as a police vehicle. Hours later, U.S. Secret Service arrested a third protester carrying a firearm near the White House, prompting a brief lockdown. The Million Mask March has become an annual anti-capitalist demonstration hosted in cities around the world, featuring protesters wearing Guy Fawkes masks... D.C. police identified the men as 27-year-old Eric Roberts, of Florida, and 35-year-old Danny Hamilton, of Louisiana... In a separate incident, a uniformed U.S. Secret Service arrested a man carrying a firearm near the White House... The man was handed over to D.C. police and charged with carrying a firearm without a license and committing a crime while wearing a mask, among other charges... The president was golfing at Joint Base Andrews at the time of the incident.

<http://wtop.com/dc/2016/11/3-men-connected-with-anti-capitalist-protest-arrested-in-incidents-near-white-house-fbi-trump-hotel/>

### **Trial of former officer resumes Monday in South Carolina**

(AP) Charleston, S.C., November 7, 2016 - **The murder trial resumes Monday for a former South Carolina police officer who fatally shot a black man in the back during a traffic stop.** Michael Slager, who's white, is accused of shooting Walter Scott in North Charleston in April 2015. Cellphone video of the shooting has been seen millions of times on the internet. Jurors also have seen the video and heard from 11 witnesses called by the state, including the bystander who took the video. **Prosecutors will resume their case Monday. Slager faces 30 years to life in prison if convicted of murder.** The jury includes 11 whites and one black. Attorneys for Scott's family say they're not concerned about the jury's racial makeup and believe any jury seeing the video would render a just verdict.

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/015e06e8d28e4577863ec42fc75ea7c7/trial-former-officer-resumes-monday-south-carolina>

### **Janet Reno, first U.S. woman attorney general, dies aged 78**

(Reuters) November 7, 2016 - **Janet Reno, the first woman U.S. attorney general who served eight tumultuous years with President Bill Clinton, has died aged 78. Reno's goddaughter, Gabrielle D'Alemberte, said she succumbed to complications of Parkinson's disease early on Monday in Miami.** The blunt-spoken lawyer worked as the top U.S. law enforcement official under Clinton from 1993 to 2001, becoming the longest-serving attorney general of the 20th century. Just weeks into the job, she authorized the deadly 1993 raid on the Branch Davidian cult compound at Waco, Texas. Reno later authorized federal agents to seize six-year-old Cuban shipwreck survivor Elian Gonzalez from relatives in Miami in 2000, and headed the Justice Department during the government's huge antitrust case against Microsoft... Reno weathered White House complaints that she was not a team player and that she sought too many special prosecutors to investigate cases, including the Whitewater affair involving the finances of the president and first lady Hillary Clinton. She always said she made decisions based on evidence and the law...

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-politics-janetreno-idUSKBN13210K>

### **Clinton gets boost from FBI as tight White House race hits final day**

(Reuters) November 7, 2016 - **Democrat Hillary Clinton heads into the final day of a tight White House race against Republican Donald Trump on Monday with new momentum after the FBI's announcement that no criminal charges were forthcoming in the probe of her email practices.** Both Clinton and Trump will spend the day racing across a handful of key battleground states that could swing Tuesday's election, which polls show is extremely close but tilting toward Clinton. **FBI Director James Comey sent shockwaves through the race by telling Congress on Sunday that investigators had worked "around the clock" to complete a review of newly discovered emails and found no reason to change their July finding that Clinton was not guilty of criminal wrongdoing in her use of a private email server while secretary of state.** Whether the announcement came in time to change minds or undo any damage from days of Republican attacks on Clinton as corrupt was uncertain. Tens of millions

of Americans had cast early votes in the 10 days since Comey first told Congress of the newly discovered emails...

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-election-idUSKBN1320IQ>

### **Philadelphia transit strike to end as SEPTA, union reach deal: reports**

(Reuters) November 7, 2016 - A six-day-old bus and rail strike in Philadelphia is set to end with a deal reached by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) and union workers, local media reported on Monday. The walkout by 4,700 Transport Workers Union members has idled buses, trolleys and trains that provide some 930,000 rides a day in the fifth most populous city in the United States. The union, Local 234, declared a strike on Monday night after contract talks with SEPTA stalemated over such issues as healthcare and pension benefits. CBS News reported the tentative deal had been reached after concerns about voters getting to polls on Election Day Tuesday.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-pennsylvania-transit-idUSKBN13218H>

## **International News**

### **UN peacekeeper, two civilians killed in attack on military convoy in Mali**

(France 24) November 7, 2016 - A peacekeeper from Togo and two Malian civilians were killed Sunday in an attack on a military convoy in Mali, rounding off a bloody week for foreign forces stationed there, a UN statement said. More than 11,000 UN police and military are currently serving in Mali, attempting to guarantee security in lawless swathes of the vast Sahel nation. Seven other peacekeepers, also from Togo, were wounded in the attack in the central Mopti region... After a mine or improvised explosive device was detonated, attackers opened fire on the convoy... The attack came the day after a soldier serving with France's "Barkhane" counter-terror force was killed in a similar incident...

<http://www.france24.com/en/20161107-mali-un-peacekeeper-two-civilians-killed-attack-military-convoy>

### **Shots Fired At Istanbul's Ataturk Airport, 2 Men Detained: Officials**

(NDTV) Istanbul, November 7, 2016 - Turkish authorities briefly barred cars from entering and leaving Istanbul's main Ataturk Airport on Sunday after police fired shots when a motorcycle refused an order to stop... One of two men aboard the motorcycle was wounded and detained and the second was apprehended by police after a pursuit... No police or civilians were reported hurt... The latest incident did not affect flights at Ataturk, Europe's third-busiest airport... Ataturk is the hub of state-run carrier Turkish Airlines. It was not immediately clear why the police ordered the men to stop...

<http://www.ndtv.com/world-news/shots-fired-at-istanbuls-ataturk-airport-2-men-detained-officials-1622107>

### **Suicide bombers in ambulances kill 21 people in Iraq: officials**

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(Reuters) November 6, 2016 - Suicide bombers driving ambulances packed with explosives detonated their vehicles at a checkpoint and a car park for Shi'ite pilgrims in two Iraqi cities on Sunday, killing at least 21 people and wounding dozens... The twin attacks took place in Tikrit and Samarra, as Iraqi troops and security forces battled to retake the northern city of Mosul from Islamic State militants... They appeared to be part of a series of diversionary attacks by the ultra-hardline Sunni Islamists, who have struck the Kurdish-controlled city of Kirkuk, the capital Baghdad and a western desert town during the three-week Mosul campaign. Islamic State's Amaq news agency said the attacks were carried out by the militant group. In Tikrit, a bomber detonated his explosives-laden ambulance at the southern entrance to the city during the morning rush hour, killing 13 people, police and hospital sources said. Another attacker detonated a vehicle in a car park for pilgrims visiting one of Shi'ite Islam's holiest shrines, al-Askari mosque in Samarra, south of Tikrit...

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-blasts-idUSKBN13107V>

### **China moves to bar Hong Kong activists as fears grow over intervention**

(Reuters) November 7, 2016 - China's parliament passed a ruling on Monday that effectively bars two elected Hong Kong pro-independence politicians from taking office, Beijing's most direct intervention in the territory's legal and political system since the 1997 handover. The rare move by Beijing came after Yau Wai-ching, 25, and Baggio Leung, 30, pledged allegiance to the "Hong Kong nation" and displayed a banner declaring "Hong Kong is not China" during a swearing-in ceremony for the city's Legislative Council in October. The National People's Congress in Beijing ruled that lawmakers must swear allegiance to Hong Kong as part of China and that candidates would be disqualified if they changed the wording of their oath of office or if they failed to take it in a sincere and solemn manner. The prospect of the ruling sparked protests in the former British colony on Sunday and it is now on high alert for any repeat of the weekend clashes. Members of the city's legal profession are planning a rare silent march on Tuesday night amid pressure for them to take even stronger action...

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-hongkong-china-politics-idUSKBN13204P>

### **German ministry wants migrants returned to Africa: report**

(Reuters) November 6, 2016 - The German Interior Ministry wants to stop migrants ever reaching Europe's Mediterranean coast by picking them up at sea and returning them to Africa... In what would be a huge shift for a country with one of the most generous asylum policies, the ministry says the European Union should adopt an Australian-style system under which migrants intercepted at sea are sent for processing at camps in third countries. "The elimination of the prospect of reaching the European coast could convince migrants to avoid embarking on the life-threatening and costly journey in the first place," the paper quoted a ministry spokeswoman as saying. "The goal must be to remove the basis for people-smuggling organizations and to save migrants from the life-threatening journey." The ministry's proposal calls for migrants picked up in the Mediterranean - most of whom set off from conflict-torn Libya - to be sent to Tunisia, Egypt or other North African states to apply for asylum from there. If their asylum applications are accepted, the migrants could then be transported safely to Europe. The ministry is headed by Thomas de Maiziere, a member of Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservative Christian Democrats. Merkel has been under fire for her open-door refugee policy, with her party losing votes to the anti-immigration Alternative



for Germany (AfD) party in recent regional elections. The ministry said there were no concrete plans or discussions at EU-level about the proposal, but opposition politicians condemned the plan...

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-germany-idUSKBN131042>

### **Vietnam, Ireland agree to cooperation on education, energy**

(AP) Hanoi, Vietnam, November 7, 2016 - Vietnam and Ireland agreed Monday to increase their cooperation in education, renewable energy, information technology and health care, during a visit to the Southeast Asian country by Irish President Michael Higgins. Higgins said he and Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang discussed how the two countries can serve as a bridge for developing relations with the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. "We discussed the changes in the economic circumstances of both of our countries in recent times and how Ireland and Vietnam can cooperate on being both bridges on the one hand to the European Union and on the other, a bridge to the 600 million people of the ASEAN community," [Higgins said]... "We are pleased to see very positive development in Vietnam-Ireland relations, and the two countries still have much potential to promote cooperation in areas of mutual interests such as trade, investment, education, green technology, agriculture, health care and sustainable development," Quang said...

[http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/A/AS\\_VIETNAM\\_IRELAND?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2016-11-07-03-05-42](http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/A/AS_VIETNAM_IRELAND?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2016-11-07-03-05-42)

### **India, Britain talk trade and investment during May's visit**

(AP) New Delhi, November 7, 2016 - British Prime Minister Theresa May and her Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi, held wide-ranging talks Monday aimed at deepening ties between their countries and boosting trade and investment as the U.K. gets set to leave the European Union. May arrived in New Delhi late Sunday on her first trip outside of Europe since she became prime minister in July... Modi hopes to attract British companies to invest in India and urge Britain to ease visa restrictions on Indian business leaders traveling to the U.K. Meanwhile, May would like Indian companies to invest in Britain. In recent years, India has emerged as the third-biggest investor in Britain, creating thousands of new jobs as the U.K. prepares for its EU exit, or Brexit... May said she would be "promoting the best of Britain, sending out the message that we are open for business, and making the most of the opportunities offered by Brexit as the world's foremost champion of free trade." Modi said it was "vital that India and the United Kingdom, two countries linked by history, work together to define the knowledge economy of the 21st century."...

[http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/A/AS\\_INDIA\\_BRITAIN?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2016-11-07-02-09-15](http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/A/AS_INDIA_BRITAIN?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2016-11-07-02-09-15)

### **Australia, Indonesia continue push for trade deal, after [Indonesian] President skips visit**

(Reuters) November 6, 2016 - Trade ministers from Australia and Indonesia continued negotiations on Sunday to seal a trade deal between the two neighbors, despite Indonesian President Joko Widodo postponing a trip to Australia to deal with local unrest. Widodo postponed his Nov. 6 to 8 visit on Saturday after a mass protest in Jakarta on Friday that briefly turned violent as Muslim extremists pressed for the resignation of the capital's

governor, a Christian they say insulted the Koran..

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-indonesia-australia-idUSKBN13106V>

### **Magnitude 6.4 quake shakes central Chile; no damage, injuries reported**

(Reuters) November 4, 2016 - A 6.4-magnitude quake rattled central Chile on Friday, shaking buildings in the capital, but authorities said there were no immediate injuries or damage to infrastructure or mines reported. Chile's emergency office Onemi called it a "major" seismic event, and said it was evaluating whether any damage had taken place. The U.S. Geological Survey said the epicenter of the quake was about 45 miles (72 km) northeast of Talca and around 119 miles south of Santiago, at a depth of about 56 miles. The quake did not meet the requirements to generate a tsunami off the coast, the Chilean navy said.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-chile-quake-idUSKBN12Z26F>

## **National Weather**



### ***Quiet Weather Expected Today across the Nation***

- Scattered thunderstorms are possible from the Central Plains/Mid-Mississippi Valley southward to Texas and the Lower Mississippi Valley.
- Rain will develop further northern from the Midwest to the western Great lakes.
- Showers and thunderstorms will dot the skies across the southern tip of Florida.
- Elsewhere, rain will develop ahead of an approaching storm system across western Washington State.

## **Tropical Weather**

### **Western Pacific:**

**Typhoon (TY) 26w (Meari):** As of 2:00 AM EST - Located approximately 646 miles southeast of Yokosuka, Japan, has tracked north-northeastward at 29 mph over the past six hours.

## Local Weather

- **Monday:** Patchy frost before 10am. Otherwise, sunny, with a high near 62. North wind around 6 mph.
- **Monday Night:** Clear, with a low around 40. Light and variable wind.
- **Tuesday:** Sunny, with a high near 67. Southwest wind 3 to 6 mph.
- **Tuesday Night:** A chance of showers after 2am. Partly cloudy, with a low around 51. Southwest wind 3 to 6 mph. Chance of precipitation is 30%.
- **Wednesday:** Showers likely, mainly between 8am and 2pm. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 61. Chance of precipitation is 60%.
- **Wednesday Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 43.
- **Thursday:** Sunny, with a high near 59.
- **Thursday Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 43.
- **Veterans Day:** Sunny, with a high near 62.
- **Friday Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 39.
- **Saturday:** Mostly sunny, with a high near 51.
- **Saturday Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 35.
- **Sunday:** Sunny, with a high near 56.