

Friday Notes

Council for Agricultural Science and Technology

CAST

The Science Source for Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Issues

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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[Rollout Events Soon for New CAST Publication about Food Animal Veterinarians--P. 2](#)

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Plant Health



The United Nations declared 2020 the [International Year of Plant Health](#), and the USDA (APHIS) encourages all to appreciate the food we eat, the air we breathe, and the environment around us.

Announcements

The [Ag Day Proclamation Event](#)--honoring outstanding young farmers and winning essays--will be held March 24.

[Neil Harl and Dennis Sjodin](#) were presented with the Meritorious



Neil Harl

Service Award to American Agriculture. Dr. Harl (Iowa State University)

received CAST's Charles A. Black Award in 1997, and he has [written publications for CAST](#).

The University of Kentucky's [Superfund Research Center](#) connects

March 6, 2020

A Dose of Reality

Farmers Explain Agriculture on the Front Lines

While many companies, societies, organizations, and individuals work hard to explain food production and agricultural issues to the public, some of the most notable efforts come from farmers themselves.

The [Peterson Brothers](#) have built a large following. [Farmer Derek](#) uses his trumpet and a sense of humor to lure viewers, and the [CauseMatters](#) site provides an [extensive list of blogs](#) from farmers and ranchers. With his ["How Farms](#)

[Work"](#) channel, one Wisconsin farmer uses personal insights, songs, and rural settings to educate the public. And "Cole the Cornstar" (photo above) boosted his online career with a realistic look at the economic hardships for young farmers in a video entitled ["Convincing The Bank To Lend Me \\$1,000,000."](#) While few people actually live on farms, many can visit there through blogs, videos, and other forms of communication.



A young farmer propelled himself to [internet corn-stardom](#) with a YouTube channel that follows his life on the family farm.

News and Views

Taking a Count: The [2020 Census](#) will determine congressional representation, inform billions in federal funding, and provide data that will impact communities for the next decade. The U.S. Census Bureau is working to accurately include rural areas.



Payment Problems: The U.S. Government Accountability Office reports that government agencies made about [\\$175 billion in improper payments](#)--with the USDA responsible for \$6.7 billion of that.

Coronavirus Updates: The CDC is using this website to [update the public](#) about the evolving coronavirus situation.

Covid-19 and Livestock Drugs: The FDA says some firms are seeing disruptions in the supply chain because of Covid-19 that [could lead to shortages of animal drugs](#) for the U.S. market.

Universities and Coronavirus: All of our 18 member universities have taken action regarding the virus. A few examples: [North Carolina A&T State University](#) issued a travel advisory and provided an information webpage. [Iowa State](#) and other universities issued a list of coronavirus-related cancellations affecting study abroad work. And the [University of California system](#) canceled programs in China, South Korea, and Italy.

with the community to improve health and wellness.

The 4th Annual [Agri-Pulse Ag & Food Policy Summit](#) will be March 23 at the National Press Club.

The 2020 [Midwest Poultry Federation Convention](#) will take place as scheduled March 17-19 in Minneapolis.

The [American Dairy Science Association's](#) annual meeting will be June 21-24 in Florida.

Send in Ideas

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

CAST Social Media



Trade Aid Analysis: Texas A&M University published an analysis of the Trump administration's [trade aid program](#).

Groundbreaking Gene-editing Procedure: For the first time, scientists [used the gene-editing technique CRISPR](#) to edit a gene while the DNA is still inside a person's body.

News from the Far Side of the Barn

Going Deep Green (video): This magical, animated trip takes you "[deep inside the inner workings of a leaf](#)"--with cool visuals, calming music, and educational annotations.

Headbangers (video): Sheep seem to be pretty chill animals, but they certainly [know how to butt heads](#).

Feline Makeover (video): A North Carolina shelter turned [an obnoxious cat into an online star](#)--and now she's almost friendly!



World's worst cat gets a home (story at left).

Impact of Recruitment and Retention of Food Animal Veterinarians on the U.S. Food Supply

Dr. Christine Navarre will present highlights of CAST's new issue paper at three Washington, D.C., venues

Food animal veterinarians in the United States safeguard livestock, poultry, and aquatic food animal health and welfare, as well as food safety and quality along the entire "farm to fork" continuum. But it has become difficult to recruit and retain these much-needed experts in rural communities.

On Friday, March 27, [CAST will host three presentations](#) about this issue, including strategies and tactics that may help.

9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

American Farm Bureau Federation, 600 Maryland Avenue SW, Suite 1000 W, 10th floor, Washington conference room, Washington, D.C.

Noon - 1:00 p.m. (including a Chick-fil-A Lunch; vegetarian option upon request); 1302 Longworth House Office Building, 9 Independence Ave SE, Washington, D.C.

2:30 - 3:30 p.m. 328A Russell Senate Office Building, 2 Constitution Avenue NE, Washington, D.C.

Note: CAST will also host a webinar to share the highlights and key findings of this paper on Tuesday, April 7.



What to Expect from CAST this Spring -- A Message from the Executive Vice President

In a blog post, CAST EVP Kent Schescke announces publications and events for members to keep their eyes on this spring. No matter if you are in Washington, D.C., or at your desk, [you'll want to be aware of these events](#).

Free Publications

CAST papers are [now available for free download](#) on the newly formatted [CAST website](#).



Friday Notes News Categories

Photos courtesy of the Agricultural Research Service (top masthead); TopLatest News (globe at right). P. 1 plant graphic from aphisc.org, young farmer photo from youtube.com, cat pic from mydailynews.com, and Harl photo from iptv.org. Animal Sec. farm collage from newdairy.com. Food Sec. school photo from harvestpublicradio.org. Plant Sec. drought pic from ecowatch.jpg. Inter. Sec. veggie pic from thisiscoolossal.com. Gen. Sec. pets collage from money.usnews.com. Unless otherwise noted, photos courtesy of the USDA Agricultural Research Service or CAST.



Animal Agriculture and Environmental News

Hitting the Bovine Jackpot: A Washington rancher's [cow gave birth to quadruplets](#)--a birth of four live, healthy calves happens only 1 in 11.2 million births.

Animal Care Publication: The American Dairy Science Association, the American Society of Animal Science, and the Poultry Science Association released the 4th edition of the [Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching](#) (Ag Guide) for public comment (until May 1).

Pork on the Menu: To kick off its national meeting, the pork industry [donated nearly 40,000 servings of pork](#) to a community food network in Kansas City.

Poultry News: *WATTAgNet* lists these as the [top ten poultry articles](#) of the last month--from fast food to safety to employment.

Swine Fever Relief? A laboratory in China announced it created a [vaccine against African swine fever](#).

Allergens in Animal Feed: This report explains a scientific expert opinion that the allergens inherent in the foods fed to livestock are [not transferred to the muscle of the animals](#).

Healthy Beef Cattle Breeding: Kansas State University experts provide [advice to beef producers about artificial insemination](#).



This guest house provides opportunities to ["sleep with cows"](#) and watch robotic milking.

Food Science and Safety News

Food Label Changes (video): New FDA rules went into effect this year regarding [how food nutrition labels convey information](#).

Label Clarity (related to above): Check out CAST's influential publication titled [Process Labeling of Food: Consumer Behavior, the Agricultural Sector, and Policy Recommendations](#).

In the Know about GMO: The FDA, USDA, and EPA [launched an initiative](#) to help consumers better understand foods created through genetic engineering, commonly called GMOs or [genetically modified organisms](#).

Food Safety and Coronavirus: Public health officials and academics agree that the coronavirus poses [little danger from a foodborne illness perspective](#), but they remain vigilant.

Food Safety and Consumers: The National Pork Board says the results of consumer research show [the need to promote food safety](#) in the event of a foreign animal disease outbreak.

Save the Banana: A deadly [fungus threatens the planet's fourth most important crop](#) with extinction, but a British start-up thinks it may have the solution.



School [lunch regulations have been changing](#), and the reactions are mixed.

Plant Agriculture and Environmental News

Livestock and Soil (video): This Illinois farmer explains his opinions about [incorporating livestock back onto the land](#) to improve soil health and mitigate climate change.

Soil Health Up--Yield Results Mixed: A 10-year study in Iowa looked at the [conservation benefits of planting cereal rye as a cover crop](#) on corn and soybean fields.

Cover Crops in Dry Areas (related to above): A Texas study shows that cover crops have numerous potential benefits, although adaptation in water-limited environments has shown [mixed results on cash crop yields](#).

Field, Lab, Earth (podcasts): This site is filled with podcasts [about crops, plants, and soil](#). One example is the segment about "plant blindness," an inability for people to see and appreciate the plants in plain sight.

Focused on Soybean Research: A North Carolina State graduate student is studying [ways to improve soybean production](#) by understanding how the crop interacts with fungi in the soil.

The Land of Fire and Ice: Alaska fires burned 2.6 million acres in 2019, much of it occurring on land where permafrost is prevalent. [What did this do to the soil?](#)



Most think of droughts as gradual events, but scientists are trying to figure out a phenomenon called a "[flash drought](#)."

International News

More Than the Usual "Bird Brain" (video): According to this research, a certain type of parrot in New Zealand can [make predictions and understand probabilities](#).

NextGen Cassava: After finishing his doctorate at Cornell University, this Ugandan [unraveled the genetics of cassava](#) to help farmers in his homeland.

On the Sustainability Road: The British dairy industry has signed up for the Dairy Roadmap, pledging its [commitment to global indicators of sustainability](#).

Beefy Import: Namibia is the first African nation to [export beef to the United States](#).

Losing Its Sting? For generations, families across Japan [hunted, raised, and ate wasps](#), but the age-old delicacy might be vanishing.



This chef turns fruits and vegetables into [intricately carved sculptures](#).

General Interest News

Learning from the Experts (webinar): An Ohio State University scientist recorded a [webinar with information and advice about coronavirus](#).

Young People Speaking about Ag: National FFA ambassadors give advice about [how to advocate for ag both in person and online](#).

Pest Control: Penn State University joined forces with state and federal agencies to [control the spread of the spotted lanternfly](#).

Virus Watchdogs: With the coronavirus in mind, University of Florida experts are helping with [the search for the next zoonotic disease](#).

Fighting a Dangerous Buzz: A new researcher at the University of Nevada-Reno is [investigating mosquito-borne viruses](#) such as Zika and West Nile.



Americans are [spending a record amount on their pets](#)--with food, veterinarian care, and "innovative toys" leading the monetary layouts.

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

Societies, Companies, and Nonprofit Organizations Serving on the CAST Board of Representatives

- * 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
- * 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
- * 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

- * Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo
- * Cornell University
- * Iowa State University
- * Kansas State University
- * Mississippi State University
- * North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University
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Dan Gogerty (Communications and *Friday Notes* Editor)
Kimberly Nelson (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 (Kimberly)
E-mail: dgogerty@cast-science.org and knelson@cast-science.org



** *With assistance from Megan Wickham (Scientific Editor) and Colleen Hamilton (Membership Specialist)*