



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.

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Adesina Honored



African Development Bank President Akinwumi Adesina received the [African of the Year Award](#) from the All Africa Business Leaders. Dr. Adesina was the [2017 World Food Prize laureate](#) and the [2010 Borlaug CAST Communication Award winner](#).

Veterinary Awards

The Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges announced five awards for professional excellence, achievement, and [service in academic veterinary medicine](#)--including doctors from Texas A&M, Purdue, UC-Davis, and Ohio State.

Communication Award

Kevin Folta received the [2019 Veritas Award](#) at the American Agri-Women National Convention. Dr. Folta--University of Florida--was the [2016 Borlaug CAST Communication Award winner](#).

Ag Curriculum

December 13, 2019

USMCA Passes Crucial Hurdle



Stakeholders are responding favorably to the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), and even though political maneuvers might slow down the official signing, most sides are optimistic.

A [USDA press release](#) calls it a big win for the economy, while [both Democrats and Republicans](#) claim the agreement as a political victory.

Canada and Mexico are the top two export markets for U.S. food and agricultural products, and the USMCA intends to provide more stability in the relationships. The [overall agreement has many aspects](#), and a few of the [most notable ag-related items](#) include increased access to Canada's dairy markets for U.S. producers, and more detailed rules for agricultural biotechnology and labeling requirements. This Farm Bureau statement is an example of the sentiment felt by many agriculture groups as they [hope for swift approval of the agreement](#).

News and Views

WASDE: The USDA released its latest [World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates](#) with information about crop and livestock production.

Climate, Agriculture, and Youth: David Nabarro--2019 World Food Prize laureate--looks at the [changing climate and food systems](#), while Greg Henderson of *Drovers* considers the [significance for agriculture](#) in regards to Greta Thunberg's new title as "Time's Person of the Year."

Ag Voices: Hosted by the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance, agricultural leaders, prominent groups, and farmers gathered recently to [talk about agriculture and climate change](#).

Urban Ag Report: Cornell University's Small Farm Program and the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service researched factors affecting the [commercial viability of urban agriculture](#). Access the [full report here](#).

A new curriculum designed at Iowa State University helps educators [explain how agriculture is involved](#) in every day life.

Helping Wildlife

A University of Nevada-Reno associate professor was one of only 10 in the country to receive the [Wildlife Society Fellows Award](#).

Send in Ideas

CAST [welcomes suggestions](#) for future publications and projects.

CAST Social Media



News from the Far Side of the Barn

Honey Badger "Don't Share" (video):

Jackals help a honey badger escape a python's death grip--but the badger isn't about to share the [snake dinner that results from the fray](#).



Some say honey badgers don't "give a hoot," and the link at left shows that they definitely don't play well with others.

On the Harvest Crazy Train



(video): The [Peterson Brothers use Ozzy's music](#) and their own insights about farming to show the ups and downs of harvest time. Their popular parody videos [entertain and inform viewers](#) about the importance of agriculture.

University Programs Promote Science, Agriculture, and Communication



Penn State University recently joined many other prestigious science/ag-based schools in the [CAST Education Program](#). Faculty, staff, and students have access to *Friday Notes*, current publications, and reference materials.

The member universities receive recognition and the option to participate on the CAST Board of Representatives. The program also provides a way for them to promote research, programs, and student activities through *Friday Notes* and social media.

Agricultural production, food safety, medical advances, and many other benefits to society are advanced at these prestigious schools. Part of CAST's mission is to communicate the exciting work being done at publicly funded universities.



Supporting the Scholarship Fund



CAST is grateful for the contributions that came in during Giving Tuesday, and the organization is close to meeting its goal for the scholarship fund. [Donations are always welcome](#). It is a great way to invest in the future of science communication.

Friday Notes News Categories

Photos courtesy of the Agricultural Research Service (top masthead); TopLatest News (globe at right). P. 1 Adesina photo from afcb.org, USMCA graphic from china-briefing.com, and honey badger pic from africanageographic.com. Animal Sec. cow pic from drovers.com. Food Sec. apple pic from rtnews.com and fuel up graphic from fueluptoplay60.com. Plant Sec. reef pic from sanctuaries.noaa.gov and chocolate pic from independent.co.uk. Inter. Sec. monkey pic from reddit.com and insect photo from youtube.com. Inter. Sec. dog pic from townnews.com. Unless otherwise noted, photos courtesy of the USDA Agricultural Research Service or CAST.



Animal Agriculture and Environmental News

Pipping, Peeping, and More (video): These three videos offer "[360-degree virtual tours](#)" of chicken hatcheries.

Legal Challenge to Pork Law: The National Pork Producers Council and the American Farm Bureau Federation filed a [legal challenge to California's Proposition 12](#), a law that imposes animal housing standards outside the state's borders.

Poultry and Data Management: The [use of data is changing management approaches](#), decision making, and operational methods. This article looks at how the poultry industry might take advantage of feed data.

FARM Workforce Development: The dairy industry's on-farm quality assurance program [released a proposed evaluation tool](#) for input from industry stakeholders.



Cows don't stay young forever, and Kansas State University experts say producers need to [consider the decreasing value](#) of their livestock over time.

Broiler-chicken Research: University researchers discovered that lipoprotein lipase, an enzyme crucial for fat metabolism, may be contributing to [wooden breast syndrome in broiler chickens](#).



Beehive Partnership Brings National Recognition: A Texas FFA chapter's [work with beehives led to national TV recognition](#)--and educational scholarships.

Bee Health--A CAST Commentary: [Why Does Bee Health Matter? The Science Surrounding Honey Bee Health Concerns and What We Can Do About It?](#)

Food Science and Safety News

A Meaty Issue: In an effort to [clarify how meat products are labeled](#), a senator introduced the Real MEAT Act. This corresponds with the "[Real Marketing Edible Artificials Truthfully \(MEAT\) Act](#)" in the House of Representatives proposed in October.

Strawberry Longevity: USDA/ARS scientists released a [new strawberry cultivar](#)--one developed with an improved shelf life.

On the Menu: Research indicates that consumers are confident when it comes to cooking ground beef but less so about steaks and roasts. Check here for [various cooking methods and recipes](#).

From Buttered Popcorn to Thai Curry: This article goes global to look at "50 of the [most delicious foods ever](#) created."

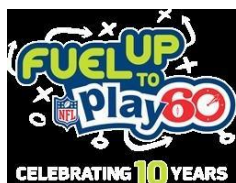


This article [focuses on the Cosmic Crisp apple](#)--including a taste test involving several other popular varieties.

Big on Canola Oil: A Kansas State University expert explains the [health benefits of canola oil](#).

Football and Dairy: A program created 10 years ago by the [Dairy Checkoff and the NFL](#)--*Fuel Up to Play 60*--is designed to improve health and wellness in schools.

Say Cheese: Penn State extension services offer tools to small-scale cheesemakers to help them [develop a food safety system](#).



Plant Agriculture and Environmental News

Better Seed, Better Life (video): This award-winning video from an Iowa State student looks at the [importance of the university's seed vault](#).

No-till Experts: The University of Kentucky celebrated its 50th anniversary of ongoing [research about no-till soil management](#).

Cover Crops and Fertilizer: These Ohio State University specialists look at the benefits of utilizing cover crops and the [pros and cons of fertilizing them](#).

Working on Water Quality: A possible [solution for one type of nitrate pollution](#) in water is taking form at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



Willy Wonka Would Be

Pleased: Penn State researchers found a [novel way to ID disease-resistance genes](#) in chocolate-producing trees.

Which Tree? More than 25 million Christmas trees are sold annually in the United States, and a Texas A&M site provides [guidance about selecting the right one](#).



University of Florida experts are helping with an important [project to restore parts of the coral reef](#).

International News

Deadly Eruption (videos): At least 16 people have been killed, dozens injured, and two still missing after a [volcano erupted](#) on a small New Zealand island. [Rescue operations continue](#) under dangerous conditions.

Unbearable (video): A village in Russia's far north has been [overrun by more than 50 polar bears](#)--community activities have been affected and schools are being guarded.

Land Restoration (video): People in northern Ethiopia are [battling the effects of climate change by restoring woodlands](#) to capture CO2 and boost food production.



Monkey Zen: Japanese macaques dip in [their own private hot springs pool](#).

Carbon-neutral Fuel Possibilities? Researchers in Israel created a strain of the bacterium *Escherichia coli* that [grows by consuming carbon dioxide](#) instead of sugars or other organic molecules.



Cricket-based Food: A Scandinavian [insect food company launched a protein powder](#) that is dairy, gluten, and soy free.

Entomophagy: This blogger looks at what's buggin' him about the [trend to use insects for food](#).

General Interest News

Speedy Science Session (podcast): This CAST scholarship winner from the University of Arkansas explains the [concept of sensory science](#).

Ever Heard a Computer Laugh? Mark Parker submits his top ten [comments you don't want to hear](#) from your tractor mechanic.

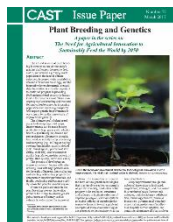
Helping Dogs Help Farmers: A Virginia farmer has been [training a variety of working dogs](#) for more than 40 years.

Ruff Choice (related to above): As this blog points out, it can be hard to decide [which breed of dog is best on the farm](#).



Cattle and sheep dogs find lost animals, guard gates, and--as shown above--use friendly persuasion to herd livestock. See related stories at left.

Species--Coming and Going: Scientists [discovered 71 new species](#) this year. On the other hand, [467 species have been declared extinct](#) in the past decade.



Genetic Breakthroughs (video): This *60 Minutes* story profiles a Harvard professor who is working to [make humans immune to viruses](#), eliminate genetic diseases, and reverse the aging process.

Plants, Genetics, and Food: [Plant Breeding and Genetics](#) is a paper in the CAST series on *The Need for Agricultural Innovation to Sustainably Feed the World by 2050*.

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.



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- * Agricultural & Applied Economics Association
- * American Association of Avian Pathologists
- * American Association of Bovine Practitioners
- * American Bar Association, Section of Environment, Energy, & Resources-Agricultural Management
- * American Dairy Science Association
- * American Farm Bureau Federation
- * American Meat Science Association
- * American Meteorological Society, Committee on Agricultural and Forest Meteorology
- * American Seed Trade Association
- * American Society for Nutrition Nutritional Sciences Council
- * American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers
- * American Society of Agronomy



- * American Society of Animal Science
- * American Society of Plant Biologists
- * American Veterinary Medical Association
- * Aquatic Plant Management Society
- * BASF Corporation
- * Cal Poly State University
- * Corteva Agriscience
- * CropLife America
- * Crop Science Society of America
- * Entomological Society of America
- * Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy
- * Land O'Lakes
- * Bayer

- * National Cattlemen's Beef Association, a Contractor to the Beef Checkoff
- * 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
- * Rural Sociological Society
- * Society for In Vitro Biology
- * Soil Science Society of America
- * Syngenta Crop Protection
- * The Fertilizer Institute
- * Tuskegee University
- * Tyson Foods
- * United Soybean Board
- * University of Nevada-Reno
- * U.S. Poultry and Egg Association
- * Weed Science Society of America
- * Western Society of Weed Science

CAST, through its network of experts, assembles, interprets, and communicates credible, balanced, science-based information to policymakers, the media, the private sector, and the public.

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