



Friday Notes is designed to enhance communication among various agricultural sectors, educators, students, and the public who are interested in a variety of plant, animal, food, and environmental issues. *Friday Notes* advocates the pursuit of credible, unbiased, science-based information. Material contained in linked articles is from the original authors and does not necessarily reflect the views of CAST.

In This Issue..... Click to Read

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Comin' Up for Air



Scuba Diving Magazine features the [winners of its underwater photography contest](#).

Send 'Em In

CAST welcomes recommendations for future publications and projects. [Submit an idea here](#).



FFA Student Officers

A record number of members, advisors, supporters, and guests gathered from across the nation at the 2017

[National FFA Convention](#). Each year, six highly motivated students are elected to represent the organization as national officers.

Accolades for UC-Davis

This report honors UC-Davis for its [excellence in plant and animal science](#).

November 10, 2017

A Science Film with Impact

The evolution of a biotech documentary

The documentary *Food Evolution* has been on the ag/science radar screen for months, and it is now gaining a buzz in wider fields. [One reviewer said](#), "It has

achieved its goal of creating change and bridging the gap between consumers and scientists," and the film's writer/producer Tracy Sheehan said it is "more than we ever could have hoped for." Various responses have been positive, including this [review from the L.A. Times](#): "It's the unusual issue film that deals in counterintuitive reason rather than barely controlled hysteria."



Of course, the film has its critics, but even in [this skeptical review](#), the writer admits the science is sound and thoughtful communication might be possible. He pointed out that a certain scene makes him hopeful--it comes when UC-Davis professor Alison Van Eenennaam stops on the street to speak with anti-GMO protesters, and they "engage in a civil, good faith conversation." They end agreeing that "maybe it's not an and/or issue." And just maybe *Food Evolution* is helping an emotional debate evolve into one of reason and science.

News and Views

Biotech Regulations: The USDA has withdrawn a plan to overhaul [how it regulates biotechnology products](#) such as genetically engineered crops. Note: watch for CAST's [forthcoming issue paper](#) *Regulatory Barriers to the Development of Innovative Agricultural Biotechnology by Small Businesses and Universities*.

Immigrants and Ag: There is a growing effort for a federal reform that [would allow undocumented immigrants](#) to stay in the U.S. to work in the agriculture industry.



Crop Report Surprises: The latest [USDA crop report](#) projects record corn yields and less-than-expected hurricane damage to the Florida orange crop.

Ag Students Online

College students from across the nation are competing to win more than \$16,000 in scholarships as they participate in the Animal Agriculture Alliance's eighth annual [College Aggies Online program](#).

It Takes All Kinds

[Temple Grandin](#) visited the Texas A&M Department of Animal Science and spoke about why it "Takes All Kinds of Minds."

Ag Research at Universities

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln joins ten other prominent research institutions in urging [increased federal support of food and agricultural science](#).



CAST Social Media

Click here for [links to CAST sites](#):
Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, videos, and blogs.

Don't Be Such a Scientist! Kylie gives an [overview of a lively panel discussion](#) at CAST's 2017 Annual Meeting in Raleigh, North Carolina. Participants discussed how to apply the science of communication to the communication of science.

Mail-order CRISPR Kits: Experts debate what amateur scientists could accomplish with the powerful DNA editing tool--and [whether its ready availability is cause for concern](#).

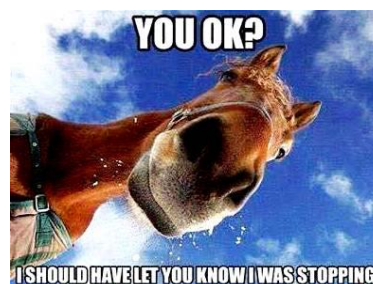
News from the Far Side of the Barn

Could You Bring a Copy of *National Velvet Tomorrow?*

(video): Before this kid goes to school, she drops by the stable to [read to her horse](#).

We're Not Yet Bullish on This Brew (video): A brewery turned the delicacy of [Rocky Mountain oysters](#) into a craft beer.

Untangling the Web (video): A [study of spider genes](#) puts a new spin on arachnids' potent venoms, stunning silks, and surprising history.



BCCA Nominations

Forms due by February 5, 2018

Nominations are open for the 2018 Borlaug CAST Communication Award, an honor that recognizes professionals actively working in the agricultural, environmental, or food sectors who are promoting agricultural science in the public policy arena. This award has become an influential component in the efforts to keep agricultural issues and programs in the public eye and in front of national and world policymakers. [Click here for information](#).

Jayson Lusk's BCCA Presentation

Jayson Lusk--the 2017 BCCA recipient--spoke about "The Future of Food" during his award ceremony. [Click here for a slide-show/audio presentation of the event](#).



Ag Research Is Critical

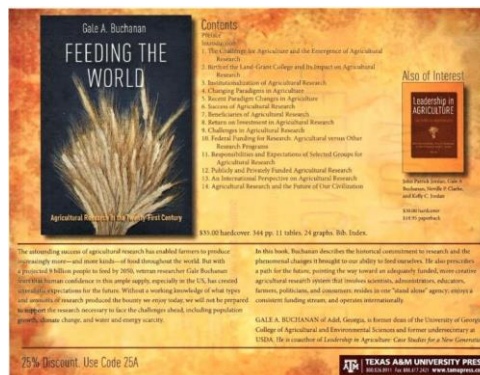
Buchanan's book explains why

According to Gale Buchanan, the situation is clear: agriculture's success made possible the emergence of civilization, and its continued success relies on sustained agricultural research. In his book--*Feeding the World*--he demonstrates "the important role agricultural research has played and continues to play in our lives," and he explains that "agricultural research touches every single person on this planet."

Citing historical insights, current trends, and future needs, Buchanan points the way toward an adequately funded, more creative agricultural research system—one that involves scientists, administrators, educators, farmers, politicians, and consumers.

Gale A. Buchanan is the former dean of the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and former undersecretary at the USDA. He has also been a long-term supporter of CAST.

[Click here for information](#) from the Texas A&M University Press.



[Click here to access](#) the book flyer.

Friday Notes News Categories

Photos courtesy of the Agricultural Research Service (top masthead); TopLatest News (globe at right). P. 1 seals pic from staticdigg.com, field workers pic from nyt.com, and horse pic from pinterest.com. Animal Sec. sheep pic from telegraph.co.uk. Food Sec. shark pic from genascihk.wordpress. Plant Sec. biotech meme from pinterest.com. Inter. Sec. Thor pic from uproxx.com. Gen. Sec. fire pic from gettyimages.com. Unless otherwise noted, photos courtesy of the USDA Agricultural Research Service.



Animal Agriculture and Environmental News

Rescue Dog Becomes Wildlife K9 Officer (video): The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife police just finished training their [first wildlife detection dog](#).

International Trade and Agriculture (opinion): This rancher explains why [international trade is incredibly important](#) to thousands of American farm and ranch families--and consumers.

Pork Producers Back Research: The National Pork Producers Council urged Congress to renew its commitment to [funding agricultural research](#).

Camera Conundrum: Beef carcasses may have been [overgraded by the USDA's new camera-grading technology](#) in recent months--delivering higher premiums to producers but leaving packers with short supply.

Fighting Pig Disease: A new pair of research grants will help a Kansas State University researcher and his laboratory work on a method of preventing one of the most devastating and [costly diseases found in swine](#).

Holy Cow: There is [a new kind of farm going up in South Dakota where cattle aren't raised for meat or milk](#)--this farm produces something entirely different that helps treat human diseases.

Keeping It Safe: According to this study, *Salmonella* on the skin--rather than in infected muscle tissue--may be a significant [contributor to ground-turkey contamination](#).



A young sheepdog lent new meaning to the phrase "[bringing the sheep home](#)" after he led a flock straight into a farmer's home.



Food Science and Safety News

Enough Food? Jayson Lusk provides [seven insights about the question](#) "Don't we produce enough food already?"

Potential Potato Products (video): Students are in the trenches with Pennsylvania's largest potato [producer to help create new and convenient potato products](#).

Nonbrowning Apple Debut: The [Arctic apple will hit the grocery shelves](#) this month--one of the few biotech items to be sold as a whole product, not an ingredient.

Mainstream, but Misunderstood: While [organic production continues to rise](#), so does food-label confusion. [This recent study shows that consumers see](#) organic and non-GMO labels as interchangeable.

Science Is Aiding Tomato Production: Officials report a steady decline in the value of Florida's tomato production in recent years, but [scientists are working on ways](#) to battle disease, pests, and declining yields.

America's 38 Essential Restaurants (opinion): This annual road map is the result of [32 weeks of travel and more than 500 meals](#) in 36 cities.



Shark fin soup is hotly debated in scientific and political communities--it is illegal in twelve states, [and Congress is considering a federal ban on shark fin trade](#).



Plant Agriculture and Environmental News

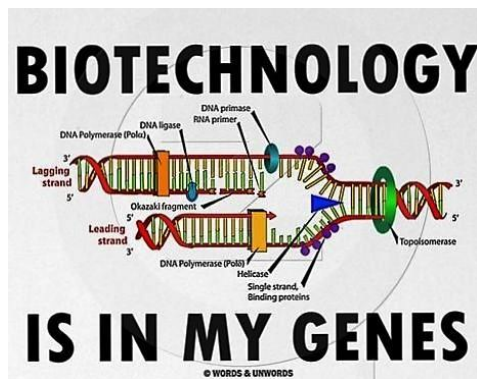
Robots, Soil, and Phenotyping: This ag-tech start-up has developed an ultracompact, autonomous, [easy-to-use robot with multiple sensors](#) and data analytics software for plant phenotyping.

Soil Thermal Properties (research paper): Heat transport is an important factor that can influence the soil environment, and this study tries to determine [whether or not perennial biofuel and cover crops could alter soil thermal properties](#).

Aflatoxin Breakthrough: By suppressing the aflatoxin-producing fungus in groundnuts, scientists have potentially improved food safety and reduced losses caused by the [contamination from the poisonous carcinogen--aflatoxin](#).

Dicamba Follow-up: This report says [dicamba damage](#) extended over 3.5 million acres, and this article suggests that the [use of generic or off-label products](#) could have contributed to the problem.

The "Soil My Undies" Challenge: A Scottish farmer has been burying his pants in various fields--the theory behind the test is that the cotton will be devoured by the [microbes and bacteria in the soil](#).



Watch for CAST's [forthcoming issue paper](#) *Genome Editing in Agriculture--Methods, Applications, and Governance*.



International News

Magical View from the Cockpit (video): Sit with this New Zealand pilot and [fly through the mountains--and buckle up for a landing.](#)

Smoke Gets in Your Eyes (video): [Pollution levels in New Delhi](#), India, reached more than ten times the safe limit recently--schools closed and people stayed home.

Waste to Energy: Australian farmers can turn trash into "gold," as this system uses [agricultural waste and by-products to produce energy.](#)

International Relations--Scientifically: Eight Texas A&M faculty members traveled to Kenya and Ethiopia to [develop relationships with scientists](#) at the International Livestock Research Institute.

Relief for Beef Down Under: Ranchers are relieved after [China lifted an import ban](#) on Australian beef--due to a labeling problem--that lasted three months.



A complicated [debate about wild and farmed salmon](#) is heating up in Norway.



General Interest News

A Short History of Tailgating (photo essay): Although tailgating is not only for football games, it certainly [reaches a frenzy this time of year.](#)

After the Fires: Tragic California wildfires took lives and property, but communities are now recovering. Traditional wine country spots are [hoping tourists start returning.](#)

Global Killer: A British medical journal says there is a [global killer responsible for more yearly deaths](#) than AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis combined--pollution.



Fire, Wine Country, and Tourism--see article link at left.

Tractor Trade with Cuba: John Deere has signed an [agreement to supply farm tractors to Cuba](#), the first direct sale of U.S. farm machinery to that island nation in more than half a century.

Dredging for Environmental Solutions: A dozen Cornell [graduate students will offer environmental solutions](#) after visiting Baltimore Harbor and Maryland's Patapsco River.

Farm Equipment--Small and Hot: Bigger may be better at times, but in the current used farm equipment market, there is another truth at work: [smaller is hotter.](#)

CAST Information

Check out CAST's page at the [YouTube site](#) to view highly regarded ag-science videos about probiotics, food safety, and water issues--or the latest video dealing with proposed mandatory labeling of GMO food items.



If you have a good idea for a CAST publication, contact us by [clicking HERE for the "Proposal Format](#) and Background Information Form."

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Contact Colleen Hamilton at 515-292-2125, ext. 224 or chamilton@cast-science.org, or [CLICK HERE](#) for CAST membership information.

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- * American Dairy Science Association
- * American Farm Bureau Federation
- * American Meat Science Association
- * American Meteorological Society, Committee on Agricultural and Forest Meteorology
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- * Entomological Society of America
- * Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy
- * Land O'Lakes
- * Monsanto

- * National Corn Growers Association/Iowa Corn Promotion Board
- * National Milk Producers Federation
- * National Pork Board
- * North Carolina Biotechnology Center
- * North Central Weed Science Society
- * Northeastern Weed Science Society
- * Poultry Science Association
- * Society for In Vitro Biology
- * Soil Science Society of America
- * Syngenta Crop Protection
- * The Fertilizer Institute
- * Tyson Foods
- * United Soybean Board
- * Weed Science Society of America
- * Western Society of Weed Science

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Note: WinField Solutions (Land O'Lakes) provides sponsorship for the distribution of *Friday Notes* to the National Association of Agricultural Educators.

Dan Gogerty (Managing Communications Editor)
Kylie Peterson (Communications and Social Media Specialist)
The Council for Agricultural Science and Technology
4420 West Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50014-3447
Phone: 515-292-2125, ext. 222 (Dan) and 230 (Kylie)
E-mail: dgogerty@cast-science.org and kpeterson@cast-science.org



**** With assistance from Carol Gostele (Managing Scientific Editor)**