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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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Look into My Eyes

These photos--including the horse fly and its eyes above--come from the BBC's [Earth Capture Community](#).

Farm Tank Conference

Several ag groups and the University of California-Davis announce the 1st annual [Farm Tank Conference in Sacramento](#). On Sept. 22-23, the event will feature more than 35 speakers from the food and agriculture field.

Cattle Course

A comprehensive cattle market outlook will be one of the featured presentations during the 62nd [Beef Cattle Short Course](#) at Texas A&M University August 1-3.

Young Ag Scholars

Tomorrow's agriculture leaders are preparing for their future by taking opportunities such as the

July 29, 2016

Gender Roles Down on the Farm

The face of agriculture has been slowly transforming, and a recent *Harvest Public Media* article explains one of the key factors: "Despite changing gender roles, it is still often sons who go home to farm. Many [young women in ag say they also hope to farm](#) and raise children. As they do, the next generation of farm kids will inherit a different world, and amid the inevitable advances in technology and science, perhaps there will be further changes to gender-role expectations."



Taryn Riediger is an aspiring farmer. She expects to work livestock for someone else before possibly returning to her family's farm.

News and Views

****Farm Policy, Health, and Disputed Findings (opinions):** [Many groups disagree](#) with the *Journal of the American Medical Association* [study that alleges a link](#) between farm policy and a person's risk of obesity and other diseases like diabetes.

****Advocating for a Bipartisan Consensus for Global Food Security:** This editorial supports the recent signing of the Global Food Security Act and favors passage of the [International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture](#).

****Ag-tech Bubble? (opinion--audio interview):** The demands of agriculture and the price tag for new technology have some developers questioning whether or not there is a [looming bubble in the ag tech industry](#).

****Another Algae Problem:** A huge [toxic algae bloom in Utah](#) has closed one of the largest freshwater lakes west of the Mississippi River,

[SoyScholars program](#)--students explore career paths before they graduate from high school.

University Research and Education

The University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment received a \$15 million [grant to renovate and expand research and education](#), with particular emphasis on grain crops and forages.

Biotech Course

A new Cornell University course looks at the [basics of genetic engineering and biotechnology](#)--and examines why GMOs are politically contentious.

CAST Social Media



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

sickening more than 100 people and leaving farmers scrambling for clean water. [Click here for the CAST Commentary](#) about nuisance aquatic plants and toxic algae.

News from the Far Side of the Barn

Does This Whale Love or Hate the Music?

(video): A flute-playing paddle boarder has a [close encounter with a humpback whale](#).

Any Bloodsicles in Your Fridge? Looking like oversized red hockey pucks, [bloodsicles help chill the tigers](#) and lions at the zoo.



A tiger's version of a frozen Bloody Mary.

And You Think Your Starbucks Coffee Is Pricy: The most expensive coffee in the world can go for \$100 a cup, but it [comes with a hidden cost](#)--the well-being of the animal used to make it.

Submit an Idea to CAST

Online portal facilitates process

CAST communicates solid, science-based information to the public and policymakers--and the organization needs ideas and input to fulfill that mission. During a strategic planning breakout session at last year's annual meeting, CAST work groups formulated a plan designed to anticipate issues better and make publications more timely. A key part of that is a system designed so external stakeholders can easily submit an idea for a proposal.

Dirk Drost (Syngenta executive and Company Liaison on the CAST Board of Directors) said, "We are broadening the pool of idea submitters, and we hope to therefore give our work groups more fuel."



CAST recently updated its homepage with a "[Submit an Idea for a CAST Publication](#)" button. Clicking on it will lead the user to a simple online form to collect ideas and basic contact information. Once an idea is submitted, CAST staff will be notified and the information will be fed to the appropriate work group.

As CAST Director of Operations Melissa Sly said, "One of CAST's strategic goals is to improve involvement from external sources. Not only does CAST want to be more inclusive in gathering ideas and input, the organization also wants to make that process as simple as possible. We hope this new website button accomplishes both. It's our equivalent of an Easy Button."

Friday Notes News Categories

Photos courtesy of the Agricultural Research Service (top masthead); TopLatest News (globe at right). P. 1 bug eyes pic from ibbci.co.uk, woman pic from harvestpublicmedia.org, and tiger pic from npr.org. Animal Sec. horse pic from pbs.twimg.com. Food Sec. drone pic from foodbev.com. Plant Sec. meme from pinterest.com. Inter. Sec. food pic from lolamipezharuerto.blogspot.jpg. Gen. Sec. boy pic from newsobserver.jpg. Unless otherwise noted, photos courtesy of the USDA Agricultural Research Service.



Animal Agriculture and Environmental News

From Cows to Store Counters (videos): These clips demonstrate what happens [behind the scenes as milk goes](#) through the process of making it to the grocery store.

Pork Producers and the FDA: New antibiotic regulations do not go into effect until January 1, but U.S. pork producers may see inspectors from the FDA. They say they will [focus on education rather than compliance](#).

Wild Horse Management: A University of Nevada-Reno study from last year looked at the state's wild horses--and the [challenges of managing](#) these free-roaming animals.

Biotech Beef Helper (video): This Montana rancher talks about why he uses [DNA tools to aid in genetic decisions](#) with his beef production.



These horses seem to wish they could roam free or at least have visitation rights.

Hen Housing (opinion): Findings from the Laying Hen Housing Research Project look at the [advantages and disadvantages of three types of hen housing](#) in five areas.

Bacon Schmacon (video): Schmacon is the [beef version of the popular pork treat](#). Some think it will appeal to various consumers, including those who do not eat pork because of religious beliefs.

Beef Clone Update: These West Texas A&M experts say, "By finding, cloning, and crossing these rare genetics, we have demonstrated the ability to [create exactly what the market desires](#)."

Cloning and Aging: A new study says that [cloned animals can expect to live just as long](#) as their more conventional counterparts.

Boy's Best Friend (video): A dog stayed with a boy who fell down a mountain ravine for 44 hours until police showed up. Authorities [say the dog saved the boy's life](#).

Ribbons, Banners, and Priceless Lessons: Many know that [youth-show pig projects can help](#) shape tomorrow's leaders.



Food Science and Safety News

The Slurpee Has Landed (video): With a delivery of chicken, coffee, and a Slurpee, 7-Eleven [made a drone delivery](#) in hopes that the procedure will become a regular thing.

Eyes in the Skies: This blog considers the [advantages of NOT having drones](#) hovering above.

Organic and Conventional (opinion): At the Organic Produce Summit in Monterey, many agree that consumers should [eat more organic AND conventionally grown fruits and veggies](#).

Egg-cellent: An independent study confirms the [superior functionality and flavor that egg ingredients supply](#) to baked goods and food products, compared to the overall performance of a variety of egg replacers.

Carb Unloading? (opinion): Celebrities, diet-book authors, and others have [blamed carbs for weight gain](#). Some are reassessing that view.

Colon Cleanse? The combination of two plant compounds that have medicinal properties---curcumin and silymarin--holds [promise in treating colon cancer](#), according to Saint Louis University research.

Bipartisan about Bacteria: As the second week of political conventions rolls on, one thing liberals and conservatives [agree about is food safety](#).

Courts to Halls: Food halls--like [food courts but without the national chains](#)--are headed to Florida as the new-style restaurants. They are drawing the attention of chefs, developers, and retailers.



Still waiting for Amazon to [deliver the pig I ordered](#).



Plant Agriculture and Environmental News

Up on the Roof (video): Building [farms on rooftops is now gaining momentum](#) across China. It provides an alternative lifestyle for city dwellers--and provides "local" plant products.

Faba Beans and Cover Crops: Four cold-tolerant faba bean germplasm lines are available for [developing pulse or cover crops](#) that can be rotated with wheat and other cereal grains grown in the Pacific Northwest.

Soybean Markets Widen: Farmers using Roundup Ready 2 Xtend soybeans have more options for selling at the end of the year, as the [EU is giving approval for its use](#).

EU Acceptance (related to above): Bayer and MS Technologies gained approval from the EU for the upcoming [soybean trait technology Balance GT](#).

Continuous Hydrologic Monitoring: This research paper looks at recent advances in technologies that show potential for the development of the [devices required for continuous data collection](#).

Understanding Plant Growth: Plant scientists have made an important advance in understanding [the natural diversity of a key plant enzyme](#) that could help us address the looming threat of global food security.

A Crop That's Poppin': Input savings and premiums make [popcorn an appealing crop](#) to some farmers who find it good for crop rotation and marketing.



This "to my toes" meme is corny enough to make a vegetable wilt.

Plant Probiotics: The summer heat wave is putting the agricultural technology sector's current darling, a [microbial seed coating](#), to the test on thousands of acres of Texas cotton.

Millennial Gardens: Some accuse millennials of obsessing with Snapchat, eating doughnuts, and shopping at Urban Outfitters, but many are [part of a new generation of gardeners](#).



International News

An Orphaned Roo and a Lovable Teddy Bear : A [kangaroo named Doodlebug](#) was found orphaned in the wild. It seems to be doing fine as long as it has its teddy bear to hug.

Greening Up the Green (video): In spite of low prices for milk, [the Irish dairy industry](#) is seen as a world leader, thanks in part to its Origin Green program.

Brexit Effects: In the wake of the Brexit vote, [farming interests in Northern Ireland](#) are anxious to work with the Republic to secure the best deal for exports, according to the Minister for Agriculture.

Cute Lunches: Packing child lunches calls for a whole different level of preparation in Japan. Moms often shape ordinary lunch ingredients like ham or rice into cute little [pandas, Pokemon, or even celebrity faces](#).

Fighting the Flu: Africa once again battled this month to [contain an outbreak of avian influenza](#)--H5N1 in poultry--with the disease spreading to Cameroon.

Going Bananas: In Uganda, 70% of the population eat bananas daily. Scientists are [trying to eradicate a bacterial wilt](#) disease that is threatening the crop.

Ag Aid for Afghanistan: The United States Agency for International Development pledged \$100 million for [agricultural development in Afghanistan](#).

Ag the New Oil: Agriculture is the "new oil" for Nigeria and the only way to [get the country out of the present economic downturn](#), according to this government official.

Fire Fighter and Bee Farmer: A 21-year-old part-time fire fighter from Wales is among the latest recruits of the world's first [bee farming apprenticeship scheme](#).



Anyone else feeling squeamish about eating Hello Kitty?



General Interest News

In the Show Ring (video): Follow this 4Her as he undergoes his ninth year [showing animals at the fair](#).

Self-driving Tractors Roll In (video): Some fret about the coming of self-driving cars, but [agriculture vehicles have already been driving themselves](#) for the last 15 years.

Clean Water and the Courts (opinion): As the Waters of the United States rule remains tied up in federal court, this attorney says [farmers should remain vigilant](#) about whether or not work they do on the land is exempt from the law.

Ag and the Environment (opinion): This report says that food production accounts for approximately 30% of [global greenhouse gas emissions](#), with deforestation and land use as big contributors. **Note:** check last week's *Friday Notes* links on page two regarding the lessening environmental footprint of livestock agriculture.

Farm-to-Table Now Roof-to-Hospital: This Wisconsin man is looking toward [building greenhouses and a therapy garden](#) on the hospital grounds.

Ag--An Exciting Industry: Agriculture is a billion-dollar industry, but [it is not just about farming](#). Job opportunities also include positions in fields such as technology, human resources, and even animal care.

Top 25 Ag Commodities: Sugar cane is the [most produced food commodity](#) in the world, followed by corn and rice. The world produces more than 100 million tons of 17 different food commodities.

Promises and Limitations (opinion): This study says that urban agriculture advocates need to be [careful about overselling the benefits](#).

Making Hospitals Safer: Ohio State University researchers identified a potential gene-based approach to [increasing the immune response to fungal infections](#) that threaten hospital patients.



Most--but maybe not all--have wonderful experiences when showing animals at the fair.

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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Contact Colleen Hamilton at 515-292-2125, ext. 224 or chamilton@cast-science.org, or [CLICK HERE](#) for CAST membership information.

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- * American Society of Animal Science
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