



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



The [2021 Borlaug CAST Communication Award goes to Sarah Evanega](#) (above center), research professor in the Department of Global Development with a joint appointment in the School of Integrative Plant Science in the College of Agriculture at Cornell University. See page two below for more about this influential scientist and communicator.

CAST will roll out its new Commentary—*The Role of Agricultural Science and Technology in Climate 21 Project Implementation*—during a June webinar presentation. Watch for details in coming newsletters.

Dr. Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted will receive the [2021 World Food Prize](#) for her groundbreaking research, critical insights, and landmark innovations in developing holistic, nutrition-sensitive approaches to aquaculture and food systems.

CAST College Corner

May 14, 2021

Communicating about Science *Run with Societal Evolution*

Alexa Lamm (at right) says we have new opportunities to communicate about science, and we should "face the world with curiosity not judgment." Before the announcement of the 2021 BCCA



winner—Sarah Evanega of Cornell—Lamm gave a spirited presentation asking scientists to take advantage of dynamic communication techniques as they search for ways to improve agriculture, the environment, food production, and more. She listed three key concepts: (1) partner with social media influencers, (2) allow Gen Z to drive science communication, and (3) tell stories while also increasing scientific transparency. Watch the [video of the BCCA event here](#), with Lamm's speech beginning at the 8-minute mark. Lamm is a professor at the University of Georgia and the [2020 BCCA](#) recipient.

News and Views

WASDE Report: Click here to access the latest [World Agricultural Supply & Demand Estimates](#) from the USDA.

USDA Confirmation: Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack issued a statement celebrating the confirmation of [Dr. Jewel Bronaugh as Deputy Secretary of the USDA](#)—Bronaugh will be the first woman of color to serve in that position.

Air Quality and Ag: Several universities published research claiming [poor air quality caused by food production](#)—involving animal and plant practices—causes thousands of deaths. The National Pork Producers Council [questions the accuracy of the study](#), and National Cattlemen's Beef Association said the study "contributes to the [false narrative around animal agriculture](#)."

Vaccine News: The FDA approved the Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus [vaccine to be used in adolescents](#) 12-15 years old. The [University of Kentucky has been selected](#) as a site for PreventCovidU, a study evaluating COVID-19 infection among post-secondary students vaccinated with the Moderna vaccine.

[North Carolina A&T State University](#) is having a blockbuster year for fundraising.

A [Mississippi State University](#) project examining the role of culture in encouraging women to pursue engineering fields is being highlighted by the National Science Foundation-funded 2021 STEM Showcase.

[Penn State University](#) launched an expanded initiative in artificial intelligence termed the AI Hub.

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

CAST Social Media

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website



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

CAST Annual Report

The [CAST 2020 Annual Report](#) is available here—featuring information, photos, and a look back at a challenging but productive year. [All CAST annual reports](#) are available as well.

Far Side of the Barn

Star Pups Café: A Toronto resident started [an eatery for dogs](#), but she says it also became a place for canine owners to make connections during the pandemic.



Miracle in the Air (video): Two [planes collided mid-air over Denver](#), but amazingly, one pilot landed safely and the other successfully deployed a parachute.

The Elephant Whisperer: A legendary man rehabilitated a group of wild South African elephants back in 1999, and [the animals honored him after his death](#). This link looks at some facts and legends behind this remarkable story.

CAST Updates



Sarah Evanega Wins 2021 Borlaug CAST Communication Award

Cornell Alliance for Science Director Sarah Evanega—an imagineer, international leader, and icon of young science communication professionals—has been awarded the coveted Borlaug CAST Communication Award (BCCA). As one colleague said, “Sarah’s passion for effectively communicating about agriculture and science has taken her around the globe, directed her academic and professional pursuits, and shaped her personal life. It has also inspired many others to become outspoken science champions. She has a unique ability to influence and inspire others to take up the banner of science advocate and defender.” [Click here for a video tribute and more information](#) about this remarkable scientist, educator, and communicator.

The BCCA presentation featured insightful comments, a thought-provoking speech, and the announcement of Sarah Evanega as the 2021 BCCA winner. [Click here to access a video of the entire event](#).

The May 11 BCCA event began with welcoming comments and an overview of the organization's mission about science communication from CAST EVP/CEO Kent Schescke. USDA Undersecretary Chavonda Jacobs-Young then gave an inspiring message from the Department of Agriculture before the 2020 BCCA recipient Alexa Lamm delivered the keynote address: *Bouncing Forward: Capitalizing on the Current Societal Evolution to Strategically Communicate about Science*. Lamm's comments and proposals included an enthusiastic blueprint for techniques scientists can use to successfully connect with the public and policymakers. See the related story on page one above for more about her speech.

CAST President David Baltensperger announced this year's BCCA winner, Sarah Evenega, and sponsor comments came from Julie Borlaug (CropLife Foundation and CAST Board of Trustees) and Tricia Beal (Farm Journal

Foundation).

2021 BCCA Announcement Event

An award presentation for Sarah Evanega will occur during World Food Prize Symposium week in October 2021.

The Farm Journal Foundation is the 2021 sponsor of the Borlaug CAST Communication Award that honors the legacies of Dr. Norman Borlaug (Nobel Prize winner and founder of the World Food Prize) and Dr. Charles A. Black (the first president of CAST).



Welcome. Kent Schescke, CAST

USDA Greetings. Chavonda Jacobs-Young, USDA REE

Featured Speaker. Alexa Lamm, University of Georgia

Announcement of 2021 Winner. David Baltensperger, Texas A&M University and CAST President

Sponsor Comments. Julie Borlaug, CAST Board of Trustees; Tricia Beal, Farm Journal Foundation

Concluding Remarks. Kent Schescke, CAST



Animal Agriculture and Environmental News

Cows, Sustainability, and Reality (video): In a thought-provoking interview, Frank Mitloehner (UC-Davis and [2019 BCCA](#)) explains the [facts about beef and dairy production](#)

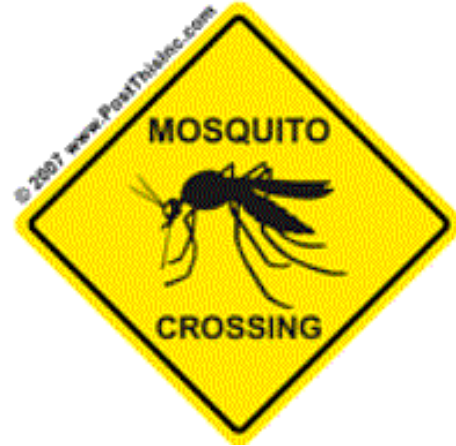
Cattle Production Resources (videos): University of Nevada-Reno specialists are providing [research-based information about cattle industry](#) efficiency, productivity, profitability, and sustainability.

Pork Supply Chain: The May 19 [Pork Checkoff webinar](#) features Jayson Lusk (Purdue and [2017 BCCA](#)) discussing five potential disrupters to the pork supply chain.

Diversifying Meat Markets: The University of Missouri's Scott Brown says continuing to diversify markets is [vital to growing demand for U.S. pork and beef](#).

Backyard Poultry Insights (videos): These poultry clips—produced by an expert from UC-Davis—look at common [questions backyard poultry owners might have](#).

Swine Feed: University of Arkansas researchers are testing [reformulated swine feed with amino acid supplements](#) in an effort to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions from swine production systems while still upholding nutritional needs.



Amid a certain amount of controversy, the [release of millions of genetically edited mosquitoes](#) will test a new method of bioengineered pest control.

Food Science and Safety News

Curbing Food Waste: The USDA provides five examples of how to use [scientific ingenuity to curb food loss](#) and waste. Click here to access the [CAST publication about food loss and waste](#).

Dairy Fat and Health: This article says research has [exonerated dairy fats](#) as a cause of early death, but low-fat products continue to be misperceived as healthier.

Food Labels (related material at right): [Misunderstanding food date labeling](#) is common, and educational communications are needed to improve consumer understanding, according to a new study in the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*.

Healthy Gut, Happy Head? A healthy diet promotes a [healthy gut that communicates with the brain](#). Researchers want to know whether or not dietary changes could help alleviate depression.

Even Cicadas are on the Menu: Advocates are promoting [insects as a sustainable protein source](#), leading to a wave of



University research from Kansas State, Missouri, and Michigan State looks at the [confusing world of food labels](#).

Click [here for the CAST publication Process Labeling of Food: Consumer Behavior, the Agricultural Sector, and Policy](#)

Plant Agriculture and Environmental News

GE Crops and Pesticide Use: The Center for Science in the Public Interest published a new report about [GE crops, weed control, and the use of pesticides](#).

Fuel Shortage Relief from Ethanol? Renewable fuel leaders are [calling on the EPA to relax E15 regulations](#) as the eastern seaboard struggles with a fuel shortage caused by the Colonial Pipeline closure.

Drought and Fire: The U.S. Drought Monitor estimates that 57 million people are living in [drought areas in western states](#), and some agriculture interests in California are having [trouble getting fire insurance](#).

Wildfires and Government Policies: The Administration stated its views on [wildland fire preparedness and response](#) including supporting science and research into the effects of climate change on wildland fire.

Smart Irrigation: [Precision agriculture technology](#) allows farmers to pinpoint exactly where water is needed and where irrigation is delivered.

Settling the Dust: One of the latest soybean checkoff dollar investments is a new [soy-based dust suppressant](#) for roads, construction sites, farms, and businesses.



A recent Cal Poly study says [human noise pollution affects an ecosystem's plant life diversity](#) even after the din has stopped.

International News

Bees Buzz about Coronavirus: Dutch researchers report that the finely tuned olfactory sense of bees helps them act as a [type of rapid test for coronavirus](#).

China Pork: The expansion of large-scale farms in China has driven a big [increase in slaughter pigs](#) for the country, and the number is expected to grow by 19.2% in 2021.

Drought-tolerant Chickpeas: Researchers in India are working to develop high yielding chickpea varieties with [enhanced drought tolerance and yields](#).

One Hump or Two? The United Arab Emirates University funded a collaborative research project investigating the [antidiabetic properties of camel milk](#).

Baby Elephant Rescue: A baby elephant was saved by an [elaborate rescue mission](#) in an Indian village after it fell into a well nearly 30 feet deep.



With its [latest super-speed bullet trains](#), Japan wants to make train travel as cool as jet setting.

General Interest News

Vaccination Information: This site provides information about [how the COVID-19 vaccination campaign is going](#) in each state.

Vaccination Misinformation: Some anti-vaccine advocates promote [false claims about the dangers vaccines pose](#) while selling treatments, supplements, or other services.

Innovative Ag (video): In this episode of the BBC's "Follow the Food" series, viewers learn about the farms being run from space—with a [look at big data, gps methods, digital innovations, robotics, drones, and more.](#)

Who's at the Wheel? A California company says farming can be greener and more profitable with its [fully electric, self-driving tractor.](#)

Literature and Neuroscience: An Ohio State University professor says literature is a form of technology. He looks at the [science behind how literature improves our lives.](#)

Historic Barns—Tours and Info: This website caters to those interested in the [beauty and history of classic barns](#)



Although African-American cowboys don't play a big part in the popular narrative of the American West, historians estimate that [one in four cowboys were Black](#), and some achieved fame.

Photo Credits

P. 1 photo of Evanega and group from [cornell.edu](#), photo of Lamm from [uga.edu](#), and cowboy photo collage from ... Animal Sec. sign pic from [postthisinc.com](#). Food Sec. grocery pic from [fortunewallstreet.com](#). Plant Sec. cartoon from [nsta.org](#). Inter. Sec. train pic from [fluentu.com](#) and [digg.com](#). Gen. Sec. cowboy photo from [getpocket.com](#). Unless otherwise noted, photos courtesy of the USDA Agricultural Research Service or CAST.

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- * American Seed Trade Association
- * 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
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- * CropLife America
- * Crop Science 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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