



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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## Announcements

### MLK Day of Service

A DAY ON, NOT A DAY OFF

The January 18 Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday was once again a day of service. This year, many [activities went outdoors or online](#). Most universities--including the 18 members of the [CAST Education Program](#)--honored Dr. King in various manners.

The Ohio State University called for more than 1,000 Buckeyes to join in [activities that honored Dr. King's legacy](#).

The president of Cornell University emphasized Dr. King's "[words of grief, words of determination, words of hope](#)."

## CAST College Corner

[North Carolina A&T State University](#) is joining other groups and schools to launch a journalism training program.

Two [University of Arkansas](#) graduate students earned recognition in the student poster contest during the virtual 2020 Crop Science Society of America Annual Meeting.

[Kansas State University](#) officials say the annual Winter Ranch Management series will begin in

## January 22, 2021

## Science in the Spotlight

Science, technology, and innovation have always been linked with agriculture, including the USDA's [Agriculture Innovation Agenda](#). The new administration seems to be focused on a strong emphasis on science.



President Biden plans to [elevate the director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy](#) to a Cabinet-level position for the first time--(Eric Lander and the science team pictured above). With the pandemic as the most critical item on the agenda, Dr. Anthony Fauci is the [chief medical adviser](#) to the president, and Dr. David Kessler will have the title of [chief science officer of COVID response](#). Agriculture secretary [nominee Tom Vilsack](#) says he will involve farmers in programs to combat climate change, and Jewel Bronaugh has been nominated as the [deputy secretary of the agriculture department](#). If confirmed, she would be the first woman of color to serve in that position. Along with [three deputy under secretaries](#) in the areas of nutrition, rural development, and marketing and regulatory programs, the [USDA announced several key staff appointments](#).

## News and Views

**Information about Vaccines:** As with many other universities, Mississippi State is providing the latest [CDC facts about COVID-19 vaccines](#) to its students.

**USDA Program:** The USDA is providing additional assistance through the [Coronavirus Food Assistance Program](#).

**Biotech Turf Battle:** A memo from the Trump administration allows the USDA to [regulate food-bearing GE livestock](#), but FDA commissioner Stephen Hahn said his agency does not agree with the decision.

**Pandemic Statistics:** This site provides ongoing updates of [coronavirus numbers on a state-by-state basis](#).

late January and highlight topics for beef cattle producers.

A [University of Nevada-Reno](#) program for undergraduate students helps them gain experience, contribute to science, and get paid.

Check throughout **Friday Notes** to see more featured articles from member universities.

## CAST Social Media

Visit our  
website



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

## Far Side of the Barn Presidential Pet Edition

**Dogs Have Dominated (video):** A German shepherd “shelter dog” will add to the [White House tradition of presidential pets](#).



**A White House Menagerie:** The list has included an [alligator](#), [bears](#), [tiger cubs](#), and [even a pony](#) that rode the White House elevator.

**Queen of the Capitol Cows:** Cows were commonplace at the White House in the early days, and [President Taft's runaway bovine](#) caused quite a stir.

## CAST Updates

### Guest Blog—Trends in Demand for Plant Based Meat

Jayson Lusk ([2017 BCCA recipient](#)) and Glynn Tonsor produce a monthly “Meat Demand Monitor” containing simulated grocery shopping choices and consumer preferences among beef, pork, chicken, shrimp, beans and rice, and plant-based patties. Through this study it was found that 3% of the time plant-based patties were chosen, while ground beef was chosen 24% of the time. Read more about this study on our [latest guest blog](#).

### 2021 Borlaug CAST Communication Award Nominations Open—Applications Due February 1

The Borlaug CAST Communication Award (BCCA) is 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.

You can learn [how to nominate and download](#) the nomination packet on the CAST website. The BCCA has been awarded to [11 outstanding professionals](#).

### Click. Contribute. Communicate.

Please support CAST's efforts to communicate credible science through [membership](#) or a [donation](#) today. CAST's success in countering misinformation and continuing as a voice for sound science in the future—as we have in the past—depends on your membership and donations. If you are already a CAST member—and haven't renewed yet for 2021—please [renew](#) today!

## Animal Agriculture and Environmental News

**Red Meat Surge:** There was [more red meat produced](#) during December 2020 than any other December on record.

**Managing Variables:** This hog industry specialist looks at why the [industry dynamics continue with high volatility](#).

**Cow Costs:** University of Nebraska-Lincoln experts provide [information about annual cow costs](#) related to feed, labor, equipment, and cow depreciation.

**Feral Fight:** The USDA is investing millions of dollars in the [Feral Swine Eradication and Control Pilot Program](#) in eight states ranging from North Carolina to Texas to Hawaii.

**Wary of FMD Outbreak:** The NCBA has called for continued vigilance in response to another [outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Namibia](#).

**Would Sheep and Cattle Play Well Together? (podcast available):** A Nebraska rancher examines the benefits of [multi-species grazing options](#).



Texas A&M [poultry students have expanded access](#) to hands-on farm experience as they gain educational and research insights.

## Food Science and Safety News

**Gym-N-Eat Business Is Hoppin' (video):** This young woman's [cricket business](#) is selling well with powder form, roasted style, and energy bars.

**Plants Packing the Protein:** A scientist explains why [wheat, pea, and soy proteins](#) are the most popular plant-based proteins in the food industry.

**COVID-19 and Pork:** The COVID-19 situation has changed [pork production, distribution, and consumption](#)

**Food Trends:** This article looks at [five food and beverage trends](#), including eco-packaging that increases the lifespan of fruits and vegetables.

**Milk, Ice Cream, Yogurt, and More:** The pandemic has had [some silver linings for dairy producers](#)

**Fried Foods and Health:** This research looks at [fried-food intake](#) and links to a heightened risk of major heart disease and stroke.



During the pandemic, community colleges have experienced a [surge in demand for food and other basic necessities](#). Many groups and organizations are working on the challenges.

## Plant Agriculture and Environmental News

**Berry Unusual (video):** University of Florida researchers are [growing a white strawberry](#)—apparently, it tastes good.

**The Courts, the EPA, and the RFA:** A federal appeals court granted the emergency motion filed by the Renewable Fuels Association in [response to the EPA's last-minute granting of three small refinery waivers](#).

**Change of Tone? (related to above):** Several biofuels groups hope the new administration will take long-term actions to "[clarify the RFS issue](#)."

**Hemp and THC Rules (related story below):** New hemp rules [provide more flexibility](#) on testing and disposal.

**Episode of Farms, Food, and You:** This North Carolina State University report looks at [hemp production in the state](#) as it enters its fifth growing season.



Even corn needs a good night's rest. These experts explain why [corn farmers need a bigger toolkit](#) to cope with climate changes.

**More Than a Hill of Beans:** UC-Davis researchers released [five new varieties of dry beans](#) combining qualities of heirloom-type and commercial-type beans.

## International News

**Drones and AI in the Field (video):** A Japanese telecom company is working on [ag drones and artificial intelligence](#).

**Gene-editing Viewpoints:** France officials view [crops developed using gene-editing techniques](#) as different to genetically modified organisms. They are opposed to a European Union court decision about GMO regulations.

**Biosecurity Issues:** South Korea [slaughtered millions of birds](#) to stem the spread of highly pathogenic H5N8 bird flu, and German authorities are concerned with continued [African swine fever cases from wild boars](#).

**Making It "Bear-able" (video):** Considering damage and attacks, locals in Japan are using repellents, robots, acorns, and dogs to figure out [ways to coexist with wild bears](#).

**"Biofarm" Startup:** An Israeli company says its 3D tissue engineering platform can [grow meat cuts from cow cells](#).



These [thick-legged chickens](#) can [sell for more than \\$2,000](#). They receive years of special care, and the best are entered into beauty competitions across Vietnam.

## General Interest News

**Time Travel to a Veterinarian World (video):** An entertaining PBS TV version of James Herriot's book [All Creatures Great And Small](#) deals with 1930s life as a country veterinarian in England. [See trailer here](#).

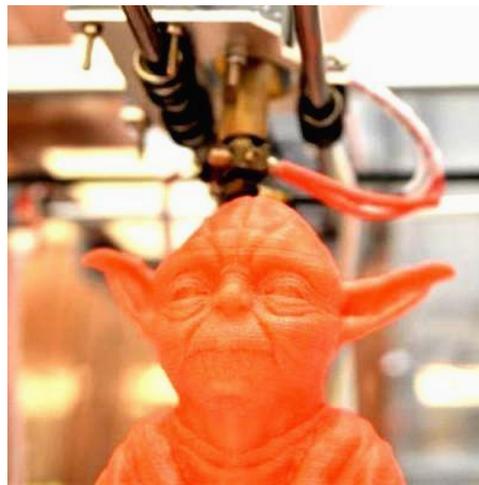
**Food Chain:** The American Farm Bureau Federation launched an [effort to address food insecurity](#) while celebrating America's food supply, farmers, and ranchers.

**Feed Your Mind:** This new FDA [curriculum guide](#) offers high school teachers helpful tools for navigating the complexities of crop biotechnology.

**Food Workers:** The nation's food workers have been hit hard by COVID-19 infections, and some say they are now having [trouble getting access to vaccinations](#).

**Gardening and Pesticides:** This report says the \$2.4 billion U.S. home and garden [pesticide market is surging](#) due to pandemic-era gardening activity.

**Drugs Focused on Rare Diseases and More:** The FDA reports that [novel drug approvals continued at a brisk clip](#), averaging more than one per week in 2020.



Penn State researchers have created a [streamlined system for five-axis additive 3D-printing](#)—Yoda impressed even very seems.

## Photo Credits

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- \* 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
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- \* 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 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

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The Science Source for Food,  
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