



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



Nebraska-Lincoln, Texas A&M, and Tuskegee are among the 18 university members of the [CAST Education Program](#) starting the fall term. Students returning to North Carolina State University will experience more color on campus as the institution is [using its greenhouse facilities to grow more flowers and plants](#).

The [2021 Farm Progress Show](#) recently occurred in Decatur, Illinois. Check out some of the activities on both [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

In a recent interview, Secretary of Agriculture [Tom Vilsack](#) [discussed various topics](#) including climate, renewable fuels, wildfires, labor shortages, disaster assistance, and more.

The annual [Iowa Hunger Summit](#) focused on addressing societal and social causes of hunger.

Check [here for information](#) about the [Ag Innovation Showcase](#), September 13-14, hosted by the Larta Institute and the North Carolina Biotechnology Center.

CAST College Corner

September 3, 2021

Fire and Rain

The classic James Taylor line, "I've seen fire and I've seen rain," symbolizes the extremes battering the country, with [California wildfires](#) and [Hurricane Ida](#) the latest examples. [Loss of life and property](#) rightly take the headlines, but such events also affect agriculture in substantial ways.



Wildfires have ravaged many western states, with [California especially hard hit](#). The USDA has offered assistance for crop, infrastructure, and livestock losses as [agricultural operations have been significantly impacted](#) by the fires.

Hurricane Ida carved a deadly [path of destruction from Louisiana to New England](#), leaving more than one million people without power and [record flooding in NYC](#). The monster storm [crippled some shipping facilities](#) along the lower Mississippi River, and [shipping issues could affect the overall export picture](#) for grain, meat, and other goods.

News and Views

USDA Updates: The department 1) released its [quarterly trade forecast](#), 2) sent [food aid to families](#) in Louisiana, and 3) is soliciting comments regarding the [labeling of meat and poultry](#) products made using cultured cells derived from animals. Note: Click here for the CAST Commentary [Producing Food Products from Cultured Animal Tissues](#).

EPA Appointees: Two Purdue professors have been [appointed to the Environmental Protection Agency's Science Advisory Board](#)—Sylvie Brouder and Dominique van der Mensbrugge. Dr. Brouder was the Task Force Chair for the CAST Commentary [Enabling Open-source Data Networks in Public Agricultural Research](#).

[College Aggies Online](#) connects college students from across the country who are passionate about sharing positive information about animal agriculture.

[Iowa State University](#) and other institutions received grants from the Agricultural Genome to Phenome Initiative to advance crop and livestock genetics research.

[Cal Poly](#) researchers set up the first [livestream](#) of rattlesnakes in the wild—including expectant mothers.

[Kansas State University's](#) Salina Aerospace and Technology Campus will renew its mission to support aerospace industries.

CAST Social Media

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

Medical Warning: Both [the FDA](#) and [the American Veterinary Medical Association](#) warn that the livestock drug ivermectin should not be taken in attempts to prevent or treat COVID-19.

Asking Farmers to Vaccinate: The leaders of the American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Milk Producers Federation explain [why vaccinations are important for farmers](#). The CDC claims that the [overall effectiveness of COVID vaccines](#) has been high.

Far Side of the Barn

Where's the Beef? In the Back Seat (video): A car using a McDonald's drive-thru apparently had [three calves in the back seat](#). We assume they ordered "chikin."



Look What You Made Me Do (video): This vintage clip from Farmer Derek uses plenty of slapstick to [parody our cellphone addictions](#).

Dream Weaver (video): A [talented spider](#) weaves a geometrical web of beauty.

CAST Updates

CAST Members--the Lifblood of the Organization

As a member-supported, 501(c)3 nonprofit, the CAST Boards and staff are acutely aware that CAST members are the lifblood of this organization! From keeping the lights on and our small staff compensated, to supporting the publications and resources we freely provide to anyone interested in unbiased, science-based information about food and agriculture...it is all thanks to our thoughtful members and donors.

And we're fortunate to have a diverse membership consisting of companies, nonprofit organizations, scientific/professional societies, and universities that represent a wide variety of ag interests around animal and plant science, food, meteorology, law, and economics. In addition, our individual members range from university students and recent graduates, to retired professionals and scientists who have been with us for decades.

But one thing they all have in common: a passion for—and commitment to—supporting CAST's mission:

CAST convenes and coordinates networks of experts to assemble, interpret, and communicate credible, unbiased, science-based information to policymakers, the media, the private sector, and the public.

Because of that invaluable support, the CAST Boards, staff, and volunteers are free to continue creating and providing credible information about the science, technology, and innovation so important to food, agriculture, and the environment.

And we thank you all!



Animal Agriculture and Environmental News

Poultry Exports Surge: Exports of U.S. broiler chickens and shell eggs [set records in the first half of 2021](#) and are on pace to break all-time marks.

Cattle Numbers: The [U.S. cattle inventory](#) experienced its largest mid-year decrease since 2012, but a University of Kentucky specialist is optimistic about the industry's future.

Veterinarians' Vital Roles: This interview gives insights into the [important role veterinarians play](#) on poultry farms.

It's Not the Cow; It's the How (opinion): An environmental lawyer explains her support of [grass-fed beef production](#).

Pig Vaccine: By using genetic modification, ARS researchers developed [yet another experimental vaccine](#) offering possible protection against African swine fever.

Animals and Diseases: Research shows that farming large numbers of carnivores, like mink, could lead to [pathogens and disease](#). Note: there is no evidence that domestic pets carry or transmit COVID-19.



Cornell researchers say 20% of female [glittering white-necked jacobin hummingbirds](#) are able to grow male-like plumage so they can avoid bullies and get more food.

Food Science and Safety News

Helping Hands (video): Chef Jose Andres' organization is one of many [groups providing free meals](#) to residents as Hurricane Ida moved through Louisiana.

Hunger Rates: The [U.S. hunger rate is the lowest it has been since the pandemic began](#). Many analysts credit the expanded child tax credit, coronavirus relief programs, and a rebound from recession for the improvement.

Food Prices: A UN report says that [world food prices jumped in August](#) after two consecutive months of decline.

Specialty Food Trends: [Summer food trends](#) included online habits, international cuisine, and tinned fish.

Analyzing Trends: Jayson Lusk (Purdue and [2017 BCCA](#)) looks at the [ebbs and flows of fashionable food trends](#)

Nutritional Science: The Center for Nutritional Sciences at the University of Florida is a good example of land-grant universities [offering educational and research opportunities](#).



Apparently, milk is "the cat's meow." Despite quarantines, restaurant closings, and other challenges, [dairy product sales increased during the pandemic](#).

Plant Agriculture and Environmental News

Water Rule: A federal court ordered the EPA to vacate the Trump [Navigable Waters Protection Rule](#) saying it contained errors harmful to the environment. Several farm groups voiced disappointment.

Biofuel Expansion: Producers of soyoil for the [rapidly emerging renewable diesel market](#) say that it can expand without food-versus-fuel criticism from the general public.

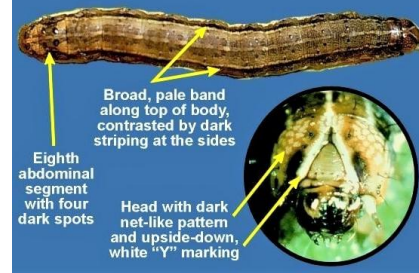
CAST Publication (see above): [Animal Feed vs. Human Food: Challenges and Opportunities in Sustaining Animal Agriculture Toward 2050](#).

Testing for Viruses: University of Arkansas scientists say [current testing regimens may be missing](#) a significant number of disease-causing viruses in berry plants.

Carbon Capture: Farmers in three states completed the initial benchmarking phase of Rabo Carbon Bank's first [carbon sequestration and soil health pilot program](#).

Soil Tests: USDA/ARS scientists are using an economic method to [measure soil health in dryland farm systems](#).

Fall Armyworm Identification



A University of Missouri entomologist explains that [armyworms are on the march](#)—damaging pastures and row crops. It is the worst outbreak in 30 years.

Penn State researchers finished an exhaustive comparison of the [genomes of multiple strains of the cacao tree](#).

International News

Printed Wagyu Beef: Scientists in Japan discovered how to utilize [3D bioprinting to produce Wagyu cultured beef](#)

Mad Cow Disease? Brazil's agriculture ministry said it was [investigating a suspected case of mad cow disease](#) in the country, according to a statement.

Farming the Desert (video): This initiative in the United Arab Emirates has been trying to find highly nutritious [crops that can adapt to desert conditions](#).

Social Influencer on Idyllic English Farm: Although he has supporters and critics, this Englishman may be the [best-known farmer in the United Kingdom](#).

Henry the Chicken, Reporting for Duty: The [traffic patrol officer at a preschool in New Zealand is a chicken](#)—and it wears a fluorescent vest.



Farmers use airlifts to move injured [Swiss Alpine meadow cows](#).

General Interest News

Fire Prevention (video): UC Davis specialists explain how owners can improve [home defenses against a wildfire](#).

That Sinking Feeling! A field in Minnesota collapsed, making a [25-foot sinkhole that was a quarter-mile long](#).

Assassin Bugs: Mississippi State University specialists warn about the [eastern bloodsucking conenose](#), a type of assassin bug that can affect frogs, rats, dogs, and more.

Seaweed Packaging: A company is exploring how seaweed fibers can be used as a [material in packaging products](#) amid increasing demand for sustainable goods.

The Science of Little House on the Prairie: Laura Ingalls Wilder's reflections on her life experiences have [spurred some scientists to use research techniques](#) to clarify details from the books.



This study shows that feral hogs around the world are [causing environmental problems](#) as they impact soil carbon emissions.

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- * 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 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

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.

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