



*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 [New AG International Annual](#) event will have in-person and digital events April 18-19.

National FFA Week (February 18-25) is a time for FFA members to raise awareness about the National FFA Organization's role in developing future leaders and the [importance of agricultural education](#).

### CAST College Corner

[North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University](#) welcomed USDA Secretary Vilsack for a tour of the university and the university farm on February 8.

[Mississippi State University](#) students designed solutions for innovative, multi-purpose solar farms.

### CAST Social Media

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## February 24, 2023

### Mexico's Immediate GMO Corn Ban Raises Concerns

Mexico recently announced it would immediately [ban imports of genetically modified corn for human consumption](#), instead of waiting until 2024 as originally planned.



Since Mexico is the biggest buyer of U.S. corn, the National Corn Growers Association expressed serious concern with the accelerated implementation timeline, noting it threatens the USMCA agreement.

Imports of GMO corn for animal feed and industrial use will be allowed until there are viable alternatives. The day after Mexico's announcement [USDA reported the sale of 213,370 tons](#) of U.S. corn to Mexico for delivery this marketing year.

### News and Views

**USDA Updates:** The USDA announced 1) the Biden-Harris Administration is investing \$59 million to [strengthen the food supply chain](#) and rural economies and 2) agricultural producers and private landowners can begin applying for the [Conservation Reserve Program](#) (CRP) general signup starting February 27 through April 7, 2023.

### Far Side of the Barn

**Cheese Contest:** The [U.S. Champion Cheese Contest](#) was held this week in Green Bay, Wisconsin. It started in 1981 and this year 42 judges evaluated 2,249 entries in many classes.



## CAST Updates

### 2023 BCCA Nominations are Closing Monday

**Nominations are closing this Monday, February 27** for the 2023 Borlaug CAST Communication Award (BCCA), an honor that recognizes professionals actively working in the agricultural, environmental, or food sectors who are promoting agricultural science in the public policy arena. More nomination information can be [found on the CAST website](#). A list of previous BCCA recipients [can be viewed here](#).



### CAST Impact Reports on Publications

[Impact data for each CAST publication](#) is tracked and reported on at 6, 12, 18, and 24 months after the paper releases. At two years, the impact report is considered “final” and we no longer continue tracking unless there is a special request. Categories that are currently being tracked are: release/rollout, press release, comments received, follow-on activities, direct and indirect paper distribution, articles and web mentions, paper citations, and social media.

Here are the final impact reports for two recent CAST publications:

- [Food Biofortification—Reaping the Benefits of Science to Overcome Hidden Hunger](#)
- [Ground and Aerial Robots for Agricultural Production: Opportunities and Challenges](#)

## Animal Agriculture and Environmental News

**Alligators and Catfish:** Researchers are injecting [alligator DNA into farm-raised catfish](#) to make the fish more resistant to disease.

**Honey Bee Diversity:** ARS researchers recently studied the U.S. honey bee’s genetic diversity and found that the [population has low genetic diversity](#).

**Bee Health (related to above):** Check out the CAST Commentary, [Why Does Bee Health Matter? The Science Surrounding Honey Bee Health Concerns and What We Can Do About It](#), released in 2017.



**USDA’s APHIS is proposing to [amend animal disease traceability regulations](#) and require electronic identification for interstate movement of certain cattle and bison.**

## Food Science and Safety News

**Indigenous Foodways:** A recent bison harvest in Montana is one example of the work being done in a growing number of state-level curriculum programs that [immerse students in sacred ceremony](#) and food traditions.

**Clear Labeling:** The Food and Drug Administration released a draft with recommendations for the industry on the [naming of plant-based beverages](#) that are marketed and sold as alternatives to milk.

**Food Labels (related to above):** Check out the CAST Issue Paper, [Process Labeling of Food: Consumer Behavior, the Agricultural Sector, and Policy Recommendations](#), released in 2015.



The health benefits of oats are [driving global interest](#) as well as investment in research and development.

## Plant Agriculture and Environmental News

**Storing Seeds:** The Sustainable, Secure Food Blog discusses ideal [storage conditions for seeds](#).

**GM Trees:** Genetically modified trees have been planted in a U.S. forest for the first time in hopes of the [seedlings helping manage climate change](#).

**Growing Seasons:** Adapting growing seasons to climate change can [boost yields of world's staple crops](#)--including maize, wheat, rice, sorghum, and soybeans.



University researchers synthesized global data from nearly 600 studies on biochar to analyze its potential as a [climate-smart agricultural practice](#).

## International News

**Sheep:** In a bid to tackle climate change, British farmers are trying to breed low-methane-emitting sheep by [using genetic engineering](#).

**Beef Exports:** Brazil's [beef exports to China will be halted](#) after a case of mad cow disease, formally called bovine spongiform encephalitis (BSE), was confirmed in the northern state of Para.

**Peanut Production:** [Solar powered peanut dryers](#) in Togo are helping women-run cooperatives reduce their workload and increase their profits.



A warmer planet was devastating wheat yields in one of India's poorest, but most fertile states. Researchers looked at the agricultural system as a whole to [find a promising path forward](#).

## General Interest

**Reservoirs in California:** California's drought-stricken reservoirs [have seen a remarkable recovery](#) after a barrage of storms lashed the state last month.

**Nanotechnology in Ag:** The "[Nanotechnology in Agriculture Market](#)" Report provides accurate information on industry SWOT analysis, CAGR status, product growth prospects, and future forecast to 2028 for nanotechnology.

**Biodiesel Plants:** The USDA and University of Illinois released a report on the [location and capacity of biodiesel plants](#) in the U.S.



**A professor at Penn State University states that in rural America, [right-to-repair laws](#) are the leading edge of a pushback against growing corporate power.**

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- \* Agricultural & Applied Economics Association
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- \* American Bar Association, Section of Environment, Energy, & Resources-Agricultural Management
- \* 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
- \* Global Teach Ag Network
- \* Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy
- \* Iowa State University
- \* Minor Use Foundation, Inc.
- \* Mississippi State University
- \* 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
- \* National Turkey Federation
- \* North Central Weed Science Society
- \* Northeastern Weed Science Society
- \* Nutrien
- \* Penn State University
- \* Poultry Science Association
- \* Rural Sociological Society
- \* Society for In Vitro Biology
- \* Society for Range Management
- \* Soil Science Society of America
- \* Syngenta Crop Protection
- \* The Fertilizer Institute
- \* The Mosaic Company
- \* 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 Ohio State University
- \* Tuskegee University

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The Science Source for Food,  
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*\*\* With assistance from Colleen Hamilton (Membership Specialist) and Charlotte Brockman (Communications Project Coordinator)*

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