

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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In honor of May 4, the above photo of the Bonneville Salt Flats was taken by Joseph Gruber and tweeted by the U.S. Department of the Interior (#MayThe4thBeWithYou).

Urban Agriculture

Toolkit The USDA has released a new [toolkit](#) for urban farmers and agribusiness entrepreneurs.

ISU Brings Home Award

Iowa State University student teams won the [overall sweepstakes award](#) among four-year institutions at the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture (NACTA) Judging Conference April 14-16.

Mississippi State Recognition

Mississippi State researchers are being recognized for efforts to tackle

May 6, 2016

The Merry, Merry Month of May

Every dog has his day--and it seems that everything else has a month. Here are just a few examples of May's honorees:

American [Wetlands](#) Month

International [Mediterranean Diet](#) Month

Iowa [Beef](#) Month

National [Asparagus](#) Month

National [Egg](#) Month

National [Hamburger](#) Month

National [Salad](#) Month

National [Salsa](#) Month

National [Strawberry](#) Month



News and Views

****GMO Feed:** Generally, both parties agree that milk, eggs, and meat from livestock that eat GMO feed should not need to be labeled as GMO products, but the divide is over how to [handle it legislatively](#). This link includes guidance from Alison Van Eenennaam, past Borlaug CAST Communication Award winner and CAST task force chair/author.

****Frozen Food Fears:** More than 350 products--like green beans, broccoli, peas, and blueberries--sold under 42 brands at grocers--including Safeway, Costco, and Trader Joe's--in the U.S. and Canada [have now been recalled](#).

childhood obesity through a new [comprehensive prevention program](#).

K-State to Host BIF Meeting

Registration is now open for the 2016 Beef Improvement Federation Annual Meeting and Research Symposium. Themed "[Progress on the Prairie](#)," this year's event will be June 14-17 in Manhattan, Kansas.

Soil Science Society of America Wins Award

The American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) awarded the Soil Science Society of America (SSSA) with a [2016 Gold Circle Award](#).

CAST Social Media

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

****Missouri Bird Flu Kill:** A southwestern Missouri turkey farm where bird flu was found [remains quarantined](#) after 39,000 of its birds were destroyed last week as a precaution, agricultural officials said Wednesday.

****Ag Start-ups Get Boost:** A new "accelerator" to assist fledgling [agriculture companies](#) was announced Thursday.

****The Beast Is Still Up':** Alberta [wildfires are raging](#), and evacuees are told to wait it out.

News from the Far Side of the Barn



Naked Mole Rats Return: Time for another peek at "the ugliest animal in the world." This researcher looks at clues as to what makes mole rats so [much less susceptible to cancer](#) than other rodents.

Too Much Ice? An Illinois [woman is suing Starbucks](#) for having too much ice in their iced coffee drinks.

Finger Lickin' Good: A new Kentucky Fried Chicken marketing campaign is offering [lickable, edible fingernail polish](#) in two flavors: Original and Hot and Spicy.



CAST Finalizes Updated Strategic Plan

Early in 2015, CAST created a Strategic Planning Committee chaired by the president-elect with two representatives from each CAST work group. The process began with a thorough analysis of significant industry, global, and agriculture changes, as well as key assumptions that should drive CAST's strategy. Input from CAST members and stakeholders was included using information gathered through surveys. The committee defined three major initiatives as core areas of focus for strategic planning. This was presented to and further developed by the CAST Board of Representatives during a special session of the 2015 annual meeting held in October. Strategies to achieve these goals--plus work assignments, timelines, and measurement methods--were further defined and refined through the CAST work groups in early 2016. The final draft of the [2016-2020 CAST Strategic Plan](#) was presented and approved by the Board of Directors during their spring meeting in April 2016.



CAST's organizational competencies are the following:

- CAST is an independent, balanced, and credible science-based source of agricultural information.
- Membership in CAST represents multiple disciplines within the food and agriculture sector.
- CAST is composed of members and contributing authors who are passionate about the importance of communicating science-based information.
- CAST is still solidly rooted in the same founding principles envisioned by its founders more than 40 years ago.

- The mission and vision of CAST are closely connected with the legacy of Dr. Norman Borlaug.

Friday Notes News Categories

Photos courtesy of the Agricultural Research Service (top masthead); TopLatest News (globe at right). P. 1 Salt Flats pic from Joseph Gruber/U.S. Department of Interior, Mediterranean diet pic from nationaldairycouncil.org, asparagus pic from nataik.blogspot.com, hamburger pic from comicvine.gamespot.com, strawberry pic from weknowyourdreamz.com, mole rat pic from news.bbc.co.uk.jpg, and finger-licking pic from brandinginasia.com. P. 2. strategy graphic from cprp.com. Animal Sec. vampire bat pic from blogs.usda.gov. Food Sec. grilling pic from porkbeinspired.jpg. Plant Sec pomegranate tree pic from myfruit.com. Inter Sec. chicken pic from dailygreen.com. Gen. Sec. hemp graphic from jackherer.com. Unless otherwise noted, photos courtesy of the USDA Agricultural Research Service.



Animal Agriculture and Environmental News

For the Love of a Rock (video): These baby [goats love exercising](#) their rock-climbing skills.

PEDv Comparison: U.S. researchers have compared the efficacy of [two different ways of immunization](#) against porcine epidemic diarrhea virus.

Rabies and Vampire Bats: According to APHIS, changes in environmental conditions will increase the likelihood of [shifts in the distribution](#) and nature of current domestic diseases, invasive species, and agricultural pests.



Fire Hydrants and All: A growing number of "[pet relief facilities](#)" are being installed at major air hubs across the nation.

Hungry Labs: This article talks about why Labrador retrievers are [more interested in food](#) than other dog breeds.

Cow Police: Cattle rustling, [signature crime of the Old West](#), has returned to Texas.

Dog Detective: The [newest apiary inspector](#) at the Maryland Department of Agriculture has four legs, golden fur, and a powerful sniffer.

Gas Relief: An international team of researchers says this compound could [reduce methane emissions](#) from cattle.



Food Science and Safety News

Reducing Fertilizer: Washington University engineers are using [nanoparticle technology](#) in an effort to meet the ever-increasing demand for food.

Health vs. Flame-cooked Foods: *Men's Health* provides some [grilling tips](#) that might just help you live longer.

Not Your Average Shopper (Fortunately!): The FBI says a man is in custody after he admitted to spraying a contaminant that officials believe contained [mouse poison on unpackaged food](#) at several Michigan grocery stores.

What's for Dinner? The options for a fast [answer to this question](#) are multiplying.



Allergy Helper: There is now a portable device that fits in your pocket and can [test for gluten](#) in your food.

Heart Health: Drinking two glasses of cranberry juice a day can lead to [significant heart health benefits](#), according to a study led by an ARS physiologist at the Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center.

Tiny Kitchens/Tiny Food (videos): *The Salt* gives us a few lessons in [preparing tiny food](#).



Plant Agriculture and Environmental News

The Name's *Jamesbondia*: A new subgenus of plants has officially been called *Jamesbondia* after the notable [American ornithologist James Bond](#), whose name Ian Fleming is known to have used for his famous spy series.

Crop Help: Three of the world's [most troubling crop diseases](#) were just hit with three new disease-resistant crops varieties, thanks to genetic modification--each with a slightly different mechanism.

Zero-waste System: Algae are the star players in an effort by USDA scientists in Hilo, Hawaii, to produce a renewable [source of oil for conversion](#) into biodiesel to help meet the island state's energy needs.

Light Trick: By reflecting light differently, the [leaves of virus-infected plants entice insects](#), a new study has suggested.



Off the Set: When she's not busy collecting awards for her various roles on TV, film, and Broadway, Oscar-winning actress [Helen Mirren plays the role of pomegranate farmer](#) on her farm in Salento, Italy.

Smartphone Diagnosis: By amassing a huge [library of leaf images](#), scientists are training computers to diagnose the diseases that threaten our food supply.

Plant Charger: An Italian green energy company is really emphasizing the 'green' with the reveal of a cell phone charger that is [powered by a potted plant](#).



International News

Pet Chickens (video): For just 10 Euros and the cost of a chicken coop, families in a growing number of

communities around France can [adopt a pair of laying hens](#) who will process their table scraps and maybe provide an egg or two.

Customized Snacks: Scientists in Finland are aiming to develop [advanced food manufacturing technologies](#) by combining expertise in food, material science, and 3-D printing technology.

Crime-free Robbery: An Italian appeals court has ruled that [stealing food from a supermarket](#) may not be a crime if you are homeless and hungry.

Edible Bale Wrap: Three chemistry Ph.D. students at Imperial College in London have invented a bale wrap that is not only edible, but could also be used to [provide nutrient supplements](#) to animals eating it.

Farming as a Business: A Nigerian economist urges the government to [provide incentives for young people](#) to boost agriculture.

Korean Model Farm (video): Two *Washington Post* reporters visited a model farm in North Korea ahead of the much-anticipated Worker's Party Congress due to open May 6. There were vegetables, but there was [barely a farmer](#) in sight.

Japanese Rice Planting: April marked the start of [rice planting season in Japan](#). Fields are plowed and flooded in preparation for planting new rice seedlings, typically during the extended 'Golden Week' holiday in early May.



General Interest News

Owl Flight (video): Check out this flying owl and how (and why) the [silence compares](#) to other birds.

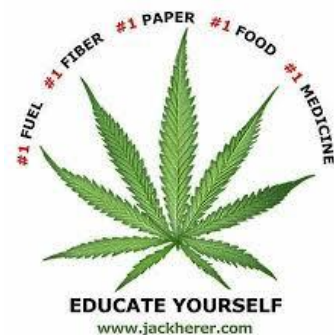
Cyber Crimes: High-tech criminals have the capability to lift your valuable farm data and sell it to the highest bidder--or, worse, [hold it for ransom](#) or destroy it forever.

Drone Test: An innovative University of Nebraska-Lincoln drone designed to ignite prescribed fires in grasslands and forests was [used successfully to burn 26 acres](#) of restored tallgrass prairie at Homestead National Monument of America.

Hemp Primer: What is hemp, and how does it fit into [the future of our food supply?](#)

Olfactory Oddness: A new study has found that [diesel exhaust](#) disrupts a bee's sense of smell.

Facts and Photos: Here are seven facts and some great [photos of river otters](#)--yes, they love to slide and they can hold their breath for eight minutes.



Edenworks Warehouse: Set to open in New York City this summer as an [urban farming start-up](#), fish will grow in tanks, bacteria will turn the fish waste into a rich fertilizer, and plants will use that fertilizer to grow.

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."

CAST provides Friday Notes as a benefit to its members. Please do not forward, edit, copy, or distribute the Notes in any form to nonmembers without the express permission of the CAST Executive Vice President Kent Schescke (kschescke@cast-science.org). Instead, please encourage your colleagues to join CAST and thereby become eligible for all membership benefits.

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 Association of Bovine Practitioners
- * 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 Society for Nutrition Nutritional Sciences Council
- * 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
- * Aquatic Plant Management Society
- * California Dairy Research Foundation
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- * DuPont Pioneer
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- * National Pork Board

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- * Northeastern Weed Science Society
- * Poultry Science Association
- * Society for In Vitro Biology
- * Soil Science Society of America
- * Syngenta Crop Protection
- * United Soybean Board
- * Weed Science Society of America
- * Western Society of Weed Science
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- * University of Nebraska Agricultural Research Division
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Note: WinField Solutions (Land O'Lakes) provides sponsorship for the distribution of *Friday Notes* to the National Association of Agricultural Educators.

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