



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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Happy Holidays



Celebrations ring out [around the world this time of year](#). Best wishes for 2020. **The next edition of *Friday Notes* will be on Jan. 10.**

Ag Happenings

Things tend to wind down at the end of the year, but there is still plenty of buzz in the world of agriculture:

The ASABE announced the winners for [best innovations in engineering and technology](#).

Specialists at Mississippi State University offer "[AgMatters](#)" [podcasts about agricultural issues](#).



Application forms are available for [scholarships through the National FFA Foundation](#)--the deadline is Jan. 15.

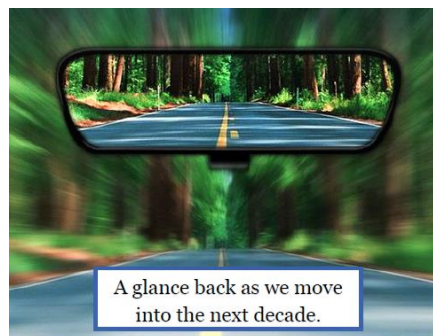
Kansas State University's [livestock judging team](#) and its [crops team](#) both

December 20, 2019

A Decade of Changes

With a steady focus on science-based communication

In 2010, the first iPad came out, Twitter was a youngster, and Facebook was going through adolescent growing pains. The world was not yet hooked on Pokemon, TikTok, or the selfie craze.



A glance back as we move into the next decade.

Much has also changed at CAST during the past decade. The organization expanded its digital presence through social media and a newly redesigned website; the [Borlaug CAST Communication Award](#) gained prestige through a cohort of exceptional communicators; many respected universities are part of the [CAST Education Program](#); and CAST published [numerous influential papers](#) about agriculture and food production.

But throughout the years--as far back as its first essay written in 1973 by Norman Borlaug--the organization has remained focused on its mission to communicate credible, science-based information to the public and policymakers alike. Take a look at this [short review about key changes and accomplishments at CAST](#) during the past decade.

News and Views

USMCA Update: House lawmakers [approved the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement](#). The vote clears the way for the Senate to ratify the deal early next year. Agriculture Secretary [Perdue applauded the agreement](#).

EPA Biofuel Plan: The Environmental Protection Agency is moving ahead with a [plan to reallocate waived biofuel volumes](#); this move is not supported by industry groups and corn-state officials.

Disease Protection: The U.S. House of Representatives approved an additional \$19.6 million in [funding for more agricultural inspectors](#) to prevent African swine fever and other foreign animal diseases from entering U.S. borders.

posted outstanding results at recent national competitions.

Cal Poly's [Floral Design Team](#) took home several top honors at the California state competitions.

The Iowa Pork Congress will hold North America's [largest winter swine conference](#) Jan. 22-23.

The University of Kentucky Wheat Science Group will host its [Winter Wheat Meeting](#) on Jan. 7.

Send in Ideas

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

CAST Social Media



Boost for Research: Most U.S. [research agencies received healthy increases](#) for 2020 in a spending bill that resolved a 3-month deadlock between Democrats and Republicans in Congress.

News from the Far Side of the Barn

Wakanda Forever? The fictional country from the Marvel superhero movie *Black Panther* was accidentally listed as a [free trade partner with the United States](#), and even the [USDA has a sense of humor](#) about it.

Eight Arms to Hold You (video): A team of salmon [farmers rescued a bald eagle](#) from an over-achieving octopus.

Dazed and Confused (video): The ["Illusion of the Year"](#) winner might amuse you--or make you dizzy.



Reports suggest that the trade negotiators from Wakanda were fair but tough. Related story at upper left.

Supporting the Mission Statement

Science and Agriculture Communication



CAST bids farewell to 2019 and welcomes in a new decade knowing that the organization's success depends on the member support that will strengthen its legacy for years to come. [Click here to donate](#) to CAST's mission--and help it remain an active, educated, reputable voice on behalf of scientists and professionals in the field of agriculture.



Check out CAST's [Summary of Activities](#) for photos and information about publications, awards, meetings, and other events from the past few months.



Friday Notes News Categories

Photos courtesy of the Agricultural Research Service (top masthead); TopLatest News (globe at right). P. 1 ornaments pic from awesomebooksforlife.com, driving pic from pfc.ca, and Wakanda photo from bbc.com. Animal Sec. reindeer photo from farmjournal.com and cornell.edu, and coyote pic from npr.org. Food Sec. bottle pic from unr.edu and potato pic from usda.gov. Inter. Sec. Brazil collage from psmag.com and bridge.edu, and snake pic from mosaicscience.com. Gen Sec. tractor pic from nafb.com and 12 days graphic from facebook.com. Unless otherwise noted, photos courtesy of the USDA Agricultural Research Service or CAST.



Animal Agriculture and Environmental News

Rudolf's Nose is Fine, but Eyes Are Essential (video):

A [reindeer mother-daughter duo](#) is ready to report for duty this holiday season following cataract surgery at Cornell University.

How Now Palpation Cow? Purdue University acquired a [life-size palpation cow](#) that will provide veterinary medicine and veterinary nursing students more life-like learning opportunities.

Maintaining Bird Comfort: Correct ventilation is a key aspect of bird comfort, welfare, and productivity--and careful [monitoring of poultry behavior](#) will yield dividends.

PAP and Heart Failure: Researchers are looking at the relationship between pulmonary arterial pressure (PAP) and [congestive heart failure in cattle](#).

Poultry Sustainability: Many stakeholders joined to work on the [Poultry Sustainability Guide](#)--an opportunity to find [solutions for growing environmental challenges](#) in the industry.



The Alaskan reindeer industry needs large-animal veterinarians, and after showing her reindeer, Taylor Armstrong (no kidding--she is from a town called North Pole) decided to increase her herd and [aspire to be a veterinarian](#). Related link at upper left.

ASF Spreading: African swine fever sweeping across Asia [has spread to Indonesia](#), reaching a region with more than a million pigs.



Will Fladry Deter Them? Coyotes are the top predator of livestock in the United States, and the USDA Wildlife Research Center is [developing nonlethal tools to prevent losses](#) while facilitating coexistence--including the use of fladry (strips of cloth hanging from a line of rope).

Where the Wild Things Are: Most don't ride the "L" Train in Chicago, but [coyotes and other wild animals](#) are becoming more urbanized.

Food Science and Safety News

Proper Food Prep: Food safety experts from The Ohio State University explain why recipes for items such as eggnog should include pasteurized eggs and [proper preparation methods](#).

Judging Beef: This review looks at the history of measurements used to [assess beef palatability regarding tenderness, juiciness, and flavor](#).

Belly Bulge Bad for Brain: Iowa State University researchers say that less muscle and more body fat [may affect how flexible our thinking gets as we age](#), and changes in parts of the immune system could be responsible.

Pesticide Residues: The USDA released its [Pesticide Data Program Annual Summary](#), with tests showing that more than 99% of samples had pesticide residues below benchmark levels.

Pesticides and Food (related to above): Check out the CAST Issue Paper titled [Interpreting Pesticide Residues in Food](#).



Striking Gold: With its signature purple skin, yellow flesh, and small size, the [Huckleberry Gold potato](#) is gaining popularity with consumers and niche markets alike.



This University of Nevada-Reno story (in English and Spanish) advises readers about ways to [know if certain drinks have sugar added to them](#).

Plant Agriculture and Environmental News

A Soybean's Odyssey (video): This documentary shows [the journey a soybean makes](#) from planting to product.

"Kind of Like a Dating Service": Focusing on plant biodiversity and agriculture, this university group tries to [match people to areas or parts of the natural world](#) they might find attractive.

Promoting Organic Farming: A USDA grant will allow Tuskegee University experts to [broaden the adoption of organic farming](#) in the southeastern United States.

In the Forest: Plant-eating [insects affect forest ecosystems](#) more than previously thought--especially in the leaching of nutrients from the soil and increased emissions of carbon.



The Cornell Alliance for Science outlines [five ways CRISPR can be used to engineer hardier crops](#) that fix more carbon and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Microclimate Study: Supported by the Irrigation Innovation Consortium, a Kansas State University agronomist is [using technology to study microclimate data](#).

Soil Health: [Podcasts in the Field, Lab, Earth series](#) include an episode about [cover crop nutrient runoff](#) under winter conditions.

Bin Busters: Despite some adverse conditions, [corn growers achieved many impressive yields](#) this year--including a new record of 616 bushels per acre.



International News

Heatwave in the Sunburnt Country

(video): Australia experienced its [hottest day on record](#) and the heatwave is expected to worsen, [exacerbating a devastating bushfire season](#).

Poultry Potential: Guinea-fowl farming is a [growing area of poultry production](#) in Africa.

Gene-edited Food Sales: Food products using genome-editing technology could go on sale in Japan by the end of the year despite [no specific labeling rules being in place](#).

A Less-flatulent Flock? Sheep farmers are now able to [breed low-methane animals in New Zealand](#).



Brazilian ranchers are looking for ways to reduce pressure on the environment--the [use of feedlots to finish beef cows](#) might expand.

Quite a Start! Saudi Arabia's "sovereign wealth fund" [invested \\$400 million in a food startup](#).



Saving a Country from Snakebite: Indonesia contains 270 million people and more than 70 species of venomous snakes. A third of Indonesian jobs are in agriculture, and [thousands of workers get bitten each year](#).

General Interest News



Fantastic Fungi (film trailer): Its many proponents say the film *Fantastic Fungi* is a consciousness-shifting experience that looks at [the magical earth beneath our feet](#).

This holiday parody came from *AgDaily* media.

Canine Bus Monitor (video): Every day, this [dog stands guard](#) until his "litter of kids" gets on the school bus.

Don't Be an Environmental Grinch: The University of Florida provides an informative graphic about how to [stay green during the holidays](#).

From Pennsylvania to Patagonia: During the winter break, Penn State students will visit areas of Chile/Patagonia to focus on [natural resources, climate, and sustainability](#).

Granting Wishes: North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University hosted ["Winter Wishes in Aggieland"](#)--a program designed to help foster children during the holiday season.



Back from the Iron-scrap Grave (video): Thanks to a dedicated group action, a 1939 Farmall F-20 was pulled from the scrap pile and [restored to its original glory](#).

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.



CAST provides Friday Notes as a benefit to its members. Please do not forward, edit, copy, or distribute the Notes in any form to nonmembers without the express permission of the CAST Executive Vice President Kent Schescke (kschescke@cast-science.org). Instead, please encourage your colleagues to join CAST and thereby become eligible for all membership benefits. Contact Melissa Sly at 515-292-2125, ext. 232 or msly@cast-science.org, or [CLICK HERE](#) for CAST membership information.

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- * 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.

Members of CAST's Education Program

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