

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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Sandhill Crane Migration

During spring, the sandhill crane migration turns a spot in Nebraska into a [zen bird-watching zone](#).

Keeping Bees Healthy

Check out the second annual Bee Symposium presented by the [Honey and Pollination Center](#) at the Robert Mondavi Institute of the University of California-Davis on May 7.

Crop Field Day

Kansas State University researchers have been evaluating cover crop management options in water-limited environments and will discuss their findings at a [Cover Crop Field Day](#) on May 13.

Ag Opportunities

Jeff Simmons, the 2013 Borlaug CAST Communication Award winner, gives five reasons why [big](#)

April 8, 2016



Who Will Fund the Next Green Revolution?

An article from the *Progressive Farmer* points out that government [resources for agriculture research](#) have shrunk, but new strategies are emerging. Collaborations between commodity organizations and state and federal agencies are helping; many are involved with programs, funding drives, and efforts to inform the public and policymakers. Considering the challenges ahead and the need for young scientists, advocacy and education are keys. Note: This CAST Commentary from several years ago still rings true: [Investing in a Better Future through Public Agricultural Research](#).

News and Views

****Working on the Antibiotics Problem:** The Obama administration and private industry have addressed the antibiotic resistance issue, but some stakeholders [want to see more clarity](#) on the specifics. This report considers the progress made by the FDA regarding the new [veterinary feed directive](#) and the push to combat antibiotic-resistant bacteria.



****Global Food Policy:** The International Food Policy Research Institute released its 2016 *Global Food Policy Report*. It provides an [in-depth look at major food policy developments](#) and events in the past year and examines key challenges and opportunities for the coming year.

****Pessimistic Outlook (opinion):** This *Quarterly Rural Economic Review* says that mounting global inventories, withering export demand, and weak global economic growth will [continue to plague the U.S. agricultural industry](#).

[opportunities await students in the world of agriculture.](#)

Grains for Hope

What started as a challenge to a group of Kansas high school students 13 years ago is now a real-life effort [focused on feeding hungry people half a world away](#) and teaching about business, food production, and communication.



Plant and Soil

Check out the redesigned

[Mississippi State University Plant and Soil Sciences website.](#)

Young Scholar Winners

This [video features scholarship recipients](#) from the National Corn Growers Association, the American Soybean Association, and the National Wheat Foundation.

Gator Accolades

The [University of Florida achieved a high ranking](#) on the Forbes 2016 list of Best Value Public Colleges.

CAST Social Media

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

****Protecting Company and Trade Secrets:** The Senate easily passed a bill allowing corporations to [make a federal case of the theft of trade secrets](#); it received broad backing from the business community, the White House, and lawmakers in both parties. This could affect some agricultural companies.

****Under the Radar:** Fazle Hasen Abed has been knighted by the Queen of England, but when it comes to eliminating poverty, he may be the [most influential man you've never heard of](#). Oh yes--he also won the 2015 World Food Prize.

News from the Far Side of the Barn

Gator with a Taste for Beef (video): A pair of Florida hunters bagged a 15-foot, 800-pound alligator that [apparently had been attacking cattle.](#)

Rats and Olfactory Talents (video):

Rats are already employed to sniff out landmines, but now they are going to be [used to sniff out tuberculosis](#) in Tanzania and Mozambique.



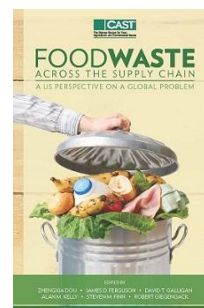
Pest with a valuable nose.

Yer Out! Ballpark Food: Baseball season starts and some concession items [should already be listed as nutritional errors](#) in the box score. The list includes the "Cracker Jack and Mac Dog" and the "Burgerizza," a patty with pepperoni pizza as the buns.

Food Waste a Profound Challenge

Feedstuffs' editor Jacqui Fatka published an [insightful look at the food waste problem](#), and she focused on the new book compiled by the University of Pennsylvania and distributed by CAST: [Food Waste Across the Supply Chain: A U.S. Perspective on a Global Problem](#). Fatka provided factual background and then explained some "promising solutions." As Professor Zhengxia Dou of the University of Pennsylvania said, "It requires the concerted efforts of all stakeholders to take part in this endeavor."

Note: A recent CAST [blog looks at food waste now versus waste in the past](#). According to one study, present-day waste is up 50% from 1970. Maybe there are some obvious reasons why American families are wasting more than the Beaver Cleaver family did.



Noteworthy Event in the Nation's Capital

Join CAST and DuPont, in cooperation with The World Bank, for a presentation on *Gene-edited Crops: More Palatable to GMO Critics and Consumers?* by Dr. Channapatna Prakash--the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Tuskegee University and winner of the 2015 Borlaug CAST Communication Award. Following this presentation, CAST will announce the 2016 winner of this prestigious award. The event is free and open to the public. Registration is requested--[please click here](#).

Spanish Versions

Within a few weeks, CAST will add to its list of publications available in Spanish. Issue Paper #56, [Process Labeling of Food: Consumer Behavior, the Agricultural Sector, and Policy Recommendations](#), will be ready--along with an Ag quickCAST companion version.

Friday Notes News Categories

Photos courtesy of the Agricultural Research Service (top masthead); TopLatest News (globe at right). P.1 pic of crane from rowe.audubon.org and rat pic from evidencemag.jpg. Animal Sec. stockyards pic from chuckmanchicagonostalgia.com. Food Sec. baby pic from bobbleheadbaby.com. Plant Sec. cartoon from cartoonaday.com. Inter. Sec. couple pic from store.bbc.com. Gen. Sec. child pic from nextshark.com. Unless otherwise noted, photos courtesy of the USDA Agricultural Research Service.



Animal Agriculture and Environmental News

Triple the Fun (video): Occurring only once in 105,000 live births, [rare triplet calves](#) were delivered by a Montana cow on a ranch east of the Rocky Mountains.

Are You Smarter Than a Cow? This farmer says [his cows know the answers](#) to these questions about grazing, poisonous plants, and bovine behavior.

How Chickens Got Bigger: As the demand for chicken as a protein has increased, farmers have worked to [create larger and healthier chickens](#) to meet that demand.

Egg Layer Policy: Walmart U.S. and Sam's Club U.S. have announced their goal to transition to a 100% [cage-free egg supply](#) chain by 2025.

Pig Gene Power: Selecting genetics to [help pigs fight infectious diseases](#) would aid hog producers--for example, in fighting porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome virus.

Pigs, Genes, and Antibiotics (related to above): Selection for [pigs with genes for healthy intestinal flora](#) may be able to reduce the use of antibiotics.

More Pork Prospects: Although there is some opposition, the ongoing expansion of the [U.S. pork packing sector](#) now includes the prospects of a 10,000-head-per-day fresh pork processing facility in Iowa.

Antibiotics Recommendations: A National Pork Producers Council official says the organization is pleased with the recommendations issued by the White House advisory panel [to address antibiotic-resistant bacteria](#).

Animal Ag and the Economy (opinion): Animal agriculture plays a [vital role in the U.S. economy](#) and also faces numerous challenges in years to come.

Stockyards and Sale Barns: Livestock [facilities have history and relevance](#). A recent survey indicates that 65% of cattle are sold in sale barns.



Getting them to the stockyards.

Biotech Mosquitoes: Genetically modified mosquitoes are in the news, and some say they may be a hope for [controlling the mosquito-borne Zika virus](#).



Food Science and Safety News

Cutting into a Really Good Steak (video): This hunk of meat has been dry aged for more than a year, but even before that it was an excellent cut of steak. So [how does a morsel this fine taste?](#)

Sell By, Use By, and Ignore? (opinion): According to this Mayo Clinic dietitian, just about the only time when you should pay attention to [the expiration date on food labels](#) is with baby formula.

Closing the Veggie Gap: If everyone ate the [recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables](#), we would soon run out. A Texas A&M expert says we need to look into how to close that potential gap.

More Than April Fools: Apparently, there are [several food holidays in April](#)--this pictorial list includes raisin, garlic, and mushroom days, as well as important proclamations such as Child Nutrition Month.

Rethinking Fat in Whole Milk (opinion): This study [challenges the recommendation](#) that we should avoid dairy fat.

Got Raw Milk Laws? Louisiana lawmakers consider [whether or not to allow on-farm sales of raw milk](#), while health officials in Utah and Tennessee weigh federal warnings about the product.

Milk, Labels, and Regs: A federal judge agrees with the Florida Department of Agriculture that an all-natural creamery [cannot label its milk "skim milk"](#) because it doesn't add vitamins to it.



Apparently pleased that "Peanut Butter and Jelly Day" falls in April.

Print Me Some Food, Please: 3-D [images of food produced at a nano level](#) promise to save on food industry costs and reduce food waste as a result of faulty production, according to this study.

Keeping Food Safe: The new [food safety transportation rule](#) adds requirements to prevent food contamination, and the industry is looking mostly to technology for answers.



Plant Agriculture and Environmental News

Farming in the City (video): Urban farming's mission is to grow food for people in need by planting gardens on unused land. As this organizer says, [working farms are found in some surprising places](#).

Glyphosate Issue (opinion): This worldwide [expert in toxicology speaks about glyphosate](#) and the controversial classification it received from the World Health Organization.

Food, Biotech, and Human Intervention (opinion): According to this writer, little of our food is truly "natural," and even the most basic crops are the result of some [form of human manipulation](#).

Pollen Counts and Watering Eyes: Allergy season is arriving so cue the sniffles, scratchy throats, and sinus headaches. This article [explains pollen counts and recommends methods](#) to ease allergy problems.

Chance to Voice Your Opinion about a Herbicide: The EPA announces a [30-day public comment period](#) regarding the use of dicamba herbicide for cotton and soybeans.

Corn Hybrids: Modern [corn hybrids produce more plant material](#) and take up the same amount of nitrogen as earlier varieties, in spite of being more crowded and having less nitrogen available per plant.

Palmer Amaranth Tops the Charts: The plant also known as Palmer pigweed has been [voted the most troublesome weed](#) in the United States by the Weed Science Society of America.

Fertilizer's Economic Impact: The Fertilizer Institute released a first of its kind [economic impact study](#) that quantifies the fertilizer industry's contribution to the U.S. economy and at the state and local levels.



International News

BBC Series on Farming: *This Farming Life* documents the lives of five farming families in Scotland. Winning praise from many within farming, the program has [brought agriculture alive to an urban British audience](#).

Tending Your Cow (video, related to above): This sample clip from *This Farming Life* shows Scottish [farmers working with a cow](#) recovering from an operation.

Cow Disease Could Lead to Ban: The [first case of mad cow disease in France in over a decade](#) is making it more likely that some importers will ban beef from Europe's largest producer.



The UN and Nutrition: The United Nations General Assembly has declared a "[Decade of Action on Nutrition](#)," placing nutrition firmly at the heart of its sustainable development agenda.

Feeding Children: In March, the United Nations World Food Program launched a school meals project that supports both [Lebanese and Syrian children attending public primary schools](#) across Lebanon.

Antimicrobial Vapors: Researchers in Spain have [patented a surface decontamination method](#) to extend the shelf life of packaged salads and minimally processed fresh fruit.

Workers Wanted in the Land of the Maple Leaf: A study carried out by the Conference Board of Canada has found that the country's [agriculture industry has a labor shortage](#) of approximately 59,000 workers.

Chooks Down Under: Australia Farmers have a [new national standard for free-range egg production](#); many say it is a win for commonsense, consumers, farmers, and chickens.

Milking the Market: India has [bucked the trend shown by the globally depressed dairy sector](#), and the country is expected to witness significant growth this year.



General Interest News

Bull in the City (video): A [bull on the loose in New York City turns into a celebrity](#) with retired *Daily Show* host Jon Stewart as the animal's rescuer. Stewart and his wife, Tracey--a former veterinary technician--want to build an [agricultural education center to offer classes on farming](#) and public tours for the community.

Flying High: According to this report, the [worldwide market for agricultural drones](#) is \$494 million and is anticipated to reach \$3.69 billion by 2022.

California Half Full or Half Empty? (opinion): Rain in the north, [continued drought in the south](#)--for many, El Niño has been little more than a cruel joke in Southern California this winter.

Lemonade Deal Is Sweet for Clever Youngster: An 11-year-old girl from Texas [built a successful business](#) with her special homemade lemonade while saving endangered honey bees in the process.



Sweet success for young entrepreneur.

Electricity on the Move: Converting wind and solar power into electricity is, in some ways, the easy part. The bigger challenge is developing the infrastructure to [transmit that electricity across the country](#).

If You Can Take the Heat, Write a Book: Deborah Harris will return to Mississippi State University to [discuss her book](#) *Taking the Heat: Women Chefs and Gender Inequality in the Professional Kitchen*.

From Waste to Energy: A new facility known as the Heartland Biogas Project is [taking wasted food](#) from Colorado's most populous areas and turning it into electricity.

Agriculture in the News: This *Global Farmer Network* site offers [news items related to ag biotech, trade, markets](#), and other related stories.

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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