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.

**In This Issue....**

**Animal Agriculture News**

**Food Science & Safety News**

**Plant & Environmental News**

**International News**

**General Interest News**

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**Announcements**

The spectacular **Super Flower Blood Moon of 2021** thrilled stargazers around the world and added an eclipse to its wonder.

As millions of Americans prepare for Memorial Day and welcome summer, the **USDA and CDC provide safety reminders** for food and health safety.

The Phytobiomes Alliance offers a program called **Crop Condition and Soil Moisture Analytics** June 24—and a reminder that the seminar called **Nuts and Bolts of U.S. Regulatory Dossiers for Genetically Engineered Products** will be June 8-9.

Pork producers are welcome at the Pork Checkoff hospitality tent at **World Pork Expo**, June 9-11, in Des Moines, Iowa.

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**CAST College Corner**

The **University of Kentucky** has worked with a charity for the past decade to help food insecure members of the community.

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**May 28, 2021**

**Agricultural Trade**

**Chess Moves on a Global Stage**

Agriculture relies on robust international trade, and that means moves, countermoves, and even a few risky gambits. As the world hopes the pandemic is easing and trade will rebound, negotiators are moving pieces on the board and working to secure the best deals for their food producers. These are a few of the many trade-issue stories from this week:

(1) The USDA **forecasts record farm exports** in FY 2021, (2) in what some call a "negotiating game," China might **clamp down on corn imports**, (3) U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai met with Chinese trade officials, and she raised "issues of concern," (4) the USDA challenged Canada's allocation of **dairy tariff-rate quotas within the USMCA**, (5) three U.S. Senators introduced legislation to **lift the Cuba trade embargo**, and (6) a **trade deal between the UK and Australia** has farmers both concerned and excited. In chess, it is fashionable to say "let's play," but global agricultural trade focuses on politics, economics, natural events, and a lot of "let's get to work."

**News and Views**

**Agriculture as Part of the Solution:** More than 450 organizations **wrote a letter to Congressional leadership** asking for agriculture involvement in solutions to climate change and additional funding to help farmers and ranchers in the process.

**USDA News Includes:** (1) the start of loan payments to socially disadvantaged borrowers under the **American Rescue Plan**, (2) an update on USDA **activities to contain the COVID-19 pandemic**, and (3) an announcement of **senior staff positions**.

**Water Woes:** Nearly 2 million Americans lack **access to running water, indoor plumbing, or wastewater treatment**. Native American, Black, and Latino households are most affected.

**Backing Biotech:** This opinion piece **says the anti-GMO movement is weakening** because influential groups are softening their opposition, Europe is warming to gene editing,
North Carolina A&T State University received a USDA grant to help improve the recruitment, retention, and graduation of diverse students—especially in STEM fields.

Kansas State University announced that the annual K-State Dairy Days will be June 2-3.

Tuskegee University College of Veterinary Medicine students were the first selected for the USDA-APHIS Foreign Service Veterinary Fellowship program.

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

CAST Social Media

CAST welcomes ideas for future publications and projects.

CAST Paper and Webinar

CAST will roll out its new Commentary—The Role of Agricultural Science and Technology in Climate 21 Project Implementation—June 28 with a webinar presentation June 29.

Far Side of the Barn

Biological Wonders (video): This naked mole rat update looks at their abilities to fight cancer, slow aging, and exude a weird cuteness.

Coffee with Shoosie Delivery (video): Buffalo Brew Coffee is a one-man delivery service with a twist. The owner hops on his bike and cruises with his sidekick—an old, blind pug dog named Sooshie.

Time to Wet Their Stingers (video): Two bees figure out how to open a Fanta orange bottle to access the sweet stuff.

CAST Updates

Guest Blog: Value of Big Data and Artificial Intelligence in Agriculture

"To tackle pressures from the world’s fast-growing population, increasing food demands, and the changing climates, there are several anticipated ways to enhance agricultural productivity and food security. These include reducing food loss and waste, adopting improved crops, and integrating advanced technologies on-farm and in food systems."

Written by Dr. Rim Lassoued, a Professional Research Associate from the University of Saskatchewan.

Read more in this week’s guest blog.

Sarah Evanega—Scientist, Communicator, and Winner of the 2021 BCCA

As announced last week, Cornell University’s Sarah Evanega won the 2021 Borlaug CAST Communication Award. To become more familiar with this extraordinary scientist, click here for the CAST press release and click here for a profile written by Joan Conrow, managing editor of the Cornell Alliance for Science.

Here is a sample from that profile:

"As founder and director of the Cornell Alliance for Science, a global communications initiative in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS), Dr. Sarah Evanega faces down misperceptions, myths, and misinformation about GMOs, or to use the scientific term, agricultural biotechnology. Now she’s
also taking on the conspiracy theories and disinformation campaigns that swirl around the pandemic, vaccines, climate change, and synthetic biology."

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**Animal Agriculture and Environmental News**

**Chicken Production:** Mississippi State University and USDA-ARS scientists studied the effects of providing [increased feed spacing for broiler chickens](https://example.com).

**Livestock:** The UN Food and Agriculture Organization [clarify some misinformation about livestock](https://example.com) emissions and the amount of "human food" eaten by food animals.

**Cattle and Drought:** Kansas State University cattle experts offer tips on reducing the [effects of drought on the herd](https://example.com).

**Feed Additive:** This article looks at the [history and current use of ractopamine hydrochloride](https://example.com), a feed additive for pigs that is banned in some countries.

**Poultry Award:** The 2021 Poultry Science Association [Distinguished Poultry Industry Career Award](https://example.com) went to a professor of monogastric nutrition for her many years of environmental sustainability work and other contributions.

**Innovations:** New [precision farm equipment](https://example.com) (smart feeder monitors and precision manure spreaders) on Iowa State University research farms facilitates research trials.

**Veterinary Training:** The Ohio State University’s new Frank Stanton [Veterinary Spectrum of Care Clinic](https://example.com) will provide impressive clinical training for veterinary medicine students.

**Food Science and Safety News**

**Farms, Food, and You:** This North Carolina State University podcast looks at the momentum that’s been building for the [food manufacturing and processing industry](https://example.com).

**French Delicacy from Carolina Soil?** With the help of an expert from North Carolina A&T State University, producers may have succeeded at [cultivating American-grown truffles](https://example.com).

**Diet and Microbiome:** This study looks at the [effects of long-term dietary patterns on the microbiome](https://example.com) and their subsequent effects on us.

**Understanding Obesity:** These scientists believe a [stomach-specific protein](https://example.com) plays a big role in the progression of obesity.

**Sit Down—and Consider Weight Loss:** A Cal Poly study looks at [obesity, weight loss, and various sitting activities](https://example.com).

**Delivery Services Boom? (video):** Fuelled by venture capitalists, speedy [delivery start-ups are booming in parts of Europe](https://example.com), and some predict continued growth.

**During a recent webinar, Jayson Lusk (Purdue and 2017 BCCA) outlined the top supply chain disruptions for the pork industry in a post-COVID-19 world.**

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Or Bust? (related to above): In the United States, some think the recent delivery service growth will fade to a bust.

**Plant Agriculture and Environmental News**

Dealing with a "Forgotten Greenhouse Gas": Scientists are looking at ways to treat the soil or adjust farming practices to cut back on N₂O production.

Dicamba Debate Continues: The EPA’s Office of Inspector General says the agency improperly approved registration for dicamba products.

Plant Health and Global Food Security: A North Carolina State University professor joined other experts in researching tools to prevent plant disease pandemics.

National Science Foundation Funds Study: An Iowa State University agronomist says climate change and soil erosion cause an environmental feedback loop that can have big effects on the land.

Weed Battle: A professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln produced research that aims to help farmers fight Palmer amaranth.

Ghost Forest (video): The artist best known for the Vietnam Veterans’ Memorial created a tree exhibit that focuses on climate change impacts on trees.

Drought Experts: Faculty and staff from UC Davis are available to discuss the drought and water-supply issues—ranging from agriculture to water law and policy.

**International News**

A "Golden" Sandwich (video): A London chef uses a leaner Japanese wagyu beef—plus caviar, quality cheese, and gold leaf—to make a tasty, expensive sandwich.

Scientists and Tourists Going with the Flow (video): Iceland recently experienced 30,000 earth tremors followed by an impressive volcano featuring a steady flow of lava. See related link in the photo caption.

Pigs and Antibiotics: This article looks at efforts in Brazil to reduce the use of antibiotics on pig farms.

Drought Recovery in Australia: The past year has been a drought-recovery time for Australian agriculture, and this has affected livestock feed demand.

Mouse Plague in the Outback (video): Bumper crops in Australia (see link above) have led to the worst mouse plague in memory.

**General Interest News**

Genetics and Animals: A University of Missouri professor is part of an international effort to sequence the genomes of more than 70,000 species of animals.
Digestive Tracts and Diseases: University of Florida researchers are looking in an unexpected place—the digestive tract of a tiny, translucent worm—in an effort to battle neurodegenerative diseases in humans.

Print My House (videos): Robots and 3D-printers are now part of the hot housing market—and someday they might affect habitats on the Moon and Mars.

Wind Power: The Federal Government plans to open the California coast to offshore wind development, ending a stalemate with the Department of Defense that has been a barrier to building wind power along the Pacific Coast.

Pandemic Puppies: Many acquired puppies during the pandemic—and many are turning to dog obedience classes.

What's New, Pussy Cat? A North Carolina State University study looks at cat health—with a focus on gut microbes.

Two recent University of Nebraska grads invented a grain robot that could help farmers inside grain bins and therefore save lives.

Three new safety resource booklets provide guidelines for young people working on farms.

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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 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
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* Bayer
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* National Corn Growers Association/Iowa Corn Promotion Board
* National Milk Producers Federation
* National Pork Board
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* Northeastern Weed Science Society
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* 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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