

# Friday Notes

Council for Agricultural Science and Technology

CAST

The Science Source for Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Issues

*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 the CAST organization.

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## Wind Sculptures



An artist makes enormous beast-like sculptures that move with the [wind](#).

## Peterson Brother TEDx



One of the famous Peterson brothers presented a TEDx talk recently about "[Celebrating Diversity in Agriculture](#)."

## A Meaty Win

Kansas State University's [Meat Animal Evaluation Team](#) won national champion honors following a three-day competition.

## Conference for Beef Producers

April 29, 2016

## Dr. Prakash Gives Presentation at The World Bank

The announcement regarding the 2016 winner of the Borlaug CAST Communication Award at The World Bank on April 21 began with a presentation by the 2015 BCCA winner, Dr. Channapatna S. Prakash. Dr. Prakash, currently the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Tuskegee University, was instrumental in establishing the prestigious plant biotechnology research and training program at the school, and he has a long list of influential publications and awards. His topic--*Gene-edited Crops: More Palatable to GMO Critics and Consumers?*--focused on biotechnology and society. Click [here](#) to link to Dr. Prakash's presentation.



Since the announcement of Dr. Kevin Folta as 2016 Borlaug CAST Communication Award winner, there have been a few updates. These are posted on the CAST website, and they're also available [here](#).

## News and Views

**\*\*Migrant Labor Concerns:** Many farmers, state officials, and some agriculture organizations are calling attention to the [problem with the H-2A visa program](#)--they say it could result in abandoned crops, higher consumer prices, and economic harm to rural communities.

**\*\*Tech Side of Ag:** The Australian Centre for Field Robotics at Sydney University refers to robotics as revolutionizing farming and [attracting young people](#) back to agriculture.

**\*\*U.S. Water Woes:** The United States may be on the [verge of a national crisis](#) that could mean the end of clean, cheap water for many. The U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence now ranks water scarcity as a major threat to national security.

**\*\*Drones in the Night Sky:** The Federal Aviation Administration has

[Grass-fed beef producers](#) will have the opportunity to learn more about marketing opportunities and production trends during a conference in late May organized by Texas A&M specialists.

### Home Is Where the Heart Is

An Iowa farm girl (and CAST intern) writes about [following your passion](#) after attending the 88th Iowa FFA Leadership Conference.

### CAST Social Media

[Click here for links](#) to CAST sites for Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, LinkedIn, videos, and the blog.

issued the first [approval for flights of small commercial drones](#) at night, in the latest sign of how quickly U.S. regulators are moving to authorize expanded uses of unmanned aircraft.

**\*\*Advocate of a Certain Type:** A well-known agriculture commentator believes farmers need to be proactive and ensure they are always doing what's best for their animals and customers; but [he thinks it is futile to constantly debate](#) issues with closed-minded critics.

## News from the Far Side of the Barn

### I'll Let You Wake the Tiger

**(video):** Cats like to sleep. [Big cats also like to sleep](#). This information may save your life one day.



Yes, we'll hit the snooze button for you.

### Better Than a Watch Dog?

**(video):** An Australian woman has kept a giant [crocodile as a pet](#) for 60 years.

**What Lurks Beneath the Waters (slideshow):** A [massive coral reef](#) has been discovered in the Amazon River.

## Susana Fredin Receives CAST President's Award

Susana Fredin is the latest recipient of the CAST President's Award. Kent Schescke, CAST EVP, presented the award in Washington, D.C., on Thursday, April 21, before the Borlaug CAST Communication Award announcement.

Susana and her husband, Dr. Carlos Blanco, regularly attend CAST events that occur in the D.C. area, be it a rollout presentation, a panel discussion, or any other CAST function. A few years ago, she approached the CAST officer at the end of an event and offered her translating services for CAST documents. For the past few years, then, Susana has been voluntarily translating specified CAST publications into Spanish. She has worked on 12-page commentaries and lengthy issue papers, as well as several one-page Ag quickCAST documents. By doing so, she has enabled CAST to reach quite a wide range of readers around the globe with credible science-based information, readers who otherwise might not have been able to benefit from our publications.



The President's Award is a CAST honor that recognizes those individuals who have personally contributed to the advancement of CAST and who have furthered the cause of agriculture, science, and technology in a world so dependent on all three disciplines.

To see some of Susana's translations, go to the CAST website [here](#). An additional issue paper that Susana translated for CAST--*El etiquetado de los alimentos: Comportamiento del consumidor, el sector agrícola y políticas que se recomiendan* (Processing Labeling of Food: Consumer Behavior, the Agricultural Sector, and Policy Recommendations)--will be released later this spring.

# Friday Notes News Categories

Photos courtesy of the Agricultural Research Service (top masthead); TopLatest News (globe at right). P. 1 sand sculpture pic from kiddingphilippines.com, Petersons pic from iptv.org, and tiger pic from metro.co.uk. Animal Sec. milking pic from abeforum.jpg. Food Sec. beef pic from beefbloggers.jpg. Plant Sec jewelry pic from mnn.com. Inter Sec. sushi cat pic from loghouseplants.jpg. Gen. Sec. sprayer pic from ncsu-biological-agricultural-news.blogspot.com. Unless otherwise noted, photos courtesy of the USDA Agricultural Research Service.



## *Animal Agriculture and Environmental News*

**Happy Cows Mean Happy Farmers (video):** This British commentator explains why [a happy cow equals a happy farmer](#)--including a look at the eating, sleeping, and socializing of modern dairy farms.

**Milking--Feelin' Groovy or Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap?** For another look at "happy cows" and the soundtrack that goes with farming, [check out this blog](#).

**Poultry Production Vote:** A Massachusetts ballot [initiative calling for expanded living space for chickens](#) could affect consumers and producers across the country.

**Bringing Home the Beef:** The chairman of the Florida Cattle Ranchers announced beef producers in his state are doing something now that they haven't done in decades: [raising homegrown beef](#).

**Sustainable Protein:** Animals may be fed [manure-bred maggots](#) to make meat sustainable.

**Extinct Animals:** Not all [rare and precious creatures](#) have been saved from going extinct--here's a look at 10 animals we've lost in the last century.

**Future of Seafood (video):** Invasive species destroy habitats by [outcompeting native species](#) for food and territory.



Who says milking ain't fun?



## *Food Science and Safety News*

**Shrinking Burgers, Thinning Cookies (video):** In a surprise twist, big food companies are [urging consumers to eat less](#).

**Breakfast at Every Time Zone:** This photo essay shows an [intriguing time-zone-by-time-zone display](#) of the first meals of the day for people around the world.

**Scanning Your Food (video):** Target is developing technology to show [when food was picked](#) and how nutritious it is.

**Reducing Waste:** Food waste and trash are getting so bad, some cities are turning to [garbage disposals](#).

**Real Food OSU:** A group of Ohio State University students who spent the past year advocating [improvements in the university's food system](#) has won \$5,000 to help its cause.

**Theater Food:** Here's a sampling of food that might be [coming to a theater near you](#).

**Google That Food:** Google has a [little-known feature](#) that will analyze what's in your food for you.



Could the "reduced size" effort go too far?



## *Plant Agriculture and Environmental News*

**Ethanol in the Fast Lane (video):** NASCAR seems to love what corn can make--ethanol. Since 2011, drivers moved away from leaded fuel [in favor of an E15 blend](#).

**Move Over, Diamonds:** Show off your [love for nature](#) with these plant-centric jewelry options.

**Wine, Grapes, and Pest Control:** Success stories related to pest and disease issues rarely include eradication, but that's what California could achieve as they [work to defeat the European grapevine moth](#).

**Up for Debate (opinion):** As this Ohio State University report points out, considerable debate surrounds [the U.S. crop insurance program](#).

**Bears Helping Plants:** Mountain-climbing [bears transport cherry tree seeds](#), internally at first, to cooler, higher altitudes where the trees can survive as temperatures rise.

**Beeless Ag:** California's almond farmers are trying to [make agriculture work](#) without bees.

**Beneficial Bacteria:** Scientists at the University of California, Riverside have discovered that a strain of beneficial nitrogen-fixing [bacteria has spread across California](#), demonstrating that beneficial bacteria can share some of the same features that are characteristic of pathogens.



Jewelry greenery



## *International News*



**Learn Not to Burn (video):** A large project aimed at encouraging communities in Indonesia to [stop burning their land](#) for clearing has been launched by two local universities.

**Making Sushi out of Poison (video):** As this master explains, Japanese chefs must train for years before serving [the notoriously poisonous puffer fish](#) to the public.

**Stinky Solution (videos):** Some folks in the United Kingdom decided to "go organic" and [substitute vinegar](#) (acetic acid plus water) for glyphosate.

**Avian Flu Gone Global:** Mexico, Myanmar, Vietnam, Taiwan, Nigeria, Ghana, and Egypt have all reported new outbreaks of [avian influenza in poultry](#).

**Next Kobe?** A nip of Scotland's national drink--coupled with a diet of high-quality [feed from distillery by-products](#)--could produce meat so succulent and tender that it will rival Japan's famous Kobe beef.

**Underground Pantry:** A Dutch designer is [bringing back the root cellar](#) concept with Groundfridge, and all you need is a big hole.

**Survival:** After the Ukrainian government [cancels a local school lunch program](#), rural families must resort to food tainted by Chernobyl radiation.



Pass the wasabi and bring on the sushi.



## *General Interest News*

**How Warren Buffett's Son Would Feed the World:** Howard G. Buffett has spent most of his life as a farmer, with little financial support from his father--until recently. Now he runs a [multibillion-dollar foundation](#) dedicated to ending global hunger.

**Student Engineers:** At North Carolina State University, a senior design [student group developed a UAV agricultural spot sprayer](#) for site-specific spraying of small amounts of fertilizers or pesticides.

**Famous Last Words:** With a light-hearted tone, this blogger looks at the "[Top 10 Farmer Famous Last Words](#)."

**What Does Student Loan Forgiveness Have to Do with Farming?** Everything. As more farmers retire, some lawmakers see [student loan forgiveness](#) as key to keeping small-scale food producers on the land.

**Beer to Beef:** Craft beer drinkers may not realize it while [sipping their ales and lagers](#), but virtually all grain used in making their brews gets an afterlife--much of it as feed for beef and dairy cows.

**Farm Facts:** From the Random History website, here's a list of [67 facts](#) about farming and agriculture.

**Going to the Birds:** Birds are a [harbinger of climate change](#), with species swapping habitats like a game of musical chairs as regions in Europe and the United States warm.

**Electricity from Renewables:** Last year, for the first time, renewables accounted for a [majority of new electricity](#)-generating capacity added around the world, according to a recent United Nations report.



NC State sprayer

## CAST Information

Check out CAST's page at the [YouTube site](#) to view highly regarded ag-science videos about probiotics, food safety, and water issues--or the latest video dealing with proposed mandatory labeling of GMO food items.



If you have a good idea for a CAST publication, contact us by [clicking HERE for the "Proposal Format](#) and Background Information Form."

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- \* American Society of Plant Biologists
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