Trade, Tariffs, and Agriculture

Pork, soybeans, and many other agricultural products joined the list of trade targets—and tension levels rose. Producers, consumers, and investors are watching the roller coaster effects on the markets, and media outlets are full of speculation—but not everyone is hitting the panic button. Some note that negotiations could still smooth things out.

The following articles provide a look at the situation, but we all know this ride could have various ups and downs.

** President Trump ordered the consideration of $100 billion in additional tariffs on China—doubling down on his call for $50 billion worth earlier this week. China responded in kind to the first move.
** These observations from ag experts indicate that livestock and plant producers are worried but philosophical about the big picture.
** These grain officials say a tariff would be devastating for U.S. growers, but they are encouraged that both sides are still talking.
** Some are trying to predict winners and losers—and market fluctuations—but this could change daily.
** Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue acknowledged that the U.S.-China tariff standoff may force Capitol Hill lawmakers to factor in trade disruptions as they work on the next farm bill.

News and Views

Close the Trust Gap: Research shows consumers place significant onus for ensuring the safety of food and beverages on the companies that make them. Here are three strategies to help close the accountability gap.

Gene Editing: This video tries to explain the genetic complexities of CRISPR—and it speculates about disease treatment and various other medical/technological advances.

Food 2.0--Tech and Ag: Farmers face an ever-expanding global...
Agriculture is one of the most diverse professions in the country--this article explains why it's important to encourage children to pursue their passion for agriculture.

**Upcoming Conferences**
Texas A&M is offering a conferences about grass-fed beef production on May 31, and this report looks at their international horsemanship program.

**Passion for Progress**
The Women's Agricultural Leadership Conference will be held in Minnesota on April 11.

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**A Quest for Biotech Answers:** This documentary follows two thirty-something city boys from Amsterdam who get into an argument about GMOs and go on a search for truth.

**News from the Far Side of the Barn**

**Japanese Spider Crab (video):** This time-lapse segment shows how a giant crab discards its old shell.

**They're Out to Fool You (video):** Trickster insects and arachnids impersonate the world around them in order to survive.

**Ladybug Bash (video):** These insects spend most of their lives alone, gorging themselves on aphids--but every winter they all gather together.

**Scientists are working to use drones, thermal imaging, and star-mapping techniques to count animals in the wild.**

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**April Keeps CAST Busy**

**Upcoming rollouts and award presentations**

CAST invites you to a presentation on Scientific, Ethical, and Economic Aspects of Farm Animal Welfare, cohosted by the Animal Agriculture Alliance. Dr. Candace Croney--Director of Purdue University's Center for Animal Welfare Science and Professor of Animal Behavior and Well-being--will present highlights of the CAST Task Force Report on April 23 in Washington, D.C. The event is free and open to the public.

Farmers across the United States have been using the first week of April to celebrate and recognize the many accomplishments made possible by agronomic experts. These individuals serve a vital role in providing expertise and support for farmers as they strive for a successful growing season and plentiful harvest. During national #AgronomyWeek, CAST remembers the many contributions of Norman Borlaug, an American agronomist and central figure of the Green Revolution.
Click here to access the **CAST Annual Report 2017**. We “reached new heights” last year and are pleased to share with you our many accomplishments. As CAST President Nancy Reichert said, "We appreciate the support of our members and stakeholders."

The rollout for the CAST Issue Paper *Omega-3 Fatty Acids: Health Benefits and Dietary Recommendations* will be on May 8 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The presentation will be live streamed through social media, and we plan to post the finished video on the website.

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**Friday Notes News Categories**

Photos courtesy of the Agricultural Research Service (top masthead); TopLatest News (globe at right). P. 1 social media image from ubermarketing.co.uk, roller coaster graphic from texasfarmbureau.org, and elephant pic from flir.co.uk. Animal Sec. sheep pic from pbstown.jpg. Food Sec. bagel pic from thrillist.com. Inter. Sec. cow pic from thebullvine.com. Gen. Sec. tractor pic from machinefinder.com. Unless otherwise noted, photos courtesy of the USDA Agricultural Research Service.

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**Animal Agriculture and Environmental News**

**The Chicken or the Egg (video):** Two national surveys were conducted to evaluate market potential and consumer willingness to pay for poultry and eggs with various labels.

**Pigs—the Magical Animal:** Check this blog for several recent articles about the hog industry, from research to legal cases to odd news.

**Canine Cancer Research:** A groundbreaking lifetime study of 3,044 golden retrievers is hoping to lead to some answers about cancer development in humans and canines.

**Livestock Disposal Research:** Iowa State University researchers completed testing of a key component of a new concept for disposing of animal carcasses following a disease outbreak.

**From Petri Dish to Plate? (opinions):** Cattle groups are saddling up to make sure that consumers know beef comes from animals, not from cells grown indoors. But this biochemist promotes "clean-meat" technology.

**Methane Emissions:** Penn State research looks at an international consortium that devised more accurate models to estimate the amount of greenhouse gas produced by dairy cattle.

**Becoming More Sustainable?** This article says U.S. cattle farmers have reduced carbon emissions by improving animal husbandry, nutrition, and genetics.
Food Science and Safety News

NY’s Rarest Steak (video): This New York restaurant serves a very uncommon type of meat that requires a unique method of preparation.

Bogus Food Trends (opinion): This group says consumers should not fall for fearmongering tactics regarding biotech foods.

Dairy Research: A global consumer perception research study by Cargill found that dairy scored higher than nondairy substitutes in multiple areas. Other research shows why some may avoid dairy.

Fruit of the Future: This start-up company is on the verge of producing the first CRISPR-made fruit—with strawberries at the top of the list.

Spam, Spam, Spam: Spam has the military, Hawaii, and Monty Python to thank for its fame. From teriyaki to chorizo, from garlic to bacon, you can bite into 15 flavors of the iconic meat.

Menu of the Future: Scientists are peering into the future of food and envisioning these five meals that may soon grace your dinner table, while these three chefs are making gourmet meals out of garbage.

Plant Agriculture and Environmental News

Just-in-time Tomatoes: At NC State, scientists are exploring whether they can stall the ripening of tomatoes by changing the molecular-level machinery at work when the plant perceives the hormone ethylene.

A Day in the Life of an Agronomist (video): This agronomist’s research focuses on ways to prevent nitrate from flowing into lakes, rivers, and streams—especially using denitrifying wood chip bioreactors.

App Aids Corn Growers: This mobile app, developed by the University of Arkansas and Purdue University, can help corn growers and grain marketers identify, avoid, and cope with mycotoxin infections in corn.

Bee-friendly Breakthrough: Efforts to create pesticides that are not toxic to bees have been boosted by a scientific breakthrough and could lead to the development of a bee-friendly pesticide.

Enriching Cassava: Cornell University will expand international efforts to deliver improved varieties of cassava to smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa with generous new funding.

Benefits from Both? (opinion): This farmer explains why both organic and conventional techniques can be good farming practices.
**International News**

**A New River Runs Through It (video):** The sudden appearance of a network of rivers in Argentina's soybean growing area worries environmentalists and farmers.

**Tracking Livestock Down Under:** An electronic tracking ear tag being developed for cattle in Australia could change the way ranchers manage both livestock and farmland.

**Fitbit for Cows? (related to above):** This blog includes references and links to various cow monitoring devices.

**British Biotech First?** Crops that have been genetically modified so they produce industrial products might be grown in Britain for the first time after scientists applied for permission to start field trials.

**Whale Disaster:** More than 150 whales became stranded on a Western Australia beach--most died as bad weather and shark threats prevented rescues.

**Disease Discovery:** South Korea has confirmed a case of foot-and-mouth disease on a hog farm--the country's first discovery since February of last year.

**General Interest News**

**Dog Discovery:** Do our reactions to dogs based on preconceptions about breed characteristics have any impact on how we treat or train them? New research aims to find out.

**Filling the Rodeo Record Books (video):** The Cal Poly rodeo program has many national championships to its credit, and the team is vibrant again this year.

**Bigger Is Better?** A USDA report says that farm production has continued to shift to larger farms, and this has resulted in some positives and negatives.

**How Dirt Can Make You Happy:** A recent study conducted by two of the United Kingdom's most prestigious universities made a breakthrough discovery of the presence of antidepressant microbes in soil.

**Yard of the Month Losers:** This farmer looks at the top ten reasons why farmers' yards are rarely featured in landscaping magazines--including mentions of cows, grandkids, and armadillos.
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.

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Dan Gogerty (Managing Communications Editor)
Kylie Peterson (Communications and Social Media Specialist)
The Council for Agricultural Science and Technology
4420 West Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa  50014-3447
Phone: 515-292-2125, ext. 222 (Dan) and 230 (Kylie)
E-mail: dgogerty@cast-science.org and kpeterson@cast-science.org

** With assistance from Carol Gostele (Managing Scientific Editor)