



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



With an inspiring speech and a call for inclusivity, alliances, and bold actions, Sarah Evanega received the [2021 Borlaug CAST Communication Award](#) (BCCA) at a special event tied in with World Food Prize activities. A video of the presentation will be available early next week. Check for more on page 2 below and in next week's Friday Notes.

The CAST Commentary, *Gains Foregone by Going GMO Free: Potential Impacts on Consumers, the Environment, and Agricultural Producers*, will be available November 15, with a webinar presentation/Q&A panel occurring on November 16. Watch for more details in next week's Friday Notes.

The CDC has given the green light for [COVID vaccine booster shots](#) for newly eligible Americans. The decision of which brand will be up to the individual.

CAST College Corner

[North Carolina A&T State University](#) mourned the passing of former Secretary of State Colin Powell—and many universities

October 22, 2021

Feeding the World

Borlaug legacy lives on with the World Food Prize

The World Food Prize Foundation's annual event is part of its mission to "increase the quality, quantity, and availability of food for all." As noted elsewhere in this edition, CAST plays an active role in these efforts.



Among many other activities during the past week, the World Food Prize Foundation 1) hosted the [Borlaug Dialogue](#), 2) organized [youth institutes](#), 3) set up the [Global Guides Program for Educators](#), and 3) presented the [2021 World Food Prize to Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted](#) during an impressive ceremony at the Iowa State Capitol Building.

Dr. Thilsted was recognized for "her groundbreaking research, critical insights, and landmark innovations in developing holistic, nutrition-sensitive approaches to aquaculture and food systems." She sees a need to recognize, fund, and value aquatic foods as a way to get nutrition to millions. Her October 18 presentation about this topic at Iowa State University was titled "[Aquatic Foods for Nourishing Nations](#)."

An earlier award went to Elliott Dossou-Yovo of the Africa Rice Center who was named the [2021 recipient of the Norman E. Borlaug Award for Field Research and Application](#). Dr. Dossou-Yovo developed innovative water management systems for resilient rice production in the face of climate change.

News and Views

USDA Updates: The department 1) issued a [joint statement from the U.S. and Mexican](#) agriculture secretaries, 2) hosted a virtual session about access to [nutritious foods for school meal programs](#), and 3) announced members of the [National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods](#).

PFAS: EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan announced the agency's [PFAS Strategic Roadmap](#)—laying out an approach to addressing the compounds that some call "forever chemicals." Note: PFAS stands for "per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances."

noted the death of the accomplished statesman.

The [University of Missouri](#) Interdisciplinary Plant Group celebrated its 40th year of pursuing innovative ideas in the field of plant biology.

A [Texas A&M](#) scientist is using controlled environment agriculture to make leaps in urban farming through automation, artificial intelligence, and robotics.

A [Mississippi State University](#) scientist is asking for citizen scientist volunteers to help collect data for a study about bees, flowers, and nutrition.

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

SNAP: A USDA study says [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) funds save jobs and boost rural economies, as well as providing food to rural families during financially tough times.

Xenotransplantation: In a major medical advance, a [kidney from a gene-edited pig was transplanted into a human](#) without triggering rejection by the recipient's immune system.

Far Side of the Barn

Airport Pigs (video): No flying pigs, but an Amsterdam airport has employed a herd of [pigs to keep geese away and reduce airline bird-strikes](#).



A Pumpkin Miracle Grow (video): This time-lapse video shows a pumpkin growing [from a seed to a 1223-pound gargantuan](#) in a few months.

Eagle Cam (video): Zoo Miami and a wildlife rescue group are [hosting a 24-hour livestream](#) to monitor a pair of eagles.

CAST Updates

Sarah Evanega Receives 2021 BCCA Award

She wants us to "set a bolder table for the future"

An October 21 event honored 2021 Borlaug CAST Communication Award [winner Sarah Evanega](#), a professor at the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research and the founding [director of the Alliance for Science](#). Held at the Hall of Laureates in Des Moines and part of the World Food Prize agenda, the breakfast session was emceed by CAST EVP/CEO Kent Schescke and included welcoming remarks from World Food Prize Foundation President Barbara Stinson, sponsor comments from Farm Journal Foundation CEO Tricia Beal, insights from former CropLife America President Jay Vroom, and introductory remarks from Cornell University International Programs Director Ronnie Coffman.



In her keynote speech, Dr. Evanega explained why scientists and agriculturalists need to "modify, include, and diversify." As she said, "You can be that person who offers a chair, a hand, and says, 'Will you join me at my table?' 'Will you join us at our table?', and just as importantly, 'May we join you at your table?'"

The more than 100 in attendance responded warmly to Evanega's enthusiasm and optimism. "We make mistakes. What's important is that when we recognize our mistakes, that we learn, change, and grow--and we become better communicators, better allies, and better advocates."

***A video of the presentation and Evanega's speech, *Set a Bolder Table for the Future: Modify, Include,*

*** In the photo above: left inset from left to right, Ronnie Coffman, Sarah Evanega, Kent Schescke, and Tricia Beal; middle inset, Barbara Stinson; and right inset, Jay Vroom.

*** This award was sponsored by the Farm Journal Foundation, with additional support for the breakfast and the video coming from FMC.

Animal Agriculture and Environmental News

Poultry Product Safety: The USDA/FSIS announced a comprehensive effort to [reduce *Salmonella* illnesses associated with poultry products](#).

Poultry Research: Research at North Carolina State University evaluated the pathogenicity of *Cochlosoma anatis*—part of a comprehensive program [looking at various phases of poultry and egg production](#).

Answering the Critics: Dr. Frank Mitloehner (UC Davis and [2019 BCCA](#)) replies to criticism about his material [regarding animal agriculture and climate change](#).

Pork Optimism: In this “Open Mic” interview, Bill Even—CEO of the National Pork Board—says swine producers are optimistic about [domestic demand and export sales](#).

Cow Talk: Kansas State University’s Cattle Chat podcast [looks at cow pregnancy](#) and spring calving.

New Meat Plants: Farmers and ranchers are joining together to build multiple meat plants in different states, hoping to put [pricing power back in the producers’ hands](#).



The “Reset Yourself with Dairy” initiative uses media channels and marketing [strategies to engage young people](#).

New research explores the effects of [supplementation with vitamin D](#) to support cows’ immune function.

This blog discusses why [hens are housed indoors](#).

Food Science and Safety News

Food Variety: A UC Davis review calls for a broader [understanding of eco-friendly diets](#). This story includes insights from Alison Van Eenennaam ([2014 BCCA](#)).

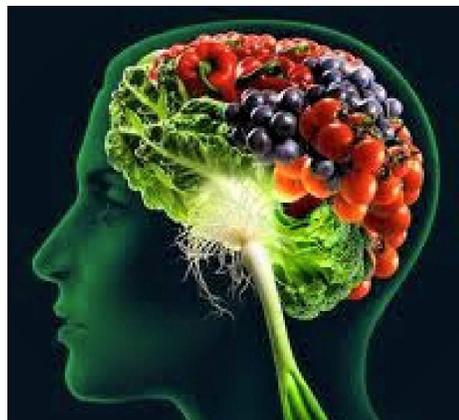
Comparison: A University of Nevada-Reno professor looks at the [nutritional differences between oat and cow’s milk](#).

Criticism: Some environmental advocates are [criticizing plant-based food companies](#) for sustainability issues.

Processed Food: Consumption of [ultra-processed foods](#) [has increased](#) during the past two decades in the United States, and some say this affects health.

The Pandemic and Food Systems: Scientists from the Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability were involved with a study about how the COVID-19 [pandemic provides lessons for agri-food systems](#) and innovation.

Eat the Invaders: Invasive species cause problems, and some say it is time to [put non-native plants and animals on our menus](#). Ready for kudzu, wild boar, and bullfrog?



Researchers are examining neurons and hormones associated with eating too much, as they hope to understand the [brain circuits involved with eating disorders](#).

Plant Agriculture and Environmental News

Anaerobic Soil Disinfestation: Penn State scientists are improving a [method for controlling soilborne pests and pathogens](#).

Pond Scum: The microalgae that make up floating green mats of slime could get newfound respect as renewable sources of fuel, specialty chemicals, dietary supplements, and [possibly as agricultural fertilizer](#).

Diggin' in the Dirt: Soils contain solid particles of different sizes and different types. This *Soils Matter* [blog explains what soils are made of](#).

Local Best: UC Davis staff members and a nonprofit are using native plants and insects to launch a [community initiative to find the best native plants](#) for the local area.

A Crop with Possibilities: Some tout the [benefits of a crop called "sunn hemp."](#) It can grow in inhospitable environments, increase soil organic matter, provide nitrogen, and suppress parasitic nematodes.



Yorizane is a [new self-pollinating almond variety](#) developed by USDA/ARS, and aside from it not needing insect pollinators, it is reported to have impressive size, color, and flavor.

International News

Empty Shelves: The pandemic and other factors are contributing to various [shortages around the world](#)—from coffee to cooking gas, from toys to toilet paper.

Russian Buzz (video): The untouched forests that cover much of Russia's Far East region are increasingly [known for honey production](#).

Bring in the Butchers: This report says that Britain will try to [avoid a mass cull of pigs](#) by allowing foreign-trained butchers to work on temporary visas.

Shortages (related to above): With staffing shortages looming, this British expert provides [steps pig producers can take to be better prepared](#) for potential crisis situations.

Cherry Pickin': Chilean industry leaders project that [cherry exports to the United States](#) will be strong in 2021-22.



A [rooftop farm in Paris](#) uses 90% less water than traditional farming and is becoming a blueprint for sustainable farming.

General Interest News

Carbon Capture: The University of Kentucky received a U.S. Department of Energy grant to develop [technology that will capture carbon dioxide](#) directly from the atmosphere.

Finding Hope in Young People: Well-known naturalist [Jane Goodall wants to help others](#) avoid "eco-grief," and her "Roots and Shoots" program for young people has chapters in more than 60 countries.

Agrivoltaics: By [growing crops under solar panels](#), researchers are showing how this might increase yields and reduce water use.

Island Agriculture Shifting: Researchers from the University of Hawaii are [seeking crops that will withstand the increased heat](#), soil salinity, and droughts expected as the state faces climate shifts.

Wineries Adapt: Some [wineries are tackling the climate crisis](#) by using methods such as no till, cover crops, varied



In this video profile, noted [agriculturalist Temple Grandin](#) urges parents and educators to expose autistic children to a range

Photo Credits

Note: BCCA event photos from Dwight Tomes, Melissa Sly, and Dan Gogerty. Page one collage from wfp.org, pig cartoon from imgbin.com and pig pic from flipboard.com. Animal Sec. milk pic from aginfo.net. Food Sec. brain graphic from eatrightvirginia.com. Plant Sec. almond pic from ars.usda.gov and tytynursery.com. Inter. Sec. rooftop pic from curbed.com. Gen. Sec. Grandin photo from d.umn.edu. Unless otherwise noted, photos courtesy of the USDA Agricultural Research Service or CAST.

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- * National Milk Producers Federation
- * National Pork Board
- * National Turkey Federation
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- * Northeastern Weed Science Society
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- * 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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