



AgTrends Summer Newsletter

Directors Message

This Summer 2016 edition of the AgTrends newsletter includes numerous links to worthwhile information about agriculture in America and how it may affect our students and families. These include: the delicate balance of supply and demand in the dairy industry, the negative impacts of crop disease, worker safety issues, and much more.

Please take the time to read each article so that we may all be better informed about our target audience. Knowledge is power and we need every available tool to continue reaching the students and families in the most efficient and effective ways. We hope you will also pass this newsletter along to folks in your network.

Thank you for all of the work you do,

Michael Maye (IRRC) and Tracie Kalic (GOSOSY)

Milk News



PORTLAND, Maine - Maine's U.S. senators are asking the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help the dairy industry as it struggles with declining milk prices and oversupply.

Sens. Susan Collins and Angus King are among a group of lawmakers who have asked USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack to expand milk markets in the U.S. and encourage consumption of dairy products.

The senators say farm milk prices have dropped 40 percent since 2014 due to an increase in production, changes to the way European countries regulate milk and a drop in the export market. They say farmers across the country face similar financial problems as they adjust to changes in federal dairy support programs from the farm bill of 2014. [Read More](#)

Additional Related articles:

- [Milwaukee Dairy Farmers Struggling as Markets are Flooded with Milk, Grain, Livestock Organic Milk Demand Up and Farms Struggle to Keep up with Demand](#)
- [Vermont Dairy Farmers Struggle as Milk Prices in the Northeast Drop](#)
- [Worsening Drought in CA will not affect Milk Production](#)
- [Per State Statistics of # of Dairy Cows- Wisconsin now #2](#)

Cotton News



See how cotton production is moving along in farm country. This map is updated every Monday through the USDA's weekly crop progress estimates.

<http://www.agweb.com/cotton-planting-map/>

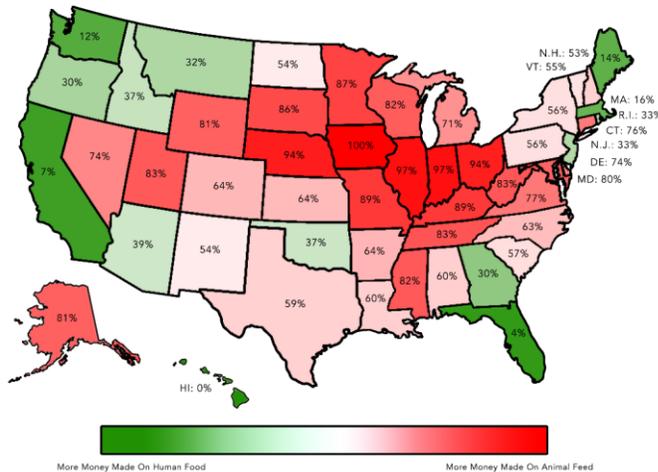
Additional Related articles:

[Drought is bleeding into two major U.S. cotton production regions](#)

- [Alabama needs more rain for cotton crop](#)
- [US Cotton Production is expected to be up 23% more than last year](#)
- [Annual Economic Outlook for Cotton for US for 2016](#)

Human Food vs. Animal Feed

The percentage of each state's agricultural income derived from crops grown primarily for animal consumption



Created by Joe Satran of The Huffington Post using data from USDA and NASS this graphic shows how the state's agricultural income is derived in relation to production for human food or animal feed.

Created by Joe Satran of The Huffington Post. Data Source: USDA NASS, HuffPost Calculations. "Crops grown primarily for animal feed" refers to field corn, soybeans, hay, barley and sorghum. Income from tobacco, cotton and other non-edible crops is not included.

Citrus News



The vast majority of Florida's citrus industry is being impacted by a bacterial disease known as citrus greening or Huanglongbing, according to the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

The survey by university researchers found that 80 percent of the citrus trees currently in operation across Florida are infected with the disease that decreases production, reduces fruit size and quality, and causes higher tree mortality. "Further proof of greening's widespread destruction of Florida citrus,"

Agriculture Commission Adam Putnam tweeted Wednesday, with a link to the study. Growers also reported that operations in central Florida have experienced a 12-percent higher "yield loss" because of the disease than those in southwest Florida, according to the report. [Read More](#)

Additional Related Articles:

[Emergency Citrus Disease Response Act](#)

[Citrus World Market and Trade Report- FL Citrus down in FL up in CA](#)

[Guest Workers - Working in FL citrus crop](#)

Fruit and Vegetable News



The domestic market consumes most U.S. fresh-market apples, but export markets have grown in importance for the Nation's apple growers over the past several decades. U.S. exports of fresh apples have increased steadily during the period, with their share of U.S. production climbing from 14 percent in the mid-1980s to over 28 percent in 2014/15. In terms of volume, fresh-apple exports rose from an average of

607 million pounds in the 1980s to a record 2.3 billion pounds in the 2014/15 marketing year (August-July). The strong growth in fresh-apple exports reflects shifts in domestic supply-and-demand patterns in the U.S. fruit market. [Read More](#)

Additional Related Articles

[Virginia's crop forecast down for fruits and up for other crops](#)

[Washington's apple crop the second largest on record](#)

[Michigan's apple crop should be big!](#)

[Understanding the big pictures of vegetable production in the US](#)

Tobacco News



An audit commissioned by Reynolds American identifies instances of minors working in unsafe conditions on contracted tobacco farms in North Carolina.

Children are working on North Carolina's tobacco farms - and some of them are working in hazardous conditions, according to an audit commissioned by Reynolds American of its contract farms in the Tar Heel State. The audit company - [Footprint BenchStrength](#) - found that 40 percent of farms surveyed employing minors were not complying with federal law. In addition, a portion of those minors was

performing hazardous work.

Justin Flores, vice president of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), says this isn't just a matter of children working on family farms. "Most of the folks talked about in the study worked with labor contractors and they're certainly not as caring and concerned for their well-being as their parents or grandparents or uncles would be," Flores stresses.

Flores says it's important to recognize that questionable labor conditions on North Carolina farms go far beyond tobacco and extend to the state's food supply.

"We will see change as we continue to publicize and educate people about what's going on in the fields, reminding people it's not just tobacco, that these folks that are working in tobacco are also harvesting your sweet potatoes, strawberries, cucumbers," he states.

[Read More](#)

Additional Related Articles

[Tobacco planting begins with bright outlook](#)

[Ozone and weather affect tobacco plants](#)

[States leading the way in tobacco production](#)

Meat Processing News



WASHINGTON - A report of an amputation at a Tyson Foods Inc. plant led to a broader investigation by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration that revealed serious workplace safety violations.

OSHA, responding to a report of a finger amputation at Tyson's Center, Texas, chicken processing plant, investigators identified two repeated and 15 serious violations. The company is facing \$263,498 in proposed fines.

Investigators found that an employee suffered a finger amputation when his finger became stuck in an unguarded conveyor belt in the debone area of the plant. The worker was attempting to remove chicken parts that had jammed in the belt. [Read More](#)

Additional Related Articles

[US Pork Exports Up](#)

[Record Crop Production should keep feed prices low](#)

[Cattle Inventory Numbers and Rank for all 50 states](#)

Fishing News



The use of migrant workers in the US seafood supply chain has led to the creation of exploitative conditions that are equivalent to forced labor, according to [a report released](#) related in June.

The report was released by the National Guestworker Alliance (NGA) and is based on previous findings as well as interviews with 126 seafood processing workers in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and a range of in-depth case studies.

In order to succeed in a highly competitive global market, US seafood processors have increasingly come to rely on temporary labor. Such workers include H-2B visa laborers as well as undocumented workers. Their immigration status makes these workers vulnerable to exploitation. The NGA found that these workers were unlikely to report abuse on the job due to threats from employers not to hire them in subsequent seasons and sponsor them for H-2B visa. Undocumented workers have been threatened with immigration enforcement. [Read More](#)

Additional Related Articles

[China Tilapia Prices Expected to Rise but US market still slow](#)

[Silver Bay Could Build Three More Plants](#)