**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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- Animal Agriculture News
- Food Science & Safety News
- Plant & Environmental News
- International News
- General Interest News

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**Announcements**

A [video is available of the event](https://example.com) honoring Dr. Sarah Evanega as the 2021 Borlaug CAST Communication Award winner—and it includes her presentation *Set a Bolder Table for the Future: Modify, Include, Diversify*. See page 2 below for more.

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*.

Jayson Lusk (Purdue and 2017 BCCA) will lead the new [Center for Food Demand Analysis and Sustainability](https://example.com)—to create, interpret, and communicate data about consumer preferences and food markets.

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**October 29, 2021**

**Climate Change Conference**

*Agriculture at the Global Table*

Agriculture influences most global concerns, and it will certainly be a key topic in an upcoming world gathering. The United Kingdom will host the [26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26)](https://example.com) in Glasgow, October 31-November 12, to work on the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. With a growing awareness that food and agricultural systems play a role in climate change, many say the ag sector should be a big piece of the discussions.

In many ways, agriculture has already been heavily involved, as these examples demonstrate: 1) With mixed responses, global agriculture companies are enticing farmers to join [programs that keep carbon dioxide in the soil](https://example.com). 2) Dr. Frank Mitloehner (UC Davis and 2019 BCCA) says climate issues can present opportunities for agriculture, and he thinks the environmental impact of livestock production has been overstated. 3) Programs such as the "methane barn" at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln show that producers and climate scientists can find some common ground. 4) CAST recently published the Commentary *The Role of Agricultural Science and Technology in Climate 21 Project Implementation*.

**News and Views**

**USDA Updates**: The department 1) announced that more than 50 organizations and countries declared support for the [Coalition on Sustainable Productivity Growth for Food Security](https://example.com), 2) released a 40-page [climate adaptation and resilience plan](https://example.com), and 3) announced the department will release selected tables prepared for the upcoming [USDA Agricultural Projections](https://example.com) report.

**Ag Biotechnology**: A panel of scientists and farm-state lawmakers urge the FDA and USDA to modernize the regulation of agricultural biotechnology.

**Supply Chain and Ag**: More than 50 agriculture groups wrote
Volunteers from The Ohio State University joined community organizations and delivered 188,300 meals to fight food insecurity in the state.

Iowa State University researchers will identify tougher enzymes and engineer microbes for use in industrial fermentation and to improve bioproduction of fuels and chemicals.

The Tuskegee University College of Veterinary Medicine received a generous grant to support veterinary medical education.

North Carolina A&T State University will be able to provide additional aid to small farmers thanks to two USDA grants.

CAST Social Media

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CAST welcomes ideas for future publications and projects.

CAST Updates

Sarah Evanega Emphasizes Science and Communication

"reject exclusivity, form unlikely alliances, and be daring altruists"

With the World Food Prize Hall of Laureates as the venue and a portrait of Norman Borlaug looking on, CAST gathered an impressive group of science and agriculture enthusiasts for the October 21 event honoring the 2021 Borlaug CAST Communication Award winner, Dr. Sarah Evanega, a professor at the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research and the founding director of the Alliance for Science, received the award and then gave an inspiring presentation about communication and inclusion: Set a Bolder Table for the Future: Modify, Include, Diversify. A video of Evanega’s speech is available here.

The 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. Many other influential agriculture stakeholders attended, including Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig, pictured above at the far left with (left to right) Tricia Beal, Ryan Locke of FMC, Sarah Evanega, Kent Schescke, and Jay Vroom. The Borlaug CAST Communication Award is sponsored by the Farm Journal Foundation. Additional support for the breakfast and video recording was provided by FMC.

The Borlaug CAST Communication Award is presented annually for outstanding achievement by a scientist,
CAST Annual Meeting Held in Columbus, Ohio

The CAST Fall Annual Meeting occurred October 26-28 in Columbus, Ohio. Along with educational tours on The Ohio State University campus, members attended informational sessions and met in various work groups. Dr. Chavonda Jacobs-Young—Administrator, USDA Agricultural Research Service—provided updates from the USDA, and during the next three days, attendees and webinar participants stayed focused on CAST’s mission of communicating credible science and agricultural information. Presenters and emcees included members of the CAST boards (Trustees and Directors), several Borlaug CAST Communication Award winners, the CAST staff, and more. Watch for further information about the meeting in next week’s Friday Notes.

Animal Agriculture and Environmental News

**Al on the Ranch:** A cattle monitoring system includes electronic ear tags and corresponding software that send information straight to a computer or mobile device.

**Turkey Talk:** A new CAST member, the National Turkey Federation, explains the “health benefits, versatility, and great taste” of its birds.

**Pork Market:** Rabobank reports that pandemic challenges persist, but pork values remain strong on good demand and smaller supply.

**Cow Health:** A USDA/ARS study took a closer look at the genetic material of multiple subtypes (strains) of three groups of bacterial species commonly implicated with bovine respiratory disease.

**Poultry Science Departments:** The USPOULTRY Foundation awarded student recruiting grants to six U.S. universities—including Mississippi State, Arkansas, Texas A&M, and North Carolina State.

**Feral pigs are considered destructive, and new research looks at the ways they disturb wildlife, uproot soil, and cause harmful carbon emissions.**

Food Science and Safety News

**Biotech Help for Waste and Taste:** Researchers may have found a gene that allows tomatoes to ripen but keeps their flesh firm longer.

**Want Fries with That Pasta Sauce?** University of Florida researchers say that the supply chains for two of America’s most popular foods—French fries and pasta sauce—are surprisingly resilient to climate change.

**Boosting Rice:** University of Arkansas food scientists developed a parboiling process that reduces water use up to 75% and improves nutrient content in rice.

**Salt Tips:** Adding to last week’s FDA recommendations about salt intake, this Kansas State University nutrition specialist gives suggestions about cutting back.

**Honey, I Shrunk the Produce:** This expert explains how produce departments lose money through the hidden shrink factor—and he provides six ways to overcome the problem.

**Don’t tell the turkeys, but students at the Penn State Poultry Education and Research Center are selling birds for Thanksgiving. Check here for a 360-degree virtual reality video experience showing how young turkeys are raised.**

Plant Agriculture and Environmental News
Fires and Communities: Cal Poly is establishing the Wildland-Urban Interface Institute to develop solutions to prevent destructive wildfires and help build more resilient communities.

Water Conservation and Communication: Scientists at the University of Florida and the University of Georgia (including 2020 BCCA winner Alexa Lamm) found that the best ways to communicate about water conservation include a reduction of science jargon and a focus on economics.

Biofuels in the Air: A major grain company plans to slash more than half of its capacity for corn ethanol for cars and transition it to clean jet fuel production.

Corn Crop Health: A team of scientists—including from the ARS—are helping farmers turn the tide on an emerging corn disease called tar spot.

Orange Peels and Soybeans: These scientists looked at reusing a by-product of the orange juice industry that contains pectin to find if it helps soybeans grow.

Seven states and 30 Native American tribes are dealing with a drought-stricken Colorado River—while a “bomb cyclone” hit the West Coast—triggering landslides, flooding roads, and reigniting the iconic Yosemite Falls.

International News

The Songhai Project (video): This agricultural project by a Nigerian-born scientist is designed to increase food security, help the environment, and create jobs.

Climate Pledge: Australia has committed to reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050, but many say the country should set an earlier target.

Mexican Pork: Many commend the Mexican pork industry as it transforms into a competitive pork supplier, but a Rabobank report suggests the country still needs to advance its modernization process.

Waiter, There’s a Fly in My Feed: Black soldier fly larvae might replace soybean meal as a protein source in pig feed according to researchers in the Netherlands.

Bean Boost: Nigeria is the world’s largest producer and consumer of cowpea (beans), and a genetically modified variety is expected to help increase production.

The amazing animals in this protected wetlands system in the Amazon Basin include pink dolphins and piranhas.

General Interest News

Only 23 Million Light Years Away: Astronomers spotted signs of a planet in a star system outside the Milky Way. If confirmed, it would be the first ever found in another galaxy.

Solar Farming: An Indiana farmer says the long-term solar benefits outweigh the possible burdens, but he encourages farmers to do their homework before taking the plunge.

Helping with Land Ownership: Black farmers in Detroit have turned blighted properties into vital food sources, and a new land fund is helping them obtain official ownership—a situation that has been historically challenging.

Truckin': The American Transportation Research Institute report looks at driver shortage, retention, compensation, and, for the first time, the shortage of diesel technicians.

This noted photographer spent decades capturing “Two Worlds: Above and Below the Sea”—an
Swimming Upstream: Officials say warm water, low flows, and bacteria killed 80% or more of Chinook salmon returning to the South Fork Nooksack River in Washington.

Photo Credits

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* Bayer
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* National Corn Growers Association/Iowa Corn Promotion Board
* National Milk Producers Federation
* National Pork Board
* National Turkey Federation
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* 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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