

From: Jay Byrne
To: Pearl, Stephanie - ARS
Subject: RE: Follow up per your LinkedIn message
Date: Tuesday, June 19, 2018 10:06:33 AM

Perfect.

Jay Byrne, president
v-Fluence Interactive
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USA: +1-314-880-8000 ext (b) (4), (b) (6)
Mobile: (b) (4), (b) (6)
LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/jaybyrne>
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-----Original Message-----

From: Pearl, Stephanie - ARS [<mailto:Stephanie.Pearl@ARS.USDA.GOV>]
Sent: Tuesday, June 19, 2018 8:25 AM
To: Jay Byrne <(b) (4), (b) (6)@v-fluence.com>
Subject: RE: Follow up per your LinkedIn message

Hi Jay -- Thanks for being willing to chat! How about 3:30pm today? Shall I call you at the number in your signature?

Best,
Stephanie

-----Original Message-----

From: Jay Byrne [[mailto:\(b\) \(4\), \(b\) \(6\)@v-fluence.com](mailto:(b) (4), (b) (6)@v-fluence.com)]
Sent: Tuesday, June 19, 2018 9:23 AM
To: Pearl, Stephanie - ARS <Stephanie.Pearl@ARS.USDA.GOV>
Subject: Follow up per your LinkedIn message

Stephanie - I'm available for a call anytime today after 1 pm Eastern. Text or email me what works for you - my contact info is below.

Jay Byrne

Sent from my mobile

(b) (4), (b) (6)

(b) (4), (b) (6)@v-Fluence.com

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From: Jay Byrne
To: Pearl, Stephanie - ARS
Subject: RE: New User Registered on Bonus Eventus
Date: Wednesday, July 25, 2018 4:44:05 PM

Stephanie, I'm just following up to this email to see if you'd like to connect when I'm in DC (b) (4), (b) (6) to discuss your issues tracking interests.

Regards,

Jay Byrne, president
v-Fluence

Toll Free: 877-835-8362 ext. (b) (4), (b) (6)
USA +1 314-880-8000 ext. (b) (4), (b) (6)
Mobile: (b) (4), (b) (6)
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From: Jay Byrne
Sent: Tuesday, July 17, 2018 11:42 AM
To: Pearl, Stephanie - ARS <stephanie.pearl@ars.usda.gov>
Cc: Nina Helgeson <(b) (4), (b) (6)@v-fluence.com>; Jeff Latzke <(b) (4), (b) (6)@v-fluence.com>; Chris Phillips <(b) (4), (b) (6)@v-fluence.com>
Subject: Re: New User Registered on Bonus Eventus

Stephanie:

We're happy to add you to one or more of our current reports to let you see examples of our offerings. I believe you are receiving one of our general interest weekly newsletters already.

(b) (4)

We have nearly 20 years experience working (b) (4)

Let me know what might be of interest and I'll include you in one or more of the following daily, weekly and/or monthly reports live for you to sample:

- (b) (4)
- (b) (4)
- (b) (4)
- (b) (4)
- (b) (4)

I'm happy to get on the phone to discuss, set up a webcast or if you prefer I can schedule an in person meeting on my next trip to DC ((b) (4), (b) (6)) to come by and provide a presentation on our capabilities and offerings.

Regards,

Jay Byrne

(b) (4), (b) (6) @v-fluence.com

(b) (4), (b) (6)

Sent from my mobile

From: Pearl, Stephanie - ARS <Stephanie.Pearl@ARS.USDA.GOV>
Sent: Saturday, July 14, 2018 3:57:11 PM
To: Jay Byrne
Cc: Info; Nina Helgeson
Subject: RE: New User Registered on Bonus Eventus

Thanks very much!

I'm curious to learn more about the analyses you provide in your issues intelligence monitoring reports. Do I understand correctly that these analyses are part of your paid service? Do you have any sample reports that I could see to get a better sense of the types of data and analyses that you deliver?

Thanks!

Stephanie

From: Jay Byrne [[mailto:\(b\) \(4\), \(b\) \(6\)@v-fluence.com](mailto:(b) (4), (b) (6)@v-fluence.com)]
Sent: Saturday, July 14, 2018 4:26 PM
To: Pearl, Stephanie - ARS <Stephanie.Pearl@ARS.USDA.GOV>
Cc: Info <info@bonuseventus.org>; Nina Helgeson <[\(b\) \(4\), \(b\) \(6\)@v-fluence.com](mailto:(b) (4), (b) (6)@v-fluence.com)>
Subject: Re: New User Registered on Bonus Eventus

Your access is all set. Don't hesitate to contact us with any questions, comments or requests.

Jay Byrne
Sent from my mobile
(b) (4), (b) (6)
(877) 835-8362 ext **(b) (4), (b) (6)**
jay.byrne@v-Fluence.com

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On Jul 14, 2018, at 3:04 PM, Stephanie <stephanie.pearl@ars.usda.gov> wrote:

New User Registered for an account on Bonus Eventus. Here are the login details of new user account:

Username : **(b) (6)**
Email : stephanie.pearl@ars.usda.gov
Bonus Eventus

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From: Rodgers, Meghan - OC, Washington, DC

Sent: Monday, May 25, 2020 7:33 AM

To: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC

CC: Young, Joby - OSEC, Washington, DC; Rollins, Blake - OSEC, Washington, DC; Rich, Michawn - OC, Washington, DC; Hoskins, Dudley - OSEC, Washington, DC; Beal, Mary Dee - OSEC, Washington, DC; Varsamis, Alec - OC, Washington, DC; Weeks, Audra - OSEC, Washington, DC

Subject: Bayer Reaches Deals on Big Share of 125,000 Roundup Weedkiller Suits

Bayer Reaches Deals on Big Share of 125,000 Roundup Weedkiller Suits

Bloomberg, 5.25.20

Bayer AG has reached verbal agreements to resolve a substantial portion of an estimated 125,000 U.S. cancer [lawsuits](#) over use of its Roundup weedkiller, according to people familiar with the negotiations.

The deals, which have yet to be signed and cover an estimated 50,000 to 85,000 suits, are part of a [\\$10 billion](#) Bayer plan to end a costly legal battle the company inherited when it acquired Monsanto in 2018, the people said. While some lawyers are still holding out, payouts for settled cases will range from a few million dollars to a few thousand each, said the people, who asked not to be identified because they aren't authorized to speak publicly.

Bayer is likely to announce the settlements, which need approval from the supervisory board, in June, people familiar with the negotiations said. None of the deals are signed, though plaintiffs' lawyers are expected to do so the day of the announcement, the people said.

The shares gained as much as 8.2% as of 11:10 a.m. Monday in Frankfurt trading.

Getting past the Roundup drama is a top priority for Chief Executive Officer Werner Baumann, who orchestrated the \$63 billion Monsanto takeover and has suffered the legal consequences ever since. The surge of Roundup claims, along with three big U.S. court losses, hammered the company's stock, wiping tens of billions of dollars from the market value and prompting shareholders to issue Baumann an unprecedented rebuke last spring.

But since last summer, the CEO has kept the company out of more jury trials while engaging in high-stakes mediation talks. Last month, he won the annual confidence vote from 93% of shareholders amid signs that Bayer might soon reach a resolution.

"A settlement of all U.S. lawsuits for \$10 billion should be a major share price trigger for Bayer," Markus Mayer, an analyst at Baader Bank, said Monday by email.

Once a resolution is in place, Baumann will have to prove that his strategy of pairing pharmaceuticals, consumer health and agriculture makes sense. Some investors have doubts about the approach.

Bayer declined to comment on specifics about the talks. Chris Loder, a U.S.-based spokesman, said Friday the company has made "progress in the mediations" that arose from lawsuits. "The company will not speculate about settlement outcomes or timing," Loder said in

an emailed statement. “As we have said previously, the company will consider a resolution if it is financially reasonable and provides a process to resolve potential future litigation.”

While the exact number of settlements so far wasn’t immediately clear, the estimate of at least 125,000 claims is more than twice the amount of Roundup litigation cases Bayer has previously disclosed. The company has only acknowledged filed and served cases of about 52,500 as of April. Tens of thousands more are being held in abeyance by plaintiffs’ lawyers under agreements with Bayer, people familiar with the negotiations said. Ken Feinberg, the chief Roundup mediator, said in January the total was 85,000 and would likely increase.

Bayer has said it will earmark \$8 billion to resolve all current cases, including those held in abeyance, according to some of the people familiar with the settlements. The deals so far involve many of the strongest claims against the company, the people said. It’s unclear how much would go to those who have now settled and what’s left for the holdouts. Another \$2 billion will be set aside to cover future suits linking the weedkiller to non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, people familiar with the talks said.

Still Being Sold

Under terms of the deals, Roundup will continue to be sold in the U.S. for use in backyards and farms without any safety warning, and plaintiffs’ attorneys will agree to stop taking new cases or advertising for new clients, the people said. Because some of the Roundup cases are consolidated before U.S. District Judge Vince Chhabria in San Francisco, he may need to approve the settlement of those before him, the people said.

To be sure, with tens of thousands of cases still unresolved, there’s no guarantee the company will remain within the \$8 billion it has budgeted for filed and backlogged lawsuits. Bayer [complicated matters](#) last month by backing out of some deals and demanding lawyers take less because of losses tied to the Covid-19 pandemic. That could prompt more lawyers to take their cases out of the settlement, the people said.

Feinberg, the Washington-based lawyer tapped by Chhabria to oversee settlement negotiations, said last week he remains “cautiously optimistic a national settlement will be reached.” He acknowledged fallout from Covid-19 “has slowed momentum” on the talks.

Cancer Claims

The settlements are designed to resolve claims that Roundup, whose active ingredient is the chemical glyphosate, caused non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma in some users. The company denies that Roundup or glyphosate cause cancer, a position backed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Still, after Bayer’s court losses spurred a surge in new suits, investors such as Elliott Management Corp. urged the company to seek a comprehensive settlement.

Feinberg dispatched mediators to oversee meetings between Bayer lawyers and individual plaintiff attorneys, who negotiated solely on behalf of their clients. The company has worked out various payout schedules, though none will exceed three years, the people said.

At this point, only a handful of lawyers are holding out for larger payouts, the people said. [James Onder](#), a St. Louis-based attorney handling more than 24,000 Roundup cases, said last week he's rebuffed settlement offers that would leave his clients with as little as \$5,000 each.

Bayer's overtures "have been insulting," Onder said in an interview. The company is attempting "to strong-arm the most vulnerable in our society into accepting minuscule settlements, hoping they will cower in fear to Monsanto's repeated idle threats of bankruptcy." Onder said he's preparing for trials in St. Louis next year.

The people familiar with the talks have said Bayer lawyers used the threat of putting Monsanto into bankruptcy to get people to accept lower payments. Other companies -- including Purdue Pharma LP -- filed for Chapter 11 protection from creditors to deal with a burgeoning wave a lawsuits over its OxyContin opioid painkiller.

Challenge Verdicts

In a surprising move, Bayer is also pressing ahead with appeals of early cases it lost in court, the people said. All together, juries from three trials ordered the company to pay a combined \$2.4 billion in damages. Judges later slashed those awards to \$191 million.

The first Roundup verdict came from a state court jury in California, which held Monsanto liable for a grounds keeper's lymphoma in 2018 and awarded him \$289 million in damages. A judge later cut that to \$78.5 million. Oral arguments in the appeal are scheduled for June 2 in San Francisco.

Refusing to include past verdicts in the settlement may be designed to send a signal on future claims that Bayer won't just roll over and pay, said Carl Tobias, a University of Richmond professor who specializes in mass-tort law.

"It says they'll fight 'em through the appeals, which can take years to resolve," Tobias said. "In the meantime, people will be dying."

The deals also limit eligibility for payments to non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma cases and those where plaintiffs died of that specific cancer over the last decade, according to a Bayer term sheet reviewed in [January](#) by Bloomberg News. Roundup users that blame the product for causing their multiple-myeloma cancers get nothing under the settlement.

The consolidated case is In re: Roundup Products Liability Litigation, MDL 2741, U.S. District Court, Northern District of California (San Francisco).

###

From: Pick, Rachel - OSEC, Washington, DC

Sent: Wednesday, June 7, 2017 7:16 PM

To: SP3.PS3

CC: Crowe, Taylor - OSEC, Washington, DC

Subject: Briefing documents for Thursday - 6/8/17

Attachments: Bios_Foxx_Rokita.pdf; Event Brief_House Ed and Workforce Breakfast.pdf; Tom Dorr Article Opinion_How to get extra value out of new trade post _....pdf; Secty briefing 6-17 final.docx; Infrastructure - EM.pdf; Delta Council Dinner Pre Decisional Brief.docx

Mr. Secretary,

Below is a synopsis of tomorrow's agenda. Attached are the briefing documents for the highlighted items. I will send you any more items that my pop up before tomorrow morning!

Please let me know if you need anything else!

-Rachel

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM: Breakfast: House Education & Workforce Committee Members: Child Nutrition

Attendees: Rep. Virginia Foxx (NC-5) (Chairwoman); Rep. Todd Rokita (IN-4)
Eyang Garrison (Office Congressional Relations) will be available to brief at 6:45 AM
Read-ahead notes attached (Bios_Foxx_Rokita; Event_Brief_House Ed and Workforce Breakfast)

8:00 AM – 8:30 AM: Briefing for Acosta Meeting (11 am).

Kristi Boswell and Heidi Green
Re: H2A Visas

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM: Meeting with Tom Dorr – Former President & CEO of Door & Associates, Former Rural Development Under Secretary to discuss USDA Reorganization

Attendees – Heidi Green and Sam Clovis
Op-Ed article attached (Tom Dorr Article)

9:00 AM – 9:20 AM: Fingerprinting for PIV card
Butch (Gilbert) Stokes

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM: Wayne Odom – In Touch Ministries (drop by)

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM: Dr. Schechtman meeting

Heidi Green will staff, Sam Clovis may join
Background: Dr. Michael Schechtman – Biotechnology Coordinator; has requested to brief the Secretary on the efforts of AC21 (and all other biotech responsibilities) noting that they have received info from the Civil Rights office on renewing the Charter and need to know how to move forward. Dr. Schechtman will lead the US delegation to Italy starting June 12 and then will be on leave for two weeks prior to retiring on July 7. He has prepared briefing materials for "all things biotech" and would like to transfer the information prior to his departure.

Dr. Schechtman sent 4 documents for meeting. We've attached Secty briefing 6-17 – the rest are very detailed – we can make those readily available should you request them.

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Meeting w/ Secretary Acosta
RE: H2A Visas, Principals only

12:00 PM – 12:40 PM: Lunch

12:40 PM: Depart for White House

1:00 PM-4:30 PM: White House Infrastructure Summit

1:15 pm - 2:05 pm: Working Session - Round 1 (EEOB, War Room Suite)
 2:10 pm - 3:00 pm: Working Session - Round 2 (EEOB, War Room Suite)
 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm: Roundtable Discussion with POTUS & VPOTUS (State Room)
 Read-ahead attached (Infrastructure – EM)

4:30 PM: Transport to Reagan FBO Signature Flight
 Manifest: Jose Rodriguez and Chris Young

5:15 PM – 7:15 PM: Flight departing DCA for Greenville, Mississippi Airport

THE SECRETARY and delegation depart Ronald Reagan National Airport (DCA) en route to Mid Delta Regional Airport (GLH) via University-Oxford Airport (UOX) aboard Mississippi State University Plane, Tail No N370FC.

Flight:	N370FC
Scheduled flight time:	2h4m
Time Change:	-1 hours
Arrival Time:	6:19 pm

Stop at University-Oxford Airport (UOX) to drop off Senator and Mrs. Thad Cochran. (15m)

Flight:	N370FC
Scheduled flight time:	29m
Time Change:	none
Arrival Time:	7:03 pm

Pilots: Mark Valdes (662.341.5200) and Roben Dawkins (662.418.8453)

Passengers: Secretary Perdue

U.S. Senator Thad Cochran

Kay Cochran (wife of U.S. Senator Thad Cochran)

U.S. Senator Roger Wicker

Daniel Ulmer, Staff, Office of U. S. Senator Thad Cochran

Chris Young

Jose Rodriguez

7:10 PM – 7:30 PM: Transit to Vince’s Restaurant

7:30 PM – 8:30 PM: Delta Council Dinner

Vince’s Restaurant – 207 N Main St, Leland, Mississippi
 Briefing Document attached (Delta Council Dinner Pre Decisional Brief)

8:45 PM – 8:50 PM: Transit to Stoneville Cabin



Rachel H. Pick
Special Assistant & Advisor to the Secretary

United States Department of Agriculture
Office: 202-720-3634
Cell (b) (6)

From: Vaden, Stephen - OGC, Washington, DC

Sent: Saturday, December 14, 2019 7:28 PM

To: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC

CC: Young, Joby - OSEC, Washington, DC; CLS1, SLC1 - OSEC, Washington, DC; Tkacz, Kailee - OSEC, Washington, DC

Subject: (b)(5) ACP, (b)(5) DPP

ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE; ATTORNEY WORK PRODUCT; NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

Mr. Secretary,

(b) (5) Attorney client (b) (5) Pre-decisional/Deliberative



Stephen



Stephen Alexander Vaden
General Counsel
Office of the General Counsel
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Suite 107W
Washington, DC 20250
☎ 202-720-3351 (Office)
✉ stephen.vaden@ogc.usda.gov

From: Rich, Michawn - OC, Washington, DC

Sent: Saturday, June 23, 2018 9:21 AM

To: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC

CC: Starling, Raymond - OSEC, Washington, DC; Rollins, Blake - OSEC, Washington, DC; Murtaugh, Tim - OC, Washington, DC; Cole, Donald - OC, Washington, DC; Rodgers, Meghan - OC, Washington, DC; Wilkins, Jake - OSEC, Washington, DC; Mizrahi, Ella - OC, Washington, DC

Subject: Confession of an Anti-GMO Activist

WSJ's Saturday Essay:

Confession of an Anti-GMO Activist

Genetically modified crops have been vilified and banned, but the science is clear: They're perfectly safe. And what's more, the world desperately needs them.

WSJ

6.23.18

Mark Lynas

In a now-famous segment of his talk show, Jimmy Kimmel sent a reporter out to a West Coast farmers market in 2014 to ask food-conscious shoppers what they thought of GMOs. All the interviewees declared their horrified avoidance of GMOs—and then, predictably, failed to come up with an explanation for what the letters “G.M.O.” stand for.

The answer, of course, is “genetically modified organism.” First launched commercially on a wide scale in U.S. agriculture in 1996, GMOs are typically plants or animals whose genomes have been modified by the addition of one or more genes from another species. From the outset they were met with controversy and resistance, dubbed “Frankenfoods” and subject to boycotts and protests that continue to this day in many countries.

Opposition was largely inspired and led by environmentalists, who asserted that genetically modified crops and foods would cause a range of harms. They argued that GMOs would damage the environment, because some were bred to withstand weed killers, which would then be used to excess.

They claimed that GMOs were especially bad for the developing world, tying farmers to expensive new seeds that would not reproduce, thus destroying traditional agriculture. Some campaigners dubbed GMOs “suicide seeds,” pointing to cases of farmers in India who, trapped in debt, took their own lives. Perhaps most crucially, many opponents claimed that genetically modified foods were a threat to human health, causing a higher incidence of everything from cancer and autism to diabetes and obesity.

This wide-ranging indictment took its toll. In a matter of years, the main developer and proponent of GMO seeds, the Missouri-based agrochemical and biotech company Monsanto, became a byword for corporate evil in much of the world.

I am a science writer by profession, and I know these arguments well because, in those early years of GMO development, I was also an outspoken activist against the new technology. Along with green-minded British colleagues, I trespassed to destroy test fields of GMO crops, lobbied to have foods containing genetically modified ingredients banned in supermarkets, helped to organize the world's first campaign targeting Monsanto, and even participated in an unsuccessful attempt to steal the world's first cloned farm animal, Dolly the Sheep.

I have since reversed my views on GMOs, as the evidence debunking almost all of these claims has accumulated over the years, but there's no denying the remarkable world-wide success of our campaign.

Numerous countries, from Peru to Russia, now entirely ban genetically modified crops from being cultivated. Only one GMO food crop, an insect-resistant corn, has ever been approved for use in Europe, and most European countries ban it anyway. Only a handful of African countries permit any GMOs at all. China and India allow their farmers to grow genetically modified cotton but little else.

Early research on genetically engineered wheat, potato and rice was shelved due to worries from food processors and retailers, and strict regulations were introduced making it extremely difficult and expensive to get genetically engineered crops approved anywhere in the world.

In the U.S., the anti-GMO movement initially saw only a limited impact as farmers rapidly and overwhelmingly adopted genetically modified soy, corn and cotton. More recently, laws passed in several states and by Congress have mandated labeling for GMO foods. Though transparency in these matters is a good thing, it is often paired with campaigns of disinformation against GMOs, such as the claim that they might transfer allergenic proteins (they don't). Meanwhile, the voluntary butterfly emblem of the Non-GMO Project has proliferated on products across grocery shelves, proudly displayed as a banner of supposed purity.

The problem isn't just that almost all of the alarms about GMOs were false. It's that the anti-GMO campaign has deprived much of the world of a crucial, life-improving technology—and has shown the readiness of many environmentalists to ignore science when it contradicts their prejudices. That's not the example we need just now as the planet faces the very real threat of climate change.

Contrary to our initial fears, the overall impact of genetically modified crops has been to dramatically reduce the amount and toxicity of pesticides sprayed by farmers. Crops such as Bt corn, so called because it incorporates proteins toxic to insects from the bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis*, have enabled farmers to rely less on sprayed insecticides. A meta-analysis, combining the results of nearly 150 peer-reviewed studies, was published in 2014 in the highly regarded journal PLOS One. It concluded that GMO crops used 37% less

chemical pesticide (that is, both insecticide and herbicide) than conventional versions of the same crops, thanks largely to the new crops' internal biological protection against insects.

Pesticide reductions have been especially notable in developing countries. In Bangladesh, for instance, I have seen firsthand how smallholder farmers have benefited from Bt varieties of eggplant. In the past, they often sprayed their crop with toxic chemicals as many as 100 times in a season to fight off pests. The GMO eggplant has enabled them to dramatically reduce insecticide spraying, in some places almost to zero.

And the GMO seeds reproduce perfectly well. Those Bangladeshi farmers save and share their new Bt eggplant seeds, helping their neighbors and extended families also to reduce pesticide spraying. Many crops now in development in African countries, such as drought-tolerant corn and disease-resistant banana and cassava, will be sold royalty-free by local seed companies in an effort to improve the livelihoods of subsistence farmers and reduce poverty.

Nor is there any truth to the charge that GMO crops have driven Indian farmers to suicide. The Bt cotton introduced to India in 2002 has turned out to be a boon. It now accounts for over 90% of Indian cotton acreage, with 800 different competing Bt cotton varieties on the domestic market. Farmer suicide in India, while undoubtedly tragic in each individual case, occurs at a rate similar to that of such countries as Scotland or France, which don't use GMOs. The German researcher Martin Qaim estimates that the reduced use of insecticides by Indian farmers, thanks to GMO cotton, may have avoided as many as 2.4 million cases of poisoning a year.

Perhaps the most egregious and now-exploded myth is that GMO foods are somehow bad for human health. Doctored graphs showing purported correlations between rates of autism and GMO crop adoption, or suggested links between genetic engineering and cancer rates, have become widespread internet memes. A 2015 study by the Pew Research Center found that only 37% of U.S. adults in the general public believe that it is safe to eat genetically modified foods, as compared with 88% of American scientists.

The reason for this gap is clear enough: Anti-GMO activists have peddled a great deal of misinformation to the general public, while the scientific community, in the U.S. and elsewhere, has known for years that there is no basis for the health concerns that have long bedeviled GMOs.

A massive 2016 report by the U.S. National Academy of Sciences concluded that "the data do not support the assertion that cancer rates have increased because of consumption of products of [genetically engineered] crops." Moreover, "patterns of change in cancer incidence in the U.S. are generally similar to those in the United Kingdom and Europe, where diets contain much lower amounts of food derived from [these] crops." The NAS reached the same conclusion for obesity, diabetes, celiac disease, various allergies and autism, pointing to no evidence of higher rates in countries that use GMOs.

The view that GMO foods have no discernible impact on health is now the well-established consensus across the international scientific community. It includes not just the NAS but the American Medical Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the U.K.'s Royal Society, the French Academy of Science, the African Academy of Sciences and numerous others.

Even the usually GMO-skeptic European Commission admitted in a 2010 report: “The main conclusion to be drawn from the efforts of more than 130 research projects, covering a period of more than 25 years of research, and involving more than 500 independent research groups, is that biotechnology, and in particular GMOs, are not per se more risky than ... conventional plant breeding technologies.”

Particularly striking to me was the strongly worded statement issued in 2012 by the board of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. It declared, “The science is quite clear: Crop improvement by the modern molecular techniques of biotechnology is safe.” This language was almost identical in form to the 2007 statement by the AAAS on climate change, which stated: “The scientific evidence is clear: Global climate change caused by human activities is occurring now, and it is a growing threat to society.”

Indeed, it was this issue that forced me to publicly change my mind on GMOs. After my years of anti-GMO activism in the late 1990s, I moved on to write books on the topic of climate change, and I put a great deal of effort into trying to get the science right. I spent years poring through peer-reviewed journals and debating the issue in the media, insisting that the scientific consensus on climate change should be taken seriously.

But how could I so forcefully endorse the scientific consensus on climate change while simultaneously denying the scientific consensus on GMOs? I came to see that my refusal to accept the science on GMOs put me on the same side, ironically, as those I would contemptuously term “deniers” for their refusal to accept the mainstream scientific view on human-caused climate change.

There are now encouraging signs that the more science-friendly environmental groups are recognizing this contradiction and beginning to shift their positions. Recently, the Environmental Defense Fund, one of the earliest groups opposing GMOs, revised its view on biotechnology after lengthy internal debate. EDF, to its credit, now “recognizes the use of biotechnology as a legitimate deployment of science in the search for effective solutions.”

I have often been attacked, especially by my onetime activist friends, for changing my mind on GMOs. But what was the alternative? To stick to a position that I knew to be false in order to avoid losing reputation? Environmentalism, perhaps more than any other philosophy, requires science. And science means that you must change your mind when the evidence changes, however inconvenient that might be.

So what is it about GMOs that made environmentalists so wary in the first place? The real objection, I suspect, has always been a deeper philosophical one, about human beings “messing with nature” in new and uncertain ways. The idea of technological hubris has long been a concern of the Green movement, also evident in the longstanding and equally misguided campaign against nuclear power.

These reflexes explain why environmentalism is often not the progressive force that it claims to be. Holding a progressive worldview means believing in the possibility of positive change, recognizing past improvements and seeing the potential of scientific and technological innovation to solve humanity’s most pressing problems. In their campaign against GMOs, environmentalists have flirted with reactionary politics, aiming to block innovation and to protect traditional agricultural methods in the service of often-romanticized notions of vanished rural idylls.

The coming world of 10 billion people demands a more clear-headed and genuinely progressive approach. The great challenge will be to produce enough food for this tremendous surge in population while also protecting enough wilderness areas to maintain some measure of the planet’s fast-depleting biodiversity. We simply cannot feed the high-consuming population of the future using the low-productivity methods of the past.

Science has already helped humanity to nearly abolish the specter of famine. If it is not to reappear in decades to come, in tandem with ecological collapse, we must allow scientists to keep doing their jobs. They shouldn’t be hindered by those who, having already filled their bellies, have the luxury to indulge in righteous, ill-informed campaigns against promising new food technologies.

This essay is adapted from Mr. Lynas’s new book, “Seeds of Science: Why We Got It So Wrong on GMOs,” which will be published on June 26 by Bloomsbury Sigma. He is a visiting fellow at the Cornell Alliance for Science.

###

Sent from my iPhone

From: Green, Heidi - OSEC, Washington, DC
Sent: Tuesday, May 9, 2017 10:25 PM
To: SP3.PS3
Subject: FW: CFIUS-related article

From: YOUNG, BENJAMIN, JR. - OGC
Sent: Tuesday, May 9, 2017 11:06 AM
To: Green, Heidi - OSEC, Washington, DC <Heidi.Green@osec.usda.gov>
Cc: Vaden, Stephen - OGC <Stephen.Vaden@ogc.usda.gov>
Subject: Fwd: CFIUS-related article

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Linsky, Scott - DM" <Scott.Linsky@dm.usda.gov>
Date: May 9, 2017 at 10:50:31 AM EDT
To: "YOUNG, BENJAMIN, JR. - OGC" <BENJAMIN.YOUNG@OGC.USDA.GOV>, "Childers, Lindsey - DM" <Lindsey.Childers@dm.usda.gov>, "Linden, Gregory - DM" <Gregory.Linden@dm.usda.gov>
Cc: "Bornstein, Josh - DM" <Josh.Bornstein@dm.usda.gov>
Subject: CFIUS-related article

From the Morning Ag column:

BAYER CONFIRMS IT WILL SELL HERBICIDE, SEED BUSINESS: After months of speculation, Bayer in a statement on Monday announced it will divest its Liberty herbicide and LibertyLink brand of seeds to win South African antitrust regulators' approval of its \$66 billion acquisition of Monsanto. Selling off those two global brands accounts for the majority of \$2.5 billion in asset sales that needs to take place in order to satisfy the concerns of regulators, Reuters [reports](#). The German pharmaceutical and biotech company wouldn't comment on revenues, the number of affected staff or the value of its Liberty assets.

The Bayer-Monsanto deal has yet to be approved by the United States, and the companies haven't filed in the European Union, yet.

Scott R. Linsky
Chief, National Security Policy Staff
USDA Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Coordination
(202) 260-0106 (office)
(b) (6) (cell)

From: Green, Heidi - OSEC, Washington, DC
Sent: Friday, May 5, 2017 3:25 PM
To: SP3.PS3
Subject: FW: Public Tender Offer for Syngenta Shares Accepted

fyi

From: Peterson Laura USWS [mailto:laura.peterson@syngenta.com]
Sent: Friday, May 5, 2017 11:30 AM
To: Green, Heidi - OSEC, Washington, DC <Heidi.Green@osec.usda.gov>
Subject: Public Tender Offer for Syngenta Shares Accepted

Dear Heidi,

Today, our CEO Erik Fyrwald announced that more than 67% of Syngenta shareholders have accepted the public tender offer for Syngenta shares. This means that all the regulatory approvals and conditions required for the closing of the ChemChina offer have been obtained or satisfied. We are excited to report this news to you. We now have a stable owner for investing in agriculture to benefit American farmers and farmers around the world.

Thank you for your time.

Best wishes,
Laura

Today's News:

[ChemChina clinches landmark \\$43 billion takeover of Syngenta](#)

Reuters

By Michael Shields

ChemChina has won more than enough support from Syngenta shareholders to clinch its \$43 billion takeover of the Swiss pesticides and seeds group, the two companies said on Friday. The deal, announced in February 2016, was prompted by China's desire to use Syngenta's portfolio of top-tier chemicals and patent-protected seeds to improve domestic agricultural output. It is China's biggest foreign takeover to date. It is one of several deals that are remaking the international market for agricultural chemicals, seeds and fertilisers. The other deals in the sector are a \$130 billion proposed merger of Dow Chemical and DuPont, and Bayer's plan to merge with Monsanto. The trend toward market consolidation has triggered fears among farmers that the pipeline for new herbicides and pesticides might slow. Regulators have required some divestments as a condition for approving the Syngenta deal. Based on preliminary numbers, around 80.7 percent of Syngenta shares have been tendered, above the minimum threshold of 67 percent support, the partners said in a joint statement. The agreed offer is for \$465 per share. Syngenta shares closed on Thursday at 459 Swiss francs (\$464.5), and rose 0.4 percent in early trade on Friday to 461.20 francs. The transaction is set to close on May 18 after the start of an additional acceptance period for shareholders and payment of a special 5-franc dividend to holders of Swiss-listed shares on May 16. Holders of U.S.-listed depository receipts will get the special dividend in July. Syngenta shares will be delisted from the Swiss bourse and its depository receipts from the New York Stock Exchange. Chief Executive Erik Fyrwald played down the transition from publicly listed group to becoming part of a Chinese state enterprise, stressing that Syngenta would remain a Swiss-based global company while under Chinese ownership. "It is very important to understand that this is a financial transaction," he told broadcaster CNBC in an interview. He saw two major changes: giving Syngenta a long-term shareholder to accompany it during the 12 years it typically takes to discover and launch new products, and helping to overhaul Chinese agriculture, which he called very much behind the global standard. He said he expected the acceptance rate to easily surpass 90 percent, with a squeeze-out of remaining shareholders to follow if needed in June. Funding for the acquisition was clear and irrevocable, while refinancing the company

after the transaction closed was still being discussed. "I am very confident we are going to have a strong balance sheet as agreed," he said, with an investment-grade rating that would let it pursue market share growth, investments, capital spending and acquisitions. Syngenta sells its products in more than 90 countries under such brand names as Acuron, Axial, Beacon and Callisto. It sells seeds such as cereals, corn, rice, soybeans and vegetables.

Laura Peterson

Syngenta Corporate Affairs, N.A.
Head, Federal Government Relations
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www.syngenta.com

This message may contain confidential information. If you are not the designated recipient, please notify the sender immediately, and delete the original and any copies. Any use of the message by you is prohibited.

From: Murtaugh, Tim - OC, Washington, DC

Sent: Monday, June 19, 2017 5:50 AM

To: Young, Chris - OSEC, Washington, DC; Rich, Michawn - OC, Washington, DC; Green, Heidi - OSEC, Washington, DC; SP3.PS3

Subject: Fwd: Morning Agriculture, presented by GMO Answers: Canada rallies around dairy after Trump attacks — Gregg Doud and the challenges he could face as USTR's chief ag negotiator — Alexa, where can I find more organic farmers?

News on Canada dairy.

Begin forwarded message:

From: "POLITICO Pro Agriculture" <politicoemail@politicopro.com>

Date: June 19, 2017 at 5:45:14 AM EDT

To: <tim.murtaugh@oc.usda.gov>

Subject: Morning Agriculture, presented by GMO Answers: Canada rallies around dairy after Trump attacks — Gregg Doud and the challenges he could face as USTR's chief ag negotiator — Alexa, where can I find more organic farmers?

Reply-To: "POLITICO subscriptions" <reply-fe931277762007f74-630336_HTML-796741255-1376319-0@politicoemail.com>

By Jenny Hopkinson | 06/19/2017 05:43 AM EDT

With help from Catherine Boudreau

CANADA RALLIES AROUND DAIRY AFTER TRUMP ATTACKS: President Donald Trump's cross-border, Twitter-aided offensive against Canadian dairy policy has served to mobilize vocal support for dairy among Canada's political officials, which is good news for dairy farmers north of the border who want to see their supply management system maintained in any new free trade agreement, including NAFTA 2.0, said Wally Smith, president of Dairy Farmers of Canada. "I think the Conservatives ... are now more aggressively supporting supply management in the face of criticism. While they've always supported it, they are more public in their comments, and I think that will influence the government's position" heading into NAFTA renegotiation, Smith told Pro Agriculture and Trade last week during a meeting at our offices in Rosslyn, Va. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, a member of the Liberal Party, also has been a defender of the country's dairy policy, which uses production quotas and restrictions on imports to prevent price fluctuations.

Prediction time: Smith said he expects Canada's supply management system will survive NAFTA renegotiation intact. "Dairy farmers in Canada are not subsidized, all of our income is derived from the marketplace; we are significant contributors to the overall GDP and pay a huge amount of taxes," he said, adding that the system protects farmers from the boom and bust cycles that pose problems for U.S. producers as well. "What I'd like to see is a world where farmers everywhere have sustainable production and profitability so we can all make a living. How do you accomplish that? We believe we've been able to achieve that by producing based on what is needed domestically."

Smith said he doesn't think the market access Canada agreed to grant in the Trans-Pacific Partnership can be transferred to NAFTA 2.0, though that will be up to trade negotiators to decide. He added that he thinks NAFTA has been very good for the American dairy industry,

noting that Canada and Mexico are two of its top export markets and that the U.S. runs a dairy trade surplus with Canada of about 5-to-1.

HAPPY MONDAY, JUNE 19! Welcome to Morning Ag, where the [suggested reading](#) for the day is from our friends at NPR who tweeted [dad jokes](#) all day Sunday in an apropos homage to Father's Day. Why did MA do some stretching before reading NPR's list? MA was worried about pulling a groan. Get it?! You know the deal: Thoughts, news, tips, dad jokes? Send them to jhopkinson@politico.com or [@jennyhops](#). Follow the whole team at [@Morning_Ag](#).

**** A message from GMO Answers and the refreshed [GMOAnswers.com](#):** Have a question about GMOs? GMO Answers is an initiative committed to educating the public about GMOs, biotechnology and the science behind how our food is grown. Visit the newly refreshed [GMOAnswers.com](#) website to learn more and find out the answer today. **

OVERPRODUCTION EVERYWHERE: The U.S. has no problem with Canada's supply management system per se, "but if you're going to have supply management, then manage your supply," Jaime Castaneda, senior vice president for trade policy at the National Milk Producers Federation, said in an interview last week. "This is the problem. They have grown their production more than any other country in the last few years." He said Canadian producers have increased milk production to meet rising domestic demand for butterfat, which has resulted in surplus supply of milk protein.

That surplus of milk protein, and a new ingredient pricing policy adopted by Canadian dairy farmers and processors, prompted Trump's [outburst](#) on Twitter earlier this year. U.S. producers have been exporting ultra-filtered milk to Canada duty-free, a product that wasn't restricted when NAFTA was originally negotiated because it's a relatively new ingredient. In February, Canada lowered the price of milk protein to incentivize processors to use up domestic supply in higher value products, like cheese and yogurt.

Smith, of Dairy Farmers of Canada, said that even if the new pricing policy were removed, that would not help U.S. dairy producers. "We're a sovereign nation, and we have our own domestic product we need to utilize. If U.S. farmers weren't in this situation of so much overproduction, I don't believe it would even be an issue," he said, adding that Canada's government is "thrilled" that the nation's dairy industry came up with "an innovative way" to meet the needs of a changing domestic market.

THE CHALLENGE FOR THE MAN FROM MANKATO: Gregg Doud, Trump's [pick](#) for chief agricultural trade negotiator in the office of the U.S. Trade Representative, has agricultural roots and a closeness to farmers that may prove crucial in the public perception battle if the Senate gives him the go-ahead to negotiate various bilateral and multilateral deals, Pro Trade's Doug Palmer reports this morning. Doud, who grew up near Mankato, Kan., on his family's wheat, beef and pork farm, is president of the Commodities Market Council. He's made himself known in farm policy circles as a strong advocate for opening markets ever since he came to Washington 20 years ago to work for U.S. Wheat Associates.

"His being under consideration for such an important position speaks pretty well of capabilities, past performance and what others have thought of him along the way as he's worked up through the ranks," said Vince Peterson, the wheat group's incoming president. "We're always proud to see one of our 'wheaties' distinguish themselves." Pros, read Doug's story [here](#).

MIKA EXPECTED TO MAKE 'FULL RECOVERY': Doctors treating Tyson Foods' lobbyist Matt Mika, shot multiple times during the attack on the congressional GOP baseball

team's practice, are optimistic about his recovery after he underwent additional surgery late last week, his family said in a statement Saturday. "While we know there will be difficult and challenging days ahead for Matt and our family, the physicians and specialists at Matt's side expect a full recovery," the statement said. Mika remained in the ICU at George Washington Memorial Hospital through the weekend.

POLITICO reporters Kyle Cheney, Heather Caygle and Elana Schor put together an oral history of that morning's events, based on interviews with a dozen lawmakers who were there. Check out the harrowing account, which includes how lawmakers tried to help Mika after he was shot, [here](#).

ALEXA, WHERE CAN I FIND MORE ORGANIC FARMERS? Amazon's \$13.7 billion deal to buy Whole Foods — a sum that represents less than 3 percent of Amazon's \$470 billion market cap, as The New York Times' Farhad Manjoo pointed out — has been touted as the dawn of a [new era in grocery shopping](#), a [boon for the growth of organic foods](#), or, as Manjoo's article was headlined, a ["sustainably sourced guinea pig."](#) But one key aspect seems to have been overlooked in the initial hoopla over what it means when an e-commerce power buys the most well known natural food retailer: If Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos decides to up Whole Foods' organic game (say, through drone-based delivery) and sets off something like an organic food arms race in the supermarket sector, domestic organic acreage isn't positioned to handle such an expansion.

U.S. organic cropland has largely held steady in recent years, even as organic sales have seen almost double-digit annual growth. Since farmers aren't making the jump to organic, which requires a three-year transition period in which land must be treated organically but the crop doesn't get a premium in the marketplace, companies are keeping up with demand by turning to imports and practices that some say don't jive with the spirit of the law. It was just last month that The Washington Post [highlighted](#) fraudulent overseas shipments of "organic" soybeans, the type of news that strikes at the reputation of USDA's organic seal.

The reality: Amazon's purchase doesn't necessarily mean that the company is looking to expand Whole Foods' locations or offerings. But if drone delivery of organic chicken breast and wheat bread is in the cards, Bezos will have the additional challenge of how to increase and lock down a reputable organic production supply chain.

THIS WEEK: SONNY HEADS HOME: Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue will make his first official visit to his home state this week for a meeting and site visits with his Mexican and Canadian counterparts. Canadian Agriculture Minister Lawrence MacAulay and Mexican Secretary of Agriculture José Calzada Roviroso [will join Perdue](#) on a tour of the Georgia Ports Authority and a farm tour in Vidalia, Ga., home to the sweet onion that got its name from the town. The trilateral meeting will be the first time ag chiefs from the NAFTA partners sit down since Trump triggered the process to renegotiate the trade deal. U.S. agriculture has largely benefited from the deal's open borders for trade, and is concerned some of those benefits could be lost in efforts to get changes called for by other sectors. So anything NAFTA-related — even a farm tour in Georgia onion country well before the talks start in earnest — takes on greater meaning.

Tech focus leads to Iowa: The tech industry's awkward dance with Trump will continue today as Silicon Valley heavy-hitters visit the White House. Pro Tech's Steven Overly has that [here](#). The White House has dubbed this week "Tech Week," and its programming is expected to include an event in Iowa that will also serve as a sendoff for former Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad, who was recently confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to China, Axios reported. "We're taking the tech conversation to rural America," a White House official told the outlet, adding: "We'll be in

Iowa talking about agriculture and technology and showcasing the latest technology that is changing the way farmers produce, harvest, and market food."

House Agriculture gets schooled: The full House Agriculture Committee will hold a hearing on Thursday to review university research as part of its ongoing look at farm bill programs. Universities, especially land-grant schools, are responsible for a large chunk of the foundational studies in agriculture, which the industry then builds on for its own products. But universities are in need of funding for both research and facilities needs. Pro Agriculture recently dove into how aging facilities are hurting land-grant agricultural research. Read that [here](#). Details for Thursday's hearing are [here](#).

Rural broadband and Interior's budget: Lawmakers will be looking at rural broadband issues this week and, unrelatedly, questioning Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke about his department's budget. Both the [Senate Commerce Committee](#) and the [House Energy and Commerce Committee](#) are slated to hold hearings to consider internet infrastructure needs in rural areas, an issue that's rising in importance as officials eye the president's infrastructure package as a means to increase broadband in underserved areas. Zinke will be on the Hill on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday to defend the White House's proposed budget to [Senate appropriators](#) and the [House](#) and [Senate](#) natural resources committees.

And then there's everything else: Also on tap for lawmakers this week: the Senate Appropriations Committee will review the [FDA's budget](#), the Environment and Public Works Committee will look at [water infrastructure needs](#) and the Senate Agriculture Committee will hold a [confirmation hearing](#) for the president's pick to lead the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

BIOTECH ON THE MIND: Comments are due today on USDA's proposed changes to the rules governing biotech crop approvals, known as the Part 340 regulations, as well as two FDA policies that relate to genome editing in plants and animals. The Part 340 changes, especially, could be one of the few food- and agriculture-related proposals from the Obama era that have legs under the Trump administration. The measure would update which types of biotech crops would be subject to USDA rules — a change long called for by scientists and companies who say only products that pose a human health or environmental risk should have to go through the department's long and expensive regulatory process.

But the rule certainly isn't perfect, the American Soybean Association wrote in comments made public Friday — though it was careful to say the regulation should be repropose and not scrapped. ASA liked the possibility that gene-edited products might not be subject to USDA regulation, but took issue with changes to noxious-weed rules and requirements for an early stage risk analysis aimed at determining if a product should be regulated. That step could come at huge expense to industry and continue to keep small players out of the market, the group said.

Finish line is in sight, right? While it is not clear what USDA will do once it has reviewed all of the comments, Mike Firko, deputy administrator for USDA's Biotechnology Regulatory Service, was optimistic the rule wouldn't meet the same fate as the proposal to update the Part 340 regulations in 2008. That proposal was eventually pulled due to outcry from industry. "The comments we are receiving this time are fundamentally different than the comments we received in 2008," he said.

MA'S INSTANT OATS:

— The Washington Post has a [new poll](#) that found the political divide between rural and urban voters is more cultural than economic and stems from concerns about the nation's demographic changes.

— Trump's new policy on Cuba could derail progress the Obama administration made in its efforts to open up Florida's island neighbor, [POLITICO Magazine reports](#).

— Three farm workers in California have been arrested for stealing \$300,000 worth of avocados, the Associated Press [reports](#).

CALENDAR: Please write us at agcalendar@politico.com to tell us about any upcoming events.

8 a.m. (PDT) — Biotechnology Innovation Organization hosts the "Bio International Convention." Location: San Diego Convention Center, 111 W. Harbor Dr. San Diego, CA 92101. Register [here](#).

1 p.m. — The Association of School and Programs of Public Health holds a briefing on "The Opioid Epidemic: Findings from Public Health Research Experts." Location: 2168 Rayburn.

5 p.m. — The Senate is expected to consider the nomination of Brock Long to be administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. A vote on his nomination is planned for 5:30 p.m.

THAT'S ALL FOR MA! See you again soon! In the meantime, drop your host and the rest of the team a line: cboudreau@politico.com and [@ceboudreau](https://twitter.com/ceboudreau); jhopkinson@politico.com and [@JennyHops](https://twitter.com/JennyHops); hbottemiller@politico.com and [@hbottemiller](https://twitter.com/hbottemiller); jlauinger@politico.com and [@jmlauinger](https://twitter.com/jmlauinger); and welcome Pro's new Trade and Agriculture editor, P.J. Joshi, at pjoshi@politico.com and [@pjoshiny](https://twitter.com/pjoshiny). Follow [@POLITICOPro](https://twitter.com/POLITICOPro) and [@Morning_Ag](https://twitter.com/Morning_Ag) on Twitter.

**** A message from GMO Answers and the refreshed [GMOAnswers.com](https://www.gmoanswers.com):** Since 2013, GMO Answers has welcomed and answered more than 1,300 questions from consumers on all biotechnology and agriculture topics. Recently we introduced the refreshed [GMOAnswers.com](https://www.gmoanswers.com), a user-friendly resource that's part of our latest evolution to continue to answer your questions and create a conversation about GMOs and biotechnology, while offering more multimedia content, enhanced search functionality and refreshed educational resources. Learn more and ask our independent experts your own questions at [GMOAnswers.com](https://www.gmoanswers.com). **

To view online:

<https://www.politico.com/tipsheets/morning-agriculture/2017/06/canada-rallies-around-dairy-after-trump-attacks-023364>

Stories from POLITICO Pro

Trump to nominate Gregory Doud as USTR's chief agriculture negotiator [Back](#)

By John Lauinger | 06/16/2017 08:31 PM EDT

Gregory Doud, a native Kansan and the president of the Commodity Markets Council, has been picked by President Donald Trump to serve as chief agricultural negotiator for the Office of the United States Trade Representative.

The chief ag negotiator will be one of the front-line posts as the Trump administration seeks to expand access to overseas markets for American farmers to boost the slumping agricultural economy. The post was formerly held by Darci Vetter.

Doud has deep farm roots, is an agricultural economist by trade, and knows his way around Capitol Hill. Raised in Kansas, he owns part of a farm that has been in his family for more than a century and that his parents still operate. He's a graduate of Kansas State University, with a bachelor's degree in agriculture and a master's in agricultural economics.

He's been at the Commodity Markets Council since 2013, and before that was a senior professional staff member on the Senate Agriculture Committee for Sen. [Pat Roberts](#), the panel's chairman, and Sen. [Thad Cochran](#). He had a hand in drafting the 2012 Senate farm bill. He previously worked for eight years as chief economist for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and did stints with U.S. Wheat Associates and the World Perspectives firm.

To view online [click here](#).

[Back](#)

Trump's ag trade nominee will have to crack foreign markets — and public perception

[Back](#)

By Doug Palmer | 06/19/2017 05:01 AM EDT

Gregg Doud has had some experience when it comes to the benefit of opening foreign markets to U.S. farm exports, and the catastrophic results of countries suddenly shutting their doors.

When bovine spongiform encephalopathy, better known as mad cow disease, was found in the United States in late 2003, he was chief economist at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. U.S. beef exports dried up overnight and producers lost billions of dollars in sales to countries like Japan, China and South Korea.

But Doud worked closely with the Republican administration of George W. Bush and then the Democratic administration of Barack Obama to reopen markets around the world to U.S. beef exports. It was a slow process involving years of work.

So, in a bit of good timing, just as the last major holdout, China, is moving to drop its ban, President Donald Trump [announced plans](#) late Friday to nominate Doud as chief agricultural trade negotiator in the office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

If confirmed by the Senate, one of his first jobs will involve renegotiating NAFTA. As such, he will face the dual tasks of opening up markets to more U.S. exports and helping to persuade skeptical members of the American public — including some in the Trump administration — that trade deals are beneficial for the country.

Doud, who grew up near Mankato, Kan., on his family's wheat, beef and pork farm, has made himself known in farm policy circles as a strong advocate for opening markets ever since he came to Washington 20 years ago to work for U.S. Wheat Associates.

The wheat group's incoming president, Vince Peterson, described his blunt-talking former colleague as a bright and passionate self-starter who has made many friends in the agricultural sector and among lawmakers. His roles in Washington included a two-year stint as a senior staff member on the Senate Agriculture Committee, working for Republican Senators [Pat Roberts](#) and [Thad Cochran](#).

"His being under consideration for such an important position speaks pretty well of capabilities, past performance and what others have thought of him along the way as he's worked up through the ranks," Peterson said. "We're always proud to see one of our 'wheaties' distinguish themselves."

Doud has worked both on the influence side and on the legislative side during his years in Washington. After leaving the Senate post, he became president of the Commodities Market Council, which represents the Chicago Board of Trade and other commodity futures exchanges in high-power dealings with Congress and the Commodities Futures Trading Commission.

His two decades of working in policy may make him a Washington stalwart in the Trump administration. But the Kansas State University graduate and avid Wildcats football fan still owns part of a farm that has been in his family for more than a 100 years.

His closeness with farmers may be crucial in public perception as he negotiates various bilateral and multilateral deals. The U.S. grows more food than needed for Americans, making free flowing exports important to economic growth.

He will also face challenges in following through on some of his boss' tough-talk at the negotiating table. Trump put U.S. concerns over Canadian dairy policies in the national spotlight in March, when he lashed out on Twitter at practices that he said "made business for our dairy farmers in Wisconsin and other border states very difficult. We will not stand for this. Watch!"

Trump also began his presidency by throwing away a trade deal, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which the cattlemen and most other farm groups saw as key to their future export success.

The move, although widely expected, was hypocritical after Trump's [brash promise](#) at a campaign event in Spokane, Wash., in May 2016 to quickly roll back Japan's 38 percent tariff on U.S. beef. TPP would have immediately cut Japan's tariff on U.S. beef to 27.5 percent.

Instead, Trump gave Australian beef producers a major advantage, because they already were in possession of a deal that will phase down Japan's tariff on Australian beef to 19 percent by 2031.

Doud could have the opportunity to try to recapture the gains Trump gave away, after the administration promised to negotiate bilateral trade deals to replace the TPP. However, Tokyo has warned the U.S. not to expect it to open its agricultural market as much in a one-on-one deal as it did in the 12-nation TPP agreement.

Doud's immediate focus, besides winning Senate approval of his nomination, is preparing for NAFTA renegotiation with Canada and Mexico, which could start as early as August.

By picking someone with strong aggie credentials, Trump has reduced worries that he will sacrifice agricultural market access that U.S. farmers already enjoy in Canada and Mexico in order to strengthen the manufacturing provisions of the nearly 25-year-old agreement.

At first glance, there may seem to be little for a chief agricultural negotiator to do in the NAFTA talks, after the original 1990s agreement eliminated most barriers to agricultural trade. But remaining are the notable exceptions of Canada's supply management programs for dairy, poultry and eggs, which restrict imports in order to support domestic prices.

The TPP agreement would have opened Canada's market to more U.S. dairy, as part of an intricate deal involving other dairy-exporting nations. But Canadian dairy farmers now say they will fight any effort to transfer concessions Ottawa made in the multilateral TPP to the three-nation NAFTA pact.

"If you want to consider something like TPP as a starting point, you're looking at a reduction in market access," Wally Smith, president of Dairy Farmers of Canada, told POLITICO. "So, maybe it's not in anybody's interest to link it to the TPP, because it could actually work against the U.S. negotiating position."

Trump's high-profile attack on Canadian dairy policy has rallied public support in Canada for the supply management program, and appears to also have had the same effect on Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, DFC officials said.

Doud's extensive private sector experience, as well his familiarity with key players on the Washington policy scene, makes him a good pick to take on the Canadians and handle the rest of the agricultural trade agenda, said Jaime Castaneda, senior vice president of the National Milk Producers Federation.

"I think he brings a significant amount of skills to the job," Castaneda said. "I'm convinced Gregg knows the importance of dairy very well, particularly from his years with Senator Roberts on the Senate Agriculture Committee and at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, where he showed significant interest in supporting the dairy industry, particularly on the export side."

For the most part, Doud could be left "playing defense" in the agricultural negotiations, said his predecessor, Darci Vetter, who was chief U.S. agricultural negotiator for the last two years of the Obama administration and the deputy undersecretary of agriculture for farm and foreign agricultural services before that.

For example, if the Trump administration tries to change the automotive rules of origin in the NAFTA talks in a way that brings back manufacturing jobs to the U.S., Canada and Mexico could counter by proposing to roll back some U.S. agricultural market access, she said.

"Figuring out how to leverage a NAFTA discussion to get Canada to make regulatory changes [on dairy], because the tariffs aren't the issue, that's tricky. I think it's going to take real creativity," Vetter said. "Anything we would have left to give would likely not be in agriculture."

But Vetter said she believes Doud was a good pick for the job because of his deep understanding of how agricultural markets work and because of his forthright personality.

"He's a straight shooter. He doesn't play games or hide where he is. I think negotiators who do that pay for it in the end," Vetter said. "He also asks a lot of questions and at the end of the day is pretty pragmatic about how to get to yes."

Catherine Boudreau contributed to this report.

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'Somebody's Trying to Kill Me' [Back](#)

By Kyle Cheney, Heather Caygle and Elana Schor | 06/17/2017 07:30 AM EDT

Mass shootings often take on an identity, a characteristic shared by the victims or the scene that gives an increasingly commonplace horror something singular by which it can be remembered—nightclub partiers, gap-toothed schoolchildren, perplexed moviegoers.

So it was on Wednesday at a baseball field in the heart of Alexandria, where an unusual group of Type A personalities had gathered for an hour or so of early morning practice before they headed to their day jobs on Capitol Hill. What happened in the five harrowing minutes after a bitter 66-year-old from Illinois trained his rifle on nearly two dozen congressmen, staffers, lobbyists, security detail, family members and bystanders scattered around the diamond was not the worst shooting in recent American history. Though five people were injured—two critically, including a member of Republican House leadership—no one except the gunman died. But in an exceedingly partisan moment, scarred by withering political rhetoric and violent protest, an apparently targeted attack on a group of Republicans by someone who had posted profane rants against President Donald Trump couldn't help but become a terrible symbol of a divided country.

But while the shooting mercifully set no records for deaths or injuries, it had the effect of turning a number of men—accustomed to being in charge, accustomed to political combat, accustomed to making decisions that affect millions—into average citizens with an average citizen's control over daily life. Thirteen of those men—11 representatives, one senator (and one devoted, 81-year-old freelance photographer)—shared their experiences in uncommon detail with Politico . Used to speaking in public, some of them even veterans of actual combat, they spoke with candor and bracing detail, and the kind of emotion that grabs you when the adrenaline has subsided. For once, they were speaking about something they had lived through, not just an act of random violence, from some faraway corner of the country about which someone demanded they comment.

'It was kind of festive'

Rep. John Moolenaar: We started practice about 6:15. And we kind of warm up and take some outfield practice.

Rep. Jeff Duncan: Alexandria is coming alive, and people are exercising and that's what they do. It's not uncommon for us to have interactions with citizens who look in the fence and watch us practice a little.

Rep. Bill Johnson: A lot of joviality. A lot of "We're going to win." A lot of energy out on the field. Everybody trying to put forth their best effort. And so it was kind of festive.

Johnson: The last thing I did before I walked off the field and grabbed my bag was to fist-bump Steve Scalise. He was standing over there by home plate getting ready to take his round of batting practice. And as he always does: "See you later." And the last person I spoke to was Matt Mika. As I was walking out of the gate, he was walking in. He said, "You're leaving early, Mr.

Johnson, you must have an early morning meeting." I said, "Yeah, I do, I've got to cut out a little early."

Duncan : Ron [DeSantis] plays third base, I play shortstop. We were on the field and we had already taken batting practice, already shagged a lot of balls in the infield, and he said, "When do you wanna leave?" I said, "I can leave now, I've already practiced enough. And I can get back to the Hill and make an early meeting." And he said, "Let's go." I said, "Well, let's let Mike Conaway—Chairman Conaway—was in the batter's box," I said, "Let's let him finish his at-bat and then we'll leave." So Conaway finished, they started gathering balls up. DeSantis and I walked off the field. I actually fist-bumped Scalise on my way off the field. And then we get to the parking lot. DeSantis is already in the car. I'm getting in when this guy approaches.

Bergman: We were almost four, five minutes to the end of our practice and kind of winding down. I was standing next to the batting cage next to home plate. It was my turn to hit next.

Duncan: Someone in the parking lot asked me if the team practicing was a Democrat or Republican team. I told him they were Republicans. He said, "OK, thanks," and turned around. I got in the car and left. That was at 7:02. And the reason I know that is I got in the car and commented about what time it was, knowing how long it was going to take us to get back to the Capitol. One minute, one way or the other, makes a lot of difference in traveling back to the Hill. So I know it was exactly 7:02.

'As I was running, a round hit to my left'

Marty LaVor: I was standing in front of the first base, probably about 10, 20 feet towards home plate. And I was only watching the right hand batters. I happened to turn and look toward third base. I see this guy, and he wasn't looking at anybody, but I saw the rifle, and it's pointing skyward. And so my thought was, 'Why would anybody be out at 6 o'clock in the morning with a rifle to shoot birds?'

Moolenaar: I went over to the batting cages where we have a machine pitch, and I was going to work out some of my hitting—and it was there where we heard the first shot.



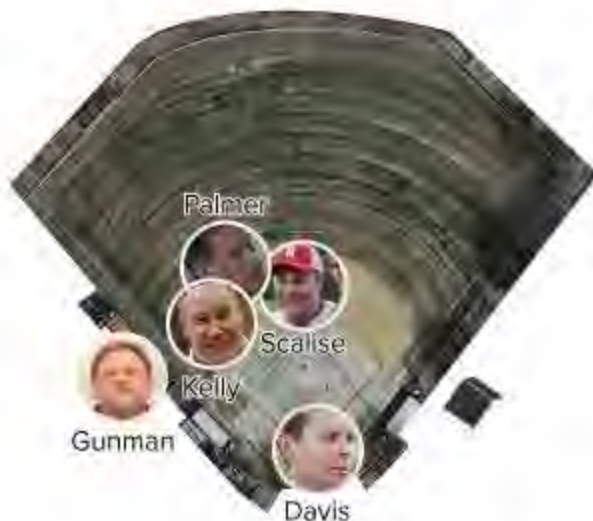
Rep. Barry Loudermilk: Right after I put on my helmet, I heard a crack. I knew it was a gunshot, but it's so out of place, you're trying to process it. That was to my left over by third base. Instinctively I just looked over to the Capitol Police detail, Scalise's detail. They're always there.

Moolenaar: When the first shot rang out, it really sounded like an explosion. It sounded like a gunshot, but all of us were thinking at 7:15 in the morning, in this pastoral setting, where people of the community could watch us practice and ask questions—we just weren't thinking about gunfire.

Fleischmann: I heard a large bang ... I didn't think anything of it, so I didn't do anything. I didn't realize it was a gunshot.

Rep. Mo Brooks: I was on deck about to hit batting practice, on the third base side of home plate, and I hear a loud "bam." And I look around and behind third base ... I see a rifle.

Rep. Gary Palmer: Trent Kelly was at third and [Rodney] Davis was batting and we heard a shot. ... I yelled to Trent "That was a gunshot." Trent yelled, "I know," turned and said "He's got a gun. Run!"



Bergman: I remember hearing somebody say something like, "Shooter!"

Rep. Joe Barton: I was by the first base dugout on the on-deck circle, so I looked down there, and I yelled at Brad, my oldest son, "Just get Jack, and get down." And they both did.

Brooks: And I see a little bit of a body and then I hear another "blam," and I realize that there's an active shooter. At the same time, I hear Steve Scalise over near second base scream.

Palmer: When I heard the shot, I knew, especially the next couple of shots. I knew pretty well he had some type of semi-automatic weapon.

Rep. Mike Conaway: There was a delay. The second gunshot went off. People started running off the field.

Palmer: If he had wanted to, Trent and I could have been his first two victims. We were stationary targets. The staffer on the mound, pitching—Wes, I think he works for Sen. Strange—I mean he was standing on the mound. We were all literally yards from the guy.

Fleischmann: An intense fear grips me that I'm literally a sitting duck. I didn't see the shooter ... I had no idea other than the shot had come from the direction behind me, the first one. And so I made the conscious decision then to get up and try to run to the first base dugout.

Palmer: As we were moving to find cover, two more shots were fired. One hit Scalise. I saw Scalise get hit and go down. I knew he was hit low. Didn't know if he was hit in the leg or hip.

Fleischmann: I got up and all I could think was, "I'm going to run and either he's going to shoot me in the back and shoot me down, or I'm going to make it to the dugout." ... But when I got in there, I got hurt. I hurt my hands, my elbows. I landed on the concrete. I hit my side. I thought I had broken ribs.

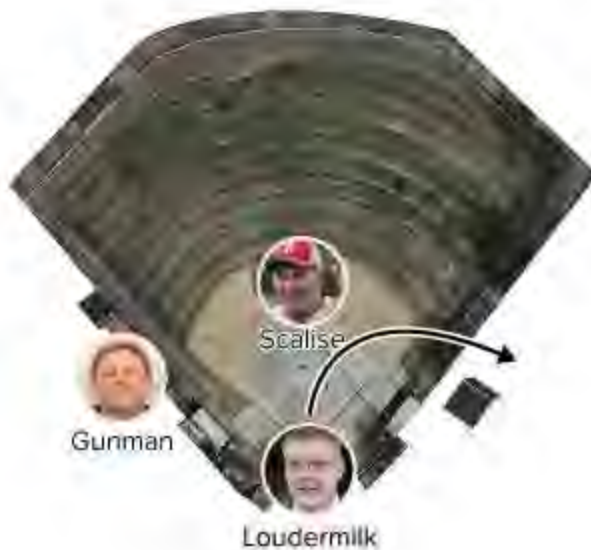


Brooks: I ran around to the first base side of home plate. We have a batting cage that's got plastic wrapped around it to stop foul balls. And hid behind the plastic. You know that plastic's not real good, and I was lying on the ground with two or three others as gunfire continued ... and there were probably 10, 20, 30 shots fired while two or three of us are lying on the ground seeking cover behind the batting cage.

Moolenaar: Our batting cage, you could hear bullets hitting the metal fence, you could hear the thuds of bullets landing.

Bergman: I went into Marine mode very quickly and literally got into a low crawl and headed toward the back side of the first base dugout. The only safe place was behind it.

Loudermilk: I ran toward the gate to get out of the field. I just wanted to get something between me and the shooter. I couldn't see him. I knew he was to the left. As I was running off the field a round hit to my left on the ground, and a round hit the fence. So I knew he was targeting us.

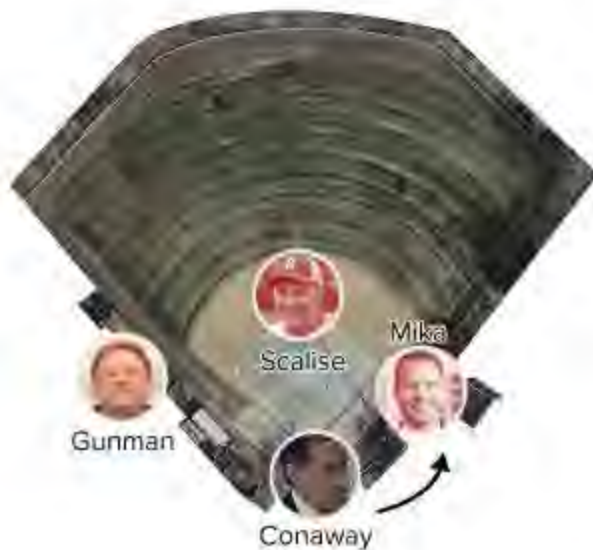


Bergman: I was thinking: "I'm in danger. Somebody's trying to kill me. Somebody's shooting at me." The worst fear for a Marine is to be in a gunfight without a gun. At that point, I'm not thinking about my family, I'm thinking about survival. You can't protect others if you haven't protected yourself first.

Palmer: We got to the gate—there was only one gate open in the entire field, on the first base side. We got through that and took cover behind a large oak tree.

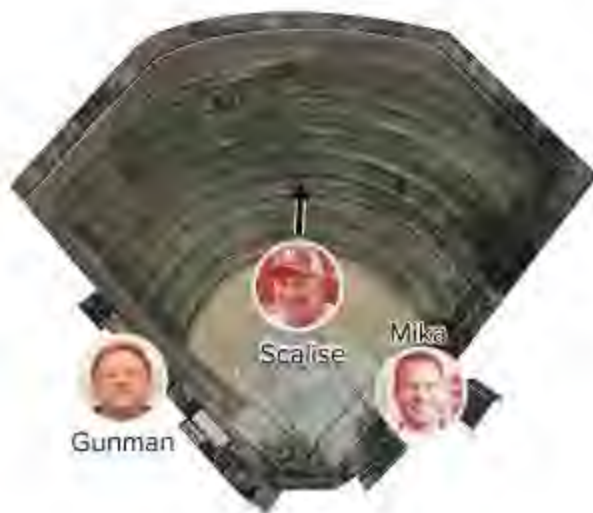
Loudermilk: I got around the side of the shed. Some of the guys were able to get out of the dugout, some others came over and got behind the shed with us. They stayed there for a little bit. There was a break in the shooting so they ran behind a bathroom, it was a concrete building. There was probably nine or 10 of us around that little shed. Two of us stayed behind because when I got to the shed, I saw Matt Mika laying about 10 feet in front of us. He was already shot, he was lying there.

Conaway: I went over behind the first base dugout, tried to find out where the shooter was. Scalise was down in the outfield. One of the staffers—or lobbyist, he's down behind a car, he's been shot in the chest.



Loudermilk: I immediately ran up to where Matt [Mika] was and the gunfire drove us back. And so, I was able to talk to him. He was about 10 feet away. Every time we tried to reach him it would drive us back.

Palmer: Scalise dragged himself off the infield dirt into the outfield grass, about 10 yards. I was yelling at him to stay down.



Loudermilk: Several other shots hit around us. We could see 'em. We could hear them. You could hear 'em go over your head. One hit the shed we were behind about two feet over my head. So we stayed put, there were fewer targets around us by now because most everyone had been able to get out of there, get out of the area. Some went in apartment buildings across the street.

Moolenaar: There was a woodshed, that wasn't really a very good barrier. It was very thin wood, and thinking perhaps the vehicles would be a better barrier. But what we realized was the shots were shooting out windows on these vehicles, so I was right behind a vehicle that had been shot out. Miraculously, someone in an apartment right there invited three of us to come inside the apartment.

Bergman: The direction I was going, Scalise would've been to my back ... Once I got behind the dugout, I had no view of the field.

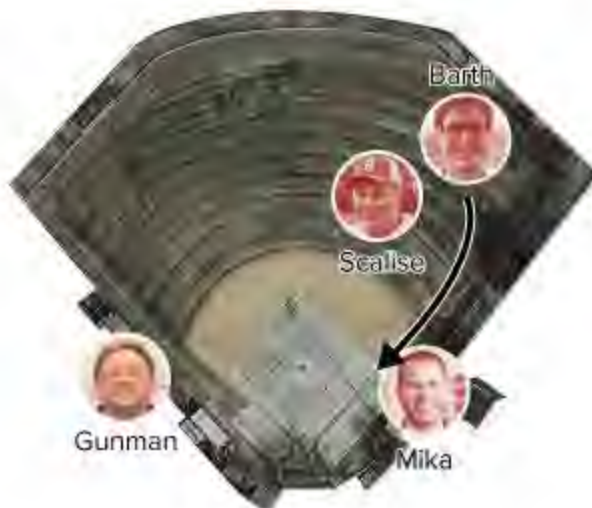
Brooks: I heard a break in the gunfire and decided to take a chance. Ran from home plate to the first base dugout, which is also cinder block and down two or three feet, so you can get better cover. There were a number of congressmen and congressional staffers, lying on the ground. One of them was wounded in the leg. I took off my belt and myself and another congressman, I don't remember who, applied a tourniquet to try to slow down the bleeding.

Rep. Roger Williams: They're real dugouts, they're about six feet in the ground. And they're concrete. I just dove into there head first ... like diving in a swimming pool with no water.

LaVor: I heard that sound and I turned and there were other people, other members and staff, running for the dugout. And I was running in back of a congressman who I literally don't know who it was. And we got to the end of the dugout. He dove in, and I dove in on top of him. I would have been severely injured if I had done the same dive because of the concrete floor. Jumping on a congressman's back apparently was a little softer.

'There was blood all over the dugout.'

Williams: I don't know how long I was there, but all of a sudden, at the top came running in was Zack Barth, who works for me. He dove in and yelled "I'm shot." And I don't know, I've got to figure this out in my head how God made this work, but he came to me. I mean all of these people—we got together and I held him as Mo Brooks ripped his belt off and Flake and I put a tourniquet on his leg to keep his leg from losing more blood. And then we all just stayed down, yelling at everybody, "Keep your head down," yelling at Scalise not to move.



Fleischmann: There was blood all over the dugout. Some of that because there was one gentleman there who had been shot in the leg. And other of it was because of people who had jumped in there like me got bloodied up and hurt hitting the concrete.

Williams: In this dugout there were probably 10 of us. But there were generations in the dugout. You had somebody like me, some of the older guys, say the 60-70ish group. And then

you had a 10-year old in there, Joe Barton's son was in there ... and there I was with Zack, who works for me, who's 23, we're holding each other.

Bergman: Joe Barton was [in the dugout]. I know for sure because his son, Jack, was outside the fence underneath the Suburban. I'm yelling at Jack Barton, Joe's son, to stay under the truck. As a 10-year-old he was popping his head out, wondering what the hell was going on. "Stay under the truck!" He'd look out. ... I'm used to leading Marines, and in that situation, if you have to tell someone to sit down or duck and they turn around and ask why, they're dead.

Williams: So Zack [Barth] is shot, he's bleeding, we're trying to tie a tourniquet up [for] him, telling him "Keep your head down," and he's texting his mother that we're under attack and he's doing fine. To me, that's got some bravery to it.

Bergman: I saw the Capitol Police move toward the gunman. Joe [Barton] and I both hustled, we grabbed Jack [Barton]. We both flew into the dugout. Because now, best scenario, the end of the dugout, the home base side of the dugout was keeping us out of the line [of fire].

Barton: By the time I got into the dugout, I couldn't see [Jack]. And I said 'Where's Jack?' They had put him under the bench, and then two members had placed themselves in front of him so had the gunman got to the dugout, he wouldn't have got shot.

Fleischmann: So while we were in the dugout, I kept saying to myself, "Please, please, somebody take this shooter out. Somebody subdue him because he's continuing to shoot people."

Brooks: We had people in the first base dugout who were screaming into their telephone that we were under attack and to send help immediately. And I think that's because of our concern that our security detail may be outgunned.

Fleischmann: While I was in the dugout, I called my chief of staff Jim Hippie. And I remember being so visibly upset, saying, "We're under attack, please call for help, I'm in a dugout, there's an active shooter."

LaVor: Now, once I was in the dugout, I clearly heard the pop, pop, pop, pop. I assume it was eight bullets. And it stopped. Well, because I'm not a rifle shooter, you know, I thought he was finished. And so I started to stand up and look around. A staffer who was in the dugout in front of me, screamed, 'Get down and get next to the wall.' Well, he saved my life, because a bullet came past the spot where I would have been looking out, hit the cinder block in the back of the dugout, took out a chunk of cinder block. From that point on, until it was over, I just stared at the dirt on the floor, and I talked to God.

'There was a different sound to their pistols'

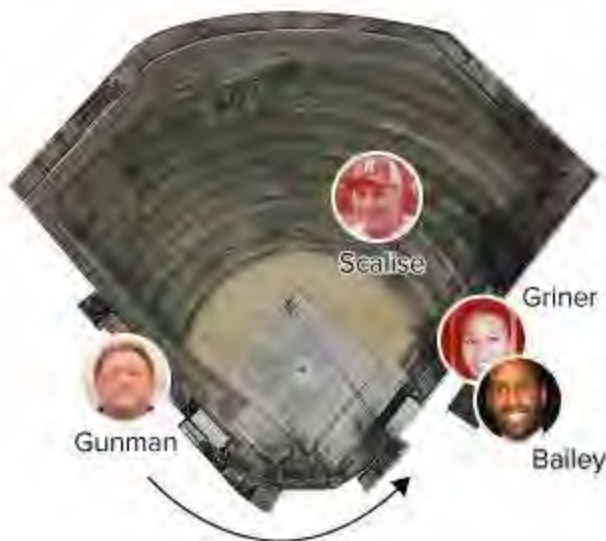
Brooks: In the meantime, I'm towards the right-field side of the dugout and there's gunfire within about five or six, seven feet of my head. And I look up and there's a guy with a gun blasting away. Fortunately, it was one of the good guys, one of our security detail who was shooting back. Of course it was pistol versus rifle, our pistols versus the shooter's rifle along the third baseline just outside the chain link fence, and he was ordering us to stay down.

Moolenaar: You could tell there was a different sound to their [pistols] as opposed to the rifle that the shooter was using.

Conaway: The shooter is actively shooting. Two Capitol Hill police guys are returning fire. They're trying to find the guy, I'm trying to point the guy out to him. [Shot] ricochets around, goes through a tire, ricochets around, hits a Capitol Hill policewoman in the ankle, so she's down.

LaVor: Once the Capitol Police became engaged, it was like Fourth of July, where you see everything go off in the last burst. Bing, bing, bing, and it's all over the sky, and it's very loud. You could hear the different kinds of sounds but it was non-stop.

Palmer: The gunman moved from the third base side around toward home plate, firing at people, then moved on around to first base side where Capitol police officers continued to engage him. Special Agent [Crystal] Griner was hit in the left leg. I saw her go down with a bullet wound, and she pulled herself, she was lying beside their SUV. She pulled herself into a firing position and continued to engage the shooter.



Loudermilk: The second officer went out and drew fire. He got wounded too. I think it was shrapnel. At that point, I backed off and went behind an oak tree. It was about five feet behind me where I could get a better vantage point. Then I saw the gunman come out carrying a handgun—apparently he'd run out of ammo. He pointed at the officer and [the officer] told him, "Drop the gun, drop the gun." He took a couple shots at the officer.

Barton: I finally saw one of the security officers rush the shooter with his pistols drawn and said, "Drop the pistol, drop the pistol, put the pistol down," and when he didn't do that, I think this is the officer who shot the attacker.

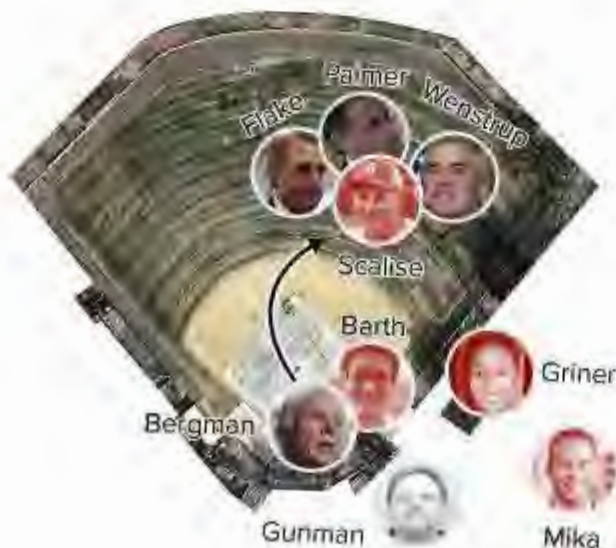


Conaway: About that time the Alexandria police engage, so between them and our one remaining Capitol Hill policeman, the guy is down to his handgun, the guy has dropped his rifle, they shoot him, he goes down. I go over there. They put him in handcuffs.

Fleischmann: The shooter had been subdued and they said it's OK to get up. I got up, I was bleeding, other people were bleeding. And I remember looking right out toward second base and Steve Scalise was lying there, out in the field. And he was being attended to by that time.

'Can you call his wife?'

Bergman: After the shooter was down, I headed directly out to the field. Dr. [Brad] Wenstrup was there, Flake was there, Congressman Palmer was there as well. I checked on the rest of the wounded, on Matt Mika. I moved over to within about 20 feet of where the shooter was down.



Palmer: I don't remember if Brad [Wenstrup] was first out there but he was a doctor. When I got out there, I think it was Mike Conaway and Chuck Fleischmann and a couple other members. Barry Loudermilk got an emergency kit out of the SUV and brought it out. Brad was trying to

press on the wound and create a tourniquet. I was digging in the kit trying to find bandages or gauze or whatever we could come up with to stop the bleeding. Brad was fabulous in terms of keeping Steve alert and getting him to drink. Steve was alert.

Loudermilk: I knelt down. [Mika] was still conscious. I put my hand on his head and I prayed for him. And then I asked the officer if she was hit. She was, in the ankle. And I went and got the medkit out of the back of the car. By the time I got the medkit, EMTs were already at Matt. So I took the med kit out to Brad Wenstrup.

Sen. Jeff Flake: As soon as the shooting stopped, that's when I ran out to Steve, and we applied pressure to the wound to try to keep the bleeding down until the medics arrived. As soon as that occurred, I went to the dugout to get my phone. But one of the staff members grabbed Steve Scalise's phone and handed it to me and said, "Can you call his wife?" and that's what I did first.

Palmer: With Steve, when we got out there and were able to get his pants down and see where the wound was, I knew we would have a hard time getting a tourniquet. But while we were waiting, Wenstrup fashioned a tourniquet out of Steve's belt. Just to increase pressure on the bandages we were applying to the wound. Then the EMT got there and they had a tourniquet that's for mid-body pressure.

Bergman: I saw [the shooter] down, laying on his right side. A man in his early 50s, stocky build, slightly graying hair. I took a quick look at his face. What I was looking for first was: Did the officers have him safely down so he could not get up and do anything else? I didn't see any laborious breathing. He was being securely held down. It was a quick call: Was he a threat or was he not?

Palmer: Special Agent Bailey, we sat him down to get a look at him, and he wouldn't leave Steve's side. He just kept saying he wouldn't leave him.

Bergman: [Matt Mika] was right next to the vehicle, he was laying on his back. The paramedics on site were just literally taking his knife and cutting his T-shirt. I got a chance to see the exit wound on the front of his chest. I just kind of looked him in the eye, touched his knee for a couple of seconds, probably said something to him.

Barton: I did call 911, I also called the Capitol Hill police on my cell phone, and as soon as it was apparently safe to get up I checked on everybody who was down and then made a phone call to try to get the Speaker [Paul Ryan] on the phone and let him know what was going on.

Palmer: I didn't really feel anything until a couple of hours later. It kind of hits you once you've had time to think about it. And that's not bravado, I just think that's what happens to you in the moment.

LaVor: When my wife finally picked me up, she said, 'Well, what was happening in your mind? You know, were you pleading with God and everything else?' And I said, 'It was the calmest I have ever been in my life.' I wasn't nervous, I wasn't frightened, I was lying down looking at the dirt and talking to God. And I said, at one point, 'If it is my time to go, I am ready.' That's not the way I normally think or talk, although I'm very religious, I'm a churchgoer, I don't miss. But this was beyond anything I had ever experienced in my life, and I still can't explain it two days later.

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White House meetings add to tech's awkward dance with Trump [Back](#)

By Steven Overly | 06/16/2017 01:54 PM EDT

The fraught relationship between the country's leading tech executives and President Donald Trump is about to get even more tense.

The latest uncomfortable moment arrives Monday, when top tech CEOs are expected to sit down with Trump at the White House to talk about modernizing government technology. Many of the companies have refused to confirm their attendance publicly, in a sign of how sensitive their dealings with the Trump administration have become in a liberal Silicon Valley that loathes his policies on issues like immigration and climate change.

It's just the newest example of a dynamic that has ensnared some of the industry's leading figures. In February, embattled Uber CEO Travis Kalanick backed away from a Trump economic council after critics of the president's travel ban announced a boycott of the company. More recently, Tesla CEO Elon Musk quit his role as a White House business adviser after Trump abandoned the Paris climate accord.

Liberal activists are serving notice that other tech companies need to beware — and calling on Silicon Valley workers to pressure their employers to disengage from Trump.

"Trump has been in office for almost 150 days. There is no mistaking what this administration is," said Nicole Carty, campaign manager for SumOfUs, an advocacy group pressuring executives to leave Trump's advisory councils. "They are condoning an administration in a moment when the truth and intent of its agenda has been revealed."

"This meeting doesn't have to happen," another group, Tech Solidarity, wrote in a blog post about Monday's White House session. "Tech employees have the power to stop it."

Even so, executives from Google's parent Alphabet, IBM, Cisco and Oracle will be among those in attendance, as will billionaire tech investor Peter Thiel. Other corporate participants named in media reports include Apple, Amazon, Microsoft and possibly Facebook. Those four companies have all declined to comment on their plans despite repeated requests, and sources close to Alphabet and IBM only confirmed their participation Thursday.

Many in the tech sector enthusiastically backed Hillary Clinton during the campaign, criticized Trump's rhetoric toward women and immigrants, and warned he posed a threat to the industry's ethos of entrepreneurship. The feeling appeared to be mutual, with Trump regularly blasting Apple for manufacturing products in China and suggesting Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos was using his ownership of The Washington Post to gain a tax advantage.

After the election, though, tech executives made a December pilgrimage to Trump Tower and continued their standard practice of lobbying the federal government to advance their interests, regardless of who occupies the White House. Amazon, Google, Facebook and Lyft have all hired lobbyists with connections to Trump or his Cabinet members, as they seek to influence the administration on everything from taxes to immigration.

"No matter what industry you're a part of, it's critical to engage with the current administration," said Gina Woodworth, senior vice president of public policy and government affairs at the Internet Association, which represents many of Silicon Valley's biggest brands. "While there may be differing opinions on some policy issues, there's also productive discussions to be had and room for positive collaboration."

Indeed, as the leaders of multinational corporations, tech executives have a financial obligation to shareholders to engage the federal government, which sets key industry regulations and, in many cases, buys their products. Some, including Apple CEO Tim Cook, have expressed a moral and patriotic responsibility to weigh in on public policy matters where executives have expertise.

But now companies face growing pressure from their liberal employees and chunks of their customer base to resist the White House over its actions on immigration, climate change and transgender rights. And even though the CEOs have become more vocal in their criticism of Trump — over the Paris pullout, for example — their argument for continued engagement is becoming riskier as Trump's political agenda skews further and further away from the progressive worldview.

And that could have workforce implications. Technology workers, particularly engineers, hold special sway over their bosses compared to employees in other industries. They have in-demand technical skills that companies often struggle to find, and often have more leeway to speak their mind with less fear of reprisal.

Behind the scenes, tech companies have been snapping up lobbyists and policy staff with deep connections to Trumpworld.

Amazon was among the first clients for the Washington office of Ballard Partners, a firm run by Trump's longtime Florida lobbyist Brian Ballard. Facebook tapped Sandy Luff — a Trump transition staffer and former top aide to then-Alabama Sen. Jeff Sessions, now Trump's attorney general — as public policy director for the executive branch.

Google brought on Akin Gump's Geoff Verhoff, a Trump donor and member of the RNC's financial leadership team, to lobby on immigration issues and Trump's travel ban. And Lyft has retained Eris Group's Travis Johnson — a onetime senior aide to then-Georgia Rep. Tom Price, now Trump's head of Health and Human Services — to lobby on tax regulation.

In making such personnel moves, the tech sector is acting no differently than the cable and telecom industries, its frequent adversaries in Washington.

Just this week, T-Mobile added David Urban, a Trump campaign senior adviser, to its roster of lobbyists on telecom issues. Comcast signed former Rep. John Sweeney, who ran the New York arm of Trump's presidential campaign. Verizon tapped McGuireWoods' Robert Wasinger, who served as the Trump campaign's director of outreach to senators and governors and later did a brief stint as White House liaison to the State Department. And AT&T called upon Sextons Creek President Bill Smith, an ex-aide to Vice President Mike Pence, to lobby on behalf of its \$85 billion merger with Time Warner.

But telecom and cable don't have the same sensitivities when it comes to cultivating Trump ties. They're mostly headquartered outside the liberal tech centers and their businesses are more heavily regulated than the dot-coms, which makes backing away from Washington a non-starter. They tend to keep a low profile on the most divisive political issues.

For the internet industry, the Washington relationship wasn't always so complicated. During President Barack Obama's two terms in office, a virtual revolving door formed between the White House and Silicon Valley, with company executives accepting high-profile government jobs and ex-politicos making a soft landing at tech firms — like Obama press secretary Jay Carney at Amazon and Obama senior adviser David Plouffe, who jumped first to Uber and then to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg's philanthropic initiative.

But those Democratic transitions were more palatable in an industry which, despite occasional run-ins with the Obama administration over national security, generally agreed with its stances on social and environmental issues.

Those simple days are gone in the age of Trump.

"At this point there is a line in the sand and the CEOs that continue to cross it are doing it to the detriment of communities and of their employees," said Brandi Collins, a senior campaign director at Color of Change, which advocates for racial and economic justice and pressured tech companies to withdraw support for the Republican National Convention last summer.

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Trump, infrastructure and solving the ag research problem at land-grant colleges [Back](#)

By Jenny Hopkinson | 06/09/2017 05:00 AM EDT

Agriculture researchers at public universities are stuck in decades-old facilities as they try to solve modern problems in food production — and advocates are looking to President Donald Trump's infrastructure program to fix a staggering backlog of maintenance needs.

Land-grant universities and influential farm groups want the administration's plan — which the White House has been hyping this week but has yet to present in detailed form — to address at least part of a growing backlog of deferred maintenance at the nation's public agricultural research facilities that is estimated to top \$9 billion.

The push to catch Trump's attention as the White House formulates its plan and also sell it to Congress as industries across the economic landscape clamor for funding has taken on greater urgency because China has outpaced U.S. public spending on agricultural research, and other countries are close to doing the same.

Research universities in the United States are hindered by outdated labs, greenhouses and other facilities as they attempt to marshal the staff and technology needed to perform long-term research on big agricultural questions that farmers and agribusiness will need answered to feed an additional 2 billion people by 2050 with less land, changing weather patterns and fewer resources.

Without updates to facilities, concern is spreading among researchers and farmers that America's prowess in agricultural production could start to slip.

"We can't lose out on the investments and the benefits that we've seen from public agriculture research," said Andrew Walmsley, the American Farm Bureau Federation's director of congressional affairs.

The Association of Public Land-grant Universities and the #RebuildRural coalition, a network of farm groups and rural advocates that includes the American Farm Bureau Federation, are preparing a lobbying push to get the administration and Congress to include in any infrastructure package roughly \$10 billion over the next decade — money they believe can be leveraged into several times that in private investments.

"If we value the importance of agriculture research moving forward — because China and India are going to outstrip us in this — that's what we need to do," said Ian Maw, APLU's vice president for food, agriculture and natural resources.

Land-grant agricultural colleges are not alone in struggling with the burden of deferred maintenance. Many university buildings and facilities across the U.S. were expanded in the 1960s and 1970s to handle the added enrollment of baby boomers and are now in need of serious renovations to meet today's technological advancements. As science evolves apace with digital developments, it makes it all the more difficult for universities to keep up.

In 2016 the price tag for deferred maintenance for mission-critical facilities across the Kansas public university system alone totaled \$908 million, up from [\\$762 million in 2012](#), according to a [report](#) from the Kansas Board of Regents. Replacing all of those buildings would cost an estimated \$5.6 billion. And that's just in Kansas — it's estimated that the deferred maintenance backlog at public universities nationwide exceeds \$50 billion, the report found.

At the same time, state spending on higher education — the main source of funding for building maintenance — plummeted during the recession and has yet to fully recover as primary education and other budget items take priority over university systems. On average, states are spending 18 percent less per student than they were prior to 2008, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities [has found](#), and only four — Montana, North Dakota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming — are spending more than they did before that point.

Federal funding for higher education, both public and private, has increased in the past several years, totaling \$75.6 billion in 2013, [according to](#) the Pew Charitable Trusts, but that money has been used largely for student financial assistance and to fund specific research projects. It rarely goes toward infrastructure. As states have scaled back spending, many universities have turned to private donors to write big checks for facilities. But that money isn't spread out equally among programs, and few donors want their contributions to go toward updating roofs and HVAC systems in old labs and lecture halls.

"People like to fund new buildings," said Kate Gregory, senior vice president for university services at Iowa State University. "People are generally less interested in investing in maintenance."

Trump and his \$1-trillion promise

President Trump has talked up infrastructure since the earliest days of his campaign and has pivoted to focus on the issue this week, delivering [a speech in Cincinnati](#) in which he pledged improvements to locks and dams on inland waterways. His \$1-trillion vision calls for using \$200 billion in federal investment to spur another \$800 billion from other funding sources, mainly from the private sector, and taking steps to speed permitting.

He's expressed a general interest in devoting infrastructure funding to educational needs. "We are going to fix our inner cities and rebuild our highways, bridges, tunnels, airports, schools, hospitals," he promised when he accepted the GOP nomination last summer. "We're going to rebuild our infrastructure, which will become, by the way, second to none."

While there will be plenty of competition for that money, agriculture advocates are hoping that appealing to the administration's nationalist wing will help secure funding. The U.S. has long been seen as the global leader in public agricultural and food research, though budgetary realities [have given China and other nations](#) an opening. USDA's research spending, which includes money for land-grant agricultural colleges and research grants, among other things, has held steady at [about \\$3 billion](#) in recent years, as research spending across the rest of the government has grown substantially.

China now spends 6 percent more on agricultural research than the U.S. does, and other countries are also catching up. It's a problem the private sector can't fix. U.S. companies invest billions annually in studying livestock, plants and pests, but the work has to have a quick return on investment — which often means a focus on major crops, such as corn and soy, and breeding — to keep shareholders happy.

"The private sector is focused on a discovery pipeline that leads specifically to them being able to market a product," said Mark Hussey, vice chancellor and dean for agriculture and life sciences at Texas A&M. "A lot of the more fundamental early generation types of discoveries and work occur at public land-grant universities."

That long-term work includes pursuits like genome mapping of plants and livestock, which is used to identify and then breed for specific traits; the creation of regional crop varieties that serve as the basis for seed sold by agricultural companies; and emerging big-picture issues like curbing insects and environmental changes. For example, a scientific advance that is seen as a likely fix for citrus greening, the scourge of Florida's orange industry, has been developed by a Texas A&M researcher.

What's more, companies rely on public universities to educate their workforce — 60 percent of Ph.D. holders in agricultural sciences come from land-grant institutions. But with little money to fix aging labs and research facilities, it's getting harder to do the science and to prepare those scientists for the private sector.

Budgets, buildings and backlogs

USDA, through its National Institute of Food and Agriculture, gives money to land-grant agricultural schools, with more going to universities in states with higher rural populations. But that money, known as capacity funds, amounts to \$753 million spread across 112 universities. Capacity funds are largely used for faculty and research, and there is often not enough left over for infrastructure, and some funds legally can't be used on building repair.

The Agriculture Department is authorized under the 2014 farm bill to provide funding for facilities acquisition and improvements at land-grant agricultural schools, though Congress appropriated just \$19.7 million for that program in fiscal 2017. Lawmakers included a \$25-million bump for USDA's competitive agricultural research grants in the fiscal 2017 budget deal finalized last month, but that money can be won by any university, not just land-grant institutions, and little of the program's funds can be used for facilities upkeep.

Federal competitive research grants include some money for indirect costs, which is supposed to include maintenance, among other things, though some departments and agencies provide more than others. The National Institutes of Health has full indirect cost recovery for its competitive grants program, whereas USDA's version is limited to about one-third of federal funds provided.

The result is that land-grant institutions are left to rely heavily on state and private funding sources, which aren't guaranteed and seldom meet the need. A negative effect on research is almost unavoidable.

"There is no doubt that the condition of some facilities, particularly off-campus, in the case of Texas A&M AgriLife is impacting research, extension and service programs," Hussey said.

APLU for months has encouraged its members to prepare a list of ready-to-go projects so plans are set once Trump's promised plan is submitted, said Maw, the APLU official. The group is also preparing to seek private and state cash to meet the president's call for non-federal investment in projects.

It won't be hard for many schools to identify suitable projects. A [2015 report](#) commissioned by APLU put the backlog at agricultural colleges at \$8.4 billion, a number the study said was on the low side. At issue are a host of problems that can jeopardize sensitive research environments, such as leaking roofs and cracked windows, which can alter building temperatures, and aging HVAC systems in labs that aren't up to current standards and spread air, and potentially contaminants, from one lab to another (modern systems seal off each room).

And many laboratories simply don't have the requisite technology needed to foster high-level scientific discovery, according to the report, which was titled "A National Study of Capital Infrastructure & Deferred Maintenance at Schools of Agriculture."

"At the very least, these failures can cause delays in research work and add extra costs in personnel time and in cost of mitigation," the report concludes. "At worst, we are entering an era when the condition of facilities will limit our ability to conduct world class research that is needed to keep our leadership edge in the agriculture industry."

Take, for example, the University of Georgia, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue's alma mater. It has been key in developing new varieties of soybeans, peanuts and other crops that grow best in Southeastern states, which were then used by Monsanto and other companies as the basis of seed sold in the region.

"They wouldn't have the basic seed we are developing if it was just up to them because our region is too small," said Bob Shulstad, associate dean for research at UGA's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, referring to agrochemical firms and how they assess product development. About 95 percent of peanuts grown from Virginia to Texas stem from varieties developed by the university, he said.

Currently, there is a roughly \$250 million backlog of deferred maintenance on UGA's agricultural facilities. They get an appropriation from the state that is separate from what the rest of the university receives, and must go to the legislature each year to ask for operations money. While its state funding has ticked up in the past five years, it's only amounted to about 10 percent of total needs. Its \$4 million appropriation for this year is enough to keep the lights on, Shulstad said.

Part of the problem at the University of Georgia that is also true of land-grant schools in other states is the huge number of facilities owned by the agriculture program — it's not just the buildings on campus, but also off-site test plots, research labs and extension offices. Land-grant universities were first created by the federal government in 1862 to teach the next generation of farmers and scientists, and many institutions have amassed sprawling portfolios of land and buildings over the intervening century and a half. The colleges are also responsible for providing USDA extension and research services, which often require maintaining facilities far from campus.

UGA's agricultural college has about 952 buildings across the state, and a significant portion of them are more than 50 years-old. In order to save money on upkeep, the state is now looking to tear down about 151 of those structures, many of which are old sheds, barns and chicken houses. None of those buildings are on the university's main campus, in Athens, and only about a third of them will be replaced.

But even buildings that aren't marked for demolition often don't meet the needs of today's researchers. Of the university's 24 greenhouses, 20 were built in the 1970s. The four new ones, which cost about \$1.2 million each, are equipped with technology to control light, temperature, moisture and other factors to ensure an optimal and stable environment for the plants being studied. The rest are just glass and metal frames, Shulstad said.

"Overall, it's definitely slowing down our research productivity," he said of the maintenance backlog.

Farm bill as a fallback

If Trump's infrastructure package doesn't provide some relief, universities and advocates are eyeing the 2018 farm bill and other options to modernize and replace aging facilities. APLU's Maw says he's talking to lawmakers and their staff about how to get more money for deferred maintenance into the farm bill, potentially through things like changes to capacity funds and other mechanisms.

However, while Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman [Pat Roberts](#) said that agricultural research, broadly, is a priority for the next farm bill, money may have to go to more pressing issues amid a push to lower costs.

"Ag research pays off in so many different ways, but you have so many tangible needs that pop up," Roberts said, pointing to recent wildfires in the Great Plains, low commodity prices and trade issues. "It's an agenda-driven thing and there is always something on fire in your inbox."

And at the end of the process, there may be nothing left for deferred maintenance.

"I don't know if that is possible or not," he said of the prospects of addressing the backlog via the farm bill reauthorization. "I'm going to leave that open. All of our universities, especially land-grants, are in need of money, but usually that's the state obligation."

Roberts' committee is set to review farm bill research programs at a hearing next week.

In the meantime, universities are looking for creative ways to leverage state and private dollars for maintenance. Texas A&M just built a new research garden — Hussey compared it to an outdoor lab — and has set aside donations for upkeep. Some universities have had success in starting to reduce the backlog by budgeting for it in capital planning.

But the problem at its core is one of priorities, regardless of whether a funding fix comes in the form of public or private dollars, said Richard Rhodes, executive director of the Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors.

"To me, it's all about choice: Is there really a lack of funding, or is it something we have chosen not to fund?" Rhodes said.

"The federal government and the states are going to have to step up to the plate," he added.

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Trump's Strange Retreat from Cuba [Back](#)

By Michael Grunwald | 06/17/2017 09:52 AM EDT

CAMAGUEY, Cuba—President Barack Obama may have normalized relations with Cuba, but he didn't normalize Cuba.

This is still a strange tropical sub-paradise with good music, bad plumbing and unrealized potential, an island of retrograde politics and economics marooned in a global sea of modernity. It can feel like a parody of a Cold War relic—boxy Soviet-era Ladas wheezing along bumpy roads lined with faded revolutionary billboards, cavernous government-run stores with lots of employees, little merchandise and no profit motive whatsoever. There's been some change since Obama's opening—more American tourists, more money sent from American relatives, a modest construction boom in Havana as locals fix up their homes to rent on Airbnb—but it certainly hasn't sparked an explosion of capitalism or democracy.

What it does seem to have sparked is hope. My wife and I spent the last week in Cuba with her father, who left the island when he was 13 in the wake of Fidel Castro's revolution, and just about everyone we spoke to hailed the Obama thaw as a symbol of progress, a gesture that had seemed to signify better days to come. The Cubans we met were also worried and dismayed by President Donald Trump's plans to undo some of Obama's policies—less the substance, which they assumed would be fairly trivial, than the message, which they saw as another step backward into a frustratingly inescapable past.

"It felt like we were moving towards the future, and now Trump wants to take us back," said Arturo, a headstrong Camaguey resident who lost a job running a local agricultural cooperative after a spat with Communist Party officials. Arturo used the international language of international relations to illustrate the change in American leadership, first extending his hand, which he said was Obama's approach to Cuba, and then clenching his fist, his visual metaphor for Trump's approach.

Like his rejection of the [Paris climate agreement](#), Trump's rejection of Obama's Cuba policies was more about messaging than governing, about showing his loyal supporters—in this case hard-line Cuban exiles rather than coal miners—that he loathes their enemies as much as they do. It was not a coincidence that he announced his new policy at the Manuel Artime Theater, a venue in Miami's Little Havana neighborhood named for a leader of the ill-fated Bay of Pigs effort to overthrow Fidel Castro in 1961, a cultural symbol of anticommunist resistance and tribal

solidarity. He portrayed Obama's opening to Cuba as a victory for repression, and even though he has downplayed human rights in his dealings with regimes in Saudi Arabia, Russia and China, he pledged common cause with the politically connected exiles who believe it should be the overriding priority of U.S. relations with Cuba.

"You voted, and here I am," Trump said.

For all his time-for-a-change bluster —"I am canceling the last administration's completely one-sided deal with Cuba," he declared—Trump is actually leaving most of Obama's Cuba policies in place. He is not cutting off diplomatic relations or shutting down the American Embassy that Obama opened on the Havana waterfront in 2015. He is not putting Cuba back on the list of state sponsors of terrorism or reinstating the wet-foot-dry-foot policy that gave near-automatic citizenship to Cuban refugees who made it to the United States. His aides suggested he won't rescind permission for U.S. airlines and cruise ships to visit Cuba, or even cancel existing contracts that would run afoul of his new policies, like Starwood's venture to run a Havana hotel owned by the Cuban military. And most of those policies sound either purely rhetorical, like affirming the importance of America's 56-year-old trade embargo with Cuba, or potentially unworkable, like requiring U.S. visitors to keep detailed records of financial transactions to prove they didn't buy goods or services from Raúl Castro's government.

That's a bit like requiring fish to keep detailed records to prove they didn't interact with any water while swimming. The Cuban military and other government affiliates own just about all the island's hotels and tour services, not to mention the island's stores, factories and cows. It would require an extraordinary bureaucratic undertaking to make sure American visitors spend their money only at privately owned restaurants and lodgings. And considering the Trump administration's proposals for huge budget cuts in its diplomatic bureaucracy—including a proposal to eliminate a program promoting democracy and human rights in Cuba—it's not clear whether the president really intends to follow through on that kind of big Government initiative, or whether he's just throwing red meat to a hungry slice of his base. Even if his administration is serious about pursuing much more intense federal regulation of "people-to-people" and "educational" travel, the new rules could take years to finalize. For example, the Treasury Department warned yesterday that American travelers will be required to join tour groups rather than plan their own itineraries, and that those tours "must not include free time or recreation in excess." It's anyone's guess how regulators would define excessively leisurely travel plans.

Florida Senator Marco Rubio and other supporters of Trump's changes argue that through hassles as well as mandates, the new policies will discourage U.S. travelers from putting money into Cuban government coffers—and ultimately force the Cuban government to give its own citizens more freedom. Of course, that was the original argument for the embargo, which has kept U.S. exports and investments out of Cuba for half a century without prompting any major advances in freedom or changes in regime. It has also provided a perpetual talking point for the Cuban government, which routinely blames "the American blockade" for Cuba's dismal economic record under Communist rule. The Obama thaw took some punch out of that argument, but Trump is a newly convenient scapegoat. On our trip, two different Cubans told us they felt sorry for us because of our new president, which was not something we ever expected to hear from subjects of Raúl Castro.

In any case, Rubio and the hard-liners do not speak for all Cuban-Americans, who tend to divide along lines of age and national origin. A Bendixen & Amandi poll found that 53 percent of the Cuban-born opposed Obama's normalization efforts, while 64 percent of the American-born

supported them. Overall, a slim majority of Cuban-Americans supported the thaw, while a large majority of Cuban-American seniors opposed it. Those older exiles who fled after the revolution were Trump's target audience yesterday. After all, they helped send him to the White House, a favor he repeatedly reminded them his new policies were designed to return—a bit of a turnabout for a hotelier who has scouted locations in Cuba.

Bendixen & Amandi also polled Cuban nationals in 2015, and what they found echoed the grumbling we heard last week on the ground: Cubans are down on their government. This is partly because of repression—short-term detentions of dissidents are on the rise, while dissident blogs (as well as porn) are blocked on the internet—but mostly because of the lousy state-run economy. More than two-thirds of Cubans said they were satisfied with their health care system—my father-in-law had to visit a clinic, and got excellent treatment plus prescription drugs at zero cost—but only two-fifths were satisfied with their political system, and just one-fifth with their economic system. And that was before the Venezuelan economy totally collapsed, depriving Cuba of its ideologically driven subsidies. The poll also found that 70 percent of Cubans would like to open a business, something they can do now only if they get a license to pursue one of 201 government-approved professions, ranging from "disposable lighter repair" to "piñata maker/seller" to "button coverer."

We got a sense of that entrepreneurial spirit when we knocked on the door of my father-in-law's childhood home in Camaguey, a once-prosperous agricultural center with maze-like streets supposedly designed to confuse the pirates who periodically preyed on locals. It's not prosperous anymore, and the woman who answered the door told us the house has been subdivided into a dozen or so modest apartments. (We later found one that was less modest and newly renovated; unsurprisingly, the owners were a military officer and a government official.) Hers included the home's grand foyer, which still had the original pink-and-green floral tile, but was now a bit grimy because she makes some money by charging commuters to park their bicycles there during business hours. "We all do what we can to live," she told us.

In Old Havana, a similarly entrepreneurial taxi driver named Lazaro gave us a ride in his 1955 Crown Victoria; his grandfather, a chauffeur, had inherited the car from a sugar-baron client who fled Cuba after the revolution. Lazaro had spent five years as a nurse in Venezuela, but realized he could make more money driving tourists at home; he said his business really took off with female clients after he painted the Crown Vic pink. He said he recently made \$800 in three days when his car was used in the film *Fast and Furious 8*, which sounded impressive, except he said a pal had made \$80,000 by letting the filmmakers drive his own vintage car into Havana Harbor. Even better, his pal had salvaged the wreck and repaired it to working condition.

Necessity is the mother of invention, and Cuba is full of necessity; one Camaguey woman was selling pigeon eggs out of her foyer. There are certainly glimmers of a private economy that didn't exist a decade ago. Airbnb reports its bookings have funneled \$40 million to ordinary Cubans since 2015. Families are running restaurants out of their homes that seem less likely to serve bread that tastes like cardboard or "beef" made from horse meat. Data mules go door-to-door selling external hard drives known as "paquetes" that provide a week worth of news, films and TV dramas for Cubans without internet access. And it's no surprise that 96 percent of Cubans told Bendixen & Amandi that more tourism would benefit Cuba, because many of those approved professions—from bike-taxi drivers to "habaneras" who dress up in colonial garb to pose for photos—depend on visitors.

Still, the monopoly force of the government hovers over the private economy. The police confiscate the bike taxis of drivers caught pedaling their customers the wrong way on one-way streets. Cubans can rent out their property, but they're not allowed to own multiple properties. My father-in-law, Humberto Dominguez, an Orlando-area family doctor who is one of those communist-hating, Trump-supporting Cuban exiles, was favorably impressed with the rare-in-the-tropics cleanliness and safety of Cuba's streets, until I reminded him that police states tend to be pretty good about that kind of thing.

Anyway, most of Cuba's economy is still a government-run system that simply doesn't work. Communist-controlled stores tend to be laughably overstaffed—usually by sales associates who betray no interest in sales—and undersupplied. We saw an appliance store with only one brand of refrigerator, a medical-supply store that carried only towels and laundry detergent, and a massive window display for a home furnishings store that featured just one pinkish vase in the corner. We met a bookstore manager who seemed genuinely distraught about the turgid revolutionary tracts and anti-American propaganda she had to sell. Her shelves included only one American author, the leftist Naomi Klein.

In many ways, normalization hasn't lived up to the hype. Obama allowed Americans credit card companies to do business in Cuba, but most haven't. The opening was supposed to upgrade Cuba's dismal telecom infrastructure and bring the internet to the masses, but that hasn't happened, either. The tentative steps toward engagement between American and Cuban diplomats have slowed, as both sides have waited to see what the Trump era would bring. Still, the opening has generated some positive economic activity, even though the negatives of the Venezuelan meltdown have overshadowed it. Former Congressman Joe Garcia of Miami, who spent years shaming political deviants from the hard-line exile position as director of the Cuban American National Foundation, has become a political deviant himself; he no longer believes that isolating Cuba will do any good for the Cuban people.

"We've seen more change in the last two years than we had seen in the last 50," Garcia said. "Obviously it's not enough change. But at least now you can get a *croqueta* in Havana and have a decent chance there will be real ham in it."

The question is whether Trump's policy tweaks will reverse or accelerate those modest gains. My father-in-law is in some ways a classically tribal Cuban exile—an ardent supporter of the National Rifle Association, the Republican Party and the United States of America. He thinks Obama spent too much time apologizing for America, like a typical liberal, and he trusts Trump to stand up for the greatest country on earth. But as deeply as Humberto loathes the Castros and the Communist Party, he's agnostic about the longstanding embargo, because of the old saying about doing the same thing and expecting a different result. And he's not one of the Cuban exiles who think visiting the island merely provides aid and comfort to an evil regime. He doesn't have close relatives here anymore, but this was his second time back. Cuba has meaning to him.

Obama made it relatively easy for Americans like Humberto to hop a flight to Cuba—and for Cubans to get multiple-entry visas to visit America. On Wednesday morning, I was a few blocks from the U.S. Embassy in Havana, and I saw a crowd of several hundred Cubans gathering like there was some kind of event happening; there were even parking attendants in red vests directing traffic. I asked a 37-year-old cook named Maria what was going on, and she said people were just lining up to apply for visas and other U.S. travel documents. I asked whether there was something special happening that day. No, she said, it's just Wednesday.

"This is normal now," she said.




I asked her what she thought would happen to that new normal if Trump cracked down on travel.

"That would move everything backwards," she said with the resigned air of a citizen unaccustomed to controlling her own destiny. "But what can you do?"

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By Helena Bottemiller Evich | 06/02/2017 05:41 AM EDT

With help from Jenny Hopkinson, Catherine Boudreau, Megan Cassella and Brent Griffiths

PERDUE OFFERS 'TOUGH LOVE' ON SAFETY NET: Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue encouraged attendees at the Montana Ag Summit in Great Falls on Thursday to remember that USDA not only oversees programs geared toward farmers and ranchers, but is also in the nutrition business. When it comes to the safety net, Perdue said his goal is to ensure it catches all Americans — both producers and those who can't afford to buy the food producers grow. "It's not in the heart of America to see others go hungry. USDA will be compassionate as we administer that program," Perdue said. "On the other hand, I don't think it should be a permanent lifestyle, either. It ought to be a hand-up."

That last statement received loud applause from the audience. Just last week, the White House released a budget proposal to cut federal funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program by more than 25 percent over a decade — or more than \$190 billion — by requiring states to pay a greater share of the costs and by enforcing stricter work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents. Perdue, in a presser after his speech, stuck to his oft-repeated lines: any changes to SNAP would have to be made by Congress in the 2018 farm bill; most Americans agree that adults who aren't disabled and don't have dependents should work; and that he hadn't been confirmed when most of the budget prep was done.

Comparing SNAP to crop insurance: Just like SNAP recipients shouldn't make relying on government assistance a lifestyle, neither should farmers, Perdue said: "I want to say something in a tough-love kind of way about crop insurance. Let's face it: You don't buy insurance on your house hoping it will burn down. Neither do we want to buy crop insurance and hope our crop fails so we can file. We have to get out of the mindset that, 'If I invest \$1 in crop insurance, I want to make sure I get a \$1.10 or plus out of that.'"

"Just like we don't want everyone on permanent status on food stamps, we don't want [farmers] to become dependent," Perdue added. He made sure to hedge that comment with a strong endorsement of crop insurance, saying he doesn't know a single farmer that would rather have a

government program than a good crop at a fair price. But there are significant risks involved in the business, including price swings and weather disasters — "that's why we need a safety net," he said.

HAPPY FRIDAY, JUNE 2! Welcome to Morning Ag, where your host had to look up the word "marocain" this morning. Congrats, [Ananya Vinay](#)! You know the deal: Thoughts, news, tips? Send them to hbottemiller@politico.com or [@hbottemiller](#). Follow the whole team at [@Morning_Ag](#).

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ROBERTS DEFENDS TRUMP — WITH A CATCH: Senate Agriculture Chairman [Pat Roberts](#)' message to farmers and ranchers during his speech at the Montana Ag Summit was that the Trump administration is on their side and will be much better for business than its predecessor, mainly because of its deregulatory push. At the same time, the Kansas Republican acknowledged that the White House's budget shows where President Donald Trump's priorities are — and that farm-state lawmakers will largely dismiss the proposal, which was roundly criticized by industry groups.

Pat's pat on the back: During the presser, Roberts was asked about the fact the administration's pro-farmer message sometimes conflicts with its policy proposals (for instance, not only did the budget call for \$228 billion in cuts to farm bill programs over a decade, but Trump has withdrawn from the Trans-Pacific Partnership and flirted with pulling out of NAFTA). Roberts argued the administration is friendly to producers because it gave farmers Secretary Perdue, who is a "champion for production agriculture" — and the chairman literally gave Perdue a pat on the back for getting "the entire Cabinet behind him so NAFTA wasn't terminated." Read Catherine Boudreau's dispatch from Great Falls [here](#).

IS FSA THE NEW CHICK-FIL-A? Perdue will have traveled to 11 states in his five weeks in office as he makes his way to Idaho today. A hallmark of speeches he's given during his travels has been his push to improve USDA's customer service. The one he delivered at the ExpoPark in Great Falls was no exception.

Perdue said that when he thinks about the Farm Service Agency, which has offices in every state, he envisions an environment similar to three chain restaurants that got their start in his home state of Georgia: Varsity, a chili-dog joint where, he said, the servers are efficient; Waffle House, which is open 24/7; and Chick-fil-A, which Perdue called a "prestige" quick-serve restaurant where the employees provide "excellent" customer service and many say "my pleasure" when customers thank them.

"Don't worry, FSA folks: I won't ask that you work around the clock," Perdue said. "But I want you to be available when people need you."

MILKING IT: Perdue, Roberts and Sen. [Steve Daines](#), who organized the Montana Ag Summit, were udderly shameless in their Holstein support for World Milk Day in a video on Twitter. Skim it [here](#).

CARGILL BOSS LAMENTS TRUMP'S PARIS EXIT: Cargill Chairman and CEO David MacLennan criticized Trump's decision to pull out of the Paris climate accord, but said the company plans to keep up its climate efforts. "It is extremely disappointing," he said in a statement. "Exiting international accords like the Paris Agreement will negatively impact trade,

economic vitality, the state of our environment and relationships amongst the world community — and it positions the U.S. as an outlier on this important issue."

The Cargill chief joined a host of food industry leaders — including honchos from Mars, Unilever, Royal DSM and The Coca-Cola Company — and several other corporate bigs in an [open letter](#) last month that argued the U.S. should remain a party to the deal. Andrew Liveris, the Dow Chemical boss, spearheaded that letter, which ran as an ad in The Wall Street Journal, at the urging of Ivanka Trump, who lost a White House power struggle to influence her father's decision, The Washington Post [reported](#).

"Based on our vast experience doing business all over the world, we believe there is strong potential for negative trade implications if the United States exits from the Paris Agreement," the CEOs wrote. "Our business interests are best served by a stable and practical framework facilitating an effective and balanced response to reducing global GHG emissions."

Beyond simply refusing to negotiate, trading partners could also take steps to hit U.S. products with a so-called carbon tariff, a levy that would increase the cost of American goods in order to offset the fact that U.S. manufacturers could make products more cheaply because they would not have to abide by Paris climate goals.

Sen. [Ron Wyden](#) (D-Ore.), the top Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee, warned of such retaliatory steps and said withdrawal from Paris would lead to job losses and new trade barriers. "By reversing the United States' obligation to fight climate change in partnership with the rest of the world, the Trump administration is putting a bull's-eye on American exporters and the jobs they support," Wyden said.

**** A message from POET - one of the world's largest ethanol producers:** From a family farm to a clean energy leader, POET operates 30 biofuel facilities & America's first cellulosic biofuel plant. We produce a cleaner fuel for millions of drivers, every day. We're POET and we're driving innovation, from the ground up. Learn more [here](#). **

PERDUE BACKS TRUMP TO THE HILT: The Ag secretary issued a very #MAGA statement Thursday evening, saying Trump had "rightly determined that the Paris accord was not in the best interests of the United States." He argued the pact's affect on global temperatures would be negligible but that U.S. involvement "represented a willful and voluntary ceding of our national sovereignty."

He focused on the need for research. "At USDA, we rely on sound science and we remain firmly committed to digging ever deeper into research to develop better methods of agricultural production in that changing climate," he said. "Floods, droughts and natural disasters are a fact of life for farmers, ranchers and foresters. They have persevered in the past, and they will adapt in the future — with the assistance of the scientists and experts at USDA. To be effective, our research and programs need to be focused on finding solutions and providing state-of-the-art technologies to improve management decisions on farm and on forest lands."

Environmental groups were, of course, apoplectic. "History will judge withdrawing from the Paris Agreement as a huge error," said Trip Van Noppen, president of Earthjustice.

Some GOP Moderates recoiled: A number of moderate Republican lawmakers said Trump's decision was regrettable. "Ultimately, this disappointing decision diminishes America's leadership role on the world stage," Rep. [Patrick Meehan](#) (R-Pa.) said in a statement, using lines

similar to those employed by the likes of Sen. [Susan Collins](#) (R-Maine) and Rep. [Carlos Curbelo](#) (R-Fla.).

Aggies largely MIA: There was a noticeable silence from farm and agribusiness groups on Thursday. The usual progressive-leaning outfits, including the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition and National Farmers Union, lambasted the move as bad for farmers and future generations of Americans, but most groups declined to weigh in.

"The future of farming depends on fighting global climate change, and we young farmers are on the front lines," Andrew Bahrenburg, national policy director for the National Young Farmers Coalition, said in a statement. "We're leaders in this fight, and our president should be too."

BROWN IS CHINA-BOUND: Wasting no time after Trump's Paris exit, California Gov. Jerry Brown flies to China today in a bid to bolster clean energy ties between Sacramento and Beijing. That effort comes after Brown, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Washington Gov. Jay Inslee announced the formation of the United States Climate Alliance, which will gather supportive states in hopes of hitting the Obama administration's carbon-reduction pledges.

"I'm on the side of the angels," Brown, a former Jesuit seminarian, said in an interview before he left the states. "I'm going to do everything I can, and people are going to join with me." POLITICO's David Siders has a sharp take [here](#).

ONE IS THE LONELIEST NUMBER AT EPA: Add the slow confirmation process for sub-cabinet positions to the reasons why EPA is delaying its pesticide applicators certification rule. The agency, in a [Federal Register notice](#) today, said it is pushing back implementation of the Obama-era rule until May 22, 2018 due to concerns from states and because, well, it isn't quite sure what the rule says.

"EPA still has only one Senate-confirmed official, and the new administration has not had the time to adequately review the January 4, 2017 certification 4 rule," per the notice. Given that officials are still reviewing the measure, "allowing the rule to go into effect could cause confusion and disruption for affected parties if the rule were subsequently substantially revised or repealed," it added.

ORGANIC TRADE AGREEMENTS, AGROTERRORISM UNDER IG REVIEW: USDA's Inspector General is reviewing the National Organic Program's trade agreements, the department's agroterrorism prevention and response, the scientific integrity of government agriculture research programs, and drug enforcement on Forest Service lands — along with a slew of other programs and issues, according to a semiannual report from the office. The full list is [here](#).

SEATTLE LOOKS LIKELY TO ADOPT SODA TAX NEXT WEEK: The Seattle City Council is planning to vote on its 1.75-cent-per-ounce soda tax plan on Monday. The proposed levy advanced earlier this week after some major changes were made, the biggest one being that the city will no longer include diet drinks in the tax. Soda tax proponents say they expect the tax to pass, but their optimism is of the cautious variety since the lobbying frenzy there continues.

The Keep Seattle Livable for All Coalition, largely funded by the beverage industry, is still pushing back against the plan. "With the cost of living constantly rising, it's already hard enough for working people to make ends meet in Seattle," the coalition said in a statement to MA. "Now they're thinking of making it harder."

Saudi Arabia goes big: While we're here, Saudi Arabia on June 10 will impose steep sin taxes on soda (50 percent) and energy drinks (100 percent). Find more on the coming tax, the first in the region, [here](#).

BACKYARD CHICKENS MAKING PEOPLE SICK: The CDC is investigating eight separate outbreaks of Salmonella infections linked to backyard poultry. By the government's count, 372 people have been sickened, and 36 percent of them are children.

"The trend of raising backyard chickens, including chickens and ducks, is growing in the United States, and CDC is seeing more people getting Salmonella infections from these birds," officials announced Thursday. From 1990 to 2016, CDC logged some 65 Salmonella outbreaks linked to contact with live poultry. CDC has [some health tips](#) for fans of keeping backyard chickens.

FORMER TOP BRANSTAD STAFFER JOINS RASTETTER'S SHOP: Michael Boussetot, a former chief of staff to U.S. Ambassador to China Terry Branstad during Branstad's days as Iowa governor, has joined Bruce Rastetter's Summit Agricultural Group as managing director and head of external relations, a company [release](#) said.

It's hardly surprising, given Rastetter's close connections to Branstad, who appointed the agribusinessman to the state's Board of Regents in 2011, after the mogul was a major donor to Branstad's 2010 gubernatorial campaign. Boussetot will be responsible for helping the company grow investments in the U.S. and in Brazil. Rastetter, who has carved out a [king-making role](#), will host his second Ag Summit in Des Moines this August.

MA'S INSTANT OATS:

— Blue Apron is about to go public, making it one of the first meal-kit delivery services to test the market, Bloomberg [reports](#).

— A new study finds 3.6 percent of Americans are dealing with food allergies or intolerances, NPR [reports](#).

— Def Jam co-founder Russell Simmons argues SNAP regulations should promote healthier eating by barring recipients from being able to buy junk food. Read his U.S. News & World Report op-ed [here](#).

— Wisconsin has (finally?) named cheese as its official state dairy product, per [Wisconsin Radio Network](#).

— The former leader of the School Nutrition Association of Iowa has been accused of embezzling \$169,000 from members, the Associated Press [reports](#).

— Dairy farmers are still chipping in dough to help market Domino's pizzas. Baylen Linnekin dives into the ongoing controversy over checkoffs in a piece for The New Food Economy [here](#).

CALENDAR: Please write us at agcalendar@politicopro.com to tell us about upcoming events.

9 a.m. — The National Marine Fisheries Service holds a meeting by webinar of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Mackerel-Squid-Butterfish Advisory Panel to develop recommendations regarding the council's squid amendment. Webinar info [here](#).

THAT'S ALL FOR MA! See you again soon! In the meantime, drop your host and the rest of the team a line: cboudreau@politico.com and [@ceboudreau](https://twitter.com/ceboudreau); jhopkinson@politico.com and [@JennyHops](https://twitter.com/JennyHops); hbottemiller@politico.com and [@hbottemiller](https://twitter.com/hbottemiller) and jlauinger@politico.com and [@jmlauinger](https://twitter.com/jmlauinger). You can also follow [@POLITICOPro](https://twitter.com/POLITICOPro) and [@Morning_Ag](https://twitter.com/Morning_Ag) on Twitter.

**** A message from POET - one of the world's largest ethanol producers:** From a family farm to a clean energy leader, POET is a biofuels company built from innovation. POET operates 30 biofuel facilities across eight states & America's first cellulosic biofuel plant. Across the country, we support 40,000 renewable energy jobs producing a cleaner fuel for millions of drivers, every day. We are securing a cleaner future for all of us. We're POET and we're driving innovation, from the ground up. Learn more [here](#). **

To view online:

<https://www.politicopro.com/tipsheets/morning-agriculture/2017/06/perdue-offers-tough-love-on-safety-net-023118>

Stories from POLITICO Pro

Defending Trump: Roberts offers praise, 'aside from that budget,' in Montana speech [Back](#)

By Catherine Boudreau | 06/01/2017 06:22 PM EDT

GREAT FALLS, Mont. — It was a tale of two messages when Senate Agriculture Chairman [Pat Roberts](#) addressed a crowd of about 700 farmers, ranchers and agribusiness officials at the Montana Ag Summit in Great Falls on Thursday.

The Kansas Republican drove home a series of anti-regulatory, pro-Trump points — drawing cheers — but also acknowledged that the deep budget cuts to farm programs proposed in the White House budget will be cast off by farm state lawmakers on the Hill.

Roberts, who attended the event along with Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, said the Trump administration wants to partner with producers — an argument he made by blasting the Obama administration, which many farmers faulted for what they saw as an over-reliance on regulations.

"The past administration, with all due respect, had an agenda," Roberts told the crowd at the state's ExpoPark, where displays featured Case IH and John Deere farm equipment. "That's changing because of Sonny Perdue, it's changing because of undersecretaries, and yes, it's changing because of President Trump."

Roberts' mention of "undersecretaries" was presumably a reference to Perdue's planned [USDA reorganization](#), which includes creation of the positions of undersecretary for trade and foreign agricultural affairs and undersecretary for farm production and conservation.

On the anti-regulatory front, Roberts discussed the Endangered Species Act and the Waters of the U.S. rule, which President Donald Trump ordered the EPA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to re-evaluate and either revise or rescind. The WOTUS rule is now tied up in litigation, and the Supreme Court in April [denied the Trump administration's request](#) to stall the lawsuit, potentially complicating Trump's efforts to rewrite the contentious regulation.

But when Roberts mentioned the White House's budget proposal, he diverted from a line of rhetoric that just as easily could have been spoken by Perdue. The administration's proposal to

cut \$38 billion over 10 years from programs that help farmers was roundly criticized by agricultural groups — and for Roberts, it was a non-starter.

"I don't think we've taken [a president's budget] seriously since Reagan. We take this one seriously because we want to see where the president wants to go," Roberts said. "But I can tell you one thing for sure: When that proposal came over to the Ag committee ... I said, 'What'd he do to crop insurance?'"

Roberts said he then told his staff to "just pick up the damn thing and throw it back."

The Trump administration's message of prioritizing the interests of farmers and ranchers has at times been undercut by its policy moves and proposals. Not only did the White House's budget call for major cuts to the farm safety net, but Trump also withdrew the U.S. from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which the agriculture industry saw as an opportunity to expand market access in the Asia-Pacific and counter China's influence in the region.

More recently, Trump flirted with pulling out of NAFTA as well, until Perdue, other White House officials and Canadian and Mexican officials persuaded him to focus instead on renegotiating the Clinton-era deal.

"I don't think we need to make a fuss about the budget because [Congress] will come up with our own budget numbers," Roberts said during a press conference after his speech. "And I'll tell you what farmers are telling me is important: One is the trade issue ... as well as crop insurance. So we're going to protect crop insurance, regardless."

Roberts added that farmers and ranchers wanted an Agriculture secretary who would "be a champion for production agriculture" — and, he said, that's exactly what they got in Perdue.

"He got the entire Cabinet behind him so NAFTA wasn't terminated, and instead we're going to fix it," Roberts said, patting Perdue on the shoulder. "That is a remarkable achievement that this man has already done."

U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer also will make sure agriculture is a top priority in bilateral trade negotiations the administration wants to open with Japan, China other countries, Roberts said.

"All of that news combined, to me, means we have a very friendly Cabinet to farmers, aside from that budget that came from OMB," Roberts said.

To view online [click here](#).

[Back](#)

[Jerry Brown defies Trump on world stage](#) [Back](#)

By David Siders | 06/01/2017 06:06 PM EDT

LOS ANGELES — For the past two years, California Gov. Jerry Brown has been aggressively recruiting other state and local governments to sign on to their own, sub-national climate pact.

But that campaign has taken new urgency under President Donald Trump, who announced Thursday that he'll withdraw the United States from the Paris climate agreement. It's a reflection of the roiling conflict between the president and the nation's most populous state, but also the ambition of a governor who, after a lifetime in politics, is seizing an unexpected opening on an international stage.

"I'm on the side of the angels," the former Jesuit seminarian said in an interview before flying on Friday to China, where he will rally support for his climate policies next week. "I'm going to do everything I can, and people are going to join with me."

Brown, now 79 and in his final term, has long championed environmental causes, promoting conservation and smog-related policies when he was governor before, from 1975 to 1983, and overseeing a dramatic expansion of California's greenhouse gas reduction standards since returning to office in 2011. Roughly 170 jurisdictions, including Canada and Mexico, have endorsed Brown's nonbinding agreement embracing efforts to limit global temperature rise to below 2 degrees Celsius, the threshold beyond which many scientists predict catastrophic consequences.

But world leaders, not governors, sign international agreements with the force of law, and for years, Brown was relegated to a supporting role. Only after the election of Trump, who has called climate change a hoax, did Brown's climate diplomacy find new prominence as a counterweight to a Republican-held White House.

"If Obama was still in office, this phenomenon would not be occurring," said former California Gov. Gray Davis, Brown's onetime chief of staff. "But Jerry keeps pushing ... People, when they think of climate change, see Jerry Brown as a legitimate alternative [to Washington]. It's not make believe. It's real."

For a politician, Davis said, "Timing is everything in life."

Brown, who has called climate change the "existential threat" to humanity, has at times questioned whether it is too late to avert calamity. While campaigning for Hillary Clinton last year, he said it would be "game over" for climate change if Trump were to win.

But last week, when it remained unclear whether Trump would withdraw from the Paris agreement, Brown predicted that the president is a political "realist" and that progress on the issue may be "not as disastrous as we thought a few months ago." Trump had visited the Vatican, where Brown spoke about climate change in 2015, and was pressed by European leaders to remain in the accord.

If Brown, like the Europeans, was seeking to nudge Trump with his remarks, he abandoned all niceties after news of Trump's decision emerged.

Following Trump's Rose Garden announcement Thursday, Brown told reporters, "Today's announcement is tragic in a fundamental way. But it's also, I guess, to be expected."

He called the withdrawal "insane" and said, "California will resist."

Brown and the governors of New York and Washington said they would establish a coalition of states committed to upholding the Paris accord, while 27 California state senators sent a letter to Brown, urging him to convene a climate summit with "like-minded states and subnationals from

around the world, to ensure that we continue to charge ahead without forfeiting all of our historic progress to date."

California has long served as a model on climate change policy, sharing extensive regulatory experience with bureaucrats abroad. Severin Borenstein, an energy economist at University of California, Berkeley, said, "What California does isn't just sort of closely watched. In some cases, it is just photocopied into other states and other countries."

But Trump's disengagement from international climate politics has left open a political opportunity for Brown, with climate-minded politicians abroad running into resistance in Washington seeking other partnerships in the United States. Even if Trump had moved to remain in the Paris accord, his rejection of mainstream climate science was broadly seen as increasing the significance of climate change efforts at the local and state level, with California at the forefront.

"The absence of a real federal policy has created a vacuum, a hunger overseas for what are Americans doing on climate change. And into that hunger, Jerry Brown offers a menu," said David Victor, professor of international relations at the University of California, San Diego, and author of the book "Global Warming Gridlock." "He's just kind of nominated himself. But I think that's the nature of the business."

In his feud with Trump, Brown has been aided by the president's myriad domestic controversies and low public approval rating - and by the freedom a governor can exercise in his final term.

When he last visited China, in 2013, California was emerging from a budget crisis and Brown devoted much of his attention to trade-related concerns. This time, he is expected to focus almost exclusively on climate, participating in a global climate summit and meeting with high-level Chinese officials, possibly including President Xi Jinping.

Earlier in his governorship, said Orville Schell, director of the Center on U.S.-China Relations at the Asia Society in New York, Brown "had just sort of begun to clean up the financial mess in the state, and he was just beginning to look out. But he hadn't fully developed this idea, which is now in sort of full fledge, that California ought to start acting like a country."

"He didn't have the pretention that the state should or could play a global role," said Schell, who wrote a biography of Brown in 1978 and remains in contact with him. "It's relatively recently that he's thought, 'My God, I'm a pilot of a supertanker in its own right that's bigger than most countries in the world. Let's put this baby to the test.'"

Brown, who ran unsuccessfully for president three times but is now seeking no higher office, has little to lose. His public approval rating remains high in a heavily Democratic state that contributed significantly to Trump's loss of the popular vote last year, and the state Legislature has pushed forward with a raft of climate legislation to gird against Trump administration policies.

Earlier this week, the state Senate passed one bill requiring utilities to obtain 100 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2045 and another folding Obama-era water, air and endangered species standards into state law, preserving them in California, regardless of reversals at the federal level.

According to a Public Policy Institute of California poll in February, more than 6 in 10 Californians support state action to address global warming. Bill Whalen, a research fellow at

Stanford University's Hoover Institution and former speechwriter for Gov. Pete Wilson, said Brown "could basically go to Beijing and dance on table tops and there wouldn't be much hell to pay back home."

Still, Trump is capable of punishing force in any collision with Brown. Earlier this year, the president directed administration officials to begin dismantling Obama's Clean Power Plan, and his administration has left open the possibility that it could revoke California's authority to set its own, more rigorous clean air standards under a federal waiver from the Clean Air Act.

Defending a massive cut proposed by Trump to the Environmental Protection Agency, White House Budget Director Mick Mulvaney dismissed climate change programs as "a waste of your money" and said the administration is "not spending money on that anymore."

Brown demurred this week when asked if he considers himself a leader in the climate-related resistance to Trump, saying, "I'm not going to characterize my role here." But he lamented the passage of time since he attended a landmark climate summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

"Now we're 25 years later, we're four presidents later, and it's time we got going," he said. "People know what the science is telling them, and we're not going to make it in any kind of prosperous way if we don't reverse this carbon dependency."

As for what he will tell Chinese officials about his adversary back home, Brown said, "I don't think I'll have much to say about the president."

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The real Iowa kingmaker [Back](#)

By Helena Bottemiller Evich | 03/03/2015 05:38 AM EDT

A dozen potential Republican presidential candidates are about to sit down, one by one, with the biggest GOP donor in Iowa — a multimillionaire few people outside the state have ever heard of.

Bruce Rastetter, an agribusiness mogul who's made a fortune in pork, ethanol and farm real estate, has long worked behind the scenes to help bankroll conservatives across the country, but Saturday is a public coming out party of sorts for Rastetter as he hosts the first-ever Iowa Agriculture Summit. It's an event designed to promote farm policy in a state where pigs outnumber voters 10 to one, but it's also a bold display of the political power Rastetter has amassed — and a reminder to candidates that his endorsement would be a big get ahead of the Iowa caucuses.

It's an unusually public gig for a donor: Rastetter will chat with each candidate on-stage for 20 minutes before 1,000 Iowans and dozens of media outlets. He'll get to ask Jeb Bush what exactly he thinks about ethanol, pepper Scott Walker with questions about EPA regulations and quiz Marco Rubio about where he stands on GMO labeling, if he wants. Chris Christie, Ted Cruz, Rick Santorum, Donald Trump and Mike Huckabee will enter the agriculture policy ring, too.

How the 58-year-old self-made millionaire assembled one of the biggest GOP cattle calls yet is illustrative of the influential network he's built over the past several years, as he's emerged as the state's top Republican donor at both the federal and state level, donating nearly half a million and \$1.1 million, respectively, since 2003, according to campaign finance disclosures — sums that are likely a fraction of his total giving to groups that don't have to disclose their donors.



[Scott Walker Got Gotcha-ed](#)

JACK SHAFER

If you ask political observers in Iowa about Rastetter, the term "kingmaker" inevitably comes up, but Rastetter and his allies dispute the idea.

"I think I try to make a difference with what I do and what candidates I support, but I would consider myself more [an influencer] than a kingmaker," Rastetter said. "Clearly not everyone I have backed has won."

But Rastetter's moves over the past decade look like a "how to" guide for becoming a political power player, with far more influence than other wannabe Iowa kingmakers. He started by building agribusiness empires in some of Iowa's key sectors— including pork and ethanol — then built close relationships with Iowa's political elite, like Gov. Terry Branstad. He slowly upped his contributions to Republican causes beyond the state in 2008, giving tens of thousands to Karl Rove's American Crossroads and the National Republican Senatorial Committee over the past few cycles. And now, Rastetter is getting up close and personal with the presidential hopefuls in full view of the media and other deep-pocketed donors.

He's also developed his share of business and political enemies in recent years, ranging from environmentalists who don't like his hog operations to university advocates who don't like the way his money has bought influence at the state's public universities, where he leads the board of regents.

Rastetter, whose company has a financial interest in agriculture subsidies and strong land prices, in particular, is eager to insert farm policy into the 2016 conversation, though he is coy about his own policy positions. "It's not my opinion that matters, it's the candidates," he said in a phone interview.

For now, Rastetter is not endorsing a candidate — he says he wants to be a neutral host at his summit. Back in 2011, he tried to get Chris Christie in the race, at one point flying a handful of Iowa heavy hitters out to New Jersey to appeal to the governor in person.



[What we learned from CPAC 2015](#)

[ALEX ISENSTADT](#)

But this cycle, he's taking a different approach. This time, the candidates will all come to him.

Rastetter pulled a lot of levers to get much of the GOP field to come to his agriculture event. He got help from Branstad, whom he recruited to run for governor in 2010 and was his top donor. Branstad worked the phones with several of the GOP presidential candidates. The governor personally called Bush — who has not been to Iowa since declaring his intention to mull a 2016 run — and also Perry to convince them to attend.

Rastetter also got plenty of help from Nick Ryan, a major Iowa operative, and his wife Jill Ryan, Santorum's former deputy campaign manager. The Ryans' consulting and lobbying firm Concordia Group is organizing the agriculture summit.

Rastetter also has a connection to Nick Ryan's 501(c)(4), American Future Fund, which pulled in more than \$13 million from Koch-backed Freedom Partners in 2012. Rastetter told POLITICO that he donated to AFF in 2008 — to run positive ads in support of then Sen. Norm Coleman — but no longer gives to the group. He declined to discuss undisclosed giving to other political causes.

Election disclosures show Rastetter gave \$25,000 to an AFF-affiliated super PAC in the 2014 cycle, but had not given to the PAC since donating \$5,000 in 2009 — a drop in the bucket for groups that have spent tens of millions in recent years.

Aside from whatever financial ties exist, Ryan and Rastetter are close allies. Ryan said the agriculture summit was his idea. He floated the concept to Rastetter last fall when the two were at a Hawkeye football game: "We were tailgating and talking politics," he recalls, pointing out that Iowa hosts lots of forums for presidential candidates, but there's never been one focused on agriculture despite the sector representing a third of the state's economy. "It seems like a huge opportunity," he said. "I thought Bruce was perfectly situated to make it happen."

But Ryan also disputes the notion that Rastetter is a kingmaker in the state. "I understand how folks could look at him that way," he said. "What I would say is that over the past several years and cycles... he's certainly become more active. Much like he is in business, when he puts his mind to something he's very focused and works very hard and more often than not is successful."

Meet Mr. Iowa

It's hard to imagine anyone more "Iowa" than Rastetter.

He was raised near Alden, Iowa, on a 320-acre farm that grew corn and soy and raised hogs and cattle. After dropping out of law school, he returned to his roots and launched a feed business that in 1994 morphed into Heartland Pork, a company he aggressively expanded to become one of the state's largest pork producers. In 2004, Rastetter sold the company to Christensen Farms, making it the fourth largest pork player in the country.



[More on POLITICO](#)

[Election Central](#)

Having conquered pork, Rastetter then turned his sights to ethanol. He launched Hawkeye Energy Holdings, rapidly growing it into the third-largest pure play ethanol company in the country — helping to pump billions of gallons of corn-fuel into American's gas tanks — before

selling to a Koch Industries subsidiary in 2011. He's currently the CEO of Summit Group, a diverse company that operates in corn, soy, cattle, international farm real estate and private equity.

Agribusiness leaders point to Rastetter as the quintessential Iowa farm boy success story, but as he's ascended, he's also become a controversial figure in the state. He's loathed by liberal community activists who believe he's leveraged his money into political power for personal gain.

But, even more, they see Rastetter as a symbol of the intensive, increasingly consolidated agriculture industry that rules and too often pollutes Iowa — an issue that's come to a head recently as Des Moines' water utility [pledged to sue](#) three ag-heavy counties over allegations farm runoff has overloaded the city's water supply with dangerous nitrates.

In 2011, Rastetter came under scrutiny after Branstad appointed his brother Brent Rastetter — whose company Quality Ag builds large scale hog facilities— to the Iowa Environmental Protection Commission. Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement [filed an ethics complaint](#) alleging a conflict of interests, citing his line of work and the fact that both Rastetters were major Branstad donors. The state's ethics board later unanimously dismissed the complaint, noting that the position Rastetter held on the commission is one reserved for farmers.

ICCI plans to protest Rastetter's "corporate ag summit" next week.

A highly-courted donor, Rastetter has steadily and strategically built his personal and political brand over the past several years. He's upped his disclosed political and philanthropic giving, including more than \$2 million to Iowa State University to found an eponymous professorship and entrepreneurship center, \$1 million to the state fairgrounds to land his name on the 4-H building and \$5 million to the University of Iowa's football facilities. He maxed out to several top conservative candidates in 2014, including North Carolina's Thom Tillis, Alaska's Dan Sullivan and Iowa's Joni Ernst, and gave \$50,000 to Karl Rove's American Crossroads.

Rastetter has long been known in political circles for his annual summer party, an A-list Republican event complete with pork on a stick that sometimes attracts national conservative figures like Sarah Palin and Bobby Jindal. Last summer, Chris Soules, the current star of "The Bachelor" —who happens to work for Rastetter's Summit Group as a [real estate broker](#) — was [reportedly](#) in attendance, rubbing elbows with Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz.



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[Polling Center](#)

Asked about Rastetter's annual shindig, Branstad, who's attended the last several years, gushed that the event is emblematic of Rastetter's loyal personality. "He is a very caring, sincere individual who doesn't ever forget somebody," he said, noting that Rastetter invites a broad range of people, from folks he went to Sunday school with "all the way through the people on Wall Street. Bruce is the kind of person who never forgets a friend."

Rastetter's also been stepping more into the public sphere the past couple of years, most notably in 2011 by joining the Iowa Board of Regents, where he's been the subject of almost constant controversy. Critics slammed Branstad for appointing Rastetter after he gave more than \$160,000

to the governor's 2010 campaign. He's also come under fire for an Iowa State University-backed [development project](#) in Tanzania — which critics argued was a land grab that would benefit his own company—for receiving half a million in [no-interest](#) wind energy loans from a university program and for having a ISU researchers conduct a beef study on his own farm.

Ask rural environmental activists what they think of Rastetter and you will get an earful.

Gary Klicker, a native of Davis County, Iowa, blames Rastetter for turning his community into a pork confinement stronghold that now smells of manure after the expansion of Heartland Pork in the late 1990s. He said he ended up with 20,000 hogs within four miles of his house and it's made him sick — literally. He's been diagnosed with environmentally-induced asthma and since moved to Colorado, he said. "I could smell the stench from them all the time, no matter which way the wind blew."

For Klicker, Rastetter is "the poster boy" for everything that's wrong with big pork. He recalls Bruce came to town and made a lot of promises to the community about good jobs and economic growth. Rastetter took all the business leaders out to dinner at the country club in Bloomfield, Iowa, to help sell pork expansion as a great thing for the community, he said, but Davis County remains among the poorest in the state.

Rastetter's friends are quick to dismiss his critics, many of whom they argue are simply deeply — and irrationally — opposed to the kind of large-scale agriculture Iowa has mastered.

"There's always going to be a certain amount of jealousy," said Branstad. "There's people who want to move us back to the 1930s and 1940s. They don't like modern agriculture."

In the coming days, Rastetter will be narrowing down what questions he'll ask the candidates on March 7. He said he really wants a serious policy discussion rather than stump speeches, which in past couple of presidential cycles have only really addressed ethanol. While he wants to broaden the discussion, there's no doubt the candidates will still be pressed on where they stand on the Renewable Fuel Standard.

The would-be candidates and people in their orbit have been calling Rastetter and his team asking for help as they mull their positions on the issues.

"It's going to make them more substantive in their approach," said Rastetter. "I think it's already working."

Kenneth P. Vogel contributed reporting.

[To view online click here.](#)

[Back](#)

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Neutral

Not really

Not at all

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POLITICOPRO

This email was sent to tim.murtaugh@oc.usda.gov by: POLITICO, LLC 1000 Wilson Blvd. Arlington, VA, 22209, USA

From: Hudson, Bethany - OSEC, Washington DC
Sent: Monday, May 15, 2017 10:01 AM
To: SP3.PS3
Subject: Invitation Spreadsheet for Today
Attachments: May 15th.xlsx

Mr. Secretary,
Please see attached.
Thank you,
Bethany



Bethany Hudson
Deputy Director of Scheduling & Protocol Officer
Office of the Secretary

United States Department of Agriculture
Office: 202-720-5949
Cell: (b) (6)

From: Shuford, Campbell - OSEC, Washington, DC
Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 2:58 PM
To: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC
CC: Young, Joby - OSEC, Washington, DC; Rollins, Blake - OSEC, Washington, DC; Ghee, Hailey - OSEC, Washington, DC; Beal, Mary Dee - OSEC, Washington, DC; Newsome, Shawna - OSEC, Washington, DC; Brashers, Mindy - OSEC, Washington, DC; Ibach, Greg - OSEC, Washington, DC; Walker, Lorren - OSEC, Washington, DC; Hoskins, Dudley - OSEC, Washington, DC; CLS1, SLC1 - OSEC, Washington, DC; Tkacz, Kailee - OSEC, Washington, DC; Barbic, Ken - OSEC, Washington, DC; Lee, Evan - OSEC, Washington, DC; Bonfitto, Jordan - OSEC, Washington, DC; CloverAdams, Jamie - OSEC, Washington, DC; Northey, Bill - OSEC, Washington, DC; Boswell, Kristi - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: June 2nd Plant Information
Attachments: USDA Livestock and Poultry Plant Closures and Reductions - June 2 2020.xlsx; USDA Daily Livestock Plant Closures and Reductions Report and Map - June 02 2020.pdf

Sir, today's plant closure/reduction spreadsheet and the AMS market information is attached.

- Beef is -5% from where were a year ago today (yesterday was -10%)
- Pork is -12% from where were a year ago today (yesterday was -13%)
- Poultry is 1% from where we were a year ago today (yesterday was the same)

Campbell



Campbell Shuford
Senior Advisor to the Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
Office: 202-720-2868
Cell: (9) (9)

From: Shuford, Campbell - OSEC, Washington, DC

Sent: Thursday, June 4, 2020 5:03 PM

To: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC

CC: Brashears, Mindy - OSEC, Washington, DC; Newsome, Shawna - OSEC, Washington, DC; Young, Joby - OSEC, Washington, DC; Ghee, Hailey - OSEC, Washington, DC; Crowe, Taylor - OSEC, Washington, DC; Rollins, Blake - OSEC, Washington, DC

Subject: June 4th Plant Information

Attachments: USDA Livestock and Poultry Plant Closures and Reductions - June 4 2020.xlsx; USDA Daily Livestock Plant Closures and Reductions Report and Map - June 04 2020.pdf

Sir,

Taylor is going to ensure that you have easy access to the slaughter capacity dashboard that we showed you yesterday, but I wanted to share the link with you as well: <https://cxodashboard.dl.usda.gov/#/views/COVID->

(b) (6)

. Today we are at -4% for beef, -7% for pork, and -3% for poultry.

To follow-up further on remaining establishment closures:

- As of today, we have 4 small **slaughter** establishments closed, 2 of which are duck plants. One is closed due to (b) (5) Deliberative Process Privilege.
- 214 **processing** establishments are closed. Of those:
 - 8 are closed due to (b) (5) Deliberative Process Privilege
 - 3 do not
 - 196 do not
 -
 -
 - Also of note – included in this count are the many establishments that produce “portion control” or specialized products for restaurants, hotels, airlines, cruise lines, tourist venues, and other similar institutions. For example, there are many establishments that will take ribeyes from a further processor or slaughter facility and cut them to an exact size and be uniform to meet a restaurant’s specification. They may also tenderize, marinate or otherwise process the product based on a specific need for a customer. Many of them have very specialized processes such as those producing meals and snack items for airlines and cruise ships. As demand has shifted to retail, these establishments have closed as they were another stop in the production chain that is otherwise not needed right now. However, as these businesses open back up, we should see these establishments come back online.
- Many of these plants have said they expect to open within the month. Others have indicated they do not have a date to re-open yet. Four have closed for good.

Standing by if you have additional questions or would like more information.

Campbell

From: Sullivan, Lauren - OSEC, Washington, DC
Sent: Monday, May 22, 2017 9:59 AM
To: SP3.PS3
Subject: May 22 Meeting
Attachments: May 22.xlsx



Lauren Sullivan
Director of Scheduling
Office of the Secretary

United States Department of Agriculture
Office: 202-720-1493

From: MacGregor, Robert – OSEC, Washington, DC

Sent: Friday, September 6, 2019 6:32 PM

To: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC

CC: Young, Joby - OSEC, Washington, DC; Rich, Michawn - OC, Washington, DC; Rollins, Blake - OSEC, Washington, DC; Brady, Lillie - OSEC, Washington, DC; Crowe, Taylor - OSEC, Washington, DC

Subject: NASDA Documents

Attachments: DRAFT - New Mexico Travel Brief (005).docx; NASDA 2019 Annual Meeting Bios.docx; NASDA Policy Memo SP 9.09.docx; Frank Yiannas FDA Bio.docx

Mr. Secretary – I wanted to make sure we sent you the attached information for your upcoming trip to Albuquerque for NASDA’s Annual Meeting. I’ve attached the following documents for your review...

- Travel Brief
- Policy Memo
- Biographies for the NASDA members that will be attending the meeting
- A biography for FDA Deputy Commissioner Frank Yiannas for your lunch on Monday

Please let me know if you need any more information, or if you need to talk with me or Blake before we see you in New Mexico.

Thanks,

Robert MacGregor

Director
Intergovernmental and External Affairs
United States Department of Agriculture



(b) (6)

From: Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC

Sent: Monday, June 11, 2018 4:34 PM

To: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC; Ray A. Starling EOP/WHO; Klippenstein, Brian - OSEC, Washington, DC; Vaden, Stephen - OGC; McKinney, Ted - OSEC, Washington, DC; Greg Ibach MRP Under Secretary; Hoskins, Dudley - OSEC, Washington, DC; Northey, Bill - OSEC, Washington, DC

Subject: New CEO of CropLife

PEOPLE

Pesticide lobby taps new leader

[Corbin Hiar](#), E&E News reporter

Published: Monday, June 11, 2018

The pesticide industry's top lobby group has hired an agriculture industry veteran to replace its longtime leader.

Chris Novak, who is currently CEO of the National Corn Growers Association, will replace Jay Vroom as president and CEO of CropLife America on Aug. 20.



Chris Novak. Novak/LinkedIn

At that point, the former aide to Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) will become just the fifth head of the 85-year-old association. Vroom has led CropLife since 1989.

"CLA is fortunate to recruit Chris to lead its staff," the outgoing pesticides chief said in a press release.

"I've worked alongside Chris on many issues of common interest to our respective associations and most recently have co-chaired the production ag CEO Council over the past three years," Vroom added. "He brings great knowledge and energy to the leadership of CropLife."

Prior to taking over the corn association in 2014, Novak was CEO of the National Pork Board for six years. He has also worked in leadership roles at the Indiana Corn Marketing Council, Indiana Corn Growers Association and Indiana Soybean Alliance.

Earlier in his career, Novak worked for CropLife member Syngenta, the American Soybean Association and the National Pork Producers Council, according to his LinkedIn [profile](#). He got his start as a legislative assistant to Grassley.

Novak holds a master's degree in business administration from Purdue University, a law degree from the University of Iowa, and a bachelor's degree in public service and administration from Iowa State University. He and his wife, Julie, have three children.

From: McKinney, Ted - OSEC, Washington, DC

Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2020 4:19 PM

To: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC

CC: Young, Joby - OSEC, Washington, DC; Boswell, Kristi - OSEC, Washington, DC; Osterlind, Anna - OSEC-TFAA-USEC, Washington, DC; McKinney, Ted - OSEC, Washington, DC

Subject: PPO - Ag Position Appointments (with attachment)

Attachments: Sequeira, Ron Resume - PENDING.pdf

Pre-decisional – Deliberative – Personnel Related

Mr. Secretary

(b) (5) Deliberative Process Privilege



Ted McKinney

From: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC <Sp3@usda.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2020 10:40 AM

To: McKinney, Ted - OSEC, Washington, DC <Ted.McKinney@usda.gov>

Cc: Young, Joby - OSEC, Washington, DC <joby.young@usda.gov>; Boswell, Kristi - OSEC, Washington, DC <kristi.boswell@usda.gov>; Osterlind, Anna - OSEC-TFAA-USEC, Washington, DC <Anna.Osterlind@usda.gov>

Subject: RE: PPO - Ag Position Appointments

Please provide me the details on  (b) (5) Deliberative Process Privilege

From: McKinney, Ted - OSEC, Washington, DC <Ted.McKinney@usda.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2020 9:54 AM

To: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC <Sp3@usda.gov>

Cc: Young, Joby - OSEC, Washington, DC <joby.young@usda.gov>; Boswell, Kristi - OSEC, Washington, DC <kristi.boswell@usda.gov>; Osterlind, Anna - OSEC-TFAA-USEC, Washington, DC <Anna.Osterlind@usda.gov>; McKinney, Ted - OSEC, Washington, DC <Ted.McKinney@usda.gov>

Subject: PPO - Ag Position Appointments

Pre-decisional – Deliberative – Personnel Related

Mr. Secretary,

(b) (5) Deliberative Process Privilege



Ted McKinney

From: Vaden, Stephen - OGC
Sent: Tuesday, May 29, 2018 5:56 PM
To: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC
CC: Green, Heidi - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: Re: Bayer-Monsanto Merger approved by DOJ

(b) (5) Attorney client (b) (5) Pre-decisional/Deliberative

Sent from my iPhone

On May 29, 2018, at 1:52 PM, SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC <Sp3@osec.usda.gov> wrote:

(b) (5) Attorney client (b) (5) Pre-decisional/Deliberative

?

Sent from my iPad

On May 29, 2018, at 1:31 PM, Vaden, Stephen - OGC <Stephen.Vaden@ogc.usda.gov> wrote:

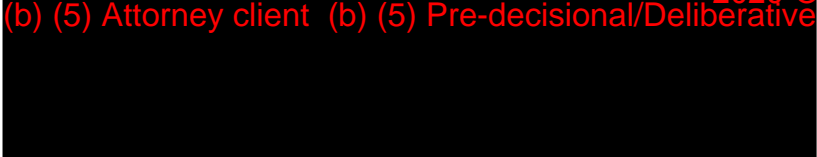
Mr. Secretary:

(b) (5) Attorney client (b) (5) Pre-decisional/Deliberative

(b) (5) Attorney client (b) (5) Pre-decisional/Deliberative



(b) (5) Attorney client (b) (5) Pre-decisional/Deliberative



Stephen

Sent from my iPad

From: CLS1, SLC1 - OSEC, Washington, DC on behalf of Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC [Stephen.Censky@usda.gov]
Sent: Thursday, May 24, 2018 10:33 PM
To: Stephanie Tomasso; Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC; Stephen Censky
CC: Amy L Walker
Subject: RE: Reference for a Colleague (TIME SENSITIVE)

Stephanie,

Apologies for the delay as I've been out of town for my daughter's [REDACTED] (b) (6)

I'd still be glad to visit with you about Chris; I recommend him extremely highly. I've had the pleasure of working with Chris in four different capacities. First as an employee when he served as Assistant to the CEO, then as an industry colleague when he was at Syngenta, then as a collaborative state executive of a state affiliate, and then finally as a peer and colleague of sister commodity associations (Pork Board and then NCGA).

I'm back in the office on Friday. I could do a call at 10 a.m., noon, or after 2:30. Please let me know.

Thanks and best regards,

Steve

Stephen L. Censky
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office 202-720-6052

From: Stephanie Tomasso [mailto:Stephanie.Tomasso@russellreynolds.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 23, 2018 9:42 AM
To: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC <Stephen.Censky@osec.usda.gov>; Stephen Censky <slcensky@gmail.com>
Cc: Amy L Walker <amy.walker@russellreynolds.com>
Subject: Reference for a Colleague (TIME SENSITIVE)

Dear Steve,

I hope you are well. As I believe he had shared with you, we are working with Chris Novak as he evaluates a potential new role. Chris suggested you would be willing to serve as a reference and I hope we may be able to find 15-20 minutes to connect at your soonest convenience.

Would you happen to have 15 minutes to connect today or tomorrow? I am holding the below windows (Eastern) but will do my best to be flexible around your schedule if these times do not work. Amy Walker is copied and can help us confirm a time.

Wednesday, May 23: 1:00-2:00pm; 3:00-6:00pm
Thursday, May 24: 12:00-3:00pm

Many thanks,
Stephanie

Stephanie J. Tomasso

Russell Reynolds Associates

1700 New York Avenue | 4th Floor | Washington, DC 20006

P: +1.202.654.7843 | M: (b) (6) | F: +1.202.638.5178

stephanie.tomasso@russellreynolds.com | [My Bio](#)

RussellReynolds.com

Executive Assistant: Amy Walker

P: (b) (6) | amy.walker@russellreynolds.com

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From: SP3.PS3
Sent: Monday, July 17, 2017 5:33 AM
To: Hafemeister, Jason - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: Re: Trade look ahead

Thanks. Making progress!

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 16, 2017, at 10:39 PM, Hafemeister, Jason - OSEC, Washington, DC <Jason.Hafemeister1@osec.usda.gov> wrote:

Thanks.

Just got word from China: only 2 more biotech events approved:

- Monsanto Corn: MON 87427
- Syngenta: Corn: 5307

So, by our count that is 4 out of 8 in the que released. We will continue to request the remainder get expedited review.

jh

From: SP3.PS3
Sent: Sunday, July 16, 2017 10:22 PM
To: Hafemeister, Jason - OSEC, Washington, DC <Jason.Hafemeister1@osec.usda.gov>
Subject: Re: Trade look ahead

Read.

Sent from my iPad

On Jul 16, 2017, at 10:16 PM, Hafemeister, Jason - OSEC, Washington, DC <Jason.Hafemeister1@osec.usda.gov> wrote:

Mr. Secretary,

Things are up in the air on several key trade issues, but here is what we know now.

China. So far no [REDACTED] (b) (5) Deliberative Process Privilege [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] For me that also means [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] We
 have also presented ideas [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] Maybe [REDACTED] Maybe [REDACTED]

(b) (5) Deliberative Process Privilege Maybe [redacted]
[redacted]

NAFTA. Negotiating objectives are supposed to be presented (b)(5) DPP [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

Sugar. Rob and I, working with staff, are nailing down the (b)(5) DPP [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

EU Beef TRQ. (b) (5) Deliberative Process Privilege [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

Steel. (b) (5) Deliberative Process Privilege [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] Let us know if

you have questions or want to discuss more.

jh

<Deficits and unfair trade.docx>

From: Gerald, Lauren - OES, Washington, DC
Sent: Tuesday, May 26, 2020 11:58 AM
To: Perdue, Sonny - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: Thank you note from Cargill
Attachments: 8644555.pdf

Good morning,

OES received the attached thank you card for Secretary Perdue today.

Lauren Gerald
Correspondent Analyst, OES
202-720-1574

From: Summers, Bruce - AMS

Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 7:38 PM

To: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC; CLS1, SLC1 - OSEC, Washington, DC; Ibach, Greg - OSEC, Washington, DC; Brashears, Mindy - OSEC, Washington, DC; Johansson, Robert - OCE, Washington, DC

CC: Young, Joby - OSEC, Washington, DC; Hoskins, Dudley - OSEC, Washington, DC; Walker, Lorren - OSEC, Washington, DC; Newsome, Shawna - OSEC, Washington, DC; Shuford, Campbell - OSEC, Washington, DC; Ghee, Hailey - OSEC, Washington, DC; Beal, Mary Dee - OSEC, Washington, DC; Rollins, Blake - OSEC, Washington, DC; Jekanowski, Mark - OCE, Washington, DC; Kiecker, Paul - FSIS

Subject: USDA Market News readout

Attachments: Market Impact - COVID-19 - June 2 2020.docx

Please see the attached USDA Market News readout for June 2

From: USDA Office of Communications
Sent: Friday, April 28, 2017 8:10 AM
To: SP3.PS3
Subject: USDA News Clips 4.28.2017



You are subscribed to Clips for USDA Office of Communications.

USDA Clips

Friday, April 28, 2017

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Top Stories

Trump to give 'serious consideration' to admitting Argentine lemons (Hagstrom Report, 4/27) At a White House news conference with Argentine President Mauricio Macri, President Donald Trump said today he is giving serious consideration to admitting Argentine lemons into the United States. The Obama administration had made plans to end a 16-year ban on the Argentine fruit, but, in a gesture to U.S. growers, Trump stopped the process. After Trump praised Macri, a center-right politician, a reporter asked, "If he's such a good president, Mr. President, are you going to let the lemons – the Argentine lemons – in, in your country? They are very good. People will love you if you let them in." Trump answered, "I know about all the lemons. And believe it or not, the lemon business is a big, big business."

'I was all set to terminate': Inside Trump's sudden shift on NAFTA (Washington Post, Ashley Parker, Damian Paletta, Karen DeYoung, 4/27) ...As news of the president's plan reached Ottawa and Mexico City in the middle of the week and rattled the markets and Congress, Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue and others huddled in meetings with Trump, urging him not to sign a document triggering a U.S. withdrawal from NAFTA. Perdue even brought along a prop to the Oval Office: A map of the United States that illustrated the areas that would be hardest hit, particularly from agriculture and manufacturing losses, and highlighting that many of those states and counties were "Trump country" communities that had voted for the president in November...

Secretary Perdue Hopes to Help President Keep Promises (Daily Herd Management, Wyatt Bechtel, 4/27) It took almost the first 100 days of Donald Trump's presidency to finally have Sonny Perdue approved as Secretary of Agriculture, but he is now ready to hit the ground running. "It has been a great honor and opportunity to work for a president who I think is keeping his promises," Perdue says during a press conference April 27 at the Kansas City U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Beacon Facility... "I'm persuaded he has

the leadership and tenacity to make a good deal for Americans,” Perdue says... Not many dairy farmers have been immediately impacted by the UHT milk trade battle with Canada, but Perdue is happy to see the president go to bat for them. “He called their hand,” Perdue says of Trump dealing with Canada. “This is a president who is going to fight for America.” Perdue likes what he has seen so far, but adds that current trade agreements won’t necessarily be dismantled... “My job as USDA Secretary is to go around the world and make sure we’re able to market and sell the products we grow...and make sure our producers continue to prosper and thrive,” Perdue says. “While on balance NAFTA has been good for American agriculture, we think it can be improved,” Perdue says.

New USDA Secretary visits KC, talks NAFTA (KSHB, Brian Abel, 4/27) KANSAS CITY - On his third day as Secretary of Agriculture, newly confirmed Sonny Perdue visited a USDA facility in Kansas City designated as a “devolution” facility if something were to happen in Washington, D.C. “If we needed to get out of DC, we would come here and continue the operation service of USDA. It’s an honor to be in Kansas City,” said Secretary Perdue following his visit with the facility’s roughly 1,500 employees. The first questions from reporters in the room revolved around President Donald Trump’s phone calls with country leaders and subsequent tweets about NAFTA, the trade agreement between the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. “The ultimate outcome is what we’re interested in,” said Perdue. “Mexico and Canada’s agreement to come to the table quickly to renegotiate this years-old trade affair will be helpful to producers of all kinds in America.”

Ag Secretary says Trump’s turn on NAFTA was deal-making (KCUR 4/27) New U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue on Thursday explained President Donald Trump’s turn-around on the North American Free Trade Agreement as just part of the negotiations in his deal making. Under heavy fire from farmers, farm groups and others who were critical of Trump’s promise to terminate NAFTA, on Thursday the president announced that after talking to the governments of Canada and Mexico, he plans instead to renegotiate the trade agreement. “So saying something was contemplated is not necessarily saying something was done or was going to be done,” Perdue says. “I think the ultimate outcome is what we’re interested in.”

Agriculture secretary, in KC, praises Trump’s deal-making, hints at food stamp change (Kansas City Star, Brian Lowry, 4/27) U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue touted President Donald Trump’s deal-making ability during a Thursday visit to Kansas City less than 24 hours after the White House announced plans to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement. Perdue, who is three days into his role as a Cabinet secretary, touched on a variety of agricultural issues during his visit to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Kansas City offices. He called Trump a “trader” and framed the president’s previous statements suggesting that the U.S. would withdraw from the agreement with Canada and Mexico as a negotiating tactic. “Saying something was contemplated is not necessarily saying something was done or going to be done. I think the ultimate outcome is really what we’re interested in,” said Perdue, who was confirmed by the U.S. Senate earlier this week. “He wrote ‘The Art of the Deal’ and he likes to do the deal and I’m persuaded that he has the leadership and the tenacity to make a good deal for Americans.”

Dear Secretary Perdue, here are USDA’s 10 most urgent priorities (New Food Economy, Reana Kovalcik, 4/27) ... The Farmer Fair Practices Rules (FFPR), which the Trump administration has already delayed several times, are designed to balance the power between contract meat and poultry producers and vertically integrated processing companies—a balance that is currently skewed entirely in the favor of the corporations... Conservation programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) confer significant benefits to farmers, ranchers, and forest owners by providing payments to help them improve and protect their natural resources and reduce the amount and cost of on-farm inputs. As an Agriculture Secretary who has repeatedly cited his and his family’s commitment to stewardship, we expect Secretary Perdue to stand against any attempted cuts to CSP or EQIP during the appropriations process and to also fight for adequate funding in the 2018 Farm Bill... Access to credit and financing is critical for farmers and ranchers, particularly those just beginning their career in agriculture. Historically, the demand

for USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) loans—critical for beginning farmers who often cannot access private loans because of their lack of capital and production history—has greatly outstripped FSA's available funding.

Cotton futures slip after USDA reports a drop in export sales (Fox Business, Carolyn Cui, 4/27) Cotton for July delivery lost 1.8% to settle at 77.96 cents a pound on the ICE Futures U.S. exchange. Net export sales of upland cotton, the most commonly grown variety in the U.S., totaled 115,500 running bales in the week ended April 20, down 49% from the prior week, the USDA said on Thursday. South Korea, Japan and China reported lower imports. "It is the weakest sales since the third week of September," said Herman S. Kohlmeyer Jr., managing director at Michael J. Nugent & Company Inc. With just three months left for the current marketing years, export sales tends to wind down as most mills are done with cotton buying, he said.

Lawmakers urge Trump, Perdue to help dairy farmers (Brownfield Ag Network, Larry Lee, 4/27) President Trump and new Ag Secretary Sonny Perdue have been asked by more than 70 lawmakers to help dairy farmers affected by Canadian trade policy. Sixty-eight Members of Congress signed a letter Wednesday asking for "swift action to hold Canada to its trade commitments." They believe Canada's new Class 6 and Class 7 milk pricing categories violate the terms of NAFTA. A separate letter from five Democratic U.S. Senators Thursday asked the administration to resolve the trade issues, and they want the USDA to purchase surplus dairy products for distribution to needy families. The senators say this would help make room for more milk at processing plants taking milk from displaced farmers. They say Section 5 of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act gives the USDA authority to assist farmers affected by foreign trade practices.

National/ International News

Exclusive: Trump says 'major, major' conflict with North Korea possible, but seeks diplomacy (Reuters, Stephen J. Adler, Steve Holland, and Jeff Mason, 4/28) U.S. President Donald Trump said on Thursday a major conflict with North Korea is possible in the standoff over its nuclear and missile programs, but he would prefer a diplomatic outcome to the dispute. "There is a chance that we could end up having a major, major conflict with North Korea. Absolutely," Trump told Reuters in an Oval Office interview ahead of his 100th day in office on Saturday. Nonetheless, Trump said he wanted to peacefully resolve a crisis that has bedeviled multiple U.S. presidents, a path that he and his administration are emphasizing by preparing a variety of new economic sanctions while not taking the military option off the table. "We'd love to solve things diplomatically but it's very difficult," he said. In other highlights of the 42-minute interview, Trump was cool to speaking again with Taiwan's president after an earlier telephone call with her angered China. He also said he wants South Korea to pay the cost of the U.S. THAAD anti-missile defense system, which he estimated at \$1 billion, and intends to renegotiate or terminate a U.S. free trade pact with South Korea because of a deep trade deficit with Seoul.

Full interview with President Trump on his first 100 days (Washington Examiner, Sarah Westwood, 4/28) ... WEX: So obviously, a lot has changed in this country and around the world since you took office. Have you changed your thinking on any particular issue, maybe like DACA, based on what you've learned on the job? POTUS: Well I always understood that with DACA, we need special heart. We need to understand the — we have to understand the other side of that equation, and I do understand that side, and I am somebody with a lot of heart and you know, you've heard what I said. Just, relax and let's let it all play out. Because I think everyone's going to be happy in the end. I will say that we're doing an amazing job at the border, and we're going to need the help of the wall, because we want to stop human trafficking, we want to stop drugs, we want to stop so many other things that the wall could be so helpful with.

Rex Tillerson: North Korean dictator Kim Jon Un is 'not insane' (Washington Examiner, Daniel Chaitin, 4/27) North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un is "not insane," asserted Secretary of State Rex Tillerson on Thursday. During an interview on Fox News, Tillerson was asked by host Bret Baier whether he thinks Kim is "unstable" and not able to make reasonable decisions. "All indications, Bret, by intelligence agencies, and there have been a number of independent psychologists who have done analysis as best they can, all indications are that he is not crazy," Tillerson replied. He went on to explain how little he thinks of Kim, despite not agreeing the man is

"crazy." "He may be ruthless. He may be a murderer. He may be someone who in many respects we would say by our standards is irrational. But he is not insane," Tillerson said.

South Korea disputes Trump's remarks on trade, missile defense system (Fox News, 4/28) South Korea announced Friday that it has no plans to renegotiate a bilateral trade deal with the U.S. or to pay for the U.S. missile defense system being deployed in the region, disputing recent remarks made by President Donald Trump. In an interview with Reuters news agency Thursday, Trump said that he plans to fix the "horrible" bilateral trade deal with South Korea and that he would also make them pay \$1 billion for the THAAD missile defense system. Woo Taehee, South Korea's vice trade minister, said the country was not notified of any trade renegotiation and that there had been "no pre-talks" with the U.S. regarding the five-year-old trade deal. In a separate statement, South Korea's defense ministry said there is no change in its plan under which the U.S. covers the cost for operating THAAD, now being deployed in the country's southeast. Under an agreement reached during the administration of Trump's predecessor, Barack Obama, South Korea offers the land and facilities for THAAD but not the cost of operations, the Defense Ministry said.

Senate confirms Alexander Acosta to Labor Department, first Hispanic in Trump cabinet (Newsweek, Reuters, 4/27) R. Alexander Acosta was confirmed on Thursday by the U.S. Senate to head the Labor Department, making him the first Hispanic member of President Donald Trump's cabinet. Acosta, a former member of the National Labor Relations Board and dean of the Florida International University College of Law in Miami, was nominated as labor secretary by Trump in mid-February. The Senate confirmed Acosta by a 60-38 vote. Acosta was expected to have a smooth confirmation process despite objections from some Democrats and workers groups that he is too friendly to business. Acosta has had a decades-long career in the public sector, including multiple Senate vettings for past appointments, making it unlikely any surprises in his background would derail his nomination... Also during the confirmation hearing, Acosta expressed reservations about another Obama administration rule issued last year that more than doubled the salary ceiling under which employees would be eligible for overtime pay, from \$23,660 to \$47,476 a year.

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA)

Smaller AG Groups Question Focus of White House Task Force (Daily Yonder/ Bryce Oates/ 4-27-2017) Some groups that were not part of a White House agriculture roundtable on Tuesday responded with mild endorsements or outright skepticism for the president's executive order creating an agriculture and rural development task force that will work on "rural prosperity." ... "While we may not have reached the great upheaval of the 80's farm crisis, I assure you that the fact that it was worse then, is cold comfort to the many farm families who are struggling to make ends meet," said Scott Marlow, executive director of Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI), in testimony to the House Agriculture Committee earlier in April. Marlow was among farm leaders who said they would wait to see what the task force produces before making comments about it. "I look forward to working with Secretary of Agriculture Perdue, and with the Interagency Task Force," Marlow said. "There's a series of critical issues now before USDA, regulatory issues like the GIPSA [Grain Inspection Packers and Stockyard Administration] rules that will tell us a lot.

Farm Service Agency

What Does the Future Hold for CRP? (KMTV, Samantha Jo Roth, 4/28) There could be good news for farmers looking to participate in a popular federal land conservation program. Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle are looking to expand the Conservation Reserve Program or CRP in the next farm bill. The CRP is a federal program that awards money to farmers, requiring them to stop production on their land for 10-15 year intervals to improve the environment. However, enrolling in the Conservation Reserve Program or CRP is now more competitive than ever. "We've lost a lot of CPR acres in South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota. Lot of the acres that were in CRP have not gotten back in," said Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN).

Gary Peters Urges Senate Colleagues to Support Farm Loans, (Michigan Sentinel Staff, Holland, April 27) In 2016, farmers that counted on Farm Service Agency loans faced a crisis when funding fell short due to high demand. U.S. Senator Gary Peters is leading a bipartisan effort now to make sure that doesn't happen again. "Michigan's farmers — and farmers across our country — feed our country and people around the globe, and we must do what we can to support them," Peters, D-West Bloomfield, said. "Our agricultural businesses rely on the ability to access the resources they need to keep growing, creating jobs, and contributing to our economy. When a farm has no other options, Farm Service Agency loans and guarantees can help farmers cover urgent operating costs — like feed, seed, and fertilizer — to get them through the season," Peters said. "Without these loans, farmers could lose their ability to purchase equipment and other necessities for the planting season, and could be forced to curtail their operations."

Non-Baseline Farm Programs (DTN the Progressive Farmer, 4/27) Though the overall spending for these may be small, compared to major farm bill programs such as crop insurance, for some issues nearly all of the relevant programs fall into this non-baseline group, Ferd Hoefner, senior strategic adviser for the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, said recently. "100 percent of the programs in the farm bill for beginning farmers, for minority farmers, for healthy food access, for organic agriculture and for local, regional food are among those three dozen programs," Hoefner said. Hoefner said the \$100 million program for beginning farmers and ranchers was of particular concern as the demographics of US agriculture shifts to an older population.

Economic Research Service

Mielke Market Weekly: Dairy Prices Continue Modest Climb (TheLandOnline.com, Lee Mielke, 4/27/17) The U.S. Department of Agriculture's preliminary data pegs March milk output in the top 23 producing states at 17.5 billion pounds, up 1.8 percent from March 2016. The 50-state total hit 18.7 billion pounds, up 1.7 percent. The Progressive Agriculture Organization says it will petition USDA for a national milk hearing to consider changing the method of determining the value of milk at the farm level. Pro-Ag manager, Arden Tewksbury, said they will ask USDA to consider the national average cost of producing milk, as determined by the Economic Research Service, as a starting price for all milk.

FARMERS' SHARE OF THE FOOD DOLLAR IS STILL LOW (Kool Radio 104.9, NAFB, 4/27/17) A Farm Journal report says some consumers may still look at grocery store prices and think farmers are making a lot of money off the commodities they produce. A U.S. Department of Agriculture report says for every dollar that consumers spend on food, farmers and ranchers get approximately 17.4 cents. An 18-ounce box of cereal will cost consumers \$4.79 but the farmer will only earn a nickel. Compared to the retail price of most products, farmers will often only make pennies on the dollar. The food dollar series for the USDA's Economic Research Service measures annual spending by consumers on domestically produced food.

Mergers May Affect Incentive to Innovate (Iowa Farmer Today, 4/27/17) Editor's note: The following was written by James M. MacDonald, a branch chief at the USDA Economic Research Service, for the ERS Amber Waves magazine. Recently proposed mergers promise to change the industry. In December 2015, Dow Chemical and DuPont proposed to merge. In February 2016, the state-owned Chinese company ChemChina offered \$43 billion to acquire Syngenta. Several months later, in September 2016, Bayer proposed to purchase Monsanto for \$66 billion. The links between competition, investments in research and innovation are complex because intense competition may dissuade investments in research. These mergers would transform the "Big Six" into the "Big Four."

Agricultural Research Service

Cassava is genetically decaying, putting staple crop at risk (Cornell Chronicle, Amanda Garris, 4/27) For breeders of cassava, a staple food for hundreds of millions in the tropics, producing improved varieties has been getting harder over time. A team at Cornell used genomic analysis of cassava varieties and wild relatives to

make a diagnosis: Mutations have corroded the genome, producing many dysfunctional versions of genes and putting at risk a crop crucial to the survival of one-tenth of the world's population. "The analysis was clearly able to show that cassava is genetically decaying," said Ed Buckler, a research geneticist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service and adjunct professor of plant breeding and genetics at the Institute for Genomic Diversity (IGD) in Cornell's Institute of Biotechnology.

ARS Geneticist Edward Buckler Receives First National Academy of Sciences Prize in Food and Agriculture Sciences (USDA ARS, Kim Kaplan, 4/27) Agricultural Research Service (ARS) geneticist Edward Buckler is the first person to receive the National Academy of Science's (NAS) Prize in Food and Agriculture Sciences. Buckler will be recognized for pioneering the use of large-scale genomic approaches linking genes with the crop's physical traits. This work is giving plant breeders' better access to key genes and reducing the time needed to improve critical traits that enhance food security. Buckler, a NAS member, works at the ARS Plant, Soil and Nutrition Research Unit in Ithaca, New York. He began his large-scale genomics work by developing an encyclopedic amount of information relating the 40,000 genes and nearly 2.3 million base pairs in the maize genome to specific traits in the field.

ARS announces new scientific impact video series (High Plains/Midwest AG Journal, 4/27) The Agricultural Research Service is pleased to debut a video series highlighting important scientific advances that occurred because of ARS research. This first YouTube video highlights ARS' role in large-scale commercial production of penicillin. While discovered in England, the ability to mass-produce penicillin occurred in the United States at an ARS lab in Peoria, Illinois.

Public Demand is Overwhelming Gene Banks' Public Service (Civil Eats, Virginia Gewin, 4/27) This year, in the six weeks spanning late winter and early spring, the U.S. gene bank that stores vital, sometimes rare, collections of fruit varieties received around 280 requests for cuttings. Like many farmers and gardeners looking for unique wine grape, plum, peach, persimmon, olive, and walnut trees, these savvy folks went straight to the source. But most of their requests were turned down. The mission of the U.S. gene bank system is to conserve the germplasm—the seeds or tissues that conserve crop genetics—and provide them for research, breeding, and education. The 19 U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) gene bank facilities located around the country, collectively, store 570,000 unique samples of 15,000 plant species that make up the National Plant Germplasm System (NPGS).

Treatment-Free Beekeeping and the Varroa Mite (Keeping Backyard Bees, Scott Offord, 4/27) The Varroa mite is a Pandora's box that humans will never be able to close. They are here to stay and they aren't going anywhere despite all our efforts to treat them away. According to USDA's Report on Honey Bee Health (PDF), published in 2012, the parasitic mite, Varroa destructor, remains the single most detrimental pest of honey bees. According to Robert Danka of the USDA-ARS Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics and Physiology Laboratory, in Baton Rouge, there are Varroa-resistant (VR) honey bees that exist whose colonies host mite populations that remain small enough to allow beekeepers to eliminate or reduce miticide treatments.

May 17 field day to highlight wheat research (My Plainview, Kay Ledbetter, 4/27) At least 3 billion loaves of bread in the Texas Panhandle alone every year – that's the difference Texas A&M AgriLife Research is making, according to hosts of the annual Wheat Field Day. Wheat research, and the difference it makes in the food supply chain, will be highlighted during the annual field day May 17 at the Texas A&M AgriLife facilities near Bushland. AgriLife Research is co-hosting the event with the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and West Texas A&M University. The field day is free and will include breakfast tacos, sponsored by Texas Wheat Producers Board, and a lunch, sponsored by the USDA-ARS Ogallala Aquifer program.

China wants a bold presence in Washington — so it's building a \$100 million garden (Washington Post, Adrian Higgins, 4/27) This summer, a construction team is expected to begin transforming a 12-acre field at the U.S. National Arboretum into one of the most ambitious Chinese gardens ever built in the West. By the time Chinese

artisans finish their work some 30 months later, visitors will encounter a garden containing all the elements of a classical Chinese landscape: enticing moongate entrances, swooping and soaring roof lines, grand pavilions with carved wooden screens and groves of golden bamboo. The grounds will boast two dozen handcrafted pavilions, temples and other ornate structures around a large central lake. The Chinese government is so anxious to have the garden that it has agreed to foot the entire bill, which approaches \$100 million.

Forest Service

USDA Offers EQUIP funds for private woodlands (Farm and Dairy Online, 4/27) In an effort to restore oak-hickory woodlands, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and its conservation partners created the 'Collaborative Oak Management' project in southeastern Ohio. Private woodlands - The project area includes the Wayne National Forest and Ohio State Forests, as well as privately held forest land. Approximately 73 percent of the land within the Wayne National Forest is privately owned and interspersed within the forest boundaries. However, the boundaries of private and public land don't exist for invasive species and wildlife.

100 Million Dead Trees: A Danger That Persists Long After the Drought (Water Deeply, 4/27) An aggressive prescribed burning program is needed to manage the massive number of trees killed during the California drought. U.C. Berkeley fire scientist Scott Stephens says there's limited time to tackle the problem. THE DROUGHT IN California may be officially over, but that doesn't mean all the problems are fixed. One of the biggest lasting problems from the state's five-year drought is a vast quantity of dead trees. In November the U.S. Forest Service, based on aerial surveys, estimated the drought killed more than 102 million trees on national forests in California, with the greatest concentration in the southern Sierra Nevada. New surveys set to begin in June may raise that number even higher.

Monarch Tracker: See where Michigan's first butterflies are arriving (M live, Tanda Smiter, 4/27) Michigan's first monarch butterflies have been spotted in the southern tier of the state - the initial wave of the annual spring migration. The new generation of winged creatures are making their way north after overwintering in Mexico. For the last few weeks, large groups of them have been traveling north along their mysterious flyways," originating from their temperate, protected winter home in the Sierra Madre Mountains.

FOoT, Forest Service dedicate shelter system (Nashville Leader, 4/27) Over 30 people made the trek to the top of Suck Mountain Friday, April 21 for the dedication of the Ouachita National Recreation Trail Shelter System. The shelter system is comprised of 12 shelters built by the Friends of the Ouachita Trail (FOoT) in partnership with the United States Forest Service. FOoT President Bo Lea thanked a host of volunteers and forest service employees who were a part of the project. Rain threatened to ruin the dedication service, but they were able to complete the ceremony before the rain came.

Natural Resources & Environment

What Can Congress Learn from Teddy Bear and Peter Rabbit? (The Hill, Eric Holst, 4/27) Regarding proposals to reform the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Eric Holst of the Environmental Defense Fund suggests that while the roles of states, the ESA delisting process, and the regulatory burdens on landowners are three clear areas for improving implementation of the Act, they would put science-based conservation in danger. He asserts that ESA successes in cooperative conservation such as efforts for the greater sage-grouse, the delisting of the Louisiana black bear, and the averted listing of the New England Cottontail are examples of how ESA can effectively remove animals from the endangered and candidate species lists. Those three species have been part of the Working Lands for Wildlife partnership of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and private landowners.

USDA Offers EQIP Funds for Private Woodland Conservation in Ohio (Farm and Dairy, 4/27) In an effort to restore oak-hickory woodlands, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation

Service and its conservation partners created the ‘Collaborative Oak Management’ project in southeastern Ohio. Funded through the agency’s Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the project includes the Wayne National Forest and Ohio State Forests, as well as privately held forest land. Woodland owners in 17 counties are eligible to participate in the project.

U.S. Drought Reaches Record Low as Rain Reigns (USA Today, Doyle Rice, 4/27) Drought in the U.S. fell to a record low this week, with just 6.1 percent of the lower 48 states currently experiencing such dry conditions, federal officials announced Thursday. That’s the lowest percentage in the 17-year history of the weekly U.S. Drought Monitor report. The previous record low occurred in July 2010, when 7.7 percent of the contiguous U.S. was in a drought. “Drought has certainly been disappearing at a rapid rate this spring,” said meteorologist Brad Rippey of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The five-year drought in California is practically over, with only about 8 percent of the state currently in drought. USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service contributes weather data to the monitor report.

Clouds, Clouds Not Going Away (The Register-Guard, Dylan Darling, 4/27) Oregon’s Willamette River basin reservoirs are nearly brimming with water; and there’s talk of the end of the drought. In the mountains, precipitation has fallen as snow, and the resulting snowpack is the most robust in years. But is Oregon’s drought ending? Nature’s reservoir — snowpack — is cause for optimism. The Natural Resources Conservation Service Snow Survey expects that current snowpacks will bring some drought relief.

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

In invasive species battle, thinking outside the cage works (WSIL, Chicago, Seth Borenstein, 4/27) A robot zaps and vacuums up venomous lionfish in Bermuda. A helicopter pelts Guam's trees with poison-baited dead mice to fight the voracious brown tree snake. A special boat with giant winglike nets stuns and catches Asian carp in the U.S. Midwest. In the fight against alien animals that invade and overrun native species, the weird and wired wins. "Critters are smart - they survive," said biologist Rob "Goose" Gosnell, head of U.S. Department of Agriculture's wildlife services in Guam, where brown tree snakes have gobbled up nearly all the native birds. "Trying to outsmart them is hard to do."

Mom fearful of ‘over 100’ vultures roosting by school (WTVR, Wayne Covil, 4/27) PETERSBUG, Va. -- Residents who live near Robert E. Lee Elementary said the vultures have become such a problem, that they avoid the school when they can. The vultures, residents said, have been an on and off again issues for two years – but recently the issues became really bad

New NAHMS survey to measure antibiotic use, stewardship (The Green Sheets Farm Forum, 4/27) Starting in May, the USDA’s National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) will ask pig farmers who have at least 1,000 pigs and farm in any of the top 13 pork-producing states about their on-farm antimicrobial use and their related stewardship practices. Those states include Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and South Dakota.

National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

National Mental-Health Survey Finds Widespread Ignorance, Stigma (Michigan State University, No Author, April 27) Less than half of Americans can recognize anxiety. Most people don't know what to do about depression even when they spot it. And nearly 8 in 10 don't recognize prescription drug abuse as a treatable problem. Those are just some of the findings of a new national survey on issues surrounding mental-health literacy by Michigan State University scholars. Their work is administered by NIFA and comes to light as public health officials and advocates prepare to observe Mental Health Month in May.

Study ranks production attributes most important to consumers (Feedstuffs Foodlink, No Author, April 27) Consumers are increasingly interested in how their food is produced and look for claims such as no growth

hormones, no genetically modified organisms (GMOs), no antibiotics, etc., on food products. While many studies have focused on consumers' willingness to pay for individual food attributes, they have not ranked which production attributes consumers say are most important to them. However, a new NIFA-supported University of Illinois study explored the topic and found what is most important to consumers when buying four different products: beef, chicken, milk, and eggs. The study, "Which Livestock Production Claims Matter Most to Consumers?," appears in *Agriculture & Human Values*.

Perceived Value of College Education Differs: Gen X invests in human capital, Gen Y in social capital (South Dakota State University, No Author, April 27) Whether people view a college education as an opportunity to increase their earning power or a means of improving social connections varies based on their age, according to South Dakota State University associate consumer sciences professor Soo Hyun Cho. She and researchers from four other land-grant institutions looked at how 1,000 adults, ages 18 to 54 with student loans, viewed college. Cho is part of a nationwide team of 24 researchers working on a NIFA project called Behavior Economic and Financial Decision-Making Across the Life Span.

Bee-friendly plants: UK entomology student develops list of bee-friendly trees and shrubs (University of Kentucky Ag News, Katie Pratt, April 26) A University of Kentucky entomology student has developed a list of bee-friendly trees and shrubs for the Ohio Valley region. The list can help homeowners, who have a desire to participate in bee conservation efforts, find the right plants for their yards. "This list allows the average homeowner to participate in meaningful bee conservation efforts using science-based plant recommendations," said Bernadette Mach, a doctoral student in the UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. The NIFA-funded research provides a way to help restore the habitat and resources of bees and other pollinators while diversifying urban landscapes with horticulturally desirable plants.

Food Safety

Baraka Bakery and Grocery Recalls Ground Beef Products Due to Possible E. coli O157:H7 Adulteration (FSIS, Kristen Booze, 4/27) Baraka Bakery and Grocery, a Nashville, Tenn. retail firm, is recalling an undetermined amount of ground beef products that may be adulterated with E. coli O157:H7, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced today.

Foster Poultry Farms Recalls Frozen Ready-To-Eat Breaded Chicken Patty Products Due to Possible Foreign Matter Contamination (FSIS, Kristen Booze, 4/27) Foster Poultry Farms, a Farmerville, La. establishment, is recalling approximately 131,880 pounds of frozen, ready-to-eat breaded chicken patty products that may be contaminated with foreign materials, specifically plastic, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced today.

PURE Bioscience Receives USDA Permission Letter and FDA FCN Acknowledgement Letter. (Yahoo Finance, Business Wire, 4/27) PURE Bioscience, Inc. (OTCQB: PURE), creator of the patented non-toxic silver dihydrogen citrate (SDC) antimicrobial, announced that the Company has received two required key regulatory notifications on the Company's path to commercialize PURE Control® as a superior raw poultry processing aid into the +\$350m US market.

Memphis Company Recalls Ham Over Listeria Concerns (Daily Hornet, Ray Simon, 4/27) The hickory smoked and BBQ ham items were packaged on Jan. 16, according to a recall notice issued Tuesday by the U.S. Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). Affected products include: 14-lb. vacuum-sealed packages containing "FINEBERG'S Finest Danish Brand BBQ Flavored Ham" with Sell by date 03/26/2017 and case code 17016. 30.6-lb. boxes containing 2 vacuum-sealed packages of "Holly Brand hickory smoked fully cooked HAM" with case code 17016.

Chicken patty products recalled after plastic material discovery (Food Safety News, News Desk, 4/28) Foster Poultry Farms in Farmerville, LA, has recalled 131,880 pounds of frozen, ready-to-eat breaded chicken patty

products that may be contaminated with foreign materials, specifically plastic, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS).

Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion

Nutrition Corner: Use SuperTracker tool to learn more about food ingredients (Sunday Dispatch, Allison Larose, 4/27) Do you have a family recipe that has been passed down for generations and are wondering what the nutrition facts are for it but don’t have a way to find out? Or maybe you just want to check the facts on something you’ve created on your own. SuperTracker is the answer. It can be found on the www.choosemyplate.gov under the ‘Online Tools’ tab. From there, you can create your own account and get started. ... SuperTracker works like the “MyFitnessPal” app and provides you with a customized plan of how much of each food group you should consume each day based on your needs. It is an easy way to keep track of your calorie intake as well as physical activity. It even has more tools like a Food-A-Pedia that allows you access to nutritional information on over 8,000 foods.

MyPlate Initiative makes healthy eating easy (HometownFocus.us, 4/28) GRAND RAPIDS – Grand Itasca launched the MyPlate Initiative in the clinic in 2013. This program ensures that all children receive a portioned meal plate at their two- or three-year-old well child visit. The portioned MyPlate is made of durable plastic and has proportioned sections especially for young children to make it simple for little one to understand how to eat healthy by including major food groups at meals. They each come with a 16-page parent-child activities book that introduces the basics of healthy eating.

DPH and DNREC Share Updated Federal Fish Consumption Guidelines for Pregnant Women and Children (Delaware.gov, Department of Health & Social Services, 4/27) DOVER – Many of us have heard that eating fish is a key part of a healthy diet. But how much should we eat and are there risks to pregnant women and children? In January, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued updated advice regarding fish consumption that applies to fish and shellfish caught commercially and sold in U.S. retail outlets. ... The advice recommends two to three servings of lower-mercury fish per week, or 8 to 12 ounces. The new advice is consistent with the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Hijacking Healthy: The Convoluted World of Food Labeling (The Epoch Times, Conan Milner, 4/27) Healthy food—it seems like such a basic concept. But interpretations vary widely. ... Federal regulators’ current definition of healthy was created during the low-fat craze of the 1990s and reflects the scientific understanding of that time. However, the Kind bar debate has prompted the FDA to reconsider its interpretation of the word. In September 2016, the agency announced it had begun revamping its definition based on the updated nutrition science and dietary recommendations contained in the 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

The good, the bad and the confusing: sugar and your health (News Enterprise, Dr. Jeff Mason, 4/27) Since 1990, the rate of obesity among adults nationwide has increased over 150 percent. In California, 24 percent of adults are obese, according to United Health Foundation’s America’s Health Rankings 2016 report. In recent years, there have been questions about carbohydrates and sugar as contributing factors to obesity. ... So how much sugar is acceptable? There are no current recommendations for limiting natural sugar found in fruits, vegetables and dairy products. However, the World Health Organization and Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend adults and children reduce their consumption of added sugar to less than 10 percent of their total daily calorie intake.

Foreign Agricultural Service

Brazil Minister Backs Tariff to Curb U.S. Ethanol Imports (Reuters, Anthony Boadle and Marcelo Teixeira, 4/27) Agriculture Minister Blairo Maggi has asked Brazil's foreign trade council to impose tariffs on ethanol imports following a surge in shipments from the United States, an official said on Thursday, a move that could

stir trade tensions with the Trump administration. Brazil is the main market for U.S. exports of corn ethanol which have swelled in recent months to fill a gap left by falling domestic output, as cane farmers in the South American country diverted more of their crop to making sugar because of high prices. Ethanol imports from the United States increased fivefold to a record 720 million liters in the first quarter - worth some \$363 million, according to official trade data. Most of that went to ports in northeastern Brazil, where ethanol producers are leading calls for the imposition of a 20 percent tariff.

North Dakota Companies, Officials Return from Trade Mission to Peru (AG Week, 4/27) North Dakota companies are returning from a trade mission to Peru today, led by Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring, and focused on the state's pulse exports. Four North Dakota companies traveled to Lima on April 23 to promote their beans, peas, chickpeas and lentils to Peruvian buyers during tours, meetings and the inaugural North Dakota-Peru "Better for You Food Ingredients" Conference and Exhibition. Trade mission organizers included the North Dakota Trade Office and BusinessHub, a boutique consulting firm with headquarters in Santiago, Chile, and an office in Lima that specializes in assisting foreign companies with expansion into the Latin American market. The Northern Crops Institute, North Dakota Department of Agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agriculture Service's Lima Office assisted in creating a successful mission.

Food and Nutrition Service

Wary immigrants in Georgia drop food stamps (Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Jeremy Redmon & Craig Schneider, 4/27) Significantly fewer immigrants have been signing up for food stamps at the Latin American Association in Atlanta since Donald Trump became president in January, including the parents of U.S. citizen children. The Buckhead Christian Ministry — which feeds and clothes needy families — has also seen substantially fewer Hispanic clients this year. And the adult caregivers for a pair of unaccompanied Central American children declined to register for food stamps this year, according to Catholic Charities Atlanta. Both adults were in the country without authorization. Whether they are here legally or illegally, some immigrants are saying they have been spooked by a political climate they see as hostile, and they are thinking twice about applying for food stamps.

Maine Seeks Modification to USDA SNAP (Food Stamp) Benefits (National Law Review, 4/28) USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also colloquially known as the "Food Stamps" Program. SNAP, through State Agency partners, offers nutrition assistance to more than 47 million eligible, low-income individuals and families. Under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (the Act) and corresponding SNAP regulations, states have little room to modify eligibility standards or otherwise dictate what foods may be purchased with SNAP benefits.

A new twist on an old crime: Flipping food stamps hits social media (WRIC-TV, Kerri O'Brien, 4/27) It's an old scam flipping food stamps for cash. But 8News has uncovered the hustle is now happening on social media. Go to Facebook or Twitter and type in "food stamps for sale" and you might be shocked by how many people are openly trying to trade in taxpayer-funded benefits for cash. In one post, a Facebook user is offering half price for their food stamps. Another Twitter user blatantly tweets "who got food stamps for sale?" 8News also found a Richmonder who posted on Facebook, "who got food stamps? I got 80 maybe a 100 to spend."

Rural Development

Habitat dedicates a Virginia home (Mesabi Daily News, Angie Riebe, 4/27) The lot for the home was donated by the City of Virginia, funded in partnership with United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development Section 502 Direct Loan Program dollars, and generous donations from the community, Thompson said. Section 502 assists low-income applicants obtain decent and safe housing in rural areas. The donation of the lot "was a boost for us," Thompson said. "The City has been a wonderful partner with our program."

April 29th Renovation Alliance Holds 18th Annual Community Renovation Day (Roanoke Star, staff, 4/27)

Overall, Renovation Alliance will rebuild 38 homes with help from more than 600 volunteers in April and May. All projects are made possible with funding from USDA Rural Development and Community Development Block Grants and local sponsors including the Bank of North Carolina, Roanoke Valley REALTORS Association, the Roanoke Housing and Redevelopment Authority, and AEP.

Programs can help first-time homebuyers (Tribune News Service, Rachel Hartman, 4/28) The homebuyer assistance program of U.S. Department of Agriculture focuses on residences in certain rural areas. And you don't need to purchase or run a farm to be eligible. Through this setup, the USDA guarantees the loan. There may be no down payment required, and the loan payments are fixed. Applicants with a credit score of 620 or higher typically receive streamlined processing.

National Agricultural Statistics Service

South Florida's shrinking agriculture industry fights to stay in the game (Miami Herald, Monique O. Madan, 4/27) The bright crimson tomatoes wilted in the South Florida heat, then rotted right on the vine. It had been weeks since anyone ordered tomatoes from Sal Finocchiaro's farm outside Miami, forcing him to hire workers to pick thousands of them, throw them in the soil and run over them with a tractor. In 2012, Miami-Dade's agriculture industry saw \$604 million in sales compared to \$661 million in 2007, according to the most recent Census data.

Extension program brings life lessons to classrooms (The Grand Island Independent, Robert Pore, 4/27) As part of the Nebraska Extension School Enrichment Program, elementary students in Hall County are learning lessons on where the food on their plates comes from. Hall County Extension assistant Melinda Vlieger is in her fourth year of conducting an embryology project with local schools. On Thursday, she was at Newell Elementary and Shoemaker Elementary candling eggs with kindergartners. In March, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service, all laying hens in Nebraska totaled 8.42 million, which was down from 8.74 million the previous year.

Kansas growers watch for freeze damage in wheat (High Plains Journal, Jennifer M. Latzke, 4/27) It's late April in Kansas, and that can only signal one worry for wheat farmers—a late freeze event. The National Agricultural Statistics Service reported the Kansas wheat crop, as of April 23, was ahead of schedule, with 82 percent of the crop at the jointing stage; that's ahead of the five-year average of 70 percent. Wheat in far southeast Kansas was reported to be flowering, with 25 percent of the Kansas crop headed.

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USDA Clips

Friday, June 5, 2020

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Top Stories

[THRIVE Innovation Series – USDA Innovation Imperative \(AgWired, 6/5\) U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue joined SVG Ventures CEO John Hartnett today in a virtual \(Zoom\) fireside chat to discuss USDA’s Agriculture Innovation Agenda and the current impact of coronavirus on American agriculture. The conversation is part of the THRIVE Innovation Series. This one focuses on USDA’s new Innovation Imperative and how it will shape the future of food and agriculture.](#)

[USDA wants EPA to allow the use of already-purchased dicamba \(Brownfield Ag News, 6/4\)](#) The Secretary of Agriculture wants the EPA to work with farmers who have dicamba products for this growing season. Sonny Perdue issued a statement Thursday encouraging the EPA to use any available flexibilities so producers can continue using already-purchased dicamba products, calling them a critical tool for American farmers to combat weeds resistant to many other herbicides, in fields that are already planted. Perdue says farmers have spent hard-earned money on these previously allowed crop protection tools, and that the USDA stands ready to assist its federal partners in meeting that goal. The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals decided Wednesday night to immediately vacate the EPA’s Dicamba registrations for products

from Bayer's XtendiMax, BASF's Engenia and Corteva's FeXapan. Perdue says USDA re-affirms its support for EPA's science-based process for assessing and managing ecological risks, balanced against the agricultural and societal benefits.

Kids could go hungry this summer with school lunch programs in peril (The Washington Post, 6/4) Anti-hunger advocates are warning that children won't have access to the food they need during the summer months unless the Trump administration loosens rules for school meal programs. On Thursday, the School Nutrition Association, a national organization of school nutrition professionals, called on the U.S. Agriculture Department to extend the coronavirus emergency feeding provisions that allow school meals for all students at no charge through the end of the 2020-2021 school year. "USDA must act to preserve [school meal] programs, which play a critical role in the public health response to the pandemic and combatting chronic child hunger," the organization's leaders wrote in a letter to Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue.

Four poultry executives charged in chicken price fixing plot (BBC, 6/4) A federal grand jury in Colorado has charged four executives from two US poultry companies with conspiracy for chicken price-fixing. The leaders of the Pilgrim's Pride and Claxton Poultry companies were indicted on Wednesday for a years-long plot to rig bids and elevate costs. Prosecutors say they worked to raise prices for chicken sold to restaurants and stores from at least 2012 to 2017. The chiefs face up to 10 years in prison and a \$1M fine. The case stems from a Justice Department antitrust investigation into anticompetitive conduct in the poultry industry. Pilgrim's CEO Jayson Penn and former vice-president Roger Austin, along with Claxton president Mikell Fries and vice-president Scott Brady are now the first to be charged in the agency's price fixing investigation. Pilgrim's Pride is one of the largest chicken producers in the US, taking in more than 17% of the American consumer poultry market.

McKinney Remains Confident Phase One Still Gets Done (Hoosier Ag Today, 6/4) Who knows? Truly, who knows what is going to happen with China?" That question was posed by Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs Ted McKinney on a webinar with Indiana corn and soybean growers Thursday. Despite rising tensions between the US and China, McKinney remains bullish that the Phase One trade deal will still happen for a few reasons. One being that China cares deeply about their image. "You need to remember that they signed a very sizeable agreement, on a very public stage in the East Room of the White House." Reason number two is that, "They really do like, even love, the quality, the safety, and, in many cases, the volumes of our products. And that includes a lot of stuff from Indiana," says McKinney. "I'm thinking of pork. In some cases poultry; mostly broilers, corn, soy, and all the derivatives thereof, ethanol for example. And they need our product. McKinney says reason number three is something that we won't read about because of the lack of a First Amendment there, "But they really, really need the U. S. business. They'd like to make sure they're getting their employees back to work, like we are, as a result of COVID."

International/National

Unemployment Rate Fell to 13.3% in May (The Wall Street Journal, 6/5) The May U.S. jobless rate fell to 13.3% and employers added 2.5 million jobs, early signs the labor market is mending after the coronavirus pandemic shut down parts of the economy nearly three months ago. "These improvements in the labor market reflected a limited resumption of economic activity that had been curtailed in March and April due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and efforts to contain it," the Labor Department said Friday in a release. The jobless rate fell from 14.7% a month earlier, which was the highest on records dating from 1948. A broader measure of unemployment—which includes part-time workers and those who gave up looking for jobs—fell to 21.2% from 22.8% a month earlier. The economy shed 22.1 million jobs combined in March and April but regained 2.5 million in May, the Labor Department said.

Esper sends some troops home after D.C. deployment (UPI, 6/4) The Department of Defense is returning some members of active duty units that had deployed to Washington, D.C., to their home bases, a senior Pentagon official said Thursday. The official told UPI the return of the remaining active duty service members will be "conditions-based." The official did not name the number of troops being removed from the capital, but Stars & Stripes reported that Esper sent about 700 soldiers with the 82nd Airborne Division back to Fort Bragg, N.C. Earlier this week, the military deployed 1,600 troops to the nation's capital to respond to police-brutality protests spurred by the death of Minneapolis man George Floyd. Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Wednesday that it was not yet necessary to invoke the Insurrection Act, which would allow the federal government to send troops to states in response to protests. It was Esper's first public comment on the matter. Earlier this week U.S. Rep. Adam Smith, D-Wash., demanded the Trump administration and Defense Department officials offer more detail about potential domestic deployments of the military, including a comment from Esper -- on a phone call recording that was leaked to The New York Times -- that National Guard forces needed to "dominate the battlespace" in cities.

Parts of US Await Tropical Storm Cristobal After Heavy Rain, Flooding in Mexico (Voice of America, 6/5) Tropical Storm Cristobal weakened overnight Thursday after dumping heavy rainfall and causing potentially deadly flooding in parts of Mexico. Campeche state Civil Protection Secretary Edgar Hernandez said the most affected municipalities were Hopelchen and Calakmul. He said Thursday evening that authorities could not yet give an assessment on damages but that more than 300 people reportedly sought temporary shelter. Meanwhile, the U.S.-based National Hurricane Center said the storm is expected to reenergize over the Gulf of Mexico on Friday on its way toward the United States. Forecasters anticipate the storm could become a menace for the U.S. Gulf Coast region by Sunday. Some people in St. Tammany Parish, in the state of Louisiana, were preparing sandbags Thursday in anticipation of Cristobal's arrival. Cristobal developed Tuesday from the remnants of Tropical Storm Amanda, which formed in the Pacific Ocean and caused severe flooding and landslides in Central America. At least 22 deaths have been reported in El Salvador and Guatemala because of the storm.

Navy vet Michael White back in US after release from Iran detention (Fox News, 6/5) U.S. Navy veteran Michael White arrived back in the U.S. early Friday after his release

from Iran following nearly two years of detention. White, 48, arrived at Dulles International Airport in Virginia, near Washington, on a flight from Zurich, where he had flown for a handover to U.S. authorities after being released by Iranian officials. White told Fox News he slept for a few hours on the trans-Atlantic flight after enjoying a steak dinner. President Trump welcomed White back to America in a Twitter message early Friday. "So great to have Michael home. Just arrived," the president wrote. "Very exciting. Thank you to Iran." A senior U.S. official told Fox News that as part of the deal to free White, the U.S. agreed to release an Iranian-American doctor, Majid Taheri, who served 16 months for violating American sanctions against Iran and was sentenced Thursday to time served.

Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services

\$90M program to support low-income families in Mississippi (Associated Press, 6/4)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced a new \$90 million program to reimburse families of Mississippi children who usually receive subsidized meals at school but missed out on the benefit due to the coronavirus pandemic. The program will provide assistance to families of approximately 340,980 students eligible for free or reduced-price meals at school, Mississippi Department of Human Services spokesman Danny Blanton said Wednesday.

1 in 4 Americans are skipping meals or relying on food donations during the coronavirus pandemic (CNBC, Megan Leonhardt, 6/4) ... Since February, 26% of Americans report they or a member of their household have gone without meals or relied on charities or government programs to obtain groceries, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation's May health tracking poll of over 1,100 U.S. adults. ... Americans who qualify can apply for SNAP through their state agency and the Families First Coronavirus Response Act passed by Congress in March did make it easier for states to be more flexible in granting aid. Eligibility requirements do vary by state, but typically your household has to be at or below 130% of the poverty line. For a family of three, that's a gross income of about \$27,700 a year.

USDA spends \$5 million on SNAP fraud investigation SD newspaper would have done for free (Food Safety News, Dan Flynn, 6/5) TA year ago the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in a 6-3 vote that USDA can keep secrets about its most costly program. It was last June that the Supreme Court denied the Sioux Falls Argus Leader's Freedom of Information Act request about the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP for marketing purposes. South Dakota's largest daily newspaper wanted to know where SNAP program recipients spent SNAP dollars, which use to be called Food Stamps. In a decade-long pursuit, the newspaper said it was investigating all-too-common Food Stamp fraud and needed access to the names and addresses of retailers participating in SNAP along with each store's annual redemption data.

SNAP benefits extended for June (Laredo Morning Times, 6/4) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food benefits have been extended. Governor Greg Abbott's office announced on Thursday via news release that the Texas Health and Human Services Commission will provide \$177 million in emergency SNAP benefits for June in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. SNAP households will see the additional amount on their Lone Star Cards by June 12.

Rural Development

USDA highlights programs to support rural housing (Times Journal, Staff, 06/04) U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Deputy Under Secretary Bette Brand today kicked off National Homeownership Month by highlighting USDA's ongoing role in supporting rural homeownership. President Trump issued a proclamation on May 29 recognizing June as National Homeownership Month.

Laurel, Montgomery, Pulaski, Others Get Millions in Federal Grants (36 WTVO, Steve Rogers, 06/04) Seven rural utilities will receive \$16.6 million in federal loans and grants for water improvement projects, Department of Agriculture Rural Development Kentucky State Director Hilda Legg announced Thursday.

Kingsland Council Approves Bond Issue for Water Projects (Cleveland County Herald, Staff, 06/03) Last July, the City of Kingsland was informed by the USDA's Department of Rural Development that it had been awarded a \$233,150 grant and a \$393,000 bond issue to install new digital water meters and make renovations to the Inside Kingsland Water Department water tower that will keep it compliance with state health regulations.

Foreign Agricultural Service

Pork: By the Numbers (National Hog Farmer, Ann Hess, 06/04) With COVID-19 causing pork processing facilities to pause production and slow line speeds, not all pork will make its way through the supply chain. Weaker expected economic growth and impacts of COVID-19 on foodservice demand are also expected to dampen the demand for pork. African swine fever is still causing disruption in pork production in Asia. According to the current USDA Foreign Agricultural Service Livestock and Poultry: World Markets and Trade report, the global pork production forecast for 2020 has been lowered 2% to 94.3 million tons due to reduced expectations for China where the industry struggles to recover from African swine fever. Global production is forecast 7% lower year-over-year, largely due to reduced output in China, Vietnam and Philippines, all countries affected by ASF. Production growth in the United States, Brazil and to a lesser extent the EU Customs Union offsets some of the declines in Asia, as recent strong export demand has encouraged producers to expand herds.

U.S. Soy Exports to China at 16-year Lows so Far in 2020 (Reuters, Karen Braun, 06/04) U.S. soybean exports had a dismal April performance and possibly an even worse showing in May as shipments to China remain historically low, but corn exports hit a one-year high in April and improved on those volumes last month... The U.S. Department of Agriculture last month predicted U.S. soybean exports in the 2019-20 marketing year ended Aug. 31 to fall 4% on the year to 1.675 billion bushels (45.6 million tonnes). That was down from the April projection of 1.775 billion. At the end of last month, exporters still had nearly 3 million tonnes of soybeans to sell to hit the agency's number. That is 18% above the recent five-year average but much more realistic when comparing unsold soybeans with USDA's previous export forecasts. Old-crop soybean sales were very healthy last month, topping 3 million tonnes, more than double the average of the past five Mays. That includes around 1.5 million tonnes to China. China's participation is going to be needed to continue the high selling pace over the next three months.

Farm Service Agency

FSA Expands Set-Aside Loan Provision for Customers Impacted by COVID-19 (Bladen Online, 6/05) USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will broaden the use of the Disaster Set-Aside (DSA) loan provision, normally used in the wake of natural disasters, to allow farmers with USDA farm loans who are affected by COVID-19, and are determined eligible, to have their next payment set aside. In some cases, FSA may also set aside a second payment for farmers who have already had one payment set aside because of a prior designated disaster. "This immediate change of the Set-Aside provision can provide some welcome financial relief to borrowers during this current crisis," said FSA Administrator Richard Fordyce. "FSA recognizes that some customers may need this option to improve their cash flow circumstances in response to the COVID-19 outbreak."

More than \$545 million Coronavirus Food Assistance Program payments paid out (WHSV, 6/04) The USDA Farm Service Agency, or FSA, has approved more than \$545 million in payments to agriculture producers who have applied for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program, or CFAP. According to a news release from the United States Department of Agriculture, the FSA received more than 86,000 applications for the relief program since May 26.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Cover crop trial seeks northern New Jersey farmers (American Agriculturist, 6/05) North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development is inviting farmers in northern New Jersey to participate in an innovative cover crop on-farm trial. RC&D is seeking 25 farmers with previous cover crop experience to commit to trying an advanced cover crop management practice during the spring of 2021 and 2022. Applications are open to farmers in Warren, Hunterdon, Sussex, Somerset and Morris counties.

Nebraska farmer pushes boundaries on N management (Nebraska Farmer, Tyler Harris, 6/05) Conventional wisdom dictates that for every bushel of corn produced per acre, it takes at least 1 pound of nitrogen. For the past 20-plus years, however, Tim Schmeekle has been challenging that wisdom — and with successful results. "We started years ago at about 1.1 pounds of nitrogen per bushel of corn. Then we dropped to 0.9 and thought we were doing really well," says Schmeekle, who farms near Gothenburg, Neb. "Then I dropped to 0.7 and then 0.65, and that was the year I had the best yields."

Risk Management Agency

Local producers now eligible to apply for financial assistance (Lakefield Standard, Staff, 6/04) Local agricultural producers can now apply for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program, which provides direct payments to offset effects of the coronavirus pandemic. The application and a payment calculator are now available online, and USDA's Farm Service Agency staff members are available via phone, fax and online tools to help producers complete applications. The agency set up a call center in order to simplify how it serves new customers across the nation.

Food Safety and Inspection Service

FSIS proposes regulation amendment to define yak as exotic animal (New Food Magazine, Sam Mehmet, 6/4) Amending the regulation aims to avoid disruption to the yak industry and the possible economic harm to producers if the agency stopped voluntarily inspecting yak. The US Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has proposed an amendment to its regulations to define yak and include it among "exotic animals" eligible for voluntary inspection and the USDA voluntary mark of inspection. Yak is currently not listed in the regulations as an exotic animal, but the agency has been providing voluntary inspection services for yak for many years. Amending the regulations would avoid the need for voluntarily inspections and aims to benefit the industry. FSIS will continue to voluntarily inspect yak during the rulemaking process.

National Agricultural Statistics Service

Corn planting 25 days ahead of 2019 (Star, 6/5) Wisconsin had 3.9 days suitable for fieldwork for the week ending May 31, 2020, according to the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service in cooperation with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Very warm and humid conditions marked the beginning of this week with highs rising into the 80s and 90s. Crop emergence and development jumped in response. Temperatures fell sharply for the latter half of the week as a cold front accompanied two days of heavy rain. Fieldwork progress stalled just as many farmers were wrapping up their spring plantings and starting to cut hay.

Mississippi: Drier Weather Helps Growers Catch Up on Planting (AgFax, 6/5) According to The U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service, 72% of the state's cotton crop had been planted by that date, with rice at 84% and soybeans at 78%. Nearly 50% of planted cotton, 62% of rice and 58% of soybeans had emerged. Almost all of the state's corn is in the ground, with 92% emerged. Trent Irby, soybean specialist with the Mississippi State University Extension Service, said warmer and drier conditions in May prompted some growers to plant soybeans in fields originally intended for corn. The USDA projected 1.85 million acres of soybeans would be planted in Mississippi this year, but Irby said the final state acreage will likely be more than initial estimates due to early weather challenges and changing markets.

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

New pet food protocol offers greater Chinese market access (Feedstuffs, 06/05) The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) issued a new protocol that paves the way for pet food manufacturers to expand access into the Chinese marketplace. APHIS created the protocol specifically for exporting U.S. pet food products to the Asian country, signaling a critical step forward in bringing the positive benefits of the U.S.-China Phase One trade agreement to bear, the American Feed Industry Assn. (AFIA) said.

USDA issues new protocol for pet food exports to China (Pet Food, Jordan Tyler, 06/04) Exporting pet food products to China is expected to become clearer and more streamlined thanks to a new protocol released by the US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). "For nearly a decade,

United States pet food manufacturers have been hamstrung in their ability to access the world's third largest pet population due to China's unclear and opaque requirements guiding how American-made pet food and treats could be imported," said Constance Cullman, president and chief executive officer of the American Feed Industry Association (AFIA).

2 new grizzly bear specialists hired (Billings Gazette, 06/04) Two new seasonal employees have been hired to help ranchers and others experiencing conflicts with grizzly bears in Montana. The new wildlife specialists will address threats posed by grizzlies in the Gravelly Range covering Madison and Beaverhead counties and the Northern Rocky Mountain Front covering Glacier, Teton, and Pondera counties. Grizzly bears in Montana are emerging from their dens, and conflicts have begun. There have been 20 confirmed livestock depredations this calendar year. The new positions are part of a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

USDA to spray Johnson County gypsy moth infestation in mid June (Johnson City Press, 06/05) The "Slow the Spread" program will be working in Johnson County later this month to target gypsy moth infestation in the easternmost part of Tennessee. As part of a national effort, the Forest Service and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry plan to make aerial treatments. Low-flying aircraft will apply the treatment to affected areas. The flights are conducted only under suitable weather conditions, but with favorable weather, the entire project area could be completed in a single day sometime during the week of June 15.

Homeland Security

Weekend severe weather, isolated tornadoes to threaten US/Canada border

(Accuweather, Alex Sosnowski, 6/5) On the heels of widespread thunderstorms that rattled several areas of the United States late in the week, an outbreak of severe thunderstorms is poised to strike portions of the northern Plains and southern Canada this weekend. The combination of a storm moving onshore in the Pacific Northwest and a strong disturbance at the jet stream height of the atmosphere, the level at which jets usually cruise, could cause thunderstorms to erupt from portions of the northern Rockies to the adjacent High Plains in Wyoming, Montana, western Nebraska and the Dakotas. The stormy weather could unfold as early as Friday night. The storms will erupt on the northern rim of building heat to the south, and the main threat from severe weather will come during Saturday afternoon and night as strong winds aloft develop over an area where temperatures and humidity levels will surge. Winds could become strong enough to knock over trees and 18-wheelers, and hail could grow large enough to break windows and destroy vehicles. The threat of severe thunderstorms, including isolated tornadoes, will continue farther to the east over southern Manitoba, the eastern part of the Dakotas and Minnesota on Sunday.

Russia declares state of emergency in Siberia after oil spill (UPI, Daniel Uria, 6/4)

Russian President Vladimir Putin declared a state of emergency for a region in northern Siberia after oil spilled from a power plant into a river. A fuel tank at the plant in Norilsk ruptured on Friday, leaking 20,000 tons of diesel fuel into the nearby Ambarnaya River, contaminating portions of the waterway as far as 7 miles away from the site. The plant's parent company, Norilsk Nickel, said it believes thawing

permafrost caused one of the tank's pillars to collapse. Permafrost thawing is linked to climate change and has caused issues including damage to roads and homes as well as disruptions to herding and agriculture throughout Siberia. Greenpeace Russia issued a statement describing the incident as the largest oil spill in the history of the Russian Arctic, comparing it to the Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989. The Russian Investigative Committee opened a criminal inquiry into the spill and detained the plant's manager, Vyacheslav Starostin. Putin said he would ask investigators to look into the spill and assess how officials responded.

NYC Calmer As Buffalo Police Draw Ire For Protester Injury (Associated Press, Jake Seiner, 6/5) The latest night of protests in New York City sparked by the death of George Floyd at the hands of police was markedly calmer, while video of a police officer appearing to shove an elderly protester who falls and cracks his head in Buffalo drew widespread condemnation. Video from WFBO showed a Buffalo police officer appearing to push the 75-year-old man who walked up to police clearing Niagara Square around the 8 p.m. curfew Thursday. The man falls straight backward and hits his head on the pavement, with blood leaking out as officers walk past. The video quickly went viral on social media, spurring outrage. Buffalo police initially said in a statement that a person “was injured when he tripped & fell,” WIVB-TV reported, but Capt. Jeff Rinaldo later told the TV station that an internal affairs investigation was opened. The police commissioner subsequently suspended two police officers without pay, Mayor Byron Brown said in a statement. The mayor of the western New York city, who expressed he was “deeply disturbed” by the video, said the unidentified man was in “stable but serious” condition at a hospital.

Firefighters injured in blast while battling fire aboard cargo ship (News 4 Jax, Nick Jones, 6/4) While battling a large fire aboard a cargo ship at Blount Island, the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department said an explosion occurred, injuring firefighters. According to Fire Chief Keith Powers, eight firefighters were injured in the explosion, and an additional firefighter was treated for heat exhaustion. During a news briefing at 10:15 p.m., Powers said the eight firefighters hurt in the blast were in stable condition. “It’s a tough situation and very dangerous -- that’s one of the most dangerous situations firefighters encounter is when they’re in a ship fire,” Powers said. Crews with the U.S. Coast Guard were seen in the river late at night spraying the ship with water along the exterior of the hull. According to Powers, the fire started on the seventh deck of the ship. Approximately 120 JFRD personnel were sent to battle the initial fire. The ship was loaded with automobiles. Firefighters closed the ship’s dampers to starve the fire of oxygen. At about 6:45 p.m., the explosion that injured the firefighters occurred.

Arson Suspect Held After Wildfire Briefly Threatens Homes (Associated Press, 6/5) A man suspected of setting a half-dozen spot fires in San Jose on Thursday was detained as firefighters worked to corral a blaze that briefly threatened homes, authorities said. The fires were reported at around 6 p.m. in the dry Santa Teresa foothills near a water treatment plant. They prompted evacuations of some homes but the evacuations were lifted Thursday night. No homes were damaged. An 80-acre blaze was about 20% contained and firefighters planned to stay overnight, fire officials said. A man was detained for questioning after reports that he was seen setting fires, authorities said.

Agricultural Marketing Service

Deepening the cash pool for fed cattle (Beef Magazine, 6/4) Cash fed cattle trade is thin and has been for a long while. Figure 20% to 25% of all fed cattle trade in the spot cash market, on average, over time and on a national basis. Those qualifiers are key; some weeks in some regions, the percentage of reported cash fed cattle trade is far less. Enough cash trade for adequate price discovery matters, of course, because the discovered cash price is typically the basis of alternative marketing arrangements (AMAs) for fed cattle, such as formulas. Cash prices are also a critical component to price discovery and validation across a wide swath of beef and cattle markets. Never mind that a futures market is busted unless cash prices of the underlying commodity converge with the futures price at contract expiration. Although debate continues over the sustained level of cash trade required to achieve effective price discovery within particular regions, few would argue against the value of more cash trade for that purpose.

Updates: ranchers selling beef locally across state lines (Beef Magazine, 6/4) The COVID-19 pandemic has likely caused a lot of dramatic changes in our industry that will impact our producers for months and years to come; however, one positive thing that came to light was a greater push for consumers to buy from ranchers. More competition in the marketplace, not less, is always a good thing, which is why I'm 100% on board with anything that allows ranchers to leverage more control and be price-makers not price-takers when it comes to selling their beef cattle.

U.S. price-fixing indictment showcases need for antitrust enforcement (The Poultry Site, 6/4) Four current and former executives at Pilgrim's Pride Corp and Claxton Poultry Farms were indicted today for colluding to inflate the prices of birds sold to grocery stores and restaurants. The latest of several price-fixing allegations against meat processors, the case highlights the need for greater antitrust enforcement and farmer protections, National Farmers Union (NFU) President Rob Larew said in a statement: "Price fixing in the agricultural industry is extremely harmful to everyone besides the companies who engage in this unethical practice. Ultimately, it means those companies pay farmers even less for their hard work while charging restaurants, grocery stores, and American consumers more for food. But price fixing is only a symptom of the much bigger problem of corporate consolidation. Companies are only able to employ anticompetitive business practices when they've amassed control over their respective industries; in this instance, just five companies control 60 percent of the chicken market in the United States. This level of market power unfortunately isn't unique to poultry; in fact, many other sectors, including beef and pork, are even more concentrated. Unsurprisingly, there have been allegations of price fixing against corporations in those industries as well. "While NFU wholeheartedly supports legal challenges to corrupt and unfair actions, there's a way to avoid this kind of behavior altogether: enforce antitrust policy; restore competition in the agricultural marketplace; reinstate the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration; and develop strong protections for farmers."

Your Organic Meat Might Not Actually Be Organic (Mother Jones, 6/4) If you've ever bought organic meat, you've noticed the hefty price tag: An organic chicken can cost more than twice a conventional one. For some shoppers, that upcharge is worth it—the circular green and white "USDA Organic" label guarantees that the meat comes from

an animal raised on feed that's grown without pesticides or chemical fertilizers. Or does it? Organic meat producers operate on impossibly tight margins, so many buy less expensive imported grain to feed their animals—and that's where things get murky. Lax federal control means that exporters can hire organic certifiers that will help them boost profits by looking the other way. The result is an influx of cheap, fraudulent products that are driving down prices and hurting American organic farmers who play by the rules.

Dairy researcher looks to improve feeding efficiency (Capital Press, 6/4) As a dairy farm adviser with the University of California Cooperative Extension, Jennifer Heguy conducts applied research to find solutions to real-world problems that producers face. She primarily works with dairies in the northern San Joaquin Valley, with an assigned territory of Merced, Stanislaus and San Joaquin counties. In recent years, her work has focused on looking at sorghum silage as a replacement for corn silage in years of water shortages. “Basically, this is how can farmers can best utilize sorghum silage and what are some best management practices to get the most out of the crop, in terms of feed quality,” she said. “I’ve also worked on some by-product projects recently, including a study looking at increased almond hull feeding rates and by-product utilization in California.”

Vermont loses 14 dairy farms amid pandemic (My Champlain Valley, 6/3) Many industries have been hit hard due to the pandemic, especially Vermont’s Dairy Industry. On Wednesday, farmers said COVID-19’s impacts have been devastating. Secretary of Agriculture Anson Tebbets said 14 farms have stopped milking. “This is a significant development. most of the farms that we lost were on the small to medium,” said Tebbets. Tebbets said losing just one small farm can have a big economic impact and he is hoping state aid will get to farmers ASAP. Recently, Governor Phil Scott proposed \$50 million in aid to the dairy industry. \$40 million would go to farmers and \$10 million would go to the processors. This money would come from the federal CARES act.

Retail dairy sales on the rise (Agri-Pulse, 6/3) As businesses closed their doors and stay-at-home orders were put in place, consumers purchased more dairy products, the National Milk Producers Federation says. According to reports by IRI — a consumer market research company — milk sales for the period from March 8 to March 22 were up 43% from last year, while butter doubled, yogurt rose 31%, ice cream grew 40% and cheese jumped 76%. Dairy sales fell from March 23 to May 17, but remained 25% higher than the previous year. While COVID-19 may have prompted an increase in the retail purchase of dairy products, sales to restaurants, schools and cafeterias have dropped, leading to reductions in forecast milk prices. The USDA monthly forecast for milk prices dropped from \$18.25 per hundredweight in March to \$14.35 per hundredweight in April. In May, it rose to \$14.55 per hundredweight.

Economic Research Service

How to Help Food Pantries Feed The Hungry Amid Protests (The Huffington Post, Amanda Balagur, 6/4) As food insecurity rises among wrecked supermarkets and coronavirus-caused unemployment, food pantries face greater challenges. Here's how you can help. To learn more about food insecurity in the United States and how you can contribute to those in need, HuffPost has put together a list of resources: The U.S.

Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service publishes data on food security, food and nutrition assistance and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Milk Findings May Help Infants Worldwide (Nebraska Ag Connection, Janos Zempleni, 6/4) Billions of people drink milk every day. In America, the average consumption of milk is about 146 pounds (17 gallons) per person per year (per 2018 data from USDA's Economic Research Service). Most importantly, milk is meant to be the sole source of nutrition for infants until age 6 months. Milk naturally contains infection-fighting properties. Commercial baby formula usually does not. Funding from USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture and other sponsors allowed me to explore an element of milk that could be used as a supplement in baby formula to boost nutrition and stave off infection. This same element can help balance your gut bacteria when you take antibiotics.

Growers in Turmoil After Court Bans Dicamba (E&ENews, Pamela King and Marc Heller, 6/4) Crop growers may no longer spray the weedkiller dicamba after a federal appeals court found that EPA "substantially understated" risks when it approved use of the chemical herbicide. Introduced into the United States in 1967, dicamba was initially applied ahead of the planting season to fight broadleaf weeds. That changed with the introduction of cotton and soybeans bred to resist it, and EPA approved "over-the-top" uses on the genetically engineered crops in 2016. Those crops, in turn, have seen a boom; the Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service said the use of dicamba-resistant seed grew 43% from 2016 to 2018.

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

\$4.8 Million Invested in Centers of Excellence (Farm Progress, 6/4) The National Institute of Food and Agriculture is investing \$4.8 million to support Centers of Excellence at 1890 Land-Grant Institutions in America. The investments in these institutions is made possible through the NIFA 1890 Centers of Excellence Grants program, funded through the FY 2019 Federal Appropriations Bill. Each of the following universities is awarded a \$1,600,000 grant: University of Maryland – Eastern Shore, Princess Anne, Maryland, for its Center of Excellence for International Engagement and Development; Tuskegee University – Tuskegee, Alabama, for its Center for Innovation and Sustainable Small Farms, Ranches, and Forestlands; and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University – Greensboro, North Carolina, for its Virtual Center to Motivate and Educate for Achievement.

MSU Research Team Receives Grant to Study Invasive Grass Management (MSU News Service, Reagan Colyer, 6/4) An interdisciplinary team of researchers from the Montana State University College of Agriculture received a grant to develop an integrated management framework for cheatgrass, an invasive species in Montana and a growing concern for agriculturalists in the Northern Rockies. The team, made up of professors Lisa Rew, Cathy Zabinski and Jane Mangold of the Department of Land Resources and Environmental Sciences; and Bok Sowell of the Department of Animal and Range Sciences, was awarded the three-year, \$350,000 grant by the Western Sustainable Agriculture, Research and Education program, which is overseen by USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. They will collaborate with Kyle Cutting of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Jim Berkey of The Nature Conservancy

nonprofit organization and local farmers and ranchers to study the impact of the invasive grass and how to best manage it in Montana.

15 Jobs That Qualify for Student Loan Repayment & Forgiveness Programs (Money Crasher, 6/4) Student loan debt can be overwhelming. That's a huge burden on new graduates just starting out in their careers. Fortunately, there are over 100 federal and state-based programs that offer help with repayment, including forgiveness, cancellation, and loan repayment programs (LRPs) specific to your chosen career. For example, USDA offers a repayment assistance program for veterinarians. The Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program pays up to \$75,000 toward your student loans, dispersed in amounts of \$25,000 per year over the course of your service. In exchange, you must work as a vet for 3 years in a region designated by USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) as a shortage area. One of the great benefits of this program is that, unlike many other LRPs, you can use this money toward private as well as federal student loan debt. NIFA only grants awards to a limited number of applicants. Also, the primary focus of the program is on veterinary medicine for livestock raised for food.

USDA, Other Groups Shift HLB Research from Lab to Grove (Ag Web, Chris Koger, 6/3) USDA and other groups have invested nearly \$47 million in research over the past six years through the Huanglongbing Multiagency Coordination Group. The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and others in the group, known as HLB MAC, are focused on research and development projects to give citrus growers a way to fight HLB (a.k.a. citrus greening). The disease damages citrus, making it unmarketable. Projects have focused on controlling the Asian citrus psyllid, infected tree therapies, technology to protect new plantings, and ways to detect the disease earlier. This year, the group is focusing on "shovel-ready" projects that are ready to move from the lab to the grove. HLB MAC will announce funding decisions on projects in early July. APHIS is currently working with USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the Agricultural Research Service to establish funding opportunities that will support long-term innovation and combatting citrus greening disease.



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Top Stories

Trump administration to move USDA researchers to Kansas City area (POLITICO, Ryan McCrimmon, 6.13) Perdue said in announcing the new home of the Economic Research Service and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture on Thursday that the move would bring the research agencies closer to major farming regions, improve customer service and save taxpayer dollars — about \$20 million per year over 15 years. But many employees at ERS, who conduct research into areas such as climate change, nutrition and the farm economy, and at NIFA, who arrange federal grants for agricultural research institutions, have told POLITICO they believe the move is rooted in politics... "This agriculture talent pool, in addition to multiple land-grant and research universities within driving distance, provides access to a stable labor force for the future," he added. The department's announcement did not mention a specific location within the Kansas City area, and it was unclear if a lease had been secured. USDA has argued since the relocation proposal was first announced that the high cost of living in the Washington, D.C., area hinders recruitment and retention at the agencies... In announcing the pick, USDA backed down on another element of its plan that had drawn pushback from lawmakers — moving ERS within the department's organizational structure so that it would fall under the Office of the Chief Economist.

The agency will remain under the department's Research, Education, and Economics mission area.

Hundreds of USDA jobs headed to KC after 'united effort' by Kansas and Missouri (Kansas City Star, Bryan Lowry, 6.13.19) A two-state proposal from Kansas and Missouri beat out 135 other bids to become new headquarters for the Economic Research Service (ERS) and National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), two of the USDA's principal research agencies. It's a major win for policymakers in both states, who worked closely on a collaborative bid, and a sign that the long-term border tensions on economic development may be easing. "It was a united effort, so that really helped," Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kansas, the Senate Agriculture chairman, said earlier in the week before the USDA officially selected Kansas City over other finalists, locations in North Carolina and Indiana... "If I'm a farmer in Livingston County or a rancher in Miami County, I'm thrilled today because the agencies that have a direct impact on my livelihood are going to be located somewhere in the 435 loop, not in the Beltway in Washington D.C.," Cowden said. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue informed employees at the agencies of the move Thursday morning. He said the relocation will save the USDA \$300 million over 15 years and that state and local governments had offered \$26 million in incentives to move to the region. The savings would be steered into agricultural research, Perdue said.

Employees turn their back on Agriculture secretary over being relocated to Kansas City (CNN, Sam Fossom, 6.13.19) Perdue announced earlier this morning that the Economic Research Service, which provides research and statistical analysis for lawmakers, and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, which allocates federal research funding, will be relocated to Kansas City from Washington, D.C. -- the final announcement in a process that began last year. The moment of solidarity comes after both agencies -- ERS last month and NIFA just this week -- voted overwhelmingly to unionize to push back against the move, which they view as politically driven... Kevin Hunt, acting vice president of the ERS Union, condemned the move as "cold-hearted" and that it "highlights his disregard for the rights and well-being of employees." "Secretary Perdue continually speaks of transparency and communicating to employees but has failed on both fronts," Hunt said. The announcement included a cost benefit analysis report that says the agency will save \$300 million over a 15-year period.

USDA research agencies will move to Kansas City region, Perdue announces (Washington Post, Ben Guarino, 6.13.19) Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue unveiled a plan to relocate the agencies, without specifying a destination, in August 2018. Perdue describes the decision as a cost-saving measure and has said it would bring them closer to their "stakeholders" in farming regions. Nearly 140 communities applied to host the agencies... Current employees, congressional Democrats and a bipartisan coalition of former USDA leaders warn the move, more than 900 miles from D.C., would devastate the two agencies. NIFA unionized earlier this week, and ERS unionized in May in the face of the decision and union officials have promised to fight the move. "The announcement today should be met with great skepticism that Secretary Perdue has the best interests of either federal employees or American agriculture in mind," said Kevin Hunt, acting vice president of American Federation of Government Employees Local 3403, which represents ERS employees... Gale

Buchanan, USDA chief scientist under George W. Bush, and Catherine E. Woteki, chief scientist in the Obama administration, predicted the relocation would set ERS back “five to 10 years” due to a loss of specialized employees, as they wrote in a 2018 letter to Congress signed by dozens of agricultural leaders...Economists and other ERS researchers who make conclusions from that data are likely to be reassigned to Kansas City, according to this analysis. The USDA secretary’s office disputed this analysis. “Of the 76 ERS positions staying in the National Capitol Region, over half of these positions perform core research functions,” said Meghan Rodgers, a USDA spokeswoman, in an email.

Kansas City selected as new home for two USDA labs: What that means for Missouri (Missouri Times, Alisha Shurt, 6/13) A joint bid between Kansas and Missouri has lured two United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) facilities to the Kansas City region, bringing with it hundreds of federal jobs. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue announced Thursday the Economic Research Service (ERS), a statistical agency, and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), which funds cutting-edge agricultural science, will be moved to Kansas City — but did not specify a location on either the Kansas or Missouri side. “Missouri agriculture has unrivaled diversity, access to cutting-edge research at our land grant universities, and a thriving agribusiness environment,” Gov. Mike Parson said. “By choosing a location close to their farmer-constituent base, these offices will remain rooted in agriculture and, as a result, will be better able to make decisions that serve American agriculture well.” “Although moving these two agencies to anywhere in the Midwest would have been beneficial for America’s heartland, we are honored and excited they will now call the Kansas City area home,” Missouri Director of Agriculture Chris Chinn said. “This is a move that will mutually benefit the agriculture industry and the agencies – creating a stronger future for American agriculture.”

Sens. Moran, Blunt, Roberts, Hawley Applaud Kansas City Selection for New ERS & NIFA Location (KTIC, 6/13) U.S. Senators Jerry Moran (R-Kan.), Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), Pat Roberts (R-Kan.) and Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) today applauded U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue’s selection of the Kansas City area as the new location for the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Economic Research Service (ERS) and National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). “After months of advocating to Secretary Perdue that NIFA and ERS ought to be relocated to the Kansas City area, I’m thrilled that USDA has selected Kansas City to house these critical research agencies,” said Sen. Moran. “The animal health corridor, stretching from Manhattan, Kansas to Columbia, Missouri, is the largest concentration of animal health companies in the world, and Kansas is also the home of the National Bio and Agro-defense Facility – and today’s decision further bolsters Kansas City’s status as a national leader in the ag industry. It is always positive when our government can operate outside of Washington and closer to the people it serves, and I am certain that the decision to relocate NIFA and ERS to Kansas City is a good one. I look forward to helping welcome these USDA agencies and employees to Kansas City.”

Agriculture Dept. Announces Plan to Move Economists to Kansas City Region (The New York Times, Alan Rappaport, 6/13) The Agriculture Department announced on Thursday that it planned to relocate two scientific divisions to the Kansas City region from Washington, despite resistance from career staff members and concern that the

move will erode the quality of research at the agency. “The Kansas City region has proven itself to be a hub for all things agriculture and is a booming city in America’s heartland,” Sonny Perdue, the agriculture secretary, said on Thursday. The move follows a nearly yearlong process to find a new home for the divisions. Plans for the relocation have generated a backlash from employees who have been fearful about their jobs being moved and who have speculated that the Trump administration is trying to stifle research that at times has clashed with its political agenda. “Certainly, Congress can do what Congress does, and we will respect that,” Mr. Perdue said. “We obviously hope that Congress will recognize that this is a legitimate executive function.” He added that the Agriculture Department does not “try to tell Congress how to run their business, and hopefully we will be allowed to complete this move with minimal disruption.”

USDA moving two agencies to KC area seen as positive for some, concerning for others (WDAF-TV, Sherae Honeycutt, 6/13) Hundreds of jobs are coming to Kansas City with the announcement Thursday that the USDA will relocate two of its offices to the metro. U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue said more than 150 locations showed interest, but it was Kansas City's quality of life and work with other federal agencies that made it the perfect choice. "You had some tough competition there, but the quality of life and all the attributes of Kansas City came to bare, both of your states and a region as a whole came and presented a united front being a home to these two agencies for USDA," Perdue said. "At the end, I think we made the right decision, and we're looking forward to having these folks join you good folks in Kansas City." The move comes out of a USDA Cost Benefit Analysis, which they say will save the department nearly \$300 million over a 15-year lease term. The majority of the money would come from employment costs and rent for \$20 million a year. Perdue said that money will allow more funding and research toward rural prosperity and agricultural competitiveness. The secretary said President Donald Trump supports the decision and puts agriculture as a top priority. "He just wants us to do a good job for our farmers," Perdue said. "We're convinced this is the best way we can serve our constituents going forward. We think it will help us to attract world class labor PHD economists to the regions to help us make the best decisions, data-driven facts based decisions going forward."

Pelosi names members of key trade working group (Politico, Jake Sherman, 6/13) House Ways and Means Chairman Richard Neal (D-Mass.) will lead the House Democrats' Trade Working Group, a task force charged with negotiating with the Trump administration to overhaul elements of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement. The Democratic members were appointed by Speaker Nancy Pelosi and are divided into four subgroups: drug pricing, labor, environment and enforcement. Enforcement is the thorniest of issues, as Pelosi has made clear the Trump administration needs to reopen trade negotiations with Canada and Mexico to exact concessions. Pelosi controls the fate of the agreement, which the White House calls its top legislative priority, and has not committed to a floor vote. The working group is expected to negotiate with U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer.

USMCA is good for Florida’s farmers | Opinion (Tallahassee Democrat, Sonny Perdue, 6/13) Since the inception of NAFTA 25 years ago, agricultural trade between our three countries has boomed — U.S. exports to Canada and Mexico increased

approximately 300% and our imports increased almost 500%, benefiting producers and consumers on both sides of our borders. Let me give you some data on Florida's agricultural output. Over the past 10 years under NAFTA, we have seen a 20% increase in vegetable operations and a 47% increase in non-citrus operations. Net farm income grew 37% during that period. On my first day as secretary, President Trump promised he'd fight for better deals for American farmers – USMCA is proof of that. Our farmers, ranchers and producers have an abundance of the highest quality products they want to sell around the globe. President Trump is laying the foundation for a stronger farm economy through USMCA and other free and fair trade deals. When President Trump mentioned the possibility of withdrawing from NAFTA, the universal hue and cry from agriculture was "do no harm." Not only has he done that, he negotiated a better agreement on almost every front.

International/National

Uganda: Three new Ebola cases confirmed (UPI, Darryl Coote, 6/14) A day after a second person in Uganda died from Ebola, the Ministry of Health said it had three more suspected cases of the disease and the number of people who may have come into contact with the virus jumped from eight to 27. Disclosed on its website, the ministry said it has no more confirmed cases of Ebola, but it has three suspected cases "not related to deceased." The two people who died -- a 5-year-old Congolese boy and his 50-year-old grandmother -- had entered the country June 9 seeking medical help with other family members. Five family members who entered the country with the victims have seen been repatriated to the Democratic Republic where they have five family members who have been confirmed to be infected with the disease, the ministry said.

Flood alerts in and around Lincoln as wet weather continues (The Lincolnite, Joseph Verney, 6/14) Four flood alerts are in place for Lincoln and the surrounding areas on Friday morning, with even more across the county. There has been heavy rainfall across Lincolnshire over the last three days so the water courses in the city of Lincoln are now rising. This could lead to flooding of low lying land and roads close to the river. River levels are expected to remain high for Lincoln watercourses throughout the next few days. Forecasts indicate that flooding to properties isn't likely, so flood warnings are not expected to be issued. River levels are being monitored and staff are in checking for blockages and clearing weedcreens.

Severe weather erupted around the region Thursday night, with a tornado touching down in New Jersey (The Morning Call, Stephanie Sigafos, 6/14) A warning from the National Weather Service forecast office in Mount Holly sounded anything but ominous Thursday night. Around 5:46 p.m., forecasters said radar showed a line of storms containing gusty winds targeting southeast Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey. Then came the tornado. Video of a clear funnel with some small debris being lofted confirmed a twister touched down in Mullica Hill, Gloucester County, NJ. Its strength and path will be determined by a survey of the area today, the NWS said. 6ABC meteorologist Adam Joseph also confirmed on his Facebook page Deptford and Weynonah had similar videos of funnel clouds sent in by viewers. No injuries were reported, the station said.

Michigan prosecutors dismiss all criminal charges in Flint water investigation (NBC News, Minyvonne Burke, 6/13) Prosecutors investigating the deadly lead-poisoned water crisis in Flint, Michigan, dropped criminal charges against eight people, including the former head of the state's health department. The Department of Attorney General said in a press release on Thursday that the decision to dismiss the charges is "not a determination of any defendant's criminal responsibility" and stems from concerns over how the Office of Special Counsel handled the investigation. According to officials, the OSC "entered into agreements that gave private law firms" a role in deciding what information would be turned over to law enforcement. The eight criminal cases involved various crimes, including involuntary manslaughter, for failing to alert the public about an outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in 2014 and 2015 that killed at least 12 people.

Agricultural Marketing Service

Christmas tree promotion program to continue (Morning Ag Clips, 6/13) The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced that Christmas tree producers and importers recently voted to continue their federal research and promotion program. In the referendum held April 22 through May 17, 2019, 55 percent of Christmas tree producers and importers who voted were in favor of continuing the program. Christmas tree producers and importers who were subject to assessments during the period of September 1, 2018 through March 15, 2019, were eligible to participate in the referendum. The Christmas tree research and promotion program was developed to strengthen the position of Christmas trees in the marketplace, to maintain and expand markets for Christmas trees and to carry out programs, plans, and projects designed to provide maximum benefits to the Christmas tree industry within the United States. The Christmas Tree Promotion Board has administered the program since 2015.

Agricultural Research Service

Pairwise Partners with Universities, USDA and PSI to Study Opportunities for Berry Improvements Through Gene Editing (Yahoo Finance, 6/13/19) Pairwise, a growing agriculture and food company, today announced a unique public-private partnership to learn more about the diversity of berries and advance opportunities to offer healthier, more sustainable varieties. The partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), several leading academic institutions and Plant Sciences, Inc. (PSI), an agricultural research company, will study Rubus, or caneberry crops, and identify natural variation for future breeding and gene editing opportunities...

Researchers discover interactions between plant and insect-infecting viruses (Phys, 6/13/19) Aphids and the plant viruses they transmit cause billions of dollars in crop damage around the world every year. Researchers in Michelle Heck's lab at the USDA Agricultural Research Service and Boyce Thompson Institute are examining the relationship at the molecular level, which could lead to new methods for controlling the pests.

The Eastern South Dakota Soil and Water Research Farm 25th annual field day (Brookings Register, 6/13/19) "The Hidden Benefits of Cover Crops," is set for Tuesday, June 18, at 3714 Western Ave. (1.5 miles north of the Highway 14 bypass on Western Avenue). Registration starts at 9:30 a.m., with a tour at 10 a.m. and a meal at

noon. For more information, call the USDA ARS North Central Agricultural Research Laboratory at 693-3241.

Low vitamin K levels linked to mobility limitation and disability in older adults (7th Space, 6/13/19) Low levels of circulating vitamin K are linked to increased risk of mobility limitation and disability in older adults, identifying a new factor to consider for maintaining mobility and independence in older age, according to a study led by researchers at the Jean Mayer USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University. The study, published online in May in advance of print in the *Journal of Gerontology: Medical Sciences*, is the first to evaluate the association between biomarkers of vitamin K status and the onset of mobility limitation and disability in older adults.

Food Safety and Inspection Service

Is U.S. Pork Safe to Eat? (Farm Journal's Pork, Jennifer Shike, 6/13) There's no question that the messages can be confusing, depending on where you get your news. I think it's more important than ever that we stay ahead of the curve in terms of instilling consumer confidence in pork. After visiting with numerous experts, scientists, doctors and veterinarians, the fact remains: U.S. pork is safe to eat. That's the most important message we can share – pork is safe to eat.

You Can't Have Your Meat and Eat It Too: "Big Ag's" Conflicting Positions About Regulating New Food Technologies (Justia Verdict, Jareb Gleckel, 6/14) Two issues quickly rose as the legal "hot topics" concerning cell-based meat: which agency—the Food and Drug Administration ("FDA") or the Department of Agriculture ("USDA")—would regulate these products, and how the agency would require companies to label them. "Big Ag" industry organizations, which profit from raising and slaughtering animals, proposed the following: the USDA should regulate cell-based meat, and that agency should restrict cell-based meat companies' use of words like "meat" on their labels. To give due credit, from the perspective of Big Ag's economic interests, both positions make a good deal of sense. Legally, however, (removing due credit) the two positions are logically incompatible. The recent outcome of the jurisdictional debates should therefore color the impending labeling decisions.

Food and Nutrition Service

Virginia school district buys food truck to provide students with free meals during summer (ABC News, Julia Jacobo, 6/13) A Virginia school district has purchased a food truck to serve free lunches to students over the summer. Danville Public Schools bought the food truck, which costs \$42,000, because of its "desire to feed our children as much as we can," Phillip Gardner, Danville Public Schools director of child nutrition, told ABC News. "We've got the realistic notion that during the summer, students may not be getting the nutrition they need," Gardner said... The first week, about 600 meals were served out of the truck, feeding an average of 140 to 160 students per day, Gardner said. The district has been providing summer meals to students since 2014, Gardner said. In the past, students could go to three different schools in the district to receive free meals. The food truck is now the fourth location, Gardner said.

Students are being shamed and punished over lunch debt, and it may take legislation to stop it (Boston Globe, Kara Baskin, 6/13) Four years ago, Stephanie Rosenquist put a \$10.80 check in the mail to cover the overdue balance on her son's school meal payments. She didn't think twice about it until he came home from his Oxford elementary school upset and hungry. He had ordered a school breakfast, made it to the front of the line, and watched as a cafeteria worker tossed the food into the trash upon discovering the negative balance. Rosenquist was incensed, and her son, she said, was humiliated in front of his classmates. "There's punishment and humiliation for a child who has no knowledge — and doesn't need to have knowledge — of my finances or know that mommy's behind on a bill. It's none of his business, and he shouldn't suffer for it," Rosenquist said. "Why should my child starve or be embarrassed over 10 dollars and 80 cents? Let's pretend I owe a thousand dollars. Does my child deserve to starve or be embarrassed?"

The surprising truth about extreme poverty (MSN, Dylan Matthews, 6/13) In discussions of poverty in the US, child poverty tends to get most of the focus. And I think there are good reasons for that. While the US has more poverty than other rich countries in general, it is a particular outlier on child poverty. In 2016, the US poverty rate for children (defined as the share living on less than half the median income) was 20.9 percent, compared to 14.2 percent in Canada, 11.8 percent in the UK, and a tiny 8.9 percent in Sweden. We're just about the only rich country without some kind of per-child cash grant distributed to most parents. But lately I've started thinking that the US poverty discussion focuses a little too much around kids and not enough around childless adults. I want to be clear: I still think offering a simple cash allowance to all parents, like almost all other rich countries do, would be very good policy... I'm just saying that families with kids aren't the only ones — and perhaps aren't even the primary ones — in need of additional assistance.

Foreign Agricultural Service

Corn Pest Could Increase Exports to China (The Western Producer, Sean Pratt, 06/13)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently issued a special update report from its office in Beijing that said fall armyworm has been discovered in China. The crop-eating pest was first detected in Yunnan province in January and has since rapidly spread across 15 provinces and 222,300 acres of farmland in southern China. It feeds on more than 80 species of plants, but corn and sugar cane are the crops that have been most heavily affected in China. Chinese pest experts expect it will reach the North China Plain and northeastern China later this month. That is the country's corn belt, where more than two-thirds of the crop is grown. China is forecast to produce 254 million tonnes of corn in 2019-20, ranking second behind the 382 million tonnes forecast for the United States. Dave Harwood, technical services manager with Corteva Agriscience, has witnessed fall armyworm infestations in corn fields in Brazil, Mexico and the southern U.S. "It is quite a damaging pest of corn," he said. "It's not to be dismissed as a rare, trivial pest." The insect recently caused extensive damage in Africa, South Asia and Southeast Asia, where corn yield losses were 20 to 50 percent, according to the USDA.

The Increasingly Complicated Trade Fight Implications - US Ag Trade Officials Unable To Shed Light On Trump Tweets About Mexico Buying More US Ag Goods (Progressive Farmer/DTN, 06/13) USDA Undersecretary for Trade and Foreign

Agricultural Affairs Ted McKinney and U.S. chief Ag Trade Negotiator Gregg Doud were both asked during a Tuesday hearing about the statements by President Donald Trump about "big" and "immediate" Mexican buys of U.S. farm commodities in the wake of the U.S.-Mexico agreement on immigration last week. "I do not have any details to that regard," Doud said. McKinney indicated he had nothing to add except that "we have got things in line if they are serious about wanting to make some immediate purchases." He later suggested Trump was referring to a return to normal growth in U.S.-Mexico trade without tariffs in the way. "We do anticipate exactly what the president said in terms of restored, new, reinvigorated sales to Mexico," the McKinney noted. Rep. Angie Craig, D-Minn., started the line of questions and said it "seems odd that the president has made this announcement and has yet to tell" two of his chief agriculture and trade officials.

NGFA Board, Staff Appointed to U.S. Ag Trade Advisory Committee (World Grain, Holly Demaree-Saddler, 06/14) Two National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA) leaders were appointed to the U.S. Foreign Agricultural Service's Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee for Trade in Grains, Feed, Oilseeds and Planting Seeds. John Fletcher, NGFA board and executive committee member, general manager at Central Missouri AGRIService LLC, and Max Fisher, NGFA director of economics and government relations, joined the committee appointed by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue and U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer. The Agricultural Technical Advisory Committees offer technical advice and information about specific commodities and products. The Grains, Feed, Oilseeds, and Planting Seeds committee will provide advice and information regarding trade issues that affect both domestic and foreign production and trade concerning grains, feed, oilseeds and planting seeds. Appointees will serve until June 15, 2023.

President Trump Signs Biotech Executive Order, Simplifying Approval Path (High Plains Journal, Jennifer M. Latzke, 06/13) On June 11, President Donald Trump signed the Modernizing the Regulatory Framework for Agricultural Biotechnology Products Executive Order, EO 138. The order calls for regulatory streamlining in order to allow ag biotech to get to the market efficiently and safely using consistent, transparent and science-based regulations. "Our current regulatory framework has impeded innovation instead of facilitating it," said U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue. "We need all the tools in the toolbox to meet the challenge of feeding everyone now and into the future—if we do not put these safe biotechnology advances to work here at home, our competitors in other nations will." The U.S.-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement specifically addresses agricultural biotechnology, the first time a trade agreement addresses biotech. This includes all biotechnologies, from traditional rDNA technology to genome editing, according to the USDA.

Some Details of Trade Aid 2.0 Revealed, First Payments in August (ProAg/Agrimarketing, 06/13) Lawmakers peppered USDA Undersecretary Ted McKinney with questions about the Trump administration's new trade relief program for farmers bruised by retaliatory tariffs, and McKinney revealed some new details about the package. Here's what we now know: The bean-counting begins: The \$16 billion package is currently under review by the Office of Management and Budget, McKinney said at a House Agriculture Committee hearing on trade issues. MA readers will recall that Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue blamed OMB's "bean-counters" –

including Director Mick Mulvaney, who is now Trump's acting chief of staff – for holding up last year's trade aid for weeks. Designing the direct aid: McKinney indicated the new payments to farmers could be based on multiple years of production levels. "We have changed how that's calculated. It's not just a one-year look back, it's looking back over several years," he said at the hearing. That would fit with USDA's efforts to avoid influencing farmers' decisions about which crops to grow.

U.S. Grains Council Joins USDA Agricultural Trade Mission to Colombia (Farm Forum, 06/13) U.S. Grains Council leadership recently met with market players in the Colombia feed, poultry and livestock sectors — including industry associations and agricultural ministry officials — to express support for one of the top markets for U.S. coarse grains and related products. The meetings took place as part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Trade Mission (ATM) to Bogota, Colombia, June 4 to 7. Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs Ted McKinney led the mission, which included one of the largest ATM delegations ever organized by the USDA to develop stronger ties with one of the top U.S. agricultural trading partners in the Western Hemisphere. "Since the United States entered into a free trade agreement with Colombia in 2012, agricultural export growth has been robust," said USGC Chairman Jim Stitzlein. "During ATM discussions, the Council emphasized our willingness to maintain this important Colombian market for corn and co-products."

Forest Service

Wildfires are 'burning longer' and 'harder to control,' officials warn (CNN, 6/13) US Forest Service and Interior Department officials warned senators Thursday that the upcoming wildfire season would be worse than last year's, which left dozens of people dead in California, saying that "if we're lucky, this year will simply be a challenging one."

Nestlé is still taking national forest water for its Arrowhead label, with feds' help (Palm Springs Desert Sun, 6/13) Nestlé, the world's largest bottled water company, continues to take millions of gallons of free water from the San Bernardino National Forest two hours east of Los Angeles, 17 months after California regulators told them they had no right to much of what they'd taken in the past. And federal officials are helping them do it, despite concluding Nestlé is drying up springs and streams and damaging a watershed.

Forest Service plan would make it easier to log national forests (CNN, 6/13) Federal officials are proposing major shifts to the way land management decisions are made -- changes that would make it easier to log national forests. The US Forest Service is proposing to expand the types and scope of work that can be completed without an environmental review. The agency says those are time consuming and the rule "reduces redundancy" when it undertakes projects similar to those it has studied before and make the agency more nimble when mitigating threats such as catastrophic wildfires and addressing "the worsening conditions" on national forests.

Stabilizing the secure rural schools program (Post Register, 6/13) "Ninety-seven percent of land in Custer County is state and federally owned and exempt from taxation," explained Custer County Commissioner and Idaho Association of Counties Public Lands Committee Chairman Wayne Butts. "Counties and schools like ours can't

operate without federal forest payments.” This is the crux of why addressing the expiration of the Secine Rural Schools program is important.

Federal judge’s ruling could ease Tongass roadbuilding (KRBD, 6/13) Alaska’s attorney general is hailing a federal judge’s decision that could ease roadbuilding throughout Southeast Alaska. “This decision is a great win for the State and for Southeast Alaska in particular,” Attorney General Kevin Clarkson said in a statement. “This allows the State to connect the communities of Southeast Alaska without unnecessary Forest Service restrictions such as the Roadless Rule.”

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Spotted lanternfly: New York’s newest insect invasion (Hudson Valley One, Frances Marion Platt, 06/13) If you live in or frequently visit a rural area of New York, chances are that you’re already on the alert for signs of our state’s better-known invasive insect pests: the hemlock wooly adelgid, the emerald ash borer, the venerable gypsy moth. Well, the Department of Environmental Conservation has recently announced a new six-legged peril to look out for: the spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*), a most unwelcome immigrant from East Asia. First discovered in the US in 2014, the spotted lanternfly (SLF) has already established a destructive presence in eastern Pennsylvania and spread into New Jersey, Delaware and Virginia. This critter is a brilliant hitchhiker, laying its inconspicuous egg masses on nearly anything from tree trunks and rocks to firewood – a known hazard to transport on account of the ash borer – and even vehicles.

USDA Restricts Pork from Mongolia Due to ASF (Pork Business, Jennifer Shike, 06/12) The USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) added Mongolia to the list of regions they consider to be affected with African swine fever (ASF) on June 10. “We took this action on Jan. 29, 2019, immediately after the disease was confirmed in Mongolia and are now publishing a notice in the regulations,” USDA said in a statement. Most swine products were already restricted from this region based on Mongolia’s classical swine fever, foot-and-mouth disease and swine vesicular disease status. APHIS is now restricting imports of pork and pork products, including casings, from Mongolia in order to prevent ASF from entering the U.S.

Campaign Against the Spread of Invasive Species Returns (WIPR, 06/11) With the motto “Declare This. Stop That.” USDA APHIS encourages travelers to declare agricultural items when they travel to the continental United States. Pests that are common in Puerto Rico, such as certain fruit flies, can cause serious damage to agricultural crops in the continental United States. Without knowing it, travelers can bring these invasive pests to the mainland when they pack fruits, vegetables, flowers, and souvenirs made of plants. “For us it is very important to raise awareness that hungry pests wreak havoc on the environment, ecosystems, and the economy, endangering agricultural exports and jobs,” said Leyinska U. Wiscovitch, State Plant Health Director, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. (Story online in Spanish)

Rural Development

Houghton approves budget (Daily Mining Gazette, Garrett Neese, 6/14) The city also budgeted for water and sewer rate hikes that would take effect mid-year. The rate increases, the first since 2012, will go toward debt load on the second phase of sewer

and water upgrades in the city as part of a \$4 million USDA Rural Development project in 2020-21.

What can the USDA Rural Development Office do for you? Well, they're glad you asked ... (My Buckhannon, Monica Zalaznick, 6/13) Kris Warner, state director of Rural Development for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, said the USDA offers over 49 programs, with about 50 employees and 11 offices in West Virginia.

USDA issues renewable energy grants to 12 Maine businesses (Lewiston Sun Journal, J. Craig Anderson, 6/13) "Maine business owners are the champions of economic development in rural communities, and these grants will support jobs and help ensure our rural communities are prosperous places to live," Bette Brand, the rural business and cooperative service administrator in the Rural Development office, said in the release.

AEC announces this morning, \$1.14 million USDA Rural Development Loan for Jefferson City (Citizen Tribune, staff, 6/13) The Federal government awarded the \$1.14 million through the USDA's Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant program to the Jefferson City Industrial Development Board. The only avenue to obtain this type of loan is through an electric cooperative. The interest-free loan is repayable to Appalachian Electric Cooperative over a 10-year period with a one-year deferment. It will be augmented by additional financing of \$285,000 through AEC's Revolving Loan Fund.

USDA Celebrates Homeownership In Warsaw (Times-Union, staff, 6/13) At 11 a.m. June 20, local USDA representatives will plant a tree at a newly constructed home on West Point Drive, Warsaw, and present Melissa Huhn with a plaque at her home. Huhn and her family have been living in the home for the last two months. She used the USDA Direct Single-Family Housing Program to have this home built for her and her family.

National Agricultural Statistics Service

View from the national agricultural census (Greenfield Recorder, Claire Morenson, 06/13) Farmers across the nation are facing real challenges, including increasingly uncertain weather patterns due to climate change and the financial pressures of global competition. Sometimes, our understanding of these trends comes primarily from anecdotes — but every five years, the national Census of Agriculture gives us the statistical view. The Census of Agriculture is a behemoth of a study that aims to capture data from farms across the country, and which provides insights down to the county level in each state. The 2017 census was released in April, which provides an opportunity to take a big-picture look at agriculture in the country and our local region.

Kentucky Winter Wheat Forecast Up 32 Percent from 2018 (Kentucky Ag Connection, 06/13) Kentucky farmers expect to harvest 26.2 million bushels of winter wheat during 2019 according to the Kentucky field office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. The expected crop for 2019 would be up 32 percent from the previous year. The forecast was based on crop conditions as of June 1 and increased 3 percent from the May forecast. Growers expect a yield of 77.0 bushels per acre, up 11.0 bushels from 2018 and up 2.0 bushels from May. Farmers seeded 450,000 acres last fall with

340,000 acres to be harvested for grain. Acres for other uses totaled 110,000 acres and will be used as cover crop for tobacco or cut as silage or hay.

Cropping Options After Small Grain Harvest (Farms.com, Sjoerd Willem Duiker, 06/13) Winter barley and wheat and spring oat harvests are on the horizon. USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) shows that in 2018 there were 45,000 acres of winter barley, 195,000 acres of winter wheat, and 65,000 acres of barley planted in Pennsylvania. The NASS indicates that, in Pennsylvania, typical barley harvesting dates are between June 25-July 20, for wheat July 10-July 30, and for oats July 25-August 20. Many times, farmers just leave the land fallow after the harvest of these crops, but you have the opportunity to grow something that may create extra value for your operation. The options are double cropping soybeans, growing a cover crop to protect and improve soil and fix atmospheric nitrogen for next year's crop, or grow a summer annual forage for silage or grazing.

Severe hay shortage hitting Ohio farmers especially hard (Farm World, Doug Graves, 06/13) Ohio farmers are in the midst of a severe hay shortage largely driven by poor, wet weather conditions that started last summer. The price for a ton of high-quality dry hay nearly tripled over the past year, forcing some farmers to turn to less-nutritious and more expensive alternatives. According to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), there has also been a decrease in hay supply in recent years. As of May 1, 2018, hay stocks were down 33 percent from May 2017. With varying temperatures this past winter and spring, coupled with wet pasture conditions, livestock are using more energy, meaning they need higher-quality hay. High-quality hay, though, is scarce after a rough growing season in 2018 that included heavy rain and unpredictable weather.

Office of Homeland Security

US Says Iran Took Mine Off Tanker: Iran Denies Involvement (Associated Press, Jon Gambrell, 6/14) The U.S. military on Friday released a video it said shows Iran's Revolutionary Guard removing an unexploded limpet mine from one of the oil tankers targeted near the Strait of Hormuz, suggesting the Islamic Republic sought to remove evidence of its involvement from the scene. Iran denies being involved, accusing the U.S. instead of waging an "Iranophobic campaign" against it. The U.S. Navy rushed to assist the stricken vessels in the Gulf of Oman, off the coast of Iran, including one that was set ablaze Thursday by an explosion. The ships' operators offered no immediate explanation on who or what caused the damage against the Norwegian-owned MT Front Altair and the Japanese-owned Kokuka Courageous. Each was loaded with petroleum products, and the Front Altair burned for hours, sending up a column of thick, black smoke. While Iran has denied being involved in the attack, Tehran previously used mines against oil tankers in 1987 and 1988 in the "Tanker War," when the U.S. Navy escorted ships through the region.

Turkey says would retaliate against U.S. sanctions over Russian S-400s (Reuters, 6/14) Turkey will "take reciprocal steps" if the United States imposes sanctions over its purchase of Russian S-400 defenses, the Turkish foreign minister said on Friday, marking the latest step toward a standoff between the NATO allies. "If the United States takes any negative actions towards us, we will also take reciprocal steps," Mevlut Cavusoglu, the minister, said when asked about possible U.S. sanctions in an

interview broadcast on Turkish TV. Ankara and Washington have sparred publicly for months over Turkey's purchase of the S-400 missile systems, expected to be delivered as early as next month. Washington has said that would trigger U.S. sanctions and sent a letter warning that Ankara would be pulled out of the F-35 jet program.

Michigan prosecutors dismiss all criminal charges in Flint water investigation (NBC News, Minyvonne Burke, 6/13) Prosecutors investigating the deadly lead-poisoned water crisis in Flint, Michigan, dropped criminal charges against eight people, including the former head of the state's health department. The Department of Attorney General said in a press release on Thursday that the decision to dismiss the charges is "not a determination of any defendant's criminal responsibility" and stems from concerns over how the Office of Special Counsel handled the investigation. According to officials, the OSC "entered into agreements that gave private law firms" a role in deciding what information would be turned over to law enforcement. The eight criminal cases involved various crimes, including involuntary manslaughter, for failing to alert the public about an outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in 2014 and 2015 that killed at least 12 people.

Uganda: Three new Ebola cases confirmed (UPI, Darryl Coote, 6/14) A day after a second person in Uganda died from Ebola, the Ministry of Health said it had three more suspected cases of the disease and the number of people who may have come into contact with the virus jumped from eight to 27. Disclosed on its website, the ministry said it has no more confirmed cases of Ebola, but it has three suspected cases "not related to deceased." The two people who died -- a 5-year-old Congolese boy and his 50-year-old grandmother -- had entered the country June 9 seeking medical help with other family members. Five family members who entered the country with the victims have seen been repatriated to the Democratic Republic where they have five family members who have been confirmed to be infected with the disease, the ministry said.

Flood alerts in and around Lincoln as wet weather continues (The Lincolnite, Joseph Verney, 6/14) Four flood alerts are in place for Lincoln and the surrounding areas on Friday morning, with even more across the county. There has been heavy rainfall across Lincolnshire over the last three days so the water courses in the city of Lincoln are now rising. This could lead to flooding of low lying land and roads close to the river. River levels are expected to remain high for Lincoln watercourses throughout the next few days. Forecasts indicate that flooding to properties isn't likely, so flood warnings are not expected to be issued. River levels are being monitored and staff are in checking for blockages and clearing weedcreens.

Severe weather erupted around the region Thursday night, with a tornado touching down in New Jersey (The Morning Call, Stephanie Sigafos, 6/14) A warning from the National Weather Service forecast office in Mount Holly sounded anything but ominous Thursday night. Around 5:46 p.m., forecasters said radar showed a line of storms containing gusty winds targeting southeast Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey. Then came the tornado. Video of a clear funnel with some small debris being loffled confirmed a twister touched down in Mullica Hill, Gloucester County, NJ. Its strength and path will be determined by a survey of the area today, the NWS said. 6ABC meteorologist Adam Joseph also confirmed on his Facebook page Deptford and

Weynonah had similar videos of funnel clouds sent in by viewers. No injuries were reported, the station said.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

LSU AgCenter receives \$1.4M for nutrient runoff research (AgFax, Olivia McClure, 6/13) The Patrick F. Taylor Foundation has awarded a \$1.4 million grant to the LSU AgCenter to fund a four-year research project on reducing nutrient runoff from crop fields. The goal is to reduce nutrient runoff that contributes to hypoxia, or inadequate oxygen, in the Gulf of Mexico. Several partner agencies, including USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Louisiana Association of Conservation Districts will help disseminate information on the scientists' findings.

Special NRCS program sign up: cover crops for fallow fields in Minn. (Faribault Daily News, 6/13) The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service in Minnesota is offering a special Environmental Quality Incentives Program sign-up for farmers who couldn't plant their crops because of flooded or wet fields. This EQIP sign-up is an opportunity for farmers to plant a cover crop, which they could later cut for hay or graze. It provides an alternative to letting fields go fallow and uncovered. The deadline for sign-up is Friday, July 12.

Top 5 reasons to invest in cover crops on wet fields or prevented plant acres (Farm Forum, 6/13) The unfortunate scenario of consistent, excessive moisture events across South Dakota and many parts of the Midwest is causing some farmers to accept the fate of wet fields or prevented planting acres. However, this scenario leads to an ideal time to invest and begin rebuilding soil aggregates and structure for next year and beyond with cover crops. The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service presents the top 5 reasons why you (and your landowner) should invest in cover crops.

Conserving the sweetgrass tradition: Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe (YouTube, 6/13) To the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe of southeastern Massachusetts, sweetgrass is more than an ordinary-looking grass with a nice aroma. It's an important ceremonial and medicinal plant. In recent years, however, the tribe has been losing local access to this native Cape Cod plant. So, they teamed up with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's local field office and the agency's Plant Materials Center in Cape May, New Jersey, on a project to bring sweetgrass back by propagating it on the tribe's 39-acre farm in Mashpee, Massachusetts. (You Tube)

Farm Service Agency

Secretary Perdue announces new Dairy Margin Coverage signup begins June 17 (American Ag Radio Network, 6/13) U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today [Thursday] announced that signup begins June 17 for the new Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program, the cornerstone program of the dairy safety net that helps dairy producers manage the volatility of milk and feed prices, operated by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). The program provides coverage retroactive to January 1, 2019, with applicable payments following soon after enrollment. The Farm Bill also allows producers who participated in MPP-Dairy from 2014-2017 to receive a repayment or credit for part of the premiums paid into the program.

DMC feed cost formula adjusted to include ‘dairy-quality’ hay prices (Progressive Dairyman, Dave Natke, 6/13) Late changes in Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program calculations make the program even more attractive for dairy farmers. DMC sign-up begins June 17 at local USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices. Under the revised DMC program formula announced June 13, the feed cost will again use monthly average corn and soybean meal prices but will incorporate a 50 percent blend price for Premium and Supreme “dairy-quality” alfalfa hay more commonly used in dairy cow rations.

County payment speculation: MFP details remain vague (AgriNews, Tom C. Doran, 6/13) When the U.S. Department of Agriculture recently rolled out another Market Facilitation Program, officials kept their cards close to their vest and details since then continue to be kept under wrap. “They don’t want you making planting decisions based on those details. So, USDA Secretary Perdue has been very coy, and more information will be released after the final acreage reporting deadline July 15,” said Adam Nielsen, Illinois Farm Bureau director of national legislation and policy development. The county payment rates will be announced at a later date based on trade damage over two years and historic plantings.

Farm Bill expands crop insurance for young, veteran farmers (Crop Insurance America, 6/13) The future of farming depends on the next generation taking up the plow, so to speak. But the barriers to entry can be prohibitive—and prohibitively expensive. Thankfully, federal crop insurance provides a valuable safety net. Congress recognized the importance of supporting these farmers and took steps to increase their access to crop insurance with the 2018 Farm Bill. Legislators expanded premium discounts for USDA Risk Management Agency’s Whole Farm Revenue Protection policies to those with 10 years or less farming experience.



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Sent by feedback@oc.usda.gov

From: Preston, Warren - OCE

Sent: Tuesday, May 1, 2018 5:47 PM

To: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC; Green, Heidi - OSEC, Washington, DC; CLS1, SLC1 - OSEC, Washington, DC; Shuford, Campbell - OSEC, Washington, DC; Appleton, Brooke - OSEC, Washington DC; McKinney, Ted - OSEC, Washington, DC; Hafemeister, Jason - OSEC, Washington, DC; Northey, Bill - OSEC, Washington, DC; Ibach, Greg - OSEC, Washington, DC

CC: Johansson, Robert - OCE; Meyer, Seth - OCE

Subject: Weekly Weather and Commodity Developments for May 1, 2018

Attachments: Wkly Brf 05-1-18.pdf; Dashboard 05-01-18.pdf

Attached are the weekly brief and dashboard for 5/1.

Highlights on crop progress for the week ending 4/29:

Winter Wheat: Dry weather returned to the southern High Plains, following last week's brief respite from drought. Winter wheat was 70 and 35 percent headed, respectively, in Texas and Oklahoma. Wheat was headed in Kansas versus 24 percent on average.

Spring Wheat: Washington led the nation in planting at 78 percent complete.

Corn: Although rain lingered in the Ohio Valley, drier conditions encouraged fieldwork in other parts of the Midwest.

Soybeans: Planting was underway in most major Midwestern production areas, with fieldwork generally progressing at an average pace.

Sorghum: Sorghum was 81 percent planted in Texas, well ahead of the 5-year average (63 percent). Planting has not yet begun in Kansas.

Rice: Rice was 93 percent and 77 percent planted, respectively, in Louisiana and Texas.

2017

	NASS	April 29	April 22	5-Year Average
-- Percent --				
Winter Wheat Headed		19	13	30
Percent (Good-to-Excellent)		33	31	45
Spring Wheat Planted		10	3	36
Corn Planted		17	5	27
Emerged		3	NA	6
Soybeans Planted		5	2	5
Sorghum Planted		26	24	26
Rice Planted		55	49	57
Emerged		29	21	38
Cotton Planted		12	10	14

Slides 3, 7: The second storm in less than a week, which was mostly light, delivered much-needed rain across the southern Plains. Nonetheless, drought conditions persist, with 20.4% of the southern Plains in D3 or D4.

Slide 14: U.S. interest rates rose across the board with generally positive economic news. Rising interest rates depressed equities despite a raft of good earnings reports. The ten-year Treasury yield moved above 3% midweek, for the first time since early 2014.

- Slide 16: U.S. real GDP growth slowed in the first quarter, compared to the last quarter of 2017, rising 2.3%, better than expected but below the 2.9% in the fourth quarter and the weakest growth in a year, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis.
- Slide 20: July corn futures finished the week 13 cents per bushel above the prior week's close, supported by continued dry conditions in the southern part of Brazil's second crop corn area and weather models portending a wetter weather pattern for the Corn Belt this week.
- Slides 29-32: U.S. outstanding sales (contracted but not yet delivered) are record large for this time of year. At the same time, new crop sales are also increasing. Sales for the 2018/19 crop include 490,000 mt sold to Argentina after an additional 120,000 sale on April 30. Much of what is classified as unknown destinations can be largely assumed as Chinese.
- Slide 36: The weekly hog price averaged \$2.30 per cwt higher than the prior week. Despite upward momentum in the cash hog markets in recent weeks, the pork cutout has failed to keep pace resulting in weaker packer margins in recent weeks.

Warren P. Preston, PhD
Deputy Chief Economist
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Chief Economist
202-720-5955

Crile, Jeffrey (CTR) - OGC, Washington, DC

Subject: Meeting with Mr. Collins, Executive Vice President at DuPont and Ms. Krysta Harden, Vice President of Public Policy and Chief Sustainability Officer

Subject: Meeting with Mr. Collins, Executive Vice President at DuPont and Ms. Krysta Harden, Vice President of Public Policy and Chief Sustainability Officer

Start: Thu 7/20/2017 2:30 PM

End: Thu 7/20/2017 3:00 PM

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Meeting organizer

Organizer: SP3.PS3

Required Attendees: SP3.PS3; Rebeckah - OSEC Washington DC Adcock (Rebeckah.Adcock@osec.usda.gov)

Optional Attendees: Taylor Crowe (Taylor.Crowe@osec.usda.gov)

Crile, Jeffrey (CTR) - OGC, Washington, DC

Subject: Call with Noel White, CEO of Tyson Foods

Subject: Call with Noel White, CEO of Tyson Foods

Start: Mon 11/18/2019 8:45 AM

End: Mon 11/18/2019 9:00 AM

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Meeting organizer

Organizer: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC

Required Attendees: Dudley - OSEC Washington DC Hoskins (Dudley.Hoskins@osec.usda.gov); Walker, Lorren - OSEC, Washington, DC; Rollins, Blake - OSEC, Washington, DC; Young, Joby - OSEC, Washington, DC; Hailey - OSEC Washington DC Ghee (Hailey.Ghee@osec.usda.gov); Preston, Warren - OCE

Optional Attendees: Ghee, Hailey - OSEC, Washington, DC

The Secretary will call (b) (6)

The CEO wants to update Secretary Perdue on their Finney County beef plant

Crile, Jeffrey (CTR) - OGC, Washington, DC

Subject: The Secretary places call to David MacLennan, Chairman and CEO of Cargill

Subject: The Secretary places call to David MacLennan, Chairman and CEO of Cargill

Start: Thu 5/18/2017 11:00 AM

End: Thu 5/18/2017 11:15 AM

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Meeting organizer

Organizer: SP3.PS3

Required Attendees: SP3.PS3; Hafemeister, Jason - OSEC, Washington, DC

Optional Attendees: Pick, Rachel - OSEC, Washington, DC

Crile, Jeffrey (CTR) - OGC, Washington, DC

Subject: Call with Brett Begemann, Monsanto COO and President

Subject: Call with Brett Begemann, Monsanto COO and President

Start: Thu 6/7/2018 2:45 PM

End: Thu 6/7/2018 3:00 PM

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Meeting organizer

Organizer: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC

Required Attendees: Raymond.Starling@osec.usda.gov; Hailey - OSEC Washington DC Ghee (Hailey.Ghee@osec.usda.gov); YOUNG, BENJAMIN, JR. - OGC

From: Mary Jo Tomalewski
Sent: Sunday, March 4, 2018 2:07 PM
To: Appleton, Brooke - OSEC, Washington DC
CC: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: RE: Tuesday Night Dinner
Attachments: WB18 Tuesday Dinner List.pdf

Thank you, Brooke.

Also, I'm attaching the list of attendees for dinner that evening.

Mary Jo Tomalewski
Executive Assistant to the President & CEO
CropLife America
Direct (b) (6)
Mobile (b) (6)
Email mjtomalewski@croplifeamerica.org

From: Appleton, Brooke - OSEC, Washington DC [mailto:Brooke.Appleton@osec.usda.gov]
Sent: Thursday, March 1, 2018 2:12 PM
To: Mary Jo Tomalewski <mjtomalewski@croplifeamerica.org>; Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC <Stephen.Censky@osec.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Tuesday Night Dinner

Hi Mary Jo,

I will check with the Deputy to see if his wife would like to attend. In case Allie didn't mention, I plan to attend with the Deputy.

Thank you,

Brooke

From: Mary Jo Tomalewski [mailto:mjtomalewski@croplifeamerica.org]
Sent: Thursday, March 1, 2018 1:48 PM
To: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC <Stephen.Censky@osec.usda.gov>
Cc: Appleton, Brooke - OSEC, Washington DC <Brooke.Appleton@osec.usda.gov>
Subject: Tuesday Night Dinner

Steve,

Just wanted to make sure that Carmen is more than welcome to attend the dinner Tuesday night. Let me know if she will accompany you. I'm looking forward to seeing you!

MJ

Mary Jo Tomalewski

Executive Assistant to the President & CEO
CropLife America
1156 15th Street, NW
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Washington, DC 20005
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Email mjtomalewski@croplifeamerica.org
Web www.croplifeamerica.org



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Future Meetings

2018 Winter Board of Directors Meeting – March 5-7, Washington, DC
2018 Regulators Conference – April 25-27, Arlington, VA
2018 Annual Meeting – September 21-26, The Ritz-Carlton Amelia Island

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From: Ibach, Greg - OSEC, Washington, DC
Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2020 9:20 AM **Email aliases of former Secretary Perdue, Censky**
To: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC
CC: CLS1, SLC1 - OSEC, Washington, DC; Young, Joby - OSEC, Washington, DC; Rollins, Blake - OSEC, Washington, DC; Beal, Mary Dee - OSEC, Washington, DC; Hoskins, Dudley - OSEC, Washington, DC; Walker, Lorren - OSEC, Washington, DC; Crosswhite, Caleb - APHIS; Densel, Brock - AMS
Subject: Slides from Cargill depicting adjustments made to plants
Attachments: Using this PowerPoint template.pdf

Sir:

Cargill shared these slides that show the adjustments they have made in their plants to provide social distancing and decrease the risk of in plant transmission of the virus. It is my understanding that almost all plants have incorporated similar protections. JBS shared that their contract epidemiologist believes these adjustments have brought the likelihood of community transmission to very low levels. I found the slides useful in understanding the lengths to which the plants have gone to try to stay open.

I hope you can open these slides. I had some difficulty on my computer but I think Lorren made adjustments.



Greg Ibach
Under Secretary
Marketing & Regulatory Programs

United States Department of Agriculture
228-W Whitten Building
Office: 202-720-4256
Cell: (b) (6)
greg.ibach@osec.usda.gov

From: Gregg, Matthew - NASS

Sent: Thursday, April 4, 2019 3:37 PM

To: Adams, Kiki - RD, Washington, DC; Anderson, Gloria - NASS; Apodaca, Mark - NASS; Averill, Travis - NASS; Bailey, Jeff - NASS; Barnes, Kevin - NASS; Beach, Allie - OSEC, Washington, DC; Beckler, Dan - NASS; Beranek, Jeff - NASS; Boess, Bruce - NASS; Brown, Shirley - OCE; Brown, Tomasina - OC, Washington, DC; Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC; Chhipa, Fahmida - NASS; CloverAdams, Jamie - OSEC, Washington, DC; Combs, Bryan - NASS; Dorn, Tony - NASS; Drunasky, Lindsay - NASS; Gandy, Robert - OCE; Gibson, Fleming - NASS; Gregg, Matthew - NASS; Hall, Tina - NASS; Hamer, Hubert - NASS; Hawthorn, Chris - NASS; Hilliard, Phoebe - NASS; Holcomb, Rich - NASS; Hollis, Scott - NASS; Holmes, Annette - OCE; Honig, Lance - NASS; Hutchins, Scott - OSEC, Washington, DC; Jefferson, Leah - NASS; Johansson, Robert - OCE; Johnson, Jay - NASS; Joshua, Troy - NASS; Kerestes, Dan - NASS; King, Sue - NASS; Mcdaniel, Jody - NASS; McGovern, Pam - NASS; McKinney, Ted - OSEC, Washington, DC; Meyer, Christy - NASS; Meyer, Seth - OCE; Northey, Bill - OSEC, Washington, DC; Parsons, Joe - NASS; Payne, Brenda - NASS; Pendarvis, Sherrie - NASS; Pratts, Jorge Garcia - NASS; Prillaman, Anthony - NASS; Prusacki, Joseph - NASS; Quade, April - NASS; Quan, Peter - NASS; Rater, Barbara - NASS; Ray, Ricardo - NASS; Ray, Tanya - NASS; Riggins, Seth - NASS; Ross, Jackie - NASS; Shimmin, Scott - NASS; Snipe, Patricia - NASS; Starling, Raymond - OSEC, Washington, DC; Sullivan, Lauren - OSEC, Washington, DC; Swann, Wanda - DM; Thompson, Damon - OSEC; Thompson, Ron - NASS; Thorson, Travis - NASS; Toepper, Moriah - FPAC-BC, Washington, DC; Washington, Artina - NASS; Wells, Jay - NASS; Willbrand, Zhulieta - OSEC, Washington, DC; Young, Linda - NASS; Zarbough, Leigh - NASS

Subject: ASB Lockup Briefing: April 9, 2019

Good Afternoon,

- Deputy Secretary Stephen Censky is scheduled to sign the April 9, 2019 Crop Production and WASDE reports.
 - Rita Carreira from Cargill Cotton plans to attend the briefing.

Please contact me with any questions.

 Matt Gregg
 Special Assistant
 USDA - National Agricultural Statistics Service
 Methodology Division

(b) (6) (O) | (b) (6) (M)

From: Vaden, Stephen - OGC
Sent: Tuesday, May 29, 2018 2:31 PM
To: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC
CC: Green, Heidi - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: Bayer-Monsanto Merger approved by DOJ

Mr. Secretary:

(b)(5) Deliberative Process Attorney Client



(b)(5) Deliberative Process Attorney Client



Sent from my iPad

From: Young, Chris - OSEC, Washington, DC

Sent: Monday, August 7, 2017 4:52 PM

To: SP3.PS3

Subject: Dicamba

Attachments: Dicamba Drift Situation 2017 August 7_17.docx; ATT00001.txt

From: Green, Heidi - OSEC, Washington, DC
Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2017 7:59 AM
To: SP3.PS3
Subject: FW: Follow Up Background Paper for Bayer-Monsanto
Attachments: CFIUS Background Paper 9-5.pdf

With attachment



Heidi Green

Chief of Staff – Office of the Secretary

United States Department of Agriculture

Office: 202-720-0121

Cell: (b) (6)

From: Rich, Michawn - OC, Washington, DC
Sent: Wednesday, July 19, 2017 9:23 PM
To: SP3.PS3
CC: Green, Heidi - OSEC, Washington, DC; Young, Chris - OSEC, Washington, DC; Murtaugh, Tim - OC, Washington, DC
Subject: Fwd: Clovis, McKinney tapped for USDA undersecretary posts

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "POLITICO Pro" <politicoemail@politicopro.com>
Date: July 19, 2017 at 9:09:50 PM EDT
To: <michawn.rich@oc.usda.gov>
Subject: Clovis, McKinney tapped for USDA undersecretary posts
Reply-To: "POLITICO subscriptions" <reply-fe8a127876610d7f71-973840_HTML-796741254-1376319-0@politicoemail.com>

Clovis, McKinney tapped for USDA undersecretary posts

By Catherine Boudreau and John Lauinger

07/19/2017 09:06 PM EDT

President Donald Trump Wednesday evening announced the nominations of Sam Clovis to be USDA's chief scientist and Ted McKinney to be undersecretary for trade and foreign agricultural affairs.

Clovis, an Iowa academic who served as a co-chair of Trump's campaign and led USDA's transition effort, will take on the position of undersecretary for research, education and economics. Clovis' name surfacing in connection with the job sparked controversy well before the White House announced his appointment Wednesday, due to his [lack](#) of scientific credentials.

McKinney was on a list of [ag heavyweights](#) who could be tapped for jobs at Trump's USDA, but the newly created undersecretary post would require him to involve himself in foreign markets to a greater degree than he has in his previous career stops. He's spent most of his career working in corporate affairs for Dow AgroSciences and Elanco.

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, in a statement applauding the president's move, said Clovis has become "a trusted adviser and steady hand" at the USDA. He said McKinney will be a person "who wakes up every morning asking how we

can sell more American agricultural products in foreign markets." Both posts require Senate confirmation.

Earlier this month, following [news reports](#) citing the expected nomination of Clovis, the consumer advocacy organization Consumers Union [wrote](#) to Senate Agriculture Chairman [Pat Roberts](#) and ranking member [Debbie Stabenow](#), urging the panel to uphold the Senate tradition of confirming highly qualified scientists to the position, which plays an important role in overseeing food and agricultural research.

Clovis' work on Trump's campaign represents a qualification in the eyes of a president who places tremendous value on loyalty, but the Iowan, an economist, does not have a background in the natural sciences. He has a doctorate in public administration from the University of Alabama and taught economics at Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa. He also made a failed run for a U.S. Senate seat and hosted a talk radio show on KSCJ in Iowa.






Working in McKinney's favor are ties to Vice President Mike Pence, who named McKinney state ag chief while serving as Indiana's governor. Pence is playing a central role in staffing USDA, along with Perdue, whose ongoing reorganization of the department created the post for which McKinney is being nominated. The 2014 farm bill called for USDA to establish the position, to place additional emphasis on expanding exports.

Lobbyists representing farmers and ranchers in Washington have high expectations for McKinney should he be confirmed. Opening new overseas markets for agricultural products and reducing trade barriers are viewed as the main strategies for reversing a prolonged period of low commodity prices.

To view online:

<https://www.politicopro.com/trade/story/2017/07/mckinney-picked-for-usda-undersecretary-for-trade-159874>

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Yes, very	Somewhat	Neutral	Not really	Not at all

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POLITICOPRO

From: Vaden, Stephen - OGC, Washington, DC
Sent: Tuesday, April 2, 2019 6:26 PM
To: SP3.PS3 - OSEC, Washington, DC
CC: Starling, Raymond - OSEC, Washington, DC; Boswell, Kristi - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: Glyphosate litigation update

ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE; NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

Mr. Secretary,

(b)(5) Deliberative Process Attorney Client



Stephen



Stephen Alexander Vaden
General Counsel
Office of the General Counsel
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Suite 107W
Washington, DC 20250
☎ 202-720-3351 (Office)
✉ stephen.vaden@ogc.usda.gov

From: Ernie Shea
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2020 11:19 AM
To: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC
CC: Ray Gaesser
Subject: Introduction and inaugural meeting of SfL Senior Advisors
Attachments: SfL_ A New Vision for Co-Producing Food Security Sustainable Livelihoods and Ecosystems Services.docx.pdf; 2020.03.23 SfL Framework for FAO Priorities and Food System Summit Recommendations.pdf; SDG Panel_Advisors Bio Clips.docx.pdf

Hi Steve-

I see that you will be participating in tomorrow's FAO webinar on **Bold and transformative innovation for a more sustainable global agriculture**. We will be participating as well, via Howard Yana-Shapiro who is Co-Chairing SfL's new global SDG work program with AG Kawamura and Tom Lovejoy. Attached is some background material on our work in this arena along with bio clips of our new farmer envoys and Senior Advisors who will be helping us form and advance our positions. We'll be formally announcing this expanded global program later this week.

Stay well and safe.

Best regards,

Ernie

Ernie Shea
President
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1430 Front Avenue
Lutherville, MD 21093
eshea@sfdialogue.net
www.sfdialogue.net

(b) (6) (p)
(c)
410-616-9264 (f)

From: Jamie Alexander
Sent: Wednesday, December 4, 2019 10:09 AM
To: Perdue, Sonny - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: LAST CHANCE TO ENTER | The Radicle Challenge by Corteva at World Agri-Tech on March 16, 2020

Dear Sonny,

Start-ups have until this Friday December 6 to submit applications for this year's [Radicle Challenge by Corteva at World Agri-Tech](#), at the pre-summit Pitch Day. The winning company will receive \$250,000 investment and mentoring from Radicle Growth, as well as the opportunity to engage with Corteva technology leaders and present on stage during the World Agri-Tech summit in San Francisco on March 17-18.

[ENTRIES CLOSE FRIDAY DECEMBER 6 - APPLY NOW](#)

Six finalists will be chosen to pitch on March 16, 2020. All finalists will also be invited to attend the summit on March 17-18, and the winning company will present their solution as part of our Technology Showcase.

More than 1,500 senior agtech professionals from around the globe will join us in San Francisco - don't miss your chance to meet with and learn from the most innovative agribusinesses, investors and technology innovators trading today.

Good luck!

With best wishes,

Jamie Alexander
Senior Technology Scout - World Agri-Tech Innovation Series
jamie.alexander@rethinkevents.com
T: (b) (6)

With thanks to our Partners: BASF, Nutrien, Syngenta, UPL OpenAg, Valagro, Valley Irrigation, Winfield United, Agrinos, Arcadia Biosciences, Cambridge Consultants, Cooley, Decisive Farming, HTI, IN10T, Intelinair, Joyn Bio, Morrison & Foerster, Mosaic, OCP Group, Pairwise, Plant Response, Pontifax AgTech, Proagrica, Prospera, Trimble, Yamaha, Yara, EY, GroGuru

Hosted by: Rethink Events

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Rethink Events
2nd Floor, Intergen House
65-67 Western Road
Hove, BN3 2JQ
United Kingdom

From: Jay Vroom
Sent: Tuesday, July 10, 2018 3:42 PM
To: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC
CC: Mary Jo Tomalewski
Subject: Meeting Request
Attachments: 4 10 18 ESA FIFRA MOA Letter.pdf; 04b ESA FIFRA MOA Letter AFBF.pdf

Good afternoon, Steve!

As you are aware, a comprehensive proposal for regulatory streamlining / administrative improvements for the ESA / FIFRA problem was sent to four cabinet officers on April 10, in a letter signed by CropLife America, Defenders of Wildlife, and the American Soybean Association, among others (see **attached** letter). Subsequently, a similar letter was submitted by the American Farm Bureau Federation (also **attached**).

Since then, we have attempted to gain a follow-up meeting with those four cabinet officers to further discuss the letters, but we've found scheduling to be a challenge.

On further thought, we feel like getting this process started is important, and would ask if you and others at USDA would consider convening an initial meeting with our group? To that end, we would suggest the dates (and times) below to be available to meet:

- Monday, July 30
- Monday, August 6 (after 1:00p)
- Tuesday, August 7 – 2:00p or after
- Monday, August 20, after 1:00p

I have copied Mary Jo here, and she would be happy to work with your scheduling staff to get this on your calendar.

I look forward to hearing from you.
Jay

Jay Vroom

President & CEO

CropLife America

1156 15th Street, NW

Suite 400

Washington, DC 20005

Direct Dial (b) (6)

Main Switchboard (202) 296-1585

Mobile (b) (6)

Fax (202) 466-5832

Email vroom@croplifeamerica.org

Executive Assistant Mary Jo Tomalewski (mjtomalewski@croplifeamerica.org, 202.872.3849 o, 703.943.9705 m)

Web www.croplifeamerica.org

From: CLS1, SLC1 - OSEC, Washington, DC on behalf of Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC [Stephen.Censky@usda.gov]
Sent: Thursday, October 31, 2019 10:19 AM
To: Keeley Rana; Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC
CC: Susan Sadigova; Adams, Kiki - RD, Washington, DC; Tkacz, Kailee - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: RE: Invitation: Food Forever Solutions Summit on 12/3

Keeley,

Thank you so much for this invitation and please accept my apologies for the delay in responding as I've been leading an agricultural trade mission to West Africa.

I am very interested and am copying Kiki Adams of my staff on this note who is my Director of Scheduling and Policy Coordination. We will be back in touch with you as soon as possible.

Thanks and best regards,

Steve

Stephen L. Censky
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office 202-720-6052

From: Keeley Rana <keeley.rana@foreignpolicy.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2019 8:01 AM
To: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC <Stephen.Censky@usda.gov>
Cc: Susan Sadigova <susan.sadigova@foreignpolicy.com>
Subject: Invitation: Food Forever Solutions Summit on 12/3

Greetings from Foreign Policy magazine.

On behalf of our Publisher, Andrew Sollinger, I would like to extend an invitation for you to participate in our upcoming initiative -- the Food Forever Solutions Summit. This afternoon gathering -- held on December 3, 2019, here in Washington, DC -- will convene up to 200 high-level guests across multiple sectors to address and discuss the most pressing issues facing our global food system, including biodiversity, agricultural innovation, and sustainable business models for a changing world.

This initiative involves partnerships with major institutions and corporate players, such as CropTrust Fund, Food Forever Campaign (chaired by Vice President of Peru), Bayer, PepsiCo etc., with Jose Andres being one of the expected speakers.

For more information, please visit the Summit website [here](#).

Following the summit, guests will be invited to attend the “tasting the food of the future” reception that will feature dishes and cocktails made by famous chefs, using a range of new and "rediscovered" ingredients.

A formal speaking invitation is attached. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.

I look forward to hearing from you.
Keeley Peters Rana

Keeley Peters Rana
Foreign Policy
keeley.rana@foreignpolicy.com

c: (b) (6)

From: James McVaney
Sent: Monday, September 24, 2018 2:27 PM
To: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: RE: Meeting request with Sec Perdue

Thanks Steve. I really appreciate it.

From: CLS1, SLC1 - OSEC, Washington, DC [mailto:SLC1@osec.usda.gov] **On Behalf Of** Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC
Sent: Monday, September 24, 2018 2:19 PM
To: James McVaney
Subject: RE: Meeting request with Sec Perdue

Thanks, Jim. Our scheduling folks really are trying to make this work if at all possible.

Thanks and best regards,

Steve

Stephen L. Censky
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office 202-720-6052

From: James McVaney <james.mcvaney@bayer.com>
Sent: Monday, September 24, 2018 1:30 PM
To: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC <Stephen.Censky@osec.usda.gov>
Subject: Re: Meeting request with Sec Perdue

Steve, it looks like we are on the bubble with this. It would be a big help to me if it could happen.

Thank you for putting it forward.

Best,

Jim

Jim McVaney
Senior Director, Federal Affairs & Policy

Bayer: Science For A Better Life

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Bayer Corp-CGR-USGR

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Fax: [+1 202 737 8909](#)

Mobile: [\(b\) \(6\)](#)

E-mail: james.mcvaney@bayer.com

Web: <http://www.bayer.com>

On Sep 10, 2018, at 2:49 PM, Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC
<Stephen.Censky@osec.usda.gov> wrote:

Jim,

Good to hear from you and hope things are going well. If it can be worked out, I'm sure the Secretary would enjoy meeting with Liam to discuss the latest in scientific advances, technology, the ag landscape, trade, etc. I'm copying Lauren Sullivan who handles scheduling and Blake Rollins, Deputy Chief of Staff on this note to relay the request for a potential meeting on the 27th. They will be back in touch!

Thanks and best regards,

Steve

Stephen L. Censky
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office 202-720-6052

From: James McVaney <james.mcvaney@bayer.com>

Sent: Monday, September 10, 2018 11:23 AM

To: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC <Stephen.Censky@osec.usda.gov>

Subject: Meeting request with Sec Perdue

Steve,

I hope all is going well. I'd love to connect over coffee some time to catch up on a variety of matters. But first I wanted to lob in this request to try to connect [Bayer Crop Science CEO Liam Condon](#) with Secretary Perdue while they are both in New York for the **Wall Street Journal Global Food Forum on Sept 27**.

I see that the Secretary will close out the program with an on-stage interview. Liam is on the agenda for an interview at 11:20 on Data-Driven Farming and will be at the event through the afternoon sessions. 4:00 to 4:15 would be ideal. Liam is around in the afternoon but I don't have clarity yet on availability.

As background, Liam is a member of the Bayer Board of Management and is President of the Crop Science Division (global). He has been with Bayer since joining in 2006 as part of our acquisition of Schering. He was born in Dublin, Ireland. I'm sure he

Lastly, I've had a 4 additional opportunities to chat with the Secretary since the Arboretum Dinner in June, including last week at the CSF dinner and the prior week when he visited our tent at Farm Progress. I've raised Georgia football every time so I'm getting predictable. At CSF he beat me to it and mentioned it first.

Thanks for your help on this.

Best,

Jim

Jim McVaney
Senior Director, Federal Relations and Policy



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From: Sullivan, Lauren - OSEC, Washington, DC
Sent: Monday, September 24, 2018 9:37 AM
To: James McVaney; Placek, Robert - OSEC, Washington, DC
CC: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: RE: Meeting request with Sec Perdue

Hi there,

Thank you for following up and hope you had a nice weekend as well. We still have a few things up in the air that will dictate most of the Secretary's schedule while in NYC. We should have more clarity by either the end of the day today or tomorrow morning, so we will reach back out just as soon as we know more.

Thank you for your patience.

Lauren

From: James McVaney <james.mcvaney@bayer.com>
Sent: Monday, September 24, 2018 9:21 AM
To: Sullivan, Lauren - OSEC, Washington, DC <Lauren.Sullivan@osec.usda.gov>; Placek, Robert - OSEC, Washington, DC <Rob.Placek@osec.usda.gov>
Cc: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC <Stephen.Censky@osec.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Meeting request with Sec Perdue

Lauren and Robert,

I hope you both had a good weekend and thought I'd reach out to see if you have any new clarity on the Secretary's Schedule while in NYC on Thursday.

Best,

Jim

Jim McVaney
Senior Director, Federal Relations and Policy



Bayer: Science For A Better Life

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Tel: +1 (b) (6)
Fax: +1 202 737 8909
Mobile: +
E-mail: james.mcvaney@bayer.com

Web: <http://www.bayer.com>

From: James McVaney
Sent: Wednesday, September 19, 2018 10:13 AM
Cc: Sullivan, Lauren - OSEC, Washington, DC; Placek, Robert - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: RE: Meeting request with Sec Perdue

Lauren and Robert,

I hope all is well. I wanted to check in to see if there has been any decisions and to let you that Liam also now has 8:30 to 10:30 am available that day if the Secretary is coming in that early.

Thank you,

Jim

From: James McVaney
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2018 1:05 PM
To: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC
Cc: Sullivan, Lauren - OSEC, Washington, DC; Rollins, Blake - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: Re: Meeting request with Sec Perdue

Steve and team,

Sorry for the change-up here? It appears that Liam's schedule now only has him free from 2:00 to 3:00 that day. Would that be a possibility?

Best,

Jim

Jim McVaney
Senior Director, Federal Affairs & Policy

Bayer: Science For A Better Life

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Mobile:
E-mail: james.mcvaney@bayer.com
Web: <http://www.bayer.com>

On Sep 10, 2018, at 2:49 PM, Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC
<Stephen.Censky@osec.usda.gov> wrote:

Jim,

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Thanks and best regards,

Steve

Stephen L. Censky
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office 202-720-6052

From: James McVaney <james.mcvaney@bayer.com>
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2018 11:23 AM
To: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC <Stephen.Censky@osec.usda.gov>
Subject: Meeting request with Sec Perdue

Steve,

I hope all is going well. I'd love to connect over coffee some time to catch up on a variety of matters. But first I wanted to lob in this request to try to connect [Bayer Crop Science CEO Liam Condon](#) with Secretary Perdue while they are both in New York for the **Wall Street Journal Global Food Forum on Sept 27**.

I see that the Secretary will close out the program with an on-stage interview. Liam is on the agenda for an interview at 11:20 on Data-Driven Farming and will be at the event through the afternoon sessions. 4:00 to 4:15 would be ideal. Liam is around in the afternoon but I don't have clarity yet on availability.

As background, Liam is a member of the Bayer Board of Management and is President of the Crop Science Division (global). He has been with Bayer since joining in 2006 as part of our acquisition of Schering. He was born in Dublin, Ireland. I'm sure he

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Thanks for your help on this.

Best,

Jim

Jim McVaney
Senior Director, Federal Relations and Policy



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Web: <http://www.bayer.com>

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From: Scott A Kohne
Sent: Thursday, July 25, 2019 4:05 PM
To: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC
Subject: RE: Request for Event Approval Information

Thank you Steve

Best regards,

Scott Kohne

Phone: +1 (b) (6), Mobile: (b) (6), Email: scott.kohne@basf.com
Postal Address: BASF Corporation, 2 T. W. Alexander Drive, 27709 Research Triangle Park, United States



From: CLS1, SLC1 - OSEC, Washington, DC <SLC1@usda.gov> **On Behalf Of** Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC
Sent: Thursday, July 25, 2019 4:03 PM
To: Scott A Kohne <scott.kohne@basf.com>
Subject: RE: Request for Event Approval Information

Thanks for your note, Scott. Let me check on this.

Thanks and best regards,

Steve

Stephen L. Censky
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office 202-720-6052

From: Scott A Kohne <scott.kohne@basf.com>
Sent: Monday, July 22, 2019 4:36 PM
To: Censky, Stephen - OSEC, Washington, DC <Stephen.Censky@usda.gov>
Subject: Request for Event Approval Information

Dear Deputy Secretary Censky,

BASF has an EPA + DHA (omega 3) canola event LBFLFK (petition number is 17-321-01p) whose final comment period closed on May 6, 2019 and has apparently been signed off at BRS and is awaiting final approval at the Secretaries office. BASF is partnering with Cargill to bring the commercial product to the market. It would be very helpful to our field compliance people (and yours) if we could identify when this final approval might occur. Could you help us determine when this event receives final approval? Thank you Steve.

Best regards,

Scott Kohne

Phone: (b) (6), Mobile: (b) (6), Email: scott.kohne@basf.com
Postal Address: BASF Corporation, 2 T. W. Alexander Drive, 27709 Research Triangle Park, United States



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From: [Jewell, Shannon](#)
Subject: FW: Updated PPDC Agenda and Additional Materials
Date: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 2:52:38 PM
Attachments: [PPDC Meeting Agenda May 12-13.2021.pdf](#)
[Wilson and Jones-BPIA-PPDC May 2021.pdf](#)
[Sanson and Basu-Crop Protection Industry-PPDC May 2021.pdf](#) Non-responsive attachment.
[Tortorici-Ongoing FIFRA Consultation-PPDC May 2021.pdf](#) Non-responsive attachment.
[Burd-Pesticides and Endangered Species-PPDC May 2021.pdf](#)
[PPDC Emerging Technologies Working Group - Interim Report - May 2021.pdf](#)

Dear PPDC Members,

Please see attached a newly updated agenda. On Thursday from 3-4:00 PM (EDT) we were going to have a talk on Risk Communication, but unfortunately, Kaci, the presenter, is now unable join us for this meeting. Because of this, we will shift the Moving Forward and Public Comment sessions up to 3:00 and 3:30 PM respectively, and end the meeting at 4:00 PM. This change is reflected in this version of the agenda. We look forward to having Kaci speak to the group at a future meeting.

Also attached are slides from PPDC members who will be speaking at the meeting. Please see slides that will be presented by: Nina Wilson, speaking with Keith Jones; Charlotte Sanson and Mano Basu; Cathy Tortorici, and; Lori Ann Burd.

Finally, please see final slides from the Emerging Technologies Workgroup.

Kind regards all,
Shannon

Shannon Jewell · (b) (6) · jewell.shannon@epa.gov
Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee, Designated Federal Officer
[Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee Website](#)
EPA Office of Pesticide Programs, Immediate Office

Shannon Jewell · (b) (6) · jewell.shannon@epa.gov
EPA Office of Pesticide Programs, Immediate Office

AGENDA—Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee Spring Meeting 2021

DAY ONE: Wednesday, May 12

[Click here to register for the meeting and receive login details.](#)

(Times are EDT)

- 11:00-11:15 Welcome and Opening Remarks**
Ed Messina, Acting Director, Office of Pesticide Programs
- 11:15-11:45 Introductions by PPDC Members**
- 11:45-12:30 OPP Updates: Recent Activities and Accomplishments**
Session Chair: Ed Messina, Acting Director, Office of Pesticide Programs
Session Goal: To provide an overview of recent accomplishments by and changes within OPP, and to discuss these with PPDC members.
- 12:30-1:30 Lunch Break**
- 1:30-2:30 Farmworker and Clinician Training Workgroup Update**
Session Chairs: Mily Treviño-Sauceda, Alianza Nacional de Campesinas, Inc.; Carolyn Schroeder, Chief, Certification and Worker Protection Branch; Steve Schaible, Pesticide Registration Improvement Act (PRIA) Coordinator
Session Goals: To review conversations being held, and work being done so far, by the Farmworker and Clinician Training Workgroup. For members of the PPDC to provide feedback and thoughts about the direction of the work.
- 2:30-3:00 Emerging Agricultural Technologies Presentation**
Presenter: Nick Tindall, American Equipment Manufacturers; Chad Biegler, Raven Industries
Session Goals: To provide PPDC members with a brief survey of current sprayer tools as well as a near future look at where the technology is headed.
- 3:00-4:00 Emerging Agricultural Technologies Workgroup Update**
Session Chairs: Mano Basu, CropLife America; Ed Messina, Acting Director, Office of Pesticide Programs
Session Goals: To review conversations being held, and work being done so far, by the Emerging Agricultural Technologies Workgroup. For members of the PPDC to provide feedback and thoughts about the direction of the work.
- 4:00-4:30 PPDC Member Presentation on Stakeholder Interests**
Session Goal: For PPDC members to share their concerns and priorities with the EPA and other stakeholders.
Biological Products Stakeholders and Industry
Presenter: Nina Wilson, The Biological Product Industry Alliance (BPIA); Keith Jones, BPIA
- 4:30-5:00 Public Comments**
- 5:00 Meeting Adjourns**

AGENDA—Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee Spring Meeting 2021

DAY TWO: Thursday, May 13

[Click here to register for the meeting and receive login details.](#)

- 11:00-12:00 Emerging Pathogens Workgroup Update**
Session Chairs: Komal Jain, Center for Biocide Chemistries; Tajah Blackburn, Senior Scientist, Antimicrobials Division
Session Goals: To review conversations being held, and work being done so far, by the Emerging Pathogens Workgroup. For members of the PPDC to provide feedback and thoughts about the direction of the work.
- 12:00-1:00 Pesticide Resistance Management Workgroup Update**
Session Chair(s): David Shaw, Mississippi State University; Bill Chism, Senior Biologist, Biological and Economic Analysis Division; Alan Reynolds, Lead Biologist, Biopesticides and Pollution Prevention Division
Session Goals: To review conversations being held, and work being done so far, by the Pesticide Resistance Management Workgroup. For members of the PPDC to provide feedback and thoughts about the direction of the work.
- 1:00-1:20 PPDC Member Presentation on Stakeholder Interests**
Session Goal: For PPDC members to share their concerns and priorities with the EPA and other stakeholders.
Information and Perspective on the Crop Protection Industry
Presenters: Charlotte Sanson, ADAMA and Mano Basu, CropLife America
- 1:20-2:00 Lunch Break**
- 2:00-2:15 Welcome from Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator**
 Michal Freedhoff, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention
- 2:15-3:00 PPDC Member Presentations on Stakeholder Interests**
Session Goal: For PPDC members to share their concerns and priorities with the EPA and other stakeholders.
- 2:15-2:25 **On-going FIFRA-ESA Consultation Work**
Presenter: Cathy Tortorici, NOAA
- 2:25-2:35 **ESA Consultations and Species Protections**
Presenter: Lori Ann Burd, Center for Biological Diversity
- 2:35-3:00 Questions/comments on PPDC on Member Presentations

AGENDA—Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee Spring Meeting 2021
DAY TWO: Thursday, May 13 Continued


3:00-3:30 Moving Forward

Session Chair: Ed Messina, Acting Director, Office of Pesticide Programs

Session Goals: To review action items mentioned during the meeting, and brainstorm agenda items for the Fall 2021 PPDC meeting.

3:30-4:00 Public Comments

4:00 Meeting Adjourns



PPDC – Introduction to the Biological Product Industry Alliance (BPIA)



May 12, 2021/4:00-4:30 pm

Biological Products Stakeholders and Industry

Presenters: **Keith Jones**, Executive Director BPIA

Nina Wilson, Gowan Company, BPIA Board Member, PPDC Member

Who is BPIA

- Washington, DC area-based Trade Association
- Started in 2003 with 5 members companies
- Today: over 137 members companies
- Manufactures, Marketers, Distributors and Service Provider
 - Member range from sole proprietors to multinational companies of Biopesticides, biostimulants and biofertilizers
- Cooperation with governmental agencies & universities



Expanding to includes food companies and growers

What does BPIA do?

Biological control & nutritionals
Sustainability
IPM

Advocate

Educate

Communicate

Collaborate

Member-Driven Committees & Meetings

Committees

Biostimulant
Canadian
Regulatory
Specialty Markets
Communications
Finance
Government Affairs
Membership
Nominating

Meetings

Annual Meetings
Capitol Hill “Fly-Ins”
Symposiums
Workshops
Now Webinars!



Industry Collaboration

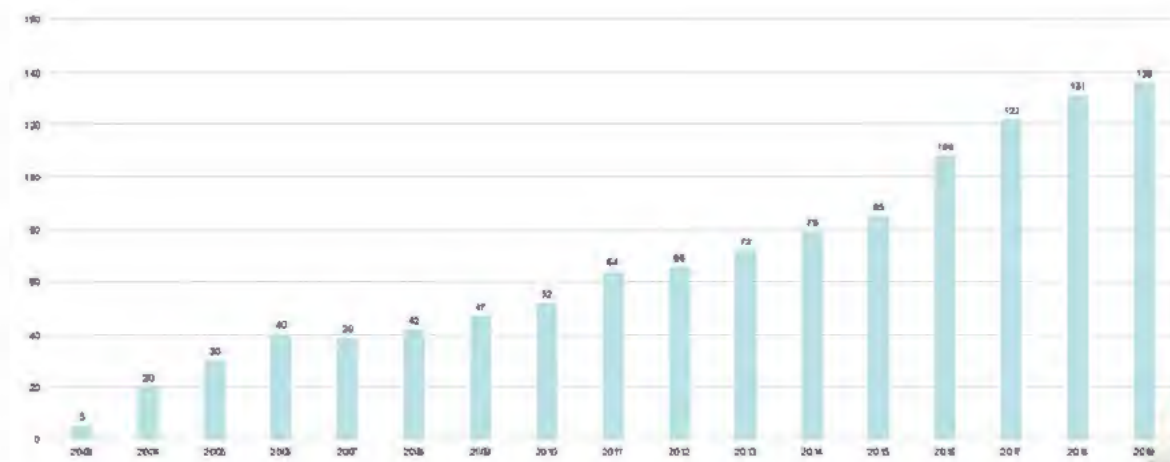
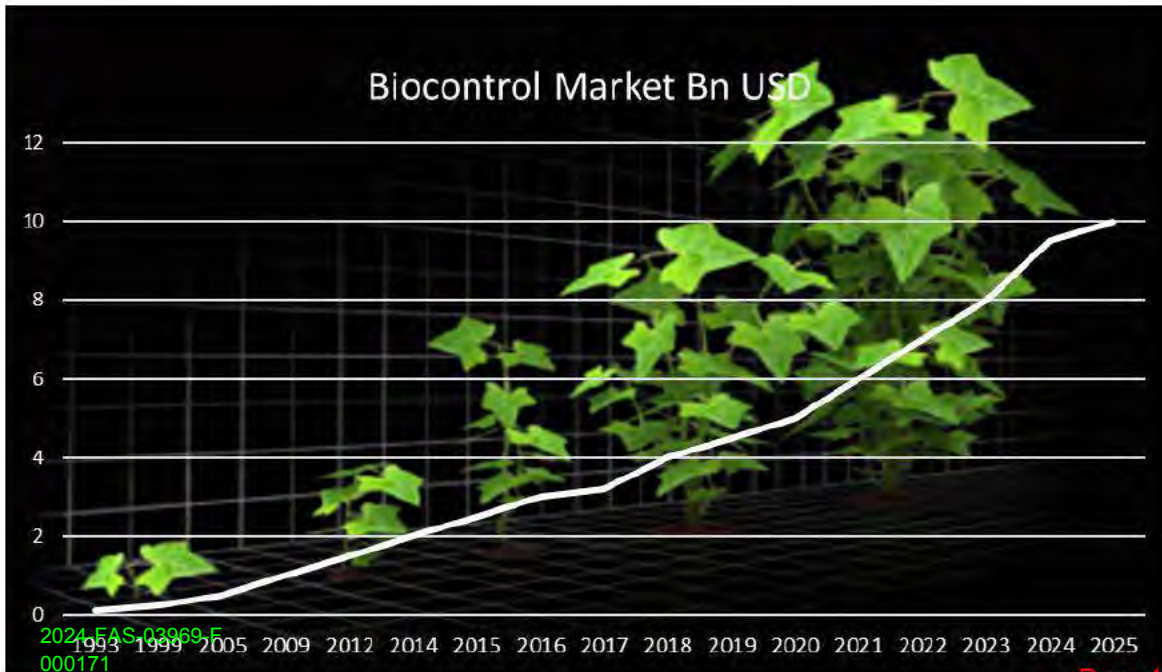
While BPIA member companies hold membership in multiple industry trade groups that represent diverse commercial interests, BPIA itself has joint initiatives with industry associations to collaborate on common goals.

- ASTA (American Seed Trade Association)
- BIO (Biotechnology Innovation Organization)
- CLA (Crop Life America)
- EBIC (European Biostimulant Industry Council)
- IBMA (International Biocontrol Manufacturers Association)
- TFI (The Fertilizer Institute)

Global Biocontrol Market



Membership Growth





Nina Wilson, Gowan Company, BPIA Board Member,
PPDC Member

About Biological Product – focus on biopesticides

Categories of Biological Pesticides

Macrobiols



Photo 19201880 © Richard Brosseau | Dreamstime.com

Predators,
parasites &
nematodes
(living organism
which protect
plants in nature)

Microbiols

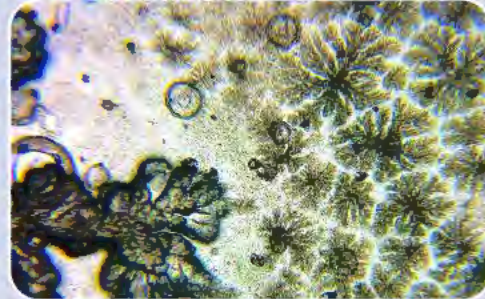


Photo 203045425 © Corinazone | Dreamstime.com

Viruses, bacteria &
fungal pathogens
(found in soil and
used in food &
feeds)

Semiochemicals



Photo ID 55265429 © Neil Letson | Dreamstime.com

Pheromones, plant
volatiles
(communication
tools found in
nature)

Biochemicals



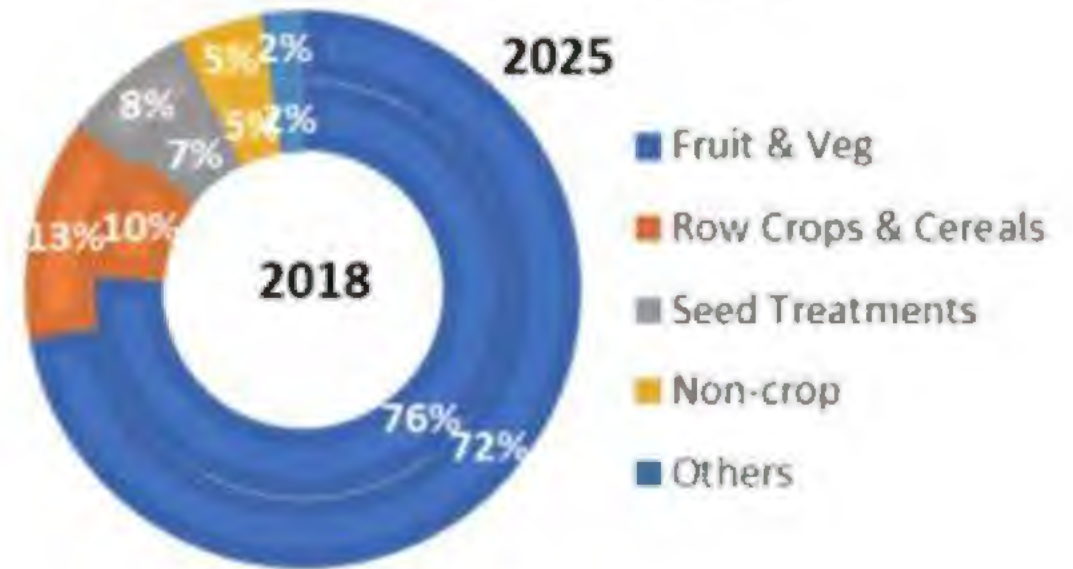
Photo 124237471 © Yana Tatevosian | Dreamstime.com

Botanicals & other
natural substances
(products derived
or extracted from
natural
substances)

Market

- Sales of biologicals in the fruit and vegetable segment represent about 80% of the global market
- While many biological controls may be organic-compliant, US organic acres make up only 1% of agricultural acres* – therefore, the largest potential market are conventional acres which desire the biological control & nutrition benefits

Global Crop Group Shares




- Cost
- Multiple harvest timing
- Consumer demands are focused on non-processed foods

* Pew Research Center

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/01/10/organic-farming-is-on-the-rise-in-the-u-s/>

Biopesticide
Benefits –
provides basic
agronomic
benefits first

- Crop quality and yield
- Beneficials insect preservation
- Labor and harvest flexibility – favorable pre harvest intervals, re-entry timing and PPE
- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) & resistance management program compatibility
- Food chain sustainability goals
- Residue management
- May be used for National Organic Production (NOP) certified land/crop; management complexities for growers



Biological Pesticides – US EPA Definition

Insecticide, fungicides, herbicides and
Plant growth regulators

- “are naturally occurring chemicals or are synthetically derived equivalents;
- have a **history of exposure to humans and the environment demonstrating minimal toxicity**, or in the case of synthetically derived biochemical pesticides, are equivalent to a naturally occurring chemical that has such a history; and
- have a **nontoxic mode of action to the target pest(s)**”
 - May or may not be National Organic Program compliant

Industry Issues – qualitative vs quantitative risk assessments

- Registration standards per FIFRA are the same as conventionals but testing should be commensurate with the risks based on minimal toxicity
 - Qualitative risk assessments using reduced animal testing scenarios to demonstrate minimal toxicity can be complexed



Industry Issues – long development timelines with alternative standards hurdles & non-traditional testing

- Product development timeline can be 7+ years, similar to conventional chemistry & are dependent on PRIA registration timelines to continue innovation
- USDA National Organic Program and other ex US organic or sustainability programs that are not based on EPA's rigorous toxicological assessment limit formulation ingredients and production methods
- Traditional on-farm efficacy testing protocols are not adequate as biological products have a nontoxic mode of action that often work best in a *seasonal* IPM program with conventional tools
 - Seasonal research is vastly more expensive and complicated

Industry Issues – no global regulatory or trade standardization

- US crops treated with biological product, by virtue of their minimal toxicity, are exempt from numeric tolerances/residue definitions
- Tolerances are not harmonized with other countries
- Trade is complexed and unpredictable

Thank You

Please contact us if you have question or need more information:

Keith Jones, Executive Director BPIA –
jones@bpia.org

Nina Wilson, Gowan Company, BPIA Board
Member, PPDC Member –
nwilson@gowanco.com



Increasing Understanding of Pesticide Safety - PPDC

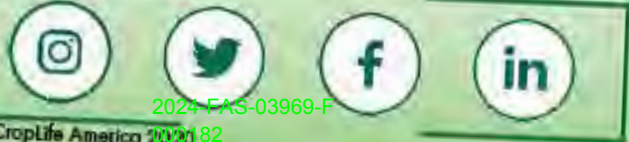
Charlotte Sanson, ADAMA

Manojit Basu, CLA

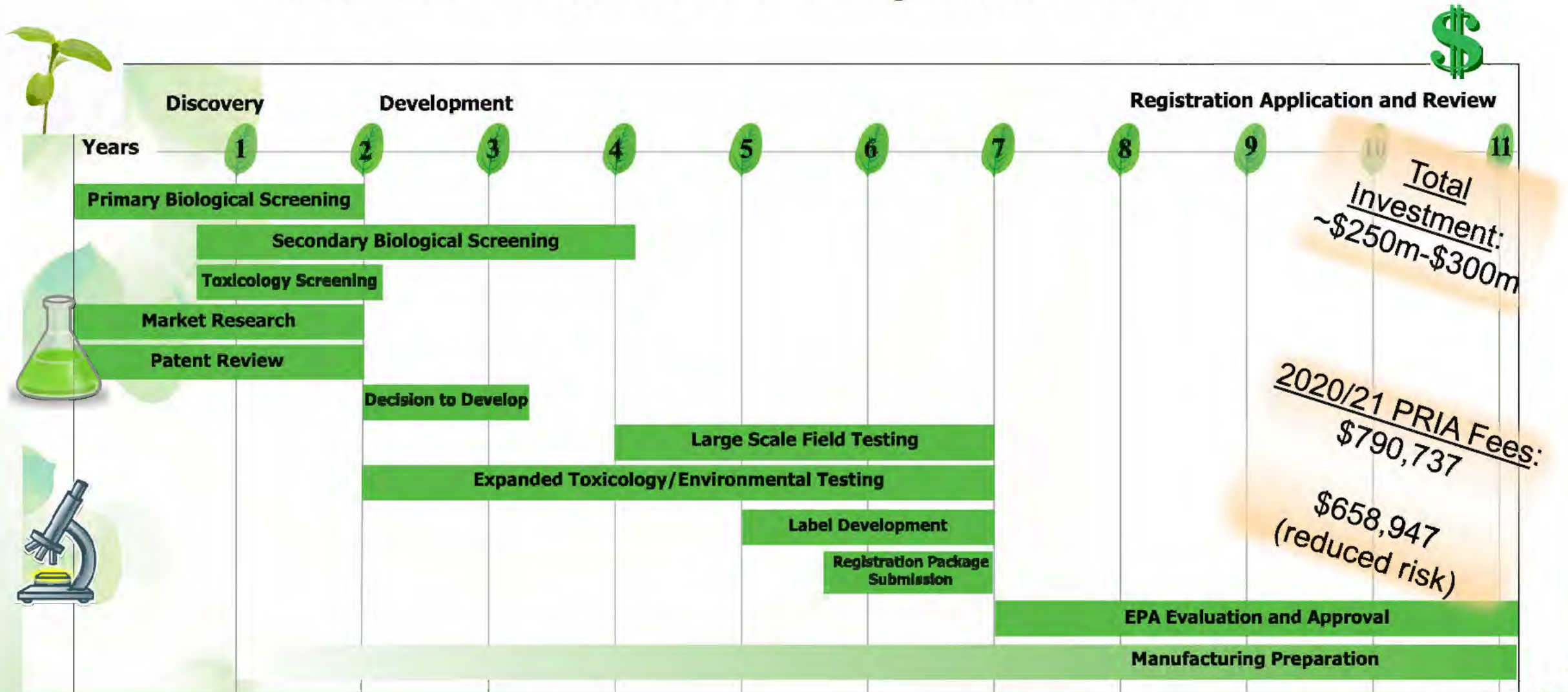


Outline

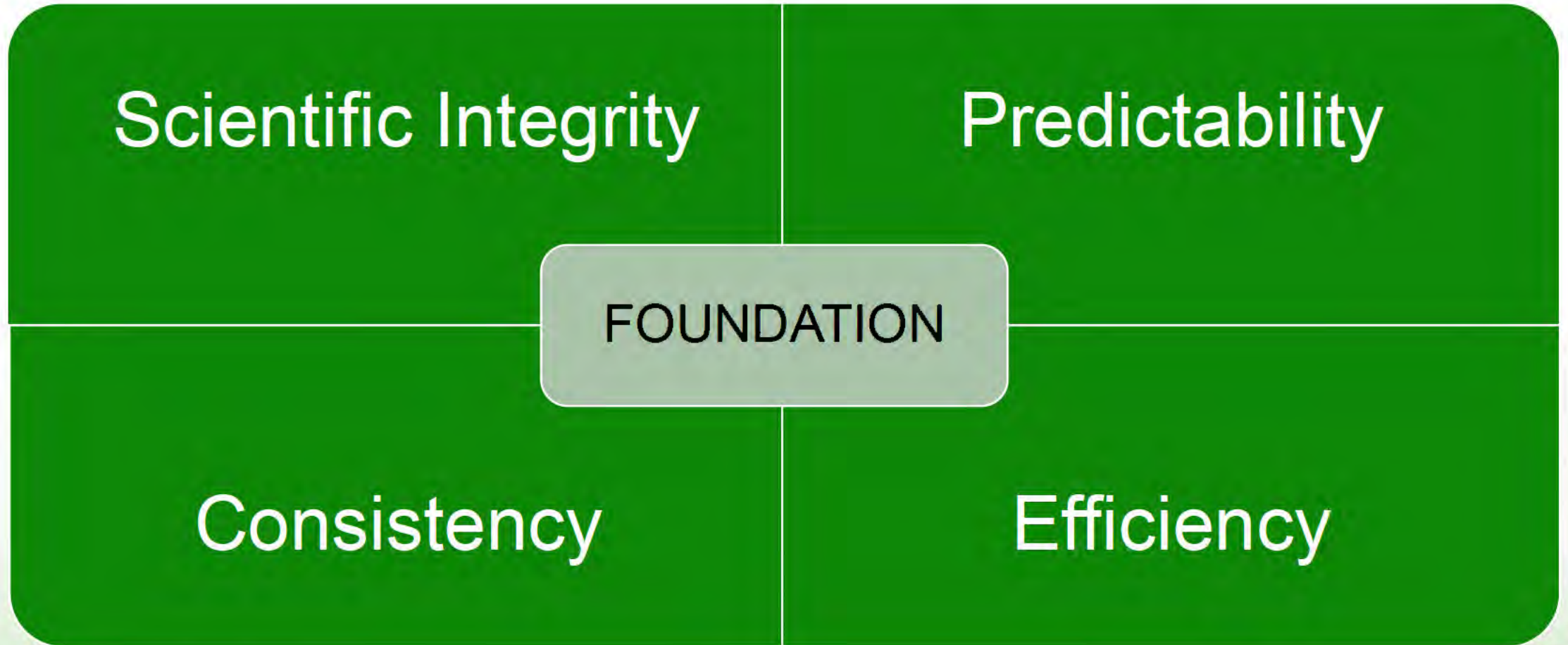
- Industry Product Development overview
- CropLife America – Strategic Priorities
 - Improving Environmental Sustainability
 - ESA Approach



New a.i. - from Discovery to Market



Expectations of a Sound Regulatory Process



FIFRA Regulation of Pesticides Is Data Driven

Specific Requirements for:

- Acute and chronic toxicology - to address human health effects
- Ecological effects, - what is impact on wildlife, & nontarget organisms
- Environmental fate – how long does it last, how does it break down
- Residue chemistry – what residues remain on treated crops
- Product chemistry – composition, manufacturing process
- Proposed label – use directions, caution statements

Studies must meet specific quality assurance standards (GLP)



Good Laboratory Practice

What is GLP?



Quality system of controls for research laboratories & organizations

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|------------------|
| • Uniformity | • Reliability | • Quality |
| • Consistency | • Reproducibility | • Data integrity |

Applies to field and laboratory studies generated for purposes of U.S registration of crop protection products



GLP Elements

- **Organization and Personnel**

- Quality Assurance staff
- Responsibilities for:
 - Management
 - Sponsor
 - Study Director
 - Principal Investigator
 - Study Personnel

- **Facilities**

- Test System Facilities
- Facilities for Test and Reference Items

- **Equipment**

- Design, maintenance, calibration

- **Testing Facilities Operation**

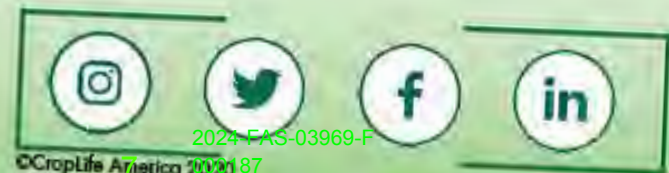
- Standard operating procedures
- Reagents & solutions
- Animal & other test system care

- **Test, Control and Reference Substances**

- **Protocol for and Conduct of a Study**

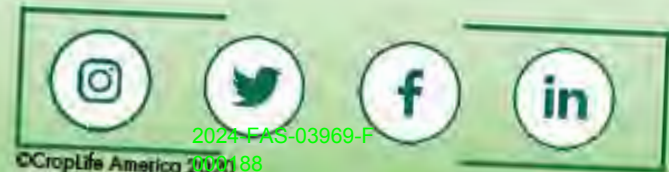
- **Records and Reports**

- Reporting of study results
- Storage & retrieval of records & data
- Retention of records



Established Study Protocol

- Full and detailed study protocol is agreed upon prior to conducting a study
- Changes to the study protocol require a clear record of when, how, and why the study was changed; and must be signed off by the Study Director



Recordkeeping

- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Written, management-approved descriptions of how a specific task is to be performed, and by whom



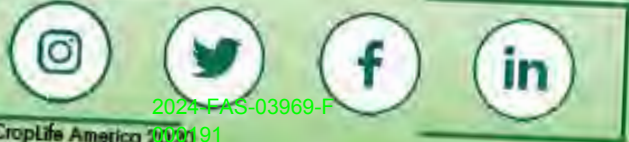
Recordkeeping

- Fully auditable study record
- Maintained for long periods, maybe decades
- Procedures for original recording of, and changes to, raw data
- Secure archive, designed for expedient retrieval



Audits

- Independent audits of all internal studies
- Study reports are audited to ensure compliance
- Audits of CROs hired by sponsor companies are conducted by sponsor QAU
- Audits by EPA/OECA are done periodically of studies and facilities



STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH GOOD LABORATORY PRACTICE

Study No.: 181/17-215CD
Study Title: ABC Herbicide 25 EC: Validation of the Analytical Method
Test Item: ABC Herbicide 25 EC

This study was conducted in compliance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) standards as set forth in 40 CFR Part 160 and as compatible with the OECD Principles of Good Laboratory Practice (OECD, 1998a; OECD 1998b) and regulatory authorities throughout the European Community and the Japan Ministry of Agriculture Test Guidelines for Pesticide Registration (JMAFF, 2012).

Johnson Labs

 Joseph Jones
 Study Director

Date

XYZ Company

 Sponsor

Date

 Submitter

Date

(Johnson Labs = CRO)

(XYZ Company = Registrant)



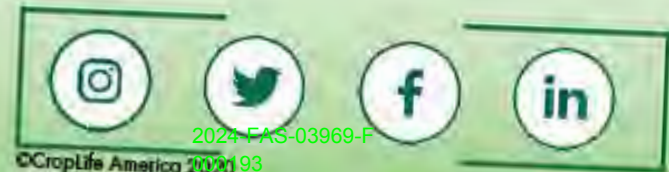
CropLife America (CLA)

Who we are:

Established in 1933, CLA represents the developers, manufacturers, formulators, and distributors of pesticides and plant science solutions for agriculture and pest management in the United States.

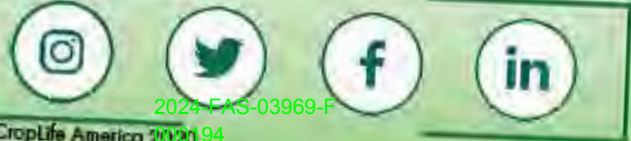
Strategic Imperatives:

1. Increase collaboration and deepen partnerships with our members, our farmers, our customers, our value chain, and our food and environmental stakeholders, and decision-makers. (**Environmental Sustainability**)
2. Communicate in a proactive and consumer-oriented manner. (**Industry Perception**)
3. Ground our efforts in data and science to share knowledge and measure impact. (**Regulatory Integrity**)



Improving Environmental Sustainability

Continually improve our environmental outcomes through voluntary conservation measures and innovative technologies



Agricultural Sustainability

1. Defining Sustainability

UN SDGs

- Members, grower groups, NGO, other associations, Food industry, and Hill Staff Surveys
- 3 U.N. SDGs selected: Innovation and Agricultural Productivity, Biodiversity, and Climate Change

2. Partnerships

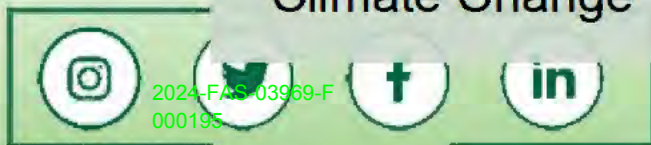
Engagement

- Outreach to Academics, Environmental NGOs, and conservation organizations

3. Communication

Pesticides & Sustainability

- Amplifying member stories
- Fact Sheets (GHG Emissions Habitats Restored, Soil Health, productivity)
- Life Cycle Analysis
- Monitoring and Reporting



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Defining Sustainability

Biodiversity

- Improving soil health and resiliency
- Reducing topsoil erosion
- Improving pollinator health
- Promoting conservation

Climate Change

- Lowering GHGs
- Cutting fuel consumption
- Promoting reduced-till practices

Innovation & Productivity

- Newer chemistries
- Robotics and Precision Ag
- Decreasing yield loss
- Enhancing farmer education



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Conservation

Last year, Corteva Agriscience announced a two-year agreement to support the efforts of the Nature Conservancy, working to help farmers grow more sustainably while protecting water quality.





Pollinator Health

Since 2011, Bayer's Bee Care Program has supported more than 30 collaborative projects addressing local and regional threats and opportunities facing pollinators.



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Rescuing Farmland

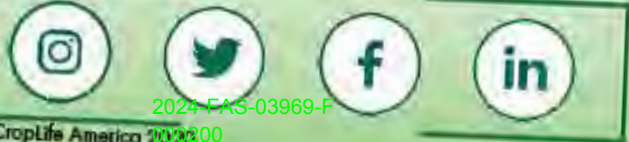
Through the Syngenta Good Growth Plan, Syngenta has benefited 26.7 million acres of farmland on the brink of degradation - roughly the size of Tennessee.



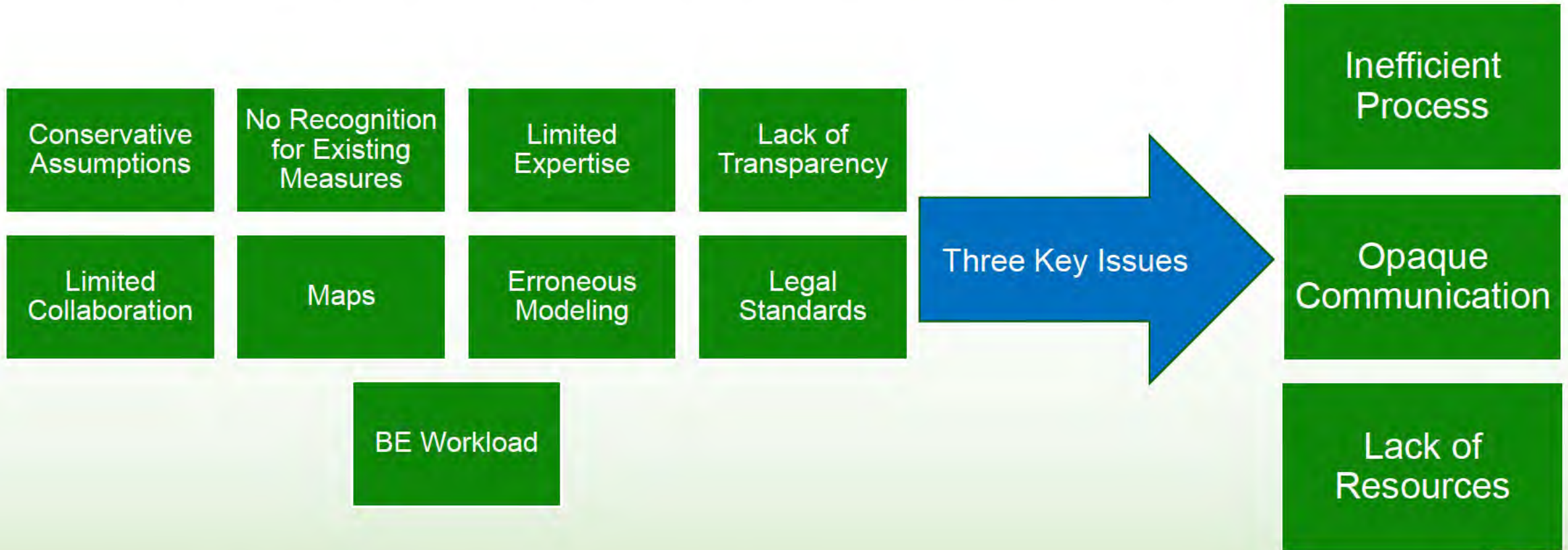
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Regulatory Integrity

Preserve the statutory commitment to a transparent and reliable federal risk-based pesticide regulatory process and market policies that help ensure farmer and consumer access to needed tools and technologies.



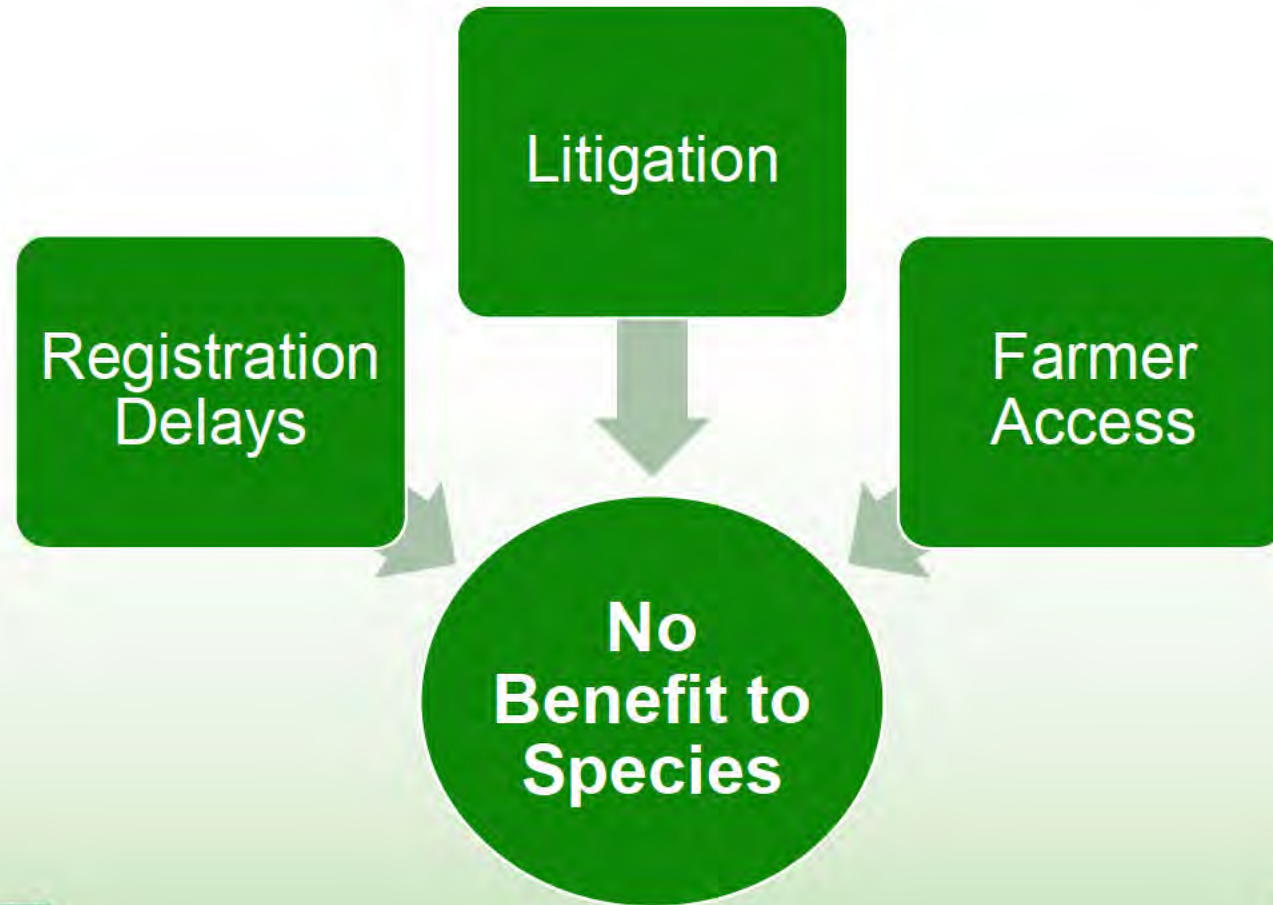
Endangered Species - Current Challenges:



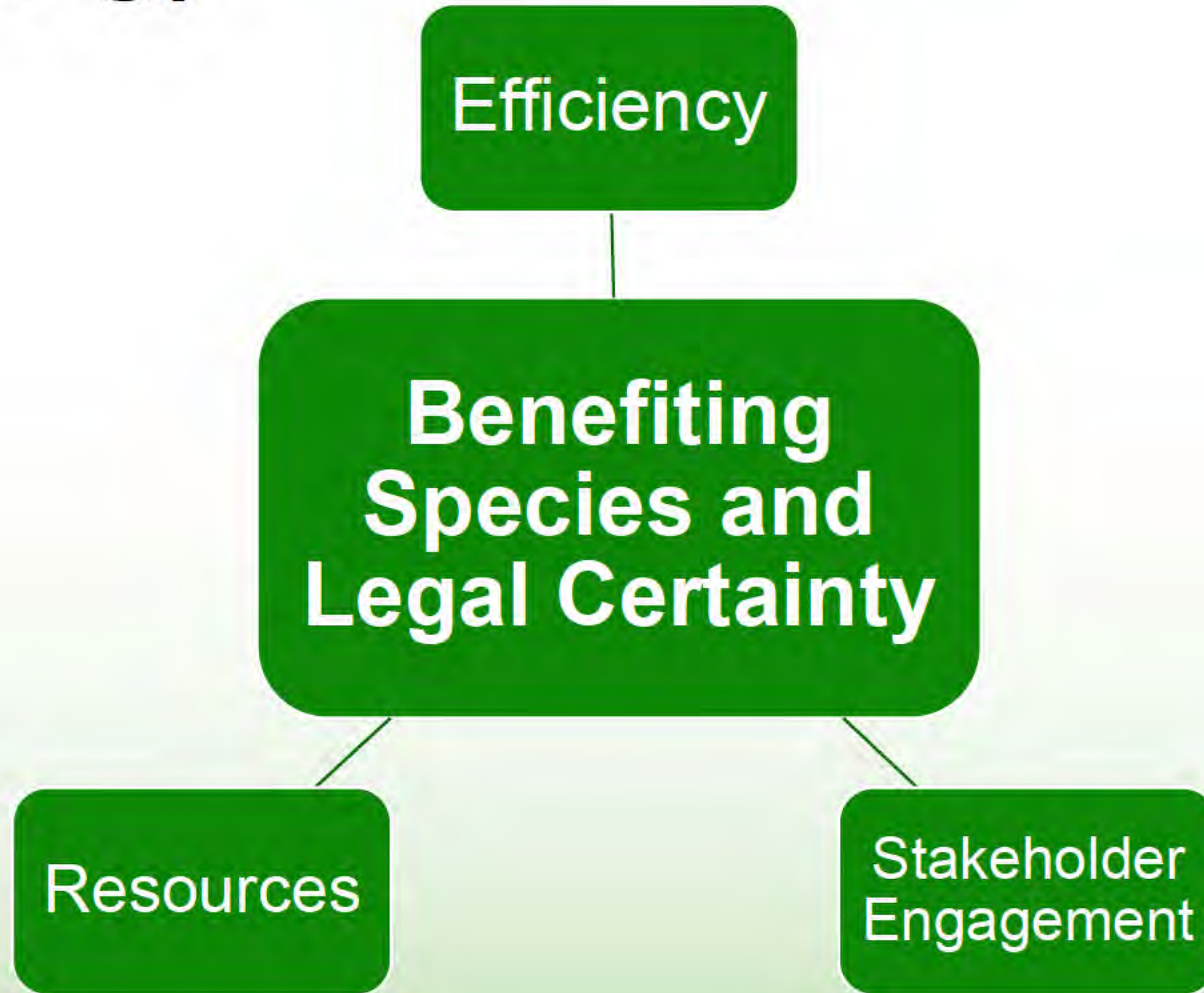
* Not the full list



The Outcome of these Challenges:

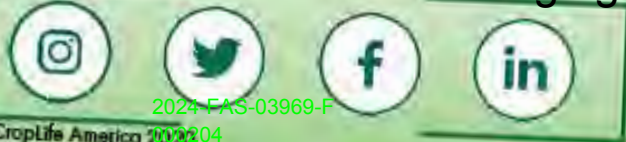


CLA's Strategy



Key Takeaways

- CropLife America Supports
 - **More Collaboration**
 - Between federal family (EPA, Services, and USDA)
 - Stakeholder engagement (Federal Family, Registrants, Farm and Grower Groups, Environmental NGOs, and others)
 - **Better Communication**
 - Between the federal family
 - Explain the limited purpose of the Biological Evaluation, assumptions made, uncertainties in the data, etc. for non-technical audience
 - Explain Avoidance and Minimization aspects of pesticide registration, and the approved uses of a pesticide
 - **Improve Efficiency**
 - Improving Risk Assessment and recognition for existing practices
 - Leveraging existing and seeking additional resources for conservation of listed species



Questions ?

Charlotte Sanson: charlotte.sanson@adama.com

Manojit Basu: mbasu@croplifeamerica.org



2024-FAS-03969-F
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Emerging Agricultural Technologies Workgroup

**Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee Meeting
May 12-13, 2021**

PPDC Emerging Agricultural Technologies Workgroup: Roster, May 2021

- **Manojit “Mano” Basu**, CropLife America (Co-chair)
- **Ed Messina**, EPA/OPP (Co-chair)
- **Ruben Arroyo**, Riverside County Department of Agriculture and Measurements Standards
- **Dan Cederberg**, Teejet
- **Gilbert Del Rosario**, Corteva Agriscience
- **Adam Finch**, BASF
- **Josh Friell**, The Toro Company
- **Brad Fritz**, USDA, ARS
- **Rebecca “Becca” Haynie**, Syngenta
- **Ramon Leon**, North Carolina State University
- **Lauren Lurkins**, Illinois Farm Bureau
- **Daniel Markowski**, Vector Disease Control International
- **Dan Martin**, USDA, ARS
- **Jacob Moore**, ADAMA
- **Robby Personette**, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture
- **Damon Reabe**, National Agricultural Aviation Association
- **Karen Reardon**, RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment)
- **Margaret Reeves**, Pesticide Action Network
- **Brian Satorius**, Independent Grower
- **Scott Shearer**, Ohio State University
- **Bryan Sanders**, HSE-UAV
- **Christina Stucker-Gassi**, Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides
- **Nick Tindall**, Association of Equipment Manufacturers
- **Anne Turnbough**, AMVAC Chemical
- **Greg Watson**, Bayer

CHARGE QUESTIONS

- How should EPA obtain a greater understanding of how the use of emerging agricultural technologies leads to reduced or increased risks that differ from those resulting from current methods?
- What changes to EPA's approach to pesticide labels, if any, are needed to accommodate emerging technologies?

Emerging Technology Workgroup - Cadence

- January 14, 2021
- February 11, 2021
- March 11, 2021
- April 8, 2021
- May 6, 2021

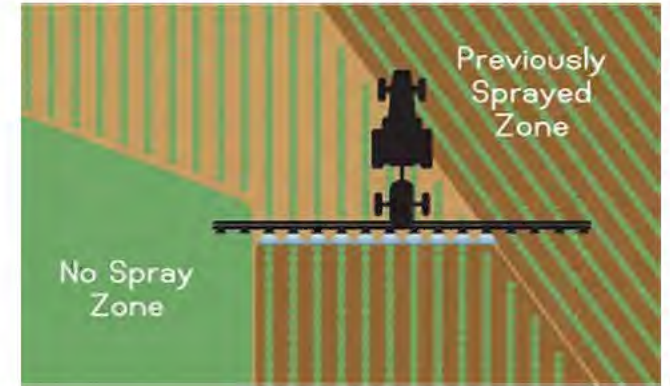
Presentations:

- February 11th: American Equipment Manufacturers presentation on Emerging Agricultural Technologies
- April 8th: Jane Tang of Bayer presented on the December 2020 CERSA Workshop

These are available to view on the PPDC website on the [Emerging Agriculture Technologies Workgroup](#) page.

Technologies

- GPS Guidance
 - Track machine's position in the field
 - Enables other control technologies
- Boundary Mapping
 - Ensures application is taking place in the intended area
- Smart Guidance
 - Maintain consistent application speeds that help deliver consistent droplet size
- Targeted Spray Technology (Autonomous application)
 - Distinguish difference between weeds and crops
 - Potential to reduce application by up to 90%
 - Works with pre and post emergence applications
- Machine Mounted Weather Station
 - Mobile weather stations mounted directly on the sprayer
 - Allows for more accurate information to assist in mitigating spray drift



North Carolina State University, Center of Excellence for Regulatory Science in Agriculture (CERSA) Workshop

- CERSA is co-led by North Carolina State and Louisiana State University. It provides undergraduate, graduate and continuing education training in regulatory science, workshops and sponsored research for the advancement of regulatory science in agriculture.
- A December 2020 workshop established an open forum for dialog involving diverse stakeholders on science-based regulations of UAS and manned aerial applications in crop protection.
- Stakeholder consensus was achieved and provided direction for the further development of the technologies in the regulatory space.
 - CERSA Promotes the implementation of Remotely Piloted Aerial Application Systems in a complementary manner to conventional aerial and ground application equipment, recognizes need for public-domain regulatory models, droplet size efficacy research, and up-to-date drift modeling.

International and US Regulation

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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Office of Pesticide Programs Page 55

2021-DA-03919-F EPA



Global Regulations - Asia

- Drone application is readily embraced and seen as beneficial for the aging and shrinking population of small holder rice farmers
- Regulators in Japan and Korea have swiftly transitioned to drones from well established RC helicopter guidance
- China leads drone innovation, and has the largest acreage treated worldwide by drones
- In 2020, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand are the most recent Asian countries to permit spray applications via drones
- India permitted exemptional use of drones on locust and formed committees in 2020 to accelerate regulatory adoption

Global Regulations - Japan

Registration requirements of pesticides by drone application

Type of data requirement	Label extension of registered formulation from conventional application to UAV application	New formulation for UAV application
Bio-efficacy data	Exempted if pest/disease claim and critical GAP (Crop, Dose, PHI) is within the range of existing registration. If not, full data requirement	Full data requirement by UAV application
Crop residue data	Exempted if critical GAP is within the range of existing registration. If not, full data requirement	Exempted if critical GAP is within the range of existing registration
Crop safety data	Full data requirement by UAV application	Full data requirement by UAV application

Global Regulations - Canada

- PMRA is actively working with Remotely Piloted Aerial Application Systems (RPAAS) WG, providing input in studies and considerations to reach an approval
 - USDA is involved in RPAAS WG
 - Spray drift studies developed in 2020
- Canada has not yet approved pesticide application by UAV

What's Happening in the U.S - EPA

- Working with several stakeholders/working groups – both US and international on UAVs:
 - SFIREG/APPCO
 - RPAAS WG (led by Canada)
 - Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) WG on drones
 - Completing literature review on drone applications – efficacy, drift, exposure, modeling
 - Center of Excellence for Regulatory Science in Agriculture (CERSA) Workshop on UAS and Manned Aerial Applications (Dec 2020)
 - Focused on:
 - Potential benefits and current and future anticipated uses of UAS
 - Spray drift models for existing application methods and UAS

EPA Risk Assessment

- EPA currently evaluates spray drift in ecological and drinking water risk assessments using two models:
 - AgDRIFT v 2.1.1 (2011) – for ground and manned aerial applications
 - AGDISP v 8.26 (2011) – used for aduicide applications
- Currently no approved model to evaluate drift from emerging technology like UAVs
- Priority for EPA is to understand the exposure considerations that this emerging technology presents and how it compares to existing application technology
- EPA continues to work towards a standard policy and risk assessment method to evaluate potential risk from emerging technology like UAV application

Deliverables Discussed at ET WG

- Deliverable 1 – List of Emerging Technologies
 - List of emerging technologies that can be used for or, in support of, or in place of pesticide application
 - Any regulatory oversight or risk assessment changes by EPA needed to facilitate their use
- Deliverable 2: Deep dive on Autonomous Application Platforms operated remotely and/or manually
 - How these technologies lead to reduced or increased risks that differ from those resulting from current methods
 - What changes to EPA's approach to pesticide labels, if any, are needed to accommodate these technologies

Deliverable 1: List of Technologies

Hardware

UAVs/Drones

Spray/Nozzles

Ground Robots

Equipment Improvements to Existing
Application Equipment

Data and Analytics

Maps

Statistical Analysis

Prescriptive Agriculture

Artificial Intelligence

Deliverable 1: Technologies List

Equipment Improvements

Autonomous Spray Systems Aboard Current Manned Aircraft and Ground Sprayers

Spot Farming

Boundary Mapping

Smart Guidance

Boom Height Control

Rate Control

Section Control

Equipment Mounted Weather Stations

Ground Based Robots

Land care robot

Robot for mechanical weed control

Tool-carrying robot

Bug vacuum

Autonomous Tractor

Autonomous Ground Sprayer

Spray/Nozzle

Nozzles that dramatically reduce or eliminate small droplets prone to drift

Direct Injection

Stacked (Tiered) Nozzles

Targeted Spray Technology

Pulse width Modulation

Future Work

Deliverable 1:

- Any regulatory oversight or risk assessment changes by EPA needed to facilitate their use including:
 - *Regulatory Framework from a risk standpoint and suggest measurable benchmarks that must be proven to realize risk assessment benefits, i.e. if a tech reduces drift by 80% this is fully accounted for in the risk assessment process and communicated in label language*

Deliverable 2:

- How these technologies lead to reduced or increased risks that differ from those resulting from current methods
 - *Continue engaging with industry, academics, CERSA, EPA and other stakeholders to develop understanding for a developing an outline of a risk framework*
- What changes to EPA's approach to pesticide labels, if any, are needed to accommodate these technologies
 - *Use the learnings to recommend pesticide label changes that may or may not be required to accommodate these technologies*

From: [Jewell, Shannon](#)
To: [Alarcon, Walter \(CDC/NIOSH/DFSE/HIB\)](#); [Arroyo, Ruben](#); [Amy Asmus](#); [mbasu](#); [sbennett@thehcpcpa.org](#); [jasmine.brown@cskt.org](#); [laburd@biologicaldiversity.org](#); [douglas.a.burkett.civ@mail.mil](#); [ifigueroa](#); [Jim Fredericks](#); [Joseph Grzywacz](#); [ghalvorson@cpda.com](#); [ginah@piscltd.org.uk](#); [Jain, Komal](#); [mjohanson@gcsaa.org](#); [\(b\) \(6\)](#); [Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC](#); [\(b\) \(6\)](#); [charlotte.liang@fda.hhs.gov](#); [Amy Liebman](#); [lloyd@fcmcd.org](#); [tim](#); [dmarkowski@vddi.net](#); [garviprescher](#); [\(b\) \(6\)](#); [Damon Reabe](#); [Karen Reardon](#); [charlotte.sanson@adama.com](#); [dshaw@research.msstate.edu](#); [cstuckergassi](#); [cathy.tortorici@noaa.gov](#); [Liza Fleeson](#); [tuckerb@hit.net](#); [edward.wakem@ceva.com](#); [nwilson@gowanco.com](#); [Lauren Lurkins](#); [Mily Treviño-Sauceda](#); [Messina, Edward](#); [wisejohn@msu.edu](#); [Blackburn, Taijah](#); [Willis, Kristen](#)
Subject: Emerging Pathogens Working Group Slides
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 3:47:18 PM
Attachments: [PPDC Emerging Pathogens Working Group - Interim Report - May 2021.pdf](#) Non-responsive attachment.

Hello everyone,

Attached are the slides for the Emerging Pathogens Working Group's presentation.

Also, providing again—

Rosters and meeting notes for the working groups are available on the PPDC website here:

- [Emerging Agriculture Technologies Workgroup](#)
- [Emerging Pathogens Workgroup](#)
- [Farmworker and Clinicians Workgroup](#)
- [Resistance Management Workgroup](#) (roster only for now)

Thank you,
 Shannon

Shannon Jewell · [\(b\) \(6\)](#) · jewell.shannon@epa.gov
 Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee, Designated Federal Officer
[Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee Website](#)
 EPA Office of Pesticide Programs, Immediate Office

AGENDA—Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee Spring Meeting 2021

DAY ONE: Wednesday, May 12

[Click here to register for the meeting and receive login details.](#)

(Times are EDT)

11:00-11:15 Welcome and Opening Remarks

Ed Messina, Acting Director, Office of Pesticide Programs

11:15-11:45 Introductions by PPDC Members

11:45-12:30 OPP Updates: Recent Activities and Accomplishments

Session Chair: Ed Messina, Acting Director, Office of Pesticide Programs

Session Goal: To provide an overview of recent accomplishments by and changes within OPP, and to discuss these with PPDC members.

12:30-1:30 Lunch Break

1:30-2:30 Farmworker and Clinician Training Workgroup Update

Session Chairs: Mily Treviño-Sauceda, Alianza Nacional de Campesinas, Inc.; Carolyn Schroeder, Chief, Certification and Worker Protection Branch; Steve Schaible, Pesticide Registration Improvement Act (PRIA) Coordinator

Session Goals: To review conversations being held, and work being done so far, by the Farmworker and Clinician Training Workgroup. For members of the PPDC to provide feedback and thoughts about the direction of the work.

2:30-3:00 Emerging Agricultural Technologies Presentation

Presenter: Nick Tindall, American Equipment Manufacturers; Chad Biegler, Raven

Session Goals: To provide PPDC members with a brief survey of current sprayer tools as well as a near future look at where the technology is headed.

3:00-4:00 Emerging Agricultural Technologies Workgroup Update

Session Chairs: Mano Basu, CropLife America; Ed Messina, Acting Director, Office of Pesticide Programs

Session Goals: To review conversations being held, and work being done so far, by the Emerging Agricultural Technologies Workgroup. For members of the PPDC to provide feedback and thoughts about the direction of the work.

4:00-4:30 PPDC Member Presentation on Stakeholder Interests

Session Goal: For PPDC members to share their concerns and priorities with the EPA and other stakeholders.

Biological Products Stakeholders and Industry

Presenter: Nina Wilson, The Biological Product Industry Alliance (BPIA); Keith Jones, BPIA

4:30-5:00 Public Comments

5:00 Meeting Adjourns

AGENDA—Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee Spring Meeting 2021

DAY TWO: Thursday, May 13

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- 11:00-12:00 Emerging Pathogens Workgroup Update**
Session Chairs: Komal Jain, Center for Biocide Chemistries; Tajah Blackburn, Senior Scientist, Antimicrobials Division
Session Goals: To review conversations being held, and work being done so far, by the Emerging Pathogens Workgroup. For members of the PPDC to provide feedback and thoughts about the direction of the work.
- 12:00-1:00 Pesticide Resistance Management Workgroup Update**
Session Chair(s): David Shaw, Mississippi State University; Bill Chism, Senior Biologist, Biological and Economic Analysis Division; Alan Reynolds, Lead Biologist, Biopesticides and Pollution Prevention Division
Session Goals: To review conversations being held, and work being done so far, by the Pesticide Resistance Management Workgroup. For members of the PPDC to provide feedback and thoughts about the direction of the work.
- 1:00-1:20 PPDC Member Presentation on Stakeholder Interests**
Session Goal: For PPDC members to share their concerns and priorities with the EPA and other stakeholders.
Information and Perspective on the Crop Protection Industry
Presenters: Charlotte Sanson, ADAMA and Mano Basu, CropLife America
- 1:20-2:00 Lunch Break**
- 2:00-2:15 Welcome from Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator**
 Michal Freedhoff, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention
- 2:15-3:00 PPDC Member Presentations on Stakeholder Interests**
Session Goal: For PPDC members to share their concerns and priorities with the EPA and other stakeholders.
- 2:15-2:25 **On-going FIFRA-ESA Consultation Work**
Presenter: Cathy Tortorici, NOAA
- 2:25-2:35 **ESA Consultations and Species Protections**
Presenter: Lori Ann Burd, Center for Biological Diversity
- 2:35-3:00 Questions/comments on PPDC on Member Presentations
- 3:00-4:00 Risk Communication Presentation**
Presenter: Kaci Buhl, National Pesticide Information Center
Session Goals: To provide PPPDC members with an overview of objective, science-based risk communication.

AGENDA—Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee Spring Meeting 2021
DAY TWO: Thursday, May 13 Continued

4:00-4:30 Moving Forward

Session Chair: Ed Messina, Acting Director, Office of Pesticide Programs

Session Goals: To review action items mentioned during the meeting, and brainstorm agenda items for the Fall 2021 PPDC meeting.

4:30-5:00 Public Comments

5:00 Meeting Adjourns

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To: [Alarcon, Walter \(CDC/NIOSH/DFSE/HIB\)](#); [Arroyo, Ruben](#); [Amy Asmus](#); [mbasu](#); [sbennett@thehcpa.org](#); [PREP OneDrive](#); [jasmine.brown@cskt.org](#); [laburd@biologicaldiversity.org](#); [douglas.a.burkett.civ@mail.mil](#); [ifigueroa](#); [Jim Fredericks](#); [Joseph Grzywacz](#); [ghalvorson@cpda.com](#); [ginah@piscltd.org.uk](#); [Jain, Komal](#); [mjohnson@qcsaa.org](#); (b) (6); [Richard, Keiqwin](#); [Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC](#); [daniel.kunkel@rutgers.edu](#); [charlotte.liang@fda.hhs.gov](#); [Amy Lieberman](#); [lloyd@lcmcd.org](#); [tim](#); [dmarkowski@vdci.net](#); [garvlprescher](#); (b) (6); [Damon Reabe](#); [Karen Reardon](#); [charlotte.sanson@adama.com](#); [dshaw@research.msstate.edu](#); [cstuckergassi](#); [cathy.tortorici@noaa.gov](#); [mily@liderescampesinas.org](#); [Liza Fleeson](#); [tuckerb@hit.net](#); [edward.wakem@ceva.com](#); [nwilson@gowanco.com](#); [Jewell, Shannon](#); [Lauren Lurkins](#); [Therriault, Alberta \(Carla\)](#); [Reynolds, Alan](#); [Chism, William](#); [Schroeder, Carolyn](#); [Schaible, Stephen](#); [Blackburn, Tajah](#); [OPP Division Directors](#); [OPP Deputy & Associate Directors](#); [Wise, John](#); [Dawson, Jeffrey](#); (b) (6); [Ryan, Emily](#); [Hauff, Amanda](#); [bsanders](#)
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If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to Shannon and/or and Carla.

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AGENDA—Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee Spring Meeting 2021

DAY ONE: Wednesday, May 12

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(Times are EDT)

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Michal Freedhoff, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention

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Session Chair: Ed Messina, Acting Director, Office of Pesticide Programs

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Session Chairs: Mano Basu, CropLife America; Ed Messina, Acting Director, Office of Pesticide Programs

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Session Goal: For PPDC members to share their concerns and priorities with the EPA and other stakeholders.

Biological Products Stakeholders and Industry

Presenter: Nina Wilson, The Biological Product Industry Alliance (BPIA); Keith Jones, BPIA

4:30-5:00 **Public Comments**

5:00 **Meeting Adjourns**

AGENDA—Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee Fall Meeting 2021

DAY TWO: Thursday, May 13

[Click here to register for the meeting and receive login details.](#)

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Session Chairs: Komal Jain, Center for Biocide Chemistries; Tajah Blackburn, Senior Scientist, Antimicrobials Division
Session Goals: To review conversations being held, and work being done so far, by the Emerging Pathogens Workgroup. For members of the PPDC to provide feedback and thoughts about the direction of the work.
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- 2:00-3:00 PPDC Member Presentations on Stakeholder Interests**
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- 4:30-5:00 Public Comments**
- 5:00 Meeting Adjourns**

From: jewell.shannon@epa.gov on behalf of [Messina, Edward](#)
To: [Alarcon, Walter \(CDC/NIOSH/DFSE/HIB\)](#); [Arroyo, Ruben](#); [Amy Asmus](#); [mbasu](#); [sbennett@thehcpa.org](#); [PREP OneDrive](#); [jasmine.brown@cskt.org](#); [laburd@biologicaldiversity.org](#); [douglas.a.burkett.civ@mail.mil](#); [ifigueroa](#); [Jim Fredericks](#); [Joseph Grzywacz](#); [ghalvorson@cpda.com](#); [ginah@piscltd.org.uk](#); [Jain, Komal](#); [mjohnson@qcsaa.org](#); (b) (6); [Richard, Keiqwin](#); [Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC](#); [daniel.kunkel@rutgers.edu](#); [charlotte.liang@fda.hhs.gov](#); [Amy Liebman](#); [lloyd@lcmcd.org](#); [tim](#); [dmarkowski@vdci.net](#); [garvlprescher](#); (b) (6); [Damon Reabe](#); [Karen Reardon](#); [charlotte.sanson@adama.com](#); [dshaw@research.msstate.edu](#); [cstuckergassi](#); [cathy.tortorici@noaa.gov](#); [mily@liderescampesinas.org](#); [Liza Fleeson](#); [tuckerb@hit.net](#); [edward.wakem@ceva.com](#); [nwilson@gowanco.com](#); [Jewell, Shannon](#); [Lauren Lurkins](#); [Therriault, Alberta \(Carla\)](#); [Mily Treviño-Sauceda](#); [Reynolds, Alan](#); [Chism, William](#); [Schroeder, Carolyn](#); [Schaible, Stephen](#); [Blackburn, Tajah](#); [OPP Division Directors](#); [OPP Deputy & Associate Directors](#); [Wise, John](#); [Dawson, Jeffrey](#); (b) (6); [Ryan, Emily](#); [Hauff, Amanda](#)
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If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to Shannon and/or and Carla.

Shannon Jewell : (b) (6) · jewell.shannon@epa.gov <<mailto:jewell.shannon@epa.gov>>

Carla Theriault : (b) (6) · theriault.carla@epa.gov <<mailto:theriault.carla@epa.gov>>

From: [Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC](#) on behalf of [Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC](#)
To: [Manojit Basu](#)
Subject: Re: [External Email]Call
Date: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 9:48:37 AM

That is perfect! Talk with you soon and try to stay cool!

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From: Manojit Basu <mbasu@croplifeamerica.org>
Sent: Monday, May 24, 2021 11:25:01 PM
To: Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>
Subject: Re: [External Email]Call

Hi Sheryl,

Thanks for your email. I would like to connect with you. Since I didn't have your personal contact information I had send an email to this address. Please feel free to call me at (b) (6) this Thursday at 11.

Thanks for your response.

Best wishes
 Manojit

Sent from my iPhone

On May 24, 2021, at 7:48 PM, Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC
 <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov> wrote:

Hi Manojit,
 I was at PPDC since EPA doesn't allow substitutes. I did not want USDA absent (b) (6). For your request, if it is for the office, Clayton or Julie can assist. If it is for me, I can be available Thursday at 11 am. Let me know the path forward! Hope all is well!
 Cheers,
 Sheryl

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From: Manojit Basu <mbasu@croplifeamerica.org>
Sent: Monday, May 24, 2021 1:25:24 PM
To: Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>
Subject: [External Email]Call

[External Email]

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Dear Dr Kunickis,

I hope this finds you well and it was great talking to you at the PPDC meeting. DO you have some time for us to connect for no more than 30 min.

Best wishes
Mano

Manojit Basu, PhD
Managing Director, Science Policy
CropLife America
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Suite 700
Arlington, VA 22203

(b) (6) – direct
(202) 296-1585 – main
mbasu@croplifeamerica.org

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From: [Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC](#) on behalf of [Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC](#)
To: rmcallister@croplifeamerica.org
Subject: Annotated agenda
Date: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 9:53:39 AM

Could you send? I am not on the list. Thanks!

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From: [Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC](#) on behalf of [Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC](#)
To: [Dr. Sheryl Kunickis](#)
Subject: Fwd: [External Email]PPDC Meeting - Important Technology Information
Date: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 7:16:50 PM

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From: Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC <sheryl.kunickis@usda.gov> on behalf of Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 1:25 PM
To: Sarah Chadwick
Subject: Re: [External Email]PPDC Meeting - Important Technology Information

Thank you!

Sheryl H. Kunickis, Ph.D., Director
 USDA/OCE- Office of Pest Management Policy
 1400 Independence Ave., SW;
 Washington, D.C. 20250-3817
 (202) 573-4984 Cell phone
sheryl.kunickis2@usda.gov

From: Sarah Chadwick <Sarah_Chadwick@abtassoc.com>
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 11:00 AM
To: wda7@cdc.gov <wda7@cdc.gov>; douglas.a.burkett.civ@mail.mil <douglas.a.burkett.civ@mail.mil>; amy@afschem.com <amy@afschem.com>; sbennett@thehcpa.org <sbennett@thehcpa.org>; RUARROYO@RIVCO.ORG <RUARROYO@RIVCO.ORG>; laburd@biologicaldiversity.org <laburd@biologicaldiversity.org>; ramsay@wsu.edu <ramsay@wsu.edu>; ifigueroa@farmworkerjustice.org <ifigueroa@farmworkerjustice.org>; jfredericks@pestworld.org <jfredericks@pestworld.org>; Jasmine.Brown@cskt.org <Jasmine.Brown@cskt.org>; jgrzywacz@fsu.edu <jgrzywacz@fsu.edu>; ghalvorson@cpda.com <ghalvorson@cpda.com>; Komal_Jain@americanchemistry.com <Komal_Jain@americanchemistry.com>; ginah@piscld.org.uk <ginah@piscld.org.uk>; mjohnson@gcsaa.org <mjohnson@gcsaa.org>; Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>; (b) (6) <(b) (6)>; charlotte.liang@fda.hhs.gov <charlotte.liang@fda.hhs.gov>; aliebman@migrantclinician.org <aliebman@migrantclinician.org>; (b) (6) <(b) (6)>; lloyd@lcmcd.org <lloyd@lcmcd.org>; llurkins@ilfb.org <llurkins@ilfb.org>; tim@sorghumgrowers.com <tim@sorghumgrowers.com>; mbasu@croplifeamerica.org <mbasu@croplifeamerica.org>; messina.edward@epa.gov <messina.edward@epa.gov>; dmarkowski@vdc.net <dmarkowski@vdc.net>; (b) (6) <(b) (6)>; damon@dairylandaviation.com <damon@dairylandaviation.com>; (b) (6) <(b) (6)>; charlotte.sanson@adama.com <charlotte.sanson@adama.com>; kreardon@pestfacts.org <kreardon@pestfacts.org>; dshaw@research.msstate.edu <dshaw@research.msstate.edu>; cstuckergassi@pesticide.org <cstuckergassi@pesticide.org>;

Mily@campesinasunite.org <Mily@campesinasunite.org>; liza.fleeson@vdacs.virginia.gov <liza.fleeson@vdacs.virginia.gov>; (b) (6) <(b) (6)>; edward.wakem@ceva.com <edward.wakem@ceva.com>; nwilson@gowanco.com <nwilson@gowanco.com>; wisejohn@msu.edu <wisejohn@msu.edu>; Reynolds.Alan@epa.gov <Reynolds.Alan@epa.gov>; Chism.Bill@epa.gov <Chism.Bill@epa.gov>; caydee.savinelli@syngenta.com <caydee.savinelli@syngenta.com>; Mallampalli.Nikhil@epa.gov <Mallampalli.Nikhil@epa.gov>; Nesci.Kimberly@epa.gov <Nesci.Kimberly@epa.gov>; blackburn.tajah@epa.gov <blackburn.tajah@epa.gov>; Blankinship.Amy@epa.gov <Blankinship.Amy@epa.gov>; Schroeder.Carolyn@epa.gov <Schroeder.Carolyn@epa.gov>; Schaible.Stephen@epa.gov <Schaible.Stephen@epa.gov>; Kaci.Buhl@oregonstate.edu <Kaci.Buhl@oregonstate.edu>; farmworkerassoc@aol.com <farmworkerassoc@aol.com>; Black.Aidan@epa.gov <Black.Aidan@epa.gov>; Liem.Francisca@epa.gov <Liem.Francisca@epa.gov>; Myers.Dan@epa.gov <Myers.Dan@epa.gov>; Miederhoff.Eric@epa.gov <Miederhoff.Eric@epa.gov>; jones@bpia.org <jones@bpia.org>; jewell.shannon@epa.gov <jewell.shannon@epa.gov>; Theriault.Carla@epa.gov <Theriault.Carla@epa.gov>; Paul Anninos <Paul_Anninos@abtassoc.com>

Subject: [External Email]PPDC Meeting - Important Technology Information

[External Email]

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Hello all,

Thank you for joining one of the webinar technology overview sessions this week in preparation for the Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee Virtual Meeting. Please email me, Sarah Chadwick (sarah_chadwick@abtassoc.com), if you were not able to attend and would like a short technology demonstration. This email and the attached documents contain important updates for next week's meetings. Please read everything in full. Some key information is below.

Meeting information:

- Panelist link to join the meetings:
(b) (6) (do not share with the public)
- Audio: We recommend using computer audio and a headset.
- Join using a computer, not a phone or tablet.
- We will be using the chat feature to communicate during the event. ***You must select "everyone" from the drop-down menu in the chat box. The public will be able to see your messages.***

Reach out if you have any questions. My email is sarah_chadwick@abtassoc.com and my phone number is (b) (6).

Best,

Sarah Chadwick | Associate Analyst | Environment and Health Division
Abt Associates Inc. | 6130 Executive Blvd., Rockville, MD 20852

T: (b) (6) www.abtassociates.com



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From: [Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC](#) on behalf of [Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC](#)
To: [OPMP - All OPMP Users](#)
Subject: Fwd: [External Email]PPDC
Date: Friday, May 7, 2021 4:51:28 PM

Sharing in case you are interested!
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From: Ray McAllister <RMcAllister@croplifeamerica.org>
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 2:25 PM
To: Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC; Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC
Cc: Manojit Basu; Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC
Subject: RE: [External Email]PPDC

The connection information for the Breakfast session (9:30 a.m. on both the 12th and 13th) is below. OPMP staff are all welcome (please share this with them), and the group will be interested in your perspectives on the business of the day.

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only)

+1 206-413-7021 (b) (6) # United States, Seattle

Phone Conference ID: (b) (6) #

[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)

Ray S. McAllister
 Senior Director, Regulatory Policy
 CroLife America
 (b) (6) (office)
 (b) (6) (mobile)
ray@croplife.us

From: Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 1:56 PM
To: Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>; Ray McAllister <RMcAllister@croplifeamerica.org>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>
Cc: Manojit Basu <mbasu@croplifeamerica.org>; Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC <sheryl.kunickis@usda.gov>
Subject: Re: [External Email]PPDC

There is. Ray McAllister reached out earlier and I told him you would be attending PPDC. You should connect with him if he hasn't already reached out to you.

Thanks!
Clayton

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From: Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC <sheryl.kunickis@usda.gov> on behalf of Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 1:28:46 PM
To: Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>; rncallister@croplifeamerica.org <rncallister@croplifeamerica.org>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>
Cc: Manojit Basu <mbasu@croplifeamerica.org>; Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC <sheryl.kunickis@usda.gov>
Subject: Re: [External Email]PPDC

Please let me know if there is a virtual breakfast to attend. I will be representing USDA.

Thanks,
Shery

Sheryl H. Kunickis, Ph.D., Director

USDA/OCE- Office of Pest Management Policy

1400 Independence Ave., SW;

Washington, D.C. 20250-3817

(202) 573-4984 Cell phone

sheryl.kunickis2@usda.gov

From: Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC on behalf of Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 3:55 PM
To: Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>; rncallister@croplifeamerica.org <rncallister@croplifeamerica.org>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>
Cc: Manojit Basu <mbasu@croplifeamerica.org>; Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC <sheryl.kunickis@usda.gov>
Subject: Re: [External Email]PPDC

I plan to attend both days!

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From: Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 3:45:16 PM
To: rmcallister@croplifeamerica.org <rmcallister@croplifeamerica.org>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>
Cc: Manojit Basu <mbasu@croplifeamerica.org>; Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>; Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC <sheryl.kunickis@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: [External Email]PPDC

Sheryl reached out and was informed that no substitutions were allowed. I think she might still plan to attend, but she can confirm her plans. I've copied her here.

Clayton

From: Ray McAllister <RMcAllister@croplifeamerica.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 3:23 PM
To: Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>
Cc: Manojit Basu <mbasu@croplifeamerica.org>
Subject: [External Email]PPDC

[External Email]

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Clayton & Julie:

(b) (6), how will OPMP be represented at the PPDC meeting next week? Could you call me about the breakfast session that CLA hosts?

Ray S. McAllister
 Senior Director, Regulatory Policy
 CroLife America
(b) (6) (office)
(b) (6) (mobile)
ray@croplife.us

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From: [Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC](#) on behalf of [Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC](#)
To: [Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Andrew R. Kniss](#)
Cc: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#); [Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: Re: Pesticide Usage Analysis
Date: Thursday, April 15, 2021 7:13:47 PM

Awesome to hear! Andrew- congrats! We met in Montana almost two years ago!
 Sounds like an excellent project! (b) (6) and we have an outstanding staff
 that will be working with you!

Sheryl

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From: Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2021 4:37:55 PM
To: Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>
Cc: Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>; Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Pesticide Usage Analysis

Dr. Kniss,

We are in the early stages, but I wanted to pass along the good news that USDA-OCE is agreeable to a \$100,000 cooperative agreement to move forward on our collaboration idea, looking at eco-toxicity indices in agriculture. We can chat soon to start scoping what will happen, but I wanted to make you aware. Our Chief economist was excited by this idea, and I think the Shultz et al. paper that came out in Science helped to light a fire about the need for this project.

I look forward to discussing more details soon. Thanks so much!

Clayton Myers, Ph.D.

(he/him/his)

Acting Director, Entomologist

USDA-Office of Pest Management Policy

1400 Independence Ave. Room 3871, South Building

Washington, DC 20250

From: Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 5, 2021 1:00 AM
To: Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Peterson, Chris - FAS, Washington, DC <Chris.Peterson@usda.gov>; Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>

Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>; Joseph Grey Ballenger <jballeng@uwyo.edu>

Subject: Re: Pesticide Usage Analysis

Thanks for the information Seth. Been thinking about our discussion over the break a bit.

The Biotech Risk Assessment Grant (BRAG) RFA came out just a few days before our last discussion ([link to RFA](#)). It requests an (optional) letter of intent for January 21, and full applications are due February 24. Those are fairly tight timelines, but I've written grants in less time (some successful, some less so).

I've sketched out a couple ideas that might fly for that RFA based on the information Seth sent and our group discussion - but before tossing them out I wanted to see what role OPMP/FAS folks might want to (or be able to?) play in an effort like that. I've worked with ARS folks on grants before, but didn't know if you all are allowed/encouraged/ineligible to participate in NIFA grants?

For those unfamiliar with the BRAG program:

"The purpose of the BRAG program Assistance Listing 10.219, is to **support the generation of new information that will assist Federal regulatory agencies** [USDA's – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service - Biotechnology Regulatory Services (APHIS-BRS), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Food and Drug Administration (FDA)] **in making science-based decisions about the environmental effects of introducing genetically engineered (GE) organisms by recombinant nucleic acid techniques.** The organisms include plants, microorganisms (including fungi, bacteria, and viruses), arthropods, fish, birds, livestock, and other animals these include related wild and agricultural organisms."

Program area 4 is "*Environmental effects of GE relative to Non-GE Organisms in the Context of Production Systems*" and I think there are a number of avenues that what we discussed could be pursued competitively.

Would be happy to chat in more detail about project ideas, but figured I'd see what level of interest you all may have first.

Thanks,
AK

From: Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>

Sent: Friday, December 18, 2020 4:13 PM

To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Peterson, Chris - FAS, Washington, DC <Chris.Peterson@usda.gov>; Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>; Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>; Joseph Grey Ballenger <jballeng@uwyo.edu>; FAS-RMB-

Calendar TPGA BioTech <CalendarTPGABioTech@usda.gov>

Subject: Re: Pesticide Usage Analysis

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Hello all,

Here's a quick follow up to our conversation yesterday.

First, Agrottrak is a nationally representative, plot-level survey of field and specialty crop producers' pesticide use decisions. The data is also representative at the state-level, and in some cases can be aggregated to CRDs. I've never been able to get a copy of the survey instrument, but I've attached some of the documentation that Kynetec sent us.

Here's some additional, very general information about what's in the dataset.

There are over 50 crop and land types, including: Alfalfa, Almonds, Apples, Apricots, Artichoke, Asparagus, Avocados, Barley, Beans (Snap, Bush, Pole, String), Broccoli, Cabbage, Caneberries, Canola (oilseed rape), Cantaloupes, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Cherries, Corn, Cotton, Cucumbers, Peas, Garlic, Grapefruit, Grapes, Hazelnuts, Lemons, Lettuce, Lima Beans, Onions, Oranges, Pasture/Range, Pastureland, Peaches, Peanuts, Pears, Peas (Fresh/Green/Sweet), Pecans, Peppers, Pistachios, Plums/Prunes, Potatoes, Pumpkins, Rice, Sorghum (Milo), Soybeans, Spinach, Squash, Strawberries, Sugar Beets, Sugarcane, Sunflowers, Sweet Corn, Tobacco, Tomatoes, Walnuts, Watermelons, and Wheat.

Data is available for every pesticide application. The data available include: the pounds applied, the application rate, the target pest, the product price, the number of applications, the timing of the application, and the mode of application. This type of data is also available at the a.i. level.

For corn, cotton, and soybeans, there is also information about the seed product used. So, it's possible to determine if the application was made to a crop that was herbicide tolerant or insect resistant.

Major limitations of the data include the fact that it doesn't contain any information about other production practices, yields, or field-level characteristics.

I know that there are a variety of ag economists that have published using this data. I've included a recent fairly descriptive paper some colleagues and I wrote about seed treatments, and a paper written by that KState group on trends in pesticide use for corn and soybeans. Zach Brown at NC state also purchased this data at some point, I think. I don't remember if he published an analysis of it. Currently, he is analyzing Kynetec Traittrak data, I think.

I know Joe mentioned that he was interested in the link between Bt seed use and insecticides, so I've also attached a recent paper I wrote on that subject. Here we quality adjust pesticide use by dividing pounds by the label rate of the products (which is similar to the approach Andrew took in his 2018 Nature Communications piece).

I enjoyed what little of our conversation I participated in yesterday, and I love the idea of exploring trends in the use of specialty crops.

Happy Holidays!

Seth

Seth Wechsler, Ph.D.

U.S. Department of Agriculture/Office of the Chief Economist/Office of Pest Management Policy

South Building, Room 3871; 1400 Independence Ave., SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-3817

(b) (6)

seth.wechsler@usda.gov

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From: [Andrew R. Kniss](#)
To: [Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC](#)
Cc: [Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC](#); [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#); [Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: Re: Pesticide Usage Analysis
Date: Thursday, April 15, 2021 5:22:10 PM

Hi Clayton, this is excellent news! I'm excited to discuss further. I agree that the Shultz paper illustrates the need for a more nuanced and careful look at pesticide tox trends. Will look forward to more info.
 Andrew

From: Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2021 2:37 PM
To: Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>
Cc: Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>; Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Pesticide Usage Analysis

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I look forward to discussing more details soon. Thanks so much!

Clayton Myers, Ph.D.

(he/him/his)

Acting Director, Entomologist

USDA-Office of Pest Management Policy

1400 Independence Ave. Room 3871, South Building

Washington, DC 20250

From: Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 5, 2021 1:00 AM
To: Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Peterson, Chris - FAS, Washington, DC <Chris.Peterson@usda.gov>; Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>;

Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>; Joseph Grey Ballenger <jballeng@uwyo.edu>

Subject: Re: Pesticide Usage Analysis

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I've sketched out a couple ideas that might fly for that RFA based on the information Seth sent and our group discussion - but before tossing them out I wanted to see what role OPMP/FAS folks might want to (or be able to?) play in an effort like that. I've worked with ARS folks on grants before, but didn't know if you all are allowed/encouraged/ineligible to participate in NIFA grants?

For those unfamiliar with the BRAG program:

"The purpose of the BRAG program Assistance Listing 10.219, is to **support the generation of new information that will assist Federal regulatory agencies** [USDA's – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service - Biotechnology Regulatory Services (APHIS-BRS), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Food and Drug Administration (FDA)] **in making science-based decisions about the environmental effects of introducing genetically engineered (GE) organisms by recombinant nucleic acid techniques.** The organisms include plants, microorganisms (including fungi, bacteria, and viruses), arthropods, fish, birds, livestock, and other animals these include related wild and agricultural organisms."

Program area 4 is "*Environmental effects of GE relative to Non-GE Organisms in the Context of Production Systems*" and I think there are a number of avenues that what we discussed could be pursued competitively.

Would be happy to chat in more detail about project ideas, but figured I'd see what level of interest you all may have first.

Thanks,
AK

From: Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>

Sent: Friday, December 18, 2020 4:13 PM

To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Peterson, Chris - FAS, Washington, DC <Chris.Peterson@usda.gov>; Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>; Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>; Joseph Grey Ballenger <jballeng@uwyo.edu>; FAS-RMB-

Calendar TPGA BioTech <CalendarTPGABioTech@usda.gov>

Subject: Re: Pesticide Usage Analysis

This message was sent from a non-UWYO address. Please exercise caution when clicking links or opening attachments from external sources.

Hello all,

Here's a quick follow up to our conversation yesterday.

First, Agrottrak is a nationally representative, plot-level survey of field and specialty crop producers' pesticide use decisions. The data is also representative at the state-level, and in some cases can be aggregated to CRDs. I've never been able to get a copy of the survey instrument, but I've attached some of the documentation that Kynetec sent us.

Here's some additional, very general information about what's in the dataset.

There are over 50 crop and land types, including: Alfalfa, Almonds, Apples, Apricots, Artichoke, Asparagus, Avocados, Barley, Beans (Snap, Bush, Pole, String), Broccoli, Cabbage, Caneberries, Canola (oilseed rape), Cantaloupes, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Cherries, Corn, Cotton, Cucumbers, Peas, Garlic, Grapefruit, Grapes, Hazelnuts, Lemons, Lettuce, Lima Beans, Onions, Oranges, Pasture/Range, Pastureland, Peaches, Peanuts, Pears, Peas (Fresh/Green/Sweet), Pecans, Peppers, Pistachios, Plums/Prunes, Potatoes, Pumpkins, Rice, Sorghum (Milo), Soybeans, Spinach, Squash, Strawberries, Sugar Beets, Sugarcane, Sunflowers, Sweet Corn, Tobacco, Tomatoes, Walnuts, Watermelons, and Wheat.

Data is available for every pesticide application. The data available include: the pounds applied, the application rate, the target pest, the product price, the number of applications, the timing of the application, and the mode of application. This type of data is also available at the a.i. level.

For corn, cotton, and soybeans, there is also information about the seed product used. So, it's possible to determine if the application was made to a crop that was herbicide tolerant or insect resistant.

Major limitations of the data include the fact that it doesn't contain any information about other production practices, yields, or field-level characteristics.

I know that there are a variety of ag economists that have published using this data. I've included a recent fairly descriptive paper some colleagues and I wrote about seed treatments, and a paper written by that KState group on trends in pesticide use for corn and soybeans. Zach Brown at NC state also purchased this data at some point, I think. I don't remember if he published an analysis of it. Currently, he is analyzing Kynetec Traittrak data, I think.

I know Joe mentioned that he was interested in the link between Bt seed use and insecticides, so I've also attached a recent paper I wrote on that subject. Here we quality adjust pesticide use by dividing pounds by the label rate of the products (which is similar to the approach Andrew took in his 2018 Nature Communications piece).

I enjoyed what little of our conversation I participated in yesterday, and I love the idea of exploring trends in the use of specialty crops.

Happy Holidays!

Seth

Seth Wechsler, Ph.D.

U.S. Department of Agriculture/Office of the Chief Economist/Office of Pest Management Policy

South Building, Room 3871; 1400 Independence Ave., SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-3817

(b) (6)

seth.wechsler@usda.gov

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From: [Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC](#)
To: [Gamini Manuweera](#); [Haosong Jiao](#)
Cc: [Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC](#); Wormell.Lance@epa.gov; [Delgado, Jorge](#)
Subject: USDA Comments on Preliminary Draft of UNEP Pesticides & Fertilizers Report
Date: Friday, August 28, 2020 8:52:21 AM
Attachments: [USDA Comments on UNEP Fertilizers and Pesticides Report.pdf](#) Responsive portions of the attachment are below.

Gamini and Haosong,

Attached are USDA's comments on the preliminary draft of the UNEP Pesticides and Fertilizers Report that you shared with us as part of stakeholder consultations on Chapter 12 ("Transformative Actions") of the report. We appreciate that you have a fairly tight deadline for publishing this report, but would greatly appreciate the opportunity to review finalized and completed drafts of portions of the report (i.e., Chapter 4, and Chapter 12) that were not final drafts when our stakeholder consultation occurred on August 18th, 2020.

Please let me know if you have any follow-up questions on our comments or suggested revisions, and thank you again for the opportunity to contribute our thoughts on this report.

Cameron Douglass, Ph.D.
Agronomist/Weed Scientist, Office of Pest Management Policy
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office: (b) (6)
Cell: (b) (6)
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Room 3859 (Mail Stop 3817)
Washington, DC 20250-3191

August 28, 2020

Gamini Manuweera & Haosong Jiao
Knowledge and Risk Unit, Economy Division
United Nations Environment Program
8-14 Avenue de la Paix
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Re: USDA Comments on the Draft United Nations Environment Program Report on Pesticides and Fertilizers

Dear Mr. Manuweera and Ms. Jiao,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the United Nations Environment Program's (UNEP) draft Report on Pesticides and Fertilizers (hereafter referred to as "the Report"), and for soliciting our participation in recent international stakeholder discussions on the Report. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) staff have reviewed the Report and respectfully submit the following comments for your consideration. These comments reflect the views of myself and other USDA colleagues referenced in this document.

In addition to specific chapter comments and line edits that are detailed below, general thoughts on the Report and the review process include:

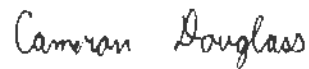
- The amount of time given to stakeholders to review the Report was inadequate given the size of the document and the scope of its contents. The Report was delivered to stakeholders in a relatively piecemeal fashion, with draft versions of six chapters (2, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 9) made available on July 16th, the remaining 4 constituent chapters (4, 6, 10 and 11) available on August 5th, and a preliminary draft of Chapter 12 provided on August 10th. However, when international stakeholders met virtually on August 18, 2020 to discuss the Report, portions of the document were either missing (including important sections of Chapter 4), or were still clearly early drafts that had not been carefully proofread. We strongly urge UNEP to redistribute to stakeholders a final and complete draft of the Report for full and formal review prior to publishing the Report.
- As discussed in our more specific comments below, we feel that the content of the Report is unbalanced and focuses disproportionately on the negative impacts of pesticides, without adequate attributions to the benefits of pesticides or the complexity of how pesticide use can enhance other environmental or conservation goals. We encourage the Report's authors to expand relevant portions of the document to better account for beneficial attributes of pesticides, including (but not limited to): contributions to global food security; stabilization of production costs and commodity prices; enhancement of international commerce; improvement of grower livelihoods; and reductions in the spread and negative impacts of harmful invasive pests.
- We find that throughout the Report, the concept of pesticide risk reduction is conflated with simply reducing pesticide use. Pesticides are not a monolithic entity, and we emphatically argue that using "reduction in pesticide use" as a catch-all proxy measure of success is neither appropriate nor correct. Reducing pesticide use without consideration of specific pest management goals, specific pesticide risk profiles, or the circumstances of pesticide usage and exposure can actually increase certain health and environmental risks within the larger agricultural context. We strongly suggest that early in the Report the authors clearly define and substantiate with reliable evidence an approach to pesticide risk reduction that is not based solely on reduced use of pesticides alone.
- We appreciate the summary of "transformative actions" presented by the Report's authors in the final chapter; however, we would caution the authors on being overly prescriptive with regards to

solutions that might address a given stakeholder's challenges regarding pesticide risk reduction and promoting national or regional-level agricultural innovations. Agricultural practices, and the challenges faced by producers and others involved in associated economic systems, vary tremendously across the globe, and no single set of solutions will universally fit. We encourage the Report's authors to take time to solicit feedback on the proposed "transformative actions" not only from stakeholder governments, but also from non-governmental organizations, research institutions, and notably from agricultural stakeholders, including producers and IPM experts. Particularly with regards to the most innovative and forward-thinking "transformative actions" these industry stakeholders will play critical roles in research, development, and adoption of changes. They will also be critical in shaping (along with governments) market forces that will allow such technologies and adaptations to be economically feasible.

We present more detailed comments below on specific chapters of the Report, and again sincerely appreciate the opportunity to participate in UNEP's consultation process. We hope that UNEP will continue to be open to stakeholder engagement and feedback on this Report, and we look forward to continuing to support and contribute to development of this Report in any way we may be of assistance. Please contact me if you have any questions about our comments.

Sincerely and respectfully,

Cameron Douglass, Ph.D.



Weed Scientist/Agronomist
Office of Pest Management Policy
United State Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Detailed Comments and Suggested Edits on Report Chapters

Part I – Pesticides

Chapter 2. Status and Trends of Pesticide Use

- Section 2.7.4 (which discusses the role of adoption of genetically modified crops as it relates to pesticide use) states that the *“impact of HT (herbicide tolerant) crops on the use of herbicides is more ambiguous”* but then goes on to emphasize only research that suggested an increase in herbicide use after the introduction of HT crops. Not only is this narrative misleading, but it ignores recently published evidence (Kniss 2017 and 2018) that: 1) clearly describes trends in herbicide use relative to the adoption of HT crops in the U.S.; and 2) indicates that while the intensity of herbicide use may have increased for some crops, the relative toxicity of the herbicides used in those crops – which is arguably more relevant and important to risks from pesticide use – has decreased. We encourage UNEP authors to account for this research in this foundational chapter of the Report, and have attached PDF copies of these two papers out of courtesy (Kniss 2017 - **Attachment 1**; Kniss 2018 – **Attachment 2**).
- In parts of Section 2.7.5 UNEP seems to imply that reduction in pesticide use is an implicit goal of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies, which is not accurate, and in fact contradicts the authors own definition of IPM provided in Box 2.7.2 (p. 43): *“IPM means the careful consideration of all available pest control techniques and subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage the development of pest populations and keep pesticides and other interventions to levels that are economically justified and reduce or minimize risks to human health and the environment.”* We suggest that the authors ensure in this section, and elsewhere in the Report, that the characterization of goals of IPM is accurately nuanced.

Chapter 3. Regulatory and Policy Environment for Pesticide Management and Use

- We encourage the authors to avoid confounding opinions with facts, and to utilize proper citations of reliable research to support any claims. The authors should use particular care when making broad statements without citations and/or statements that would be more appropriately made by governments.

Chapter 4. Human Health and Environmental Effects of Pesticide Use

- We note that the version of this chapter that was made available to us to review is incomplete, and specifically is missing the majority of the environmental effects section of the chapter. As such, we respectfully request that the authors to make a complete draft of this chapter available for our review prior to publishing the document.
- Section 4.1 states: *“Furthermore, extensive regulatory risk assessments of individual pesticides are being published by international entities, such as the Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) or the International Agency on Cancer (IARC), as well as major national or regional regulatory authorities, such as the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US-EPA) or the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), among others.”* We suggest that the authors correct this sentence and remove the reference to IARC as a regulatory body, as IARC does not conduct pesticide regulatory risk assessments. The authors should recognize that IARC only conducts limited *hazard* assessments based on a subset of the full dataset that would be evaluated by a regulatory authority. The pesticide risk assessment entity

within the WHO is the WHO Core Assessment Group, which evaluates pesticide toxicological data, including carcinogenicity data, based on the principles of risk, which includes consideration of both *hazard* and *exposure*.

- In our view, the general description of pesticide risk assessment processes presented in Section 4.2 has several mischaracterizations or omissions:
 - a. Nowhere in this section or chapter is it detailed that pesticide risk assessments are based largely on proposed or approved labels, and the use information that they contain;
 - b. As briefly discussed here, pesticide risk assessments rely on evaluations of both environmental exposure and of likely ecological and human health effects. This chapter focuses heavily on the latter (or at least will when it is complete), while providing only a minimal description of environmental exposure assessments. The environmental exposure information that is presented in this chapter describes the role of monitoring in pesticide risk assessments, and does not detail at all the critically important use of exposure modelling based on empirical environmental fate studies, label use information, and the physio-chemical properties of pesticides in risk assessments. We would suggest that the authors provide a more complete description of pesticide risk assessment methods in this chapter, and in particular present a more balanced perspective on environmental exposure evaluation methods.
 - c. In general, the chapter understates the role of toxicology studies that are designed and conducted for the explicit purpose of use in regulatory risk assessment. The chronic exposure discussion focuses almost entirely on the field of epidemiology – the application of which are still being developed in regulatory decision-making, especially given the relative paucity of high-quality epidemiology studies that would be fit for this purpose. We suggest that the authors consider information on how toxicology studies currently required under pesticide regulatory frameworks account for chronic effects, including the highly protective safety margins that are involved in such assessments.
- Section 4.4 states: “*Resistance development occurs when the genetic makeup of a pest population changes in response to selection by pesticides.*” While not wholly incorrect, we would encourage the authors to present a more holistic and accurate representation of how the development of pesticide resistance occurs in biological populations with respect to individuals. In particular, the authors need to more fully emphasize the role of pre-existing random genetic mutations in individuals of a given population that confer resistance to a pesticide for that individual. Selection pressure acts on individuals, and the outcome of that process is genetic changes in the broader population. In fact, as evidenced by the work of Delye et al. (2013) and others, genes conferring herbicide resistance have been found to predate the development of modern herbicides by almost half a century (see **Attachment 3**).
- In general, the use of the word “poisoning” does not capture the nuance or range of adverse effects (i.e., mild effects vs. severe effects, temporary/reversible effects vs. permanent effects) that may result from pesticide exposure. We suggest that the authors use the term “adverse effect,” and qualify to the extent feasible, in order to better capture these nuances.

Chapter 5. Impact of Pesticide Use

- As stated earlier in our comments on Chapter 3, we encourage the authors to avoid confounding opinions with facts, and to utilize proper citations of reliable research to support any claims. The authors should use particular care when making broad statements without citations and/or statements that would be more appropriately made by governments. Moreover, when including material from external reports or published studies the authors should distinguish whether text is the authors

interpretation or whether the text is directly paraphrased – in either case the external reports or published studies should clearly be cited.

- In our view, portions of this chapter that focus on cost and benefit analyses of pesticides are not appropriately balanced, and disproportionately emphasize the costs (or impacts) of pesticides while simultaneously arguing that there is very little reliable evidence to inform the benefits portion of this equation and undercutting the reliability of the few data points presented on benefits of pesticides. The ‘Key Findings’ at the beginning of this chapter states “*Very few comprehensive assessments are available which compare the overall costs of pesticide use with their estimated benefits.*” In fact, The US EPA and other international pesticide regulatory bodies routinely and rigorously assesses both the risks and benefits of the use of pesticides. We encourage the study authors to revise this chapter so as to better capture the approaches towards weighing costs and benefits of pesticide use employed by international regulatory bodies.
- The Report generally underestimates the benefits of pesticides in preventing the entry/introduction of harmful pests into foreign territories (i.e., the sanitary and phytosanitary benefits). We suggest that a discussion of these benefits would be appropriate in this chapter.

Chapter 6. Current Pesticide Risk Reduction and Risk Management

- This chapter appears to present a very high-level summary of the role of international, regional and national policy, regulatory and legal instruments play in managing risks from pesticides. In doing so, this chapter repeats much of the information presented in Chapter 3, and also – in our view – ignores and or downplays the arguably equally important role that product- and system-level risk mitigation strategies play in reducing environmental and human health risks from pesticides. We acknowledge that policy, regulatory and legal instruments form the basis for pesticide risk reduction efforts globally, and warrant discussion, particularly with regards to expansion of such tools in nations that may lack capacity for rigorous pesticide regulatory efforts. With this said, a proper treatment of the topic of pesticide risk reduction is incomplete without a discussion of the risk mitigations strategies that international pesticide regulatory bodies commonly employ to reduce exposure risks to both humans and the environment.
- In Section 6.3, Table 6.3-1, we strongly question the assertion that private standards requiring organic production or IPM can reduce health and environmental impacts of pest management, and that private standards create a direct link between sound pest and pesticide management and the opportunity to sell produce. In fact, elsewhere in the Report (i.e., Section 2.7.12), the authors acknowledge that certain types of private standards, such as limits on residues in food, are not generally based on scientific considerations. Without clear grounding or basis in science, general assertions about the impact of implementing private standards on reducing pesticide risk appear to be unfounded, and we suggest that they be modified or removed. We further suggest that private standards with no basis in science may be misleading to consumers, and could ultimately undermine the objective of facilitating informed consumer choice.

Part II – Fertilizers

The following chapters were reviewed by Jorge Delgado, Ph.D., Research Soil Scientist with USDA Agricultural Research Service’s Soil Management and Sugar Beet Research Unit. Dr. Delgado has suggested extensive in-line revisions and additions, which are detailed in attachments to this document (as noted below).

Chapter 7. Status and Trends of Fertilizer Use

See **Attachment 4.**

Chapter 8. Regulatory and Policy Environment for Fertilizer Management and Use

See **Attachment 5.**

Chapter 9. Human Health and Environmental Effects of Fertilizer Use

See **Attachment 6.**

Chapter 10. Impact of Fertilizer Use

See **Attachment 7.**

Chapter 11. Current Fertilizer Risk Reduction and Risk Management

See **Attachment 8.**

Part III – Opportunities and Ways Forward

Chapter 12. Options for Reducing the Risks of Pesticide and Fertilizer Use

- We appreciate the opportunity to review a preliminary draft of this chapter in advance of the August 18, 2020 stakeholder discussions focusing on this chapter. During the stakeholder discussions extensive revisions to this chapter were proposed, and so we anticipate having the opportunity to review the final draft of Chapter 12 once all stakeholder comments have been addressed by the authors.
- As we mentioned in our comments during the August 18, 2020 stakeholder discussion, we would encourage the authors to clearly define terminology integral to the proposed “transformative actions.” Similar to what was done earlier in this Report in the discussion of IPM, what do the authors mean in Chapter 12 by “*sustainable agriculture*,” and what benchmarks and quantifiable metrics of sustainability can be employed to document progress and related effects on pesticide risk reduction? For example, we believe it is important that producers’ commercial viability (i.e., profitability of agricultural production) is an important component of any reasonable definition of sustainability.
- Overall, we feel that this chapter focuses heavily on policy and economic tools for disincentivizing “*unsustainable agricultural practices*” or “*risky pesticides*,” while also not defining what benchmarks or metrics would apply to such practices or pesticides. Not only are these categories not clearly defined, but we argue that the focus on disincentives is to the detriment of the discussion of possible strategies for incentivizing agricultural practices that are likely to be more sustainable (e.g., development of novel pheromones to support IPM programs, improvement of soil fertility, etc.) and promote the development of new pesticides and application technologies that could dramatically reduce pesticide risks. This chapter also does not address the important role that various agricultural industries will play in any of the proposed “transformative actions,” and in particular the dynamic opportunity that public-private research partnerships offer in not only making the development of innovative agricultural technologies financially feasible, but also ensuring that such innovations will be targeted to meet the needs of growers and the consuming public.
- We appreciate the authors emphasis on the role that national regulatory bodies can play in streamlining the registration of “*safer*” pesticides (particularly when established criteria are used in

this determination), and applaud the efforts of US EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs and Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency along these lines. With this said, we respectfully contend that any discussion of "*mutually agreed upon criteria*" for such efforts be established on a foundation of risk-based assessments.

- Section 12.3 states: "*Burden of proof is on showing that a pesticide is not likely to pose unacceptable risks before authorizing it, rather than showing a pesticide does pose an unacceptable risk before denying a registration.*" We respectfully request that this statement be removed or significantly modified, as this appears to be an endorsement of "the precautionary principle" – a philosophical and political ideology with no grounding in science – over internationally recognized principles of risk analysis. As an alternative, we suggest that the authors recognize and encourage use of the principles and scientific methods established by international organizations (e.g., Codex, WHO Core Assessment Group) for addressing uncertainty when evaluating the potential risks of pesticides.
- In general, we suggest that proposals focused on internalizing or disincentivizing negative costs need to be balanced by proposals that recognize and seek to internalize benefits. For example, how to incentivize and assign economic value to benefits such as carbon sequestration that accrues from use of herbicides in no-tillage systems, or avoidance of harmful pest introduction into foreign territories through adherence to phytosanitary protocols mandating the use of pesticide treatments.
- As discussed in the cover letter to these comments, we respectfully suggest that the utility of much of the discussion of "transformative actions" in this chapter is limited because it does not account for the need for any proposed solutions to be scalable and flexible to meet national and regional capacity and conditions. While we fully support many of the ideas that are proposed in this chapter, we would argue that the proposed actions will only succeed if they (from this initial design phase) are formulated to be adaptable and respectful of local and regional needs and resources.

From: [Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC](#)
To: [Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC](#)
Subject: RE: For Review: Comments on UNEP Pesticides and Fertilizers Report
Date: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 11:24:24 AM
Attachments: [USDA Comments on UNEP Pesticides Fertilizers Report_FINAL DRAFT w_attachs.docx](#) (b)(5)-Deliberative (182 pages)

Sheryl,

Thanks for the speedy review – I’ve made the comment you suggested in the attached, newly revised version.

Does anyone else in OCE or USDA need to review these comments? When I submit them should I send a PDF version, or just this Word document?

Cameron

Cameron Douglass, Ph.D.
 Agronomist/Weed Scientist, Office of Pest Management Policy
 U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office: (b) (6)
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 1400 Independence Ave. SW
 Room 3859 (Mail Stop 3817)
 Washington, DC 20250-3191

From: Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 11:09 AM
To: Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>
Subject: Re: For Review: Comments on UNEP Pesticides and Fertilizers Report

Nice! Only comment is (b)(5) DPP
 [REDACTED]

Thank you for more excellent work.
 Sheryl

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From: Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 10:40:56 AM
To: Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>
Cc: Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>; Chao, Julie - OCE, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>; Delgado, Jorge <jorge.delgado@usda.gov>; Tsegaye, Teferi - ARS <teferi.tsegaye@usda.gov>

Subject: For Review: Comments on UNEP Pesticides and Fertilizers Report

Sheryl,

Attached is my final draft of comments on the UNEP draft Pesticides and Fertilizers Report; many thanks to Julie and Clayton for quickly reviewing this document this morning and making some great revisions. And of course, thanks to Jorge for his thorough and excellent review of the fertilizer chapters.

Please let me know if you would like to see any additional revisions to our comments (the first 8 pages or so of the document) prior to sending to others within OCE for review.

We are meant to submit these comments to UNEP on **Friday (8/28)**, but don't have to worry about any inter-agency reviews as these are only our comments; EPA is submitting comments separately.

Cameron

Cameron Douglass, Ph.D.
Agronomist/Weed Scientist, Office of Pest Management Policy
U.S. Department of Agriculture

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1400 Independence Ave. SW
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Washington, DC 20250-3191

From: [Dunlop Craig CHBS](#)
To: [Rasmussen, Mark - FAS, Washington, DC](#); [Fulton, Catherine - FAS, Washington, DC](#)
Cc: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: RE: Chinese National MRL Standard GB 2763 - 2021
Date: Thursday, May 20, 2021 9:42:21 AM

Hi Mark,

I understand. Hopefully with the draft starting to make its way into circulation the official version won't be far away.

Regards
Craig

From: Rasmussen, Mark - FAS, Washington, DC <mark.rasmussen@usda.gov>
Sent: Thursday, 20 May 2021 1:56 PM
To: Fulton, Catherine - FAS, Washington, DC <Catherine.Fulton@usda.gov>; Dunlop Craig CHBS <craig.dunlop@syngenta.com>
Cc: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Chinese National MRL Standard GB 2763 - 2021

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Craig

The report you provided is very helpful. At this time FAS will wait until we receive an officially released document before it is translated and published in the GAIN system as the report may undergo additional modifications before being released.

Best

Mark

From: Rasmussen, Mark - FAS, Washington, DC
Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 11:22 AM
To: Fulton, Catherine - FAS, Washington, DC <Catherine.Fulton@usda.gov>; Dunlop Craig CHBS <craig.dunlop@syngenta.com>
Cc: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Chinese National MRL Standard GB 2763 - 2021

Thank you Craig

I appreciate you sharing this information with us. We have been anticipating GB 2763 to be published very soon.

I have passed your document to our office in Beijing for review. I will get back to you with their assessment of this information.

Best
Mark

From: Fulton, Catherine - FAS, Washington, DC <Catherine.Fulton@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 10:43 AM
To: Dunlop Craig CHBS <craig.dunlop@syngenta.com>
Cc: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Rasmussen, Mark - FAS, Washington, DC <mark.rasmussen@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Chinese National MRL Standard GB 2763 - 2021

Craig-

Good morning- Mark Rasmussen is the Senior Policy Advisor and he covers China and its notifications. Copying him here. And, thanks Anastasia for forwarding to me.

Best,

Catherine Fulton
Senior Director
Plant Division, Trade Policy and Geographic Affairs
(b)(6) — mobile
Washington, DC

From: Dunlop Craig CHBS <craig.dunlop@syngenta.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 10:12 AM
To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Cc: Fulton, Catherine - FAS, Washington, DC <Catherine.Fulton@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Chinese National MRL Standard GB 2763 - 2021

Thanks Anastasia. I noticed the email to Lauren bounced, so thanks for passing it along. Yes I agree with Bryant Christie that it's not yet published, but a draft copy of the standard is starting to be circulated. As many exporters rely on the USDA English translation I was hoping this may allow Catherine and others to make a start on that.

Regards
Craig

From: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, 19 May 2021 4:04 PM
To: Dunlop Craig CHBS <craig.dunlop@syngenta.com>
Cc: Fulton, Catherine - FAS, Washington, DC <Catherine.Fulton@usda.gov>

Subject: RE: Chinese National MRL Standard GB 2763 - 2021

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Craig,

Thanks for passing this along. Bryant Christie mentions that the 2021 text is not available (https://bcglobal.bryantchristie.com/marketinfo/marketinfo_370_6208.pdf) so this may be helpful.

Loren and I no longer work at FAS. I'm ccing Catherine Fulton, the Senor Director of Plant Division who can direct you to her staff person with China in their portfolio.

Thanks,
Anastasia

Anastasia Bodnar, PhD (she/her)
Agricultural Biotechnology Advisor
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Pest Management Policy
Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov (202) 720-0066

From: Dunlop Craig CHBS <craig.dunlop@syngenta.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 9:50 AM
To: LaPointe, Loren - FAS, Washington, DC <loren.lapointe@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: Chinese National MRL Standard GB 2763 - 2021

Hi Lauren and Anastasia,
I assume like me you have been waiting for the newest version of GB 2763 to be published. To my knowledge it's still not published, however I have managed to get a draft version of what is likely to be the final version. By sending this to you I was hoping this may allow you to get a head start on translating the standard into English which many of us rely on.

Regards
Craig

From: LaPointe, Loren - FAS, Washington, DC <loren.lapointe@usda.gov>
Sent: Thursday, 21 November 2019 2:12 PM
To: Dunlop Craig CHBS <craig.dunlop@syngenta.com>
Cc: Bodnar, Anastasia - FAS, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: National MRL Standard published in China

Craig,

Last I checked this one was taking a while because of the size, but our embassy is on it. I am adding

Anastasia Bodnar, who is the lead for China in my division.

Thanks,
Loren

From: Dunlop Craig CHBS <craig.dunlop@syngenta.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 21, 2019 5:09 AM
To: LaPointe, Loren - FAS, Washington, DC <loren.lapointe@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: National MRL Standard published in China

Hi Loren,
FAS has been great in the past in translating these to English. Are you folks working on an English translation of the newest Chinese MRL standard and if so do you know when it will be published?

Regards
Craig

From: Dunlop Craig CHBS
Sent: Wednesday, 18 September 2019 11:07
To: Chao, Julie - FAS, Washington, DC <Julie.Chao@fas.usda.gov>; LaPointe, Loren - FAS, Washington, DC <Loren.LaPointe@fas.usda.gov>; Banas, Barbara - FAS, Washington, DC <Barbara.Banas@fas.usda.gov>; Hochhalter, Andrew - FAS, Washington, DC <andrew.hochhalter@fas.usda.gov>
Subject: FW: National MRL Standard published in China

Dear All,
Just in case your own sources haven't picked this up please find attached the latest MRL standard in Chinese which was published today.

Regards
Craig

From: Hou Yili CNBJ
Sent: Wednesday, 18 September 2019 10:55
To: Dunlop Craig CHBS <craig.dunlop@syngenta.com>; Lister Neil GBJH <neil.lister@syngenta.com>; Dong Zhe CNBJ <Zhe.DONG@syngenta.com>
Subject: National Standard published in China

just published today.
Sorry it is in Chinese.
Regards,
Yili

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From: [Fulton, Catherine - FAS, Washington, DC](#)
To: [Dunlop Craig CHBS](#)
Cc: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#); [Rasmussen, Mark - FAS, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: RE: Chinese National MRL Standard GB 2763 - 2021
Date: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 10:43:59 AM
Attachments: [GB 2763- 2021 Draft.pdf](#)

Craig-

Good morning- Mark Rasmussen is the Senior Policy Advisor and he covers China and its notifications. Copying him here. And, thanks Anastasia for forwarding to me.

Best,

Catherine Fulton
Senior Director
Plant Division, Trade Policy and Geographic Affairs
(b)(6) — mobile
Washington, DC

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Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 10:12 AM
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Cc: Fulton, Catherine - FAS, Washington, DC <Catherine.Fulton@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Chinese National MRL Standard GB 2763 - 2021

Thanks Anastasia. I noticed the email to Lauren bounced, so thanks for passing it along. Yes I agree with Bryant Christie that it's not yet published, but a draft copy of the standard is starting to be circulated. As many exporters rely on the USDA English translation I was hoping this may allow Catherine and others to make a start on that.

Regards
Craig

From: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, 19 May 2021 4:04 PM
To: Dunlop Craig CHBS <craig.dunlop@syngenta.com>
Cc: Fulton, Catherine - FAS, Washington, DC <Catherine.Fulton@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Chinese National MRL Standard GB 2763 - 2021

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From: [Greg Jaffe](#)
To: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: [External Email]follow up from call
Date: Friday, April 30, 2021 6:31:10 PM

[External Email]

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Dear Anastasia,

Here is an article I published recently on the implementation of bioengineered disclosure law and regulations. I thought you might be interested in reading it.

[New Bioengineered \(aka GM\) Food Disclosure Law: Useful Information or Consumer Confusion? - Food and Drug Law Institute \(FDLI\)](#)

Sincerely,

Greg

Gregory Jaffe
Biotechnology Project Director
Center for Science in the Public Interest
1220 L Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20005

(b)(6)

From: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
To: [Sarah Davidson Evanega](#); [Pablo Ivan Orozco](#); gjaffe@cspinet.org
Subject: RE: AFS & USDA
Date: Thursday, April 29, 2021 11:31:00 AM

Good morning!

I don't have a specific agenda today but appreciate the opportunity to check in and share what we are respectively working on. Talk to you soon.

Thanks,
Anastasia

-----Original Appointment-----

From: Sarah Davidson Evanega <snd2@cornell.edu>

Sent: Thursday, February 11, 2021 7:27 PM

To: Sarah Davidson Evanega; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC; Pablo Ivan Orozco; gjaffe@cspinet.org

Subject: AFS & USDA

When: Thursday, April 29, 2021 2:00 PM-3:00 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).

Where: Via zoom

(b)(6)

pass=(b)(6)

From: [John McMurdy](#)
To: [O'Mara Matt](#); [Laurie Goodwin](#); [Abby Simmons](#); [crowell, samuel](#)
Cc: [Clint Nesbitt](#); [Karimiha, Susan - TFAA-FAS, Washington, DC](#); [FAS-RMB-Calendar TPGA BioTech](#); [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#); [Jones, Elizabeth - FAS, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: [External Email]Harmonization Webinar - BIO/CLI/USG
Date: Friday, April 9, 2021 2:50:20 PM
Attachments: [Ethiopia Infographic USD.pdf](#)
[Ghana Infographic USD.pdf](#)
[Nigeria Infographic USD.pdf](#)
[Tanzania Infographic USD.pdf](#)
[Uganda Infographic USD.pdf](#)

[External Email]

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Please send any concerns or suspicious messages to: Spam.Abuse@usda.gov

Hi All,

As just referenced, some of the work done by IFPRI Program for Biosafety Systems on opportunities / opportunity lost around public-sector (in this case Africa focused) GM products (cassava, banana, rice, etc.....)

Cheers
John

John McMurdy, Ph.D.
Director of Emerging Markets & Development Partnerships

CropLife International aisbl
c/o CropLife America
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Suite 700
Arlington, VA 22203

(m) (b)(6)
john.mcmurdy@croplife.org


Helping Farmers Grow

From: momara@bio.org
When: 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM April 9, 2021
Subject: Harmonization Webinar - BIO/CLI/USG
Location: <https://zoom.us/j/96169389647>

Matthew O'Mara is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96169389647>

Meeting ID: 961 6938 9647

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+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

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Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/abEVVNxbmC>

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Predictive economic results **ETHIOPIA**

Agricultural transformation is high on Ethiopia's development agenda. With a myriad of investment decisions to make, rapid economic studies can aid decisionmakers with choices about plans, technologies, policies and budgets. This study provides an example of these assessments led by Ethiopian experts.

Predictive economic studies consider



Annual maize production value

USD 1.3B

2016



Economic study shows new biotech solution could add up to

USD 14M

Cumulative over 6 years if released in 2023



Drought and insects can cause a total loss of maize. But Ethiopian scientists are testing a local type of biotech maize capable of yielding in low water situations and protecting itself against some pests.

If regulatory decision delays the introduction of the new maize for 5 years, **Ethiopia loses**

USD 151B

Key assumptions*

1-53%

of farmers adopt the enhanced maize

39-160%

yield increase due to reduced damage or stress

5 years

to maximum adoption

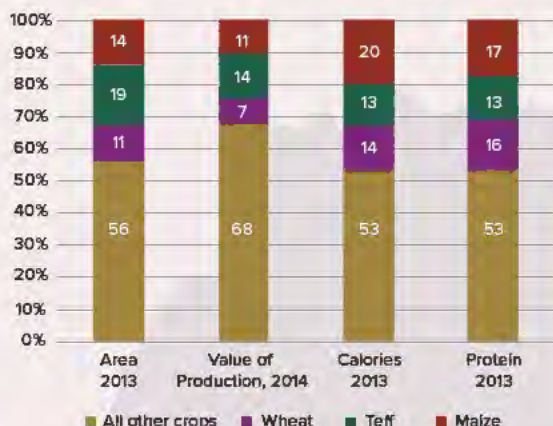
Source: Estimations from Tizale et. al, IFPRI/EIAR Discussion Paper, forthcoming
* Range accounts for differences among regions.



Predictive economic results **ETHIOPIA**

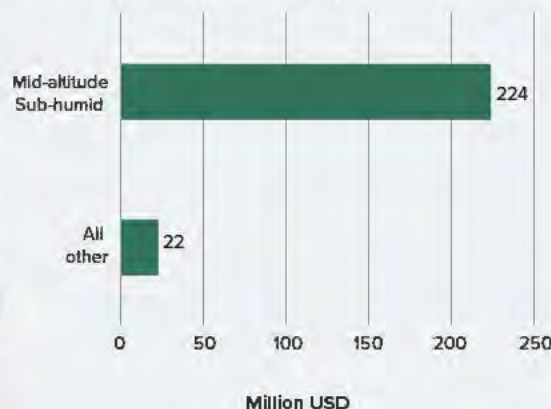
Predictive economic studies were conducted by African economists and agricultural experts to identify the potential local value of crops in development through modern biotechnology. To help decisionmakers, a project called Biotechnology and Biosafety Rapid Assessment and Policy Platform (BioRAPP), conducted research in 5 countries on improved crops. In Ethiopia, the work is focused on improved maize and is not an exhaustive economic study.

Maize plays a key role in the economy



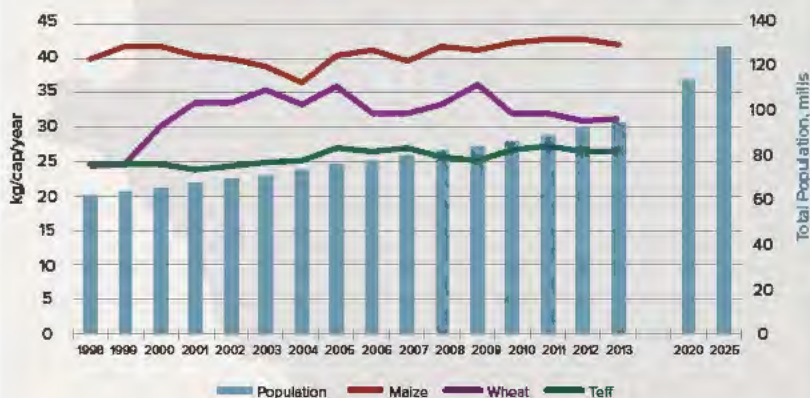
Source: FAO, FAOSTAT database.

Benefits would be concentrated



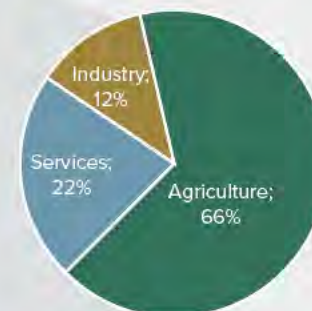
Source: Chilot et al. EIAR/IFPRI DP, forthcoming

Maize consumption is higher than any other crop



Source: FAO, FAOSTAT and UN population data

Agriculture continues to be the main source of employment



Source: World Bank, WDI 2019

For every dollar
invested



the country
gains:



1,500 USD

Source: Chilot et al. EIAR/IFPRI DP, forthcoming

Source: Estimations from Tizale et. al, IFPRI/EIAR Discussion Paper, forthcoming

PROGRAM FOR BIOSAFETY SYSTEMS

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INTERNATIONAL FOOD POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Environment and Production Technology Division
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T: +1 202-862-5600 | F: +1 202-467-4439 | Skype: IFPRIhomeoffice | ifpri@cgiar.org | pbs.ifpri.info

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2024-FAS-03969-F
000277

July 2019



Predictive economic results **GHANA**

Agriculture is an important driver of economic growth and employment in Ghana. Therefore, transformation of agriculture is high on Ghana's development agenda. With a myriad of investment decisions to make, rapid economic studies can aid decisionmakers with choices about plans, technologies, policies and budgets. Two studies provide examples of these assessments led by Ghanaian experts.

Predictive economic studies consider



Annual cowpea production value



USD 143M
2014

Annual cost of rice imports



USD 72M
AVERAGE 2011–2013

Economic study shows new biotech solution could add up to

USD 79M
Cumulative over 6 years if released in 2019

Insects can cause a 70 to 80 percent loss of cowpea. But Ghanaian scientists have enhanced cowpea to protect itself against Maruca and other damaging insects.



If regulatory decision delays the introduction of the new cowpea for 5 years, Ghana loses



Key assumptions

- 72%** of farmers adopt the enhanced cowpea
- 36% more** yield for farmers under low insect pressure
- 5 years** to maximum adoption

Economic study shows new biotech solution could save up to

USD 115M
Cumulative over 6 years if released in 2019

Lack of access to nitrogen to apply and/or inadequate nitrogen in the soil causes rice shortages. Ghanaian scientists are developing a type of rice that uses nitrogen more efficiently and thus produces more rice.



If regulatory decision delays the introduction of the new rice for 5 years, Ghana loses



Key assumptions

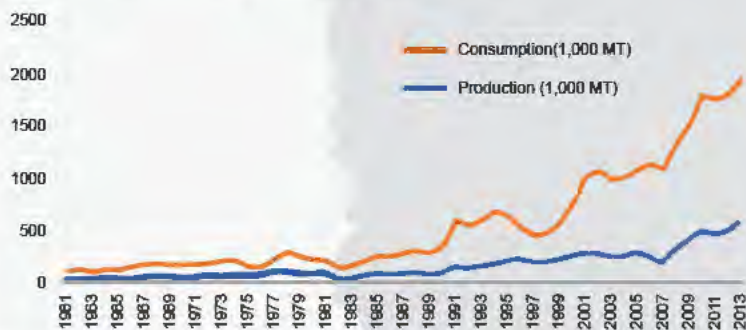
- 70%** of farmers adopt the new type of rice
- 20% more** yield under regular nitrogen levels
- 5 years** to maximum adoption

Source: Estimation from Dzanku et. al (2018), IFPRI/STEPRI

Predictive economic results **GHANA**

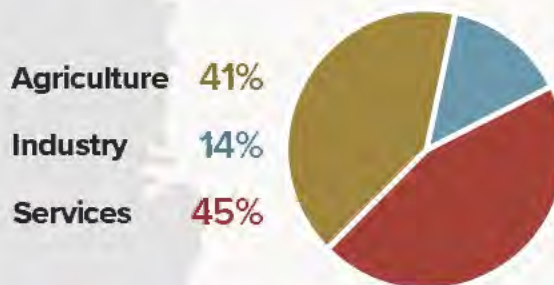
Predictive economic studies were conducted by African economists and agricultural experts to identify the potential local value of crops in development through modern biotechnology. To help decisionmakers, a project called Biotechnology and Biosafety Rapid Assessment and Policy Platform (BioRAPP), conducted research in 5 countries on improved crops. In Ghana, the work is focused on specific technologies in cowpea and rice and is not an exhaustive economic study.

The gap between rice production and rice consumption is increasing



Source: FAO, FAOSTAT, 2018

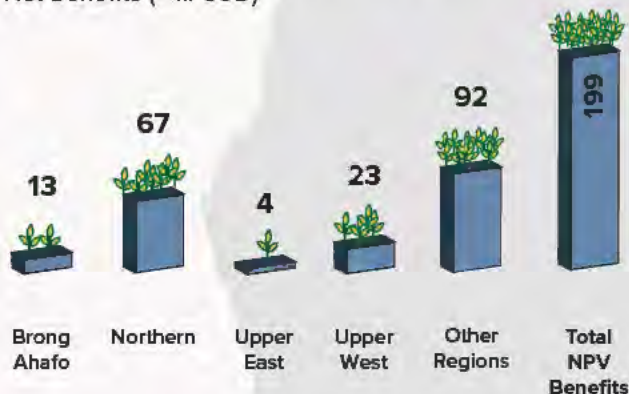
Employment by sector, 2017



Source: World Bank, WDI, 2018

Regional impact of biotech cowpea that protects against insects by region, over time

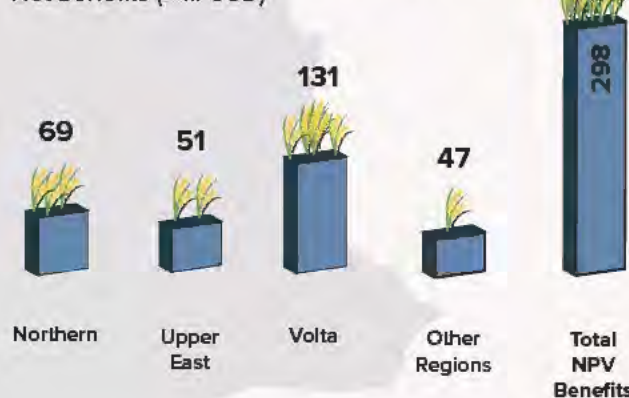
Net benefits (mill USD)



Source: Dzanku et al, 2018

Regional impact of biotech rice that uses nitrogen more efficiently by region, over time

Net benefits (mill USD)



Source: Dzanku et al, 2018

Source: Estimation from Dzanku et. al (2018), IFPRI/STEPRI

Footnote: All estimations were originally done in Cedis, using 2014 as base year. These estimations were converted from cedis to USD figures using the annual average official exchange rate, which was 2.9 Cedis/USD in 2014.

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2024-FAS-03969-F
000279

November 2018



Science and Technology Policy Research Institute (CSIR)



Predictive economic results **NIGERIA**

Agriculture is an important driver of economic growth and employment in Nigeria. Therefore, transformation of agriculture is high on Nigeria's development agenda. With a myriad of investment decisions to make, rapid economic studies can aid decisionmakers with choices about plans, technologies, policies and budgets. This study provides an example of these assessments led by Nigerian experts.

Predictive economic studies consider



Annual cowpea production value

USD 1.6B
2016



Economic study shows new biotech solution could add up to

USD 638M

Cumulative over 6 years if released in 2019

*if released in 2020, the benefits decrease by less than 5 percent



Insects can cause a 70 to 80 percent loss of cowpea. But Nigerian scientists have enhanced cowpea to protect itself against Maruca and other damaging insects.

If regulatory decision delays the introduction of the new cowpea for 5 years, **Nigeria loses**

USD 149M

Key assumptions*

- 24–64% of farmers adopt the protected cowpea
- 10–27% increased yield due to reduced damage
- 3–7 years to maximum adoption

Source: Estimations from Philips et. al (2019), IFPRI/ARCN Discussion Paper, *forthcoming*
*Range accounts for differences among regions

Predictive economic results **NIGERIA**

Predictive economic studies were conducted by African economists and agricultural experts to identify the potential local value of crops in development through modern biotechnology. To help decisionmakers, a project called Biotechnology and Biosafety Rapid Assessment and Policy Platform (BioRAPP), conducted research in 5 countries on improved crops. In Nigeria, the work is focused on improved cowpea and is not an exhaustive economic study.

Sources of cowpea consumption, 2016

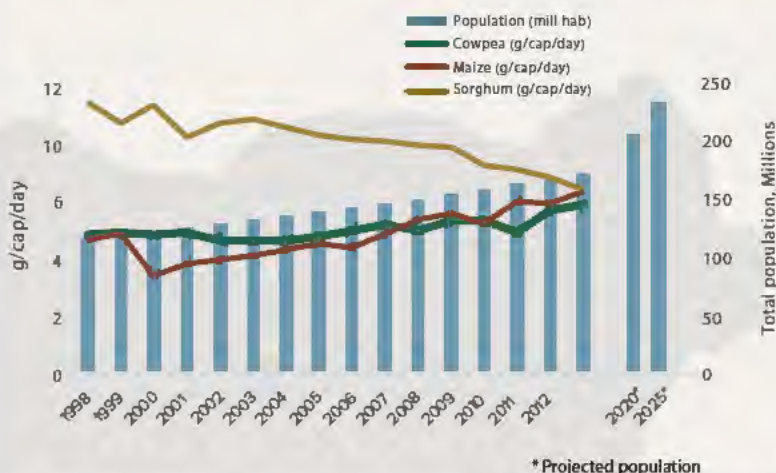
(Million USD)

Almost 20 percent of cowpea in Nigeria is imported.



Source: Authors' estimations for value of consumption and domestic production

Cowpea is a main sources of protein for Nigerians



Source: FAO, FAOStat 2019 and UNDP population data and projections

Agriculture plays a key role in employment

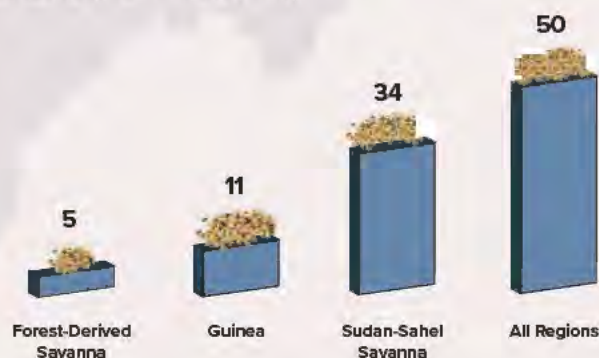
Agriculture 37%
Services 52%
Industry 12%



Source: World Bank, WDI 2019

Annual average benefits from adoption of pod borer resistant cowpea

Net benefits in millions (USD)



Source: Phillips et. al, 2019

For every dollar invested



the country gains:*



USD 71 for cowpea

Source: Phillips et. al, 2019

Source: Estimations from Phillips et. al (2019), IFPRI/ARCN Discussion Paper, forthcoming
*For every dollar invested locally on research and extension for the new cowpea

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Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria
Plot 223D, Cadastral Zone B6 Mabushi
P.M.B. 5026 Abuja, Nigeria

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2024-FAS-03969-F
000281

June 2019



Predictive economic results* **TANZANIA**

Agriculture is an important driver of economic growth and poverty reduction in Africa. In spite of progress, the sector continues to underperform. With a myriad of investment decisions to make, rapid economic assessments can aid decisionmakers with choices about plans, technologies, policies and budgets. Two studies provide examples of these assessments led by Tanzanian experts.

Predictive economic studies consider



Production value

USD 1.8B
2015 Data

Production value

USD 835M
2015 Data

Economic study shows new biotech solution could add up to

USD 724M

If released in 2021 and over 6 years

Drought and insects can cause a total loss of maize. But Tanzanian scientists are testing a local type of biotech maize capable of yielding in low water situations and protecting itself against some pests.



Economic study shows new biotech solution could add up to

USD 77M

If released in 2023 and over 6 years

Cassava brown streak disease can cause a total loss of the crop. But Tanzanian researchers can improve resistance to the disease using biotech tools.



If regulatory decision delays the introduction of the new maize for 5 years, Tanzania loses



If regulatory decision delays the introduction of the new cassava for 5 years, Tanzania loses



Key assumptions

- 38% of farmers adopt the new solution
- 40% more yield for farmers while spending 2% less
- 6 years to maximum adoption

Key assumptions

- 23% of farmers adopt the new solution
- 30% more yield
- 8 years to maximum adoption

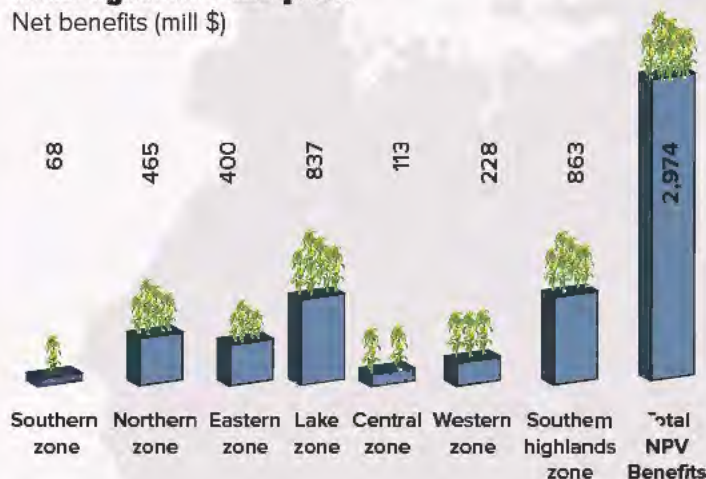
*Results presented will undergo local and peer-review before finalized.
Source: Estimation from Ruhinduka et. al (2018), IFPRI/UDSM

Predictive economic studies* **TANZANIA**

Predictive economic studies were conducted by African economist and agricultural experts to identify the potential local value of crops in development through modern biotechnology. To help decisionmakers, a project called Biotechnology and Biosafety Rapid Assessment and Policy Platform (BioRAP), conducted research in 5 countries on improved crops. In Tanzania, the work focused on improved cassava and maize and is not an exhaustive economic study.

Impact of biotech maize that is capable of yielding in low water situations and protecting itself against some pests

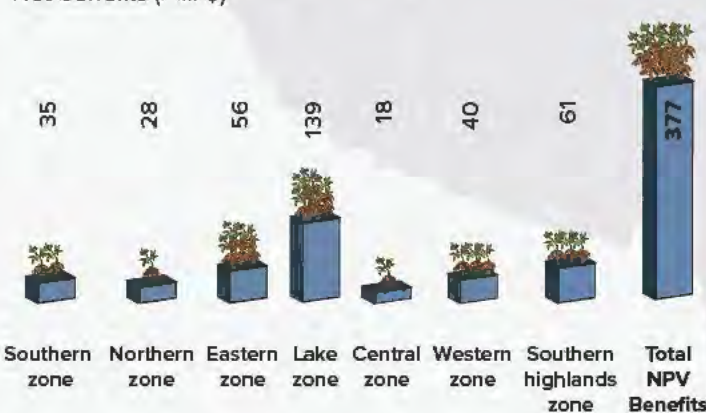
Net benefits (mill \$)



Ruhinduka et. al, 2018

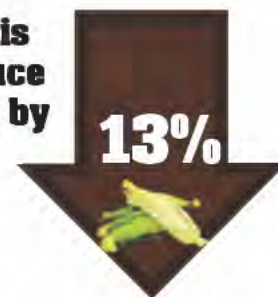
Impact of biotech cassava that protects against cassava brown streak disease

Net benefits (mill \$)



Ruhinduka et. al, 2018

Climate change is expected to reduce food from maize by



Source: United Republic of Tanzania, 2015 National Bureau of Statistics, 2014

Cassava Goal:

Quadruple cassava yield for export markets like China

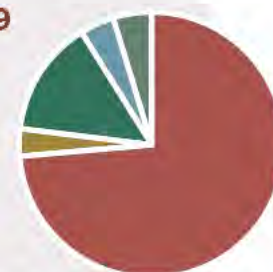


Tons/hectare

Sources: United Republic of Tanzania, 2015 National Bureau of Statistics, 2014

Employment by Industry, Tanzania mainland, 2014 (%)

Agriculture, forestry and fishing	66.9
Manufacturing	3.1
Wholesale & retail trade; repair of motor vehicles & motorcycles	12.7
Accommodation & food service activities	3.9
Other	4.1



Source: I.L.F.S 2014

*Results presented are under review and will undergo local and peer-review before finalized.

Source: Estimation from Ruhinduka et. al (2018), IFPRI/UDSM

PROGRAM FOR BIOSAFETY SYSTEMS

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2024-IFAS-03918-F

000283

October 2018



Predictive economic results **UGANDA**

Innovations in agriculture are critical to realizing Uganda's Vision 2040 development goals. Ugandan scientists continue to provide leadership in harnessing science, technology and innovations to address pressing bottlenecks. With a myriad of investment decisions to make, rapid economic studies can aid decisionmakers with choices about plans, technologies, policies and budgets. Two studies provide examples of these assessments led by Ugandan experts.

Predictive economic studies consider



Bananna production value



USD 600 M
2015

Cassava production value



USD 300 M
2015

Economic study shows new biotech solution could add up to

USD 1B

if released by 2022 and over 6 years

Banana wilt disease is predicted to destroy 90% of all bananas in Uganda. But Ugandan scientists have enhanced the banana to protect itself.



If regulatory decision delays the introduction of the new banana for 5 years, Uganda loses



Key assumptions*

- 34–73% of farmers adopt the enhanced banana
- 29–82% increased yield due to reduced damages
- 23–34% reduction in costs

Economic study shows new biotech solution could add up to

USD 800M

if released by 2021 and over 6 years

Cassava brown streak disease is hidden and the damage is mostly seen when families dig up the root to eat. Scientists are developing a solution.



If regulatory decision delays the introduction of the new cassava for 5 years, Uganda loses



Key assumptions*

- 75–85% of farmers adopt the enhanced cassava
- 20–30% increased yields due to protected cassava
- 12% increase in costs

Source: Estimations from Kikuiwe et. al (2019), IFPRI/UNCST Discussion Paper, forthcoming

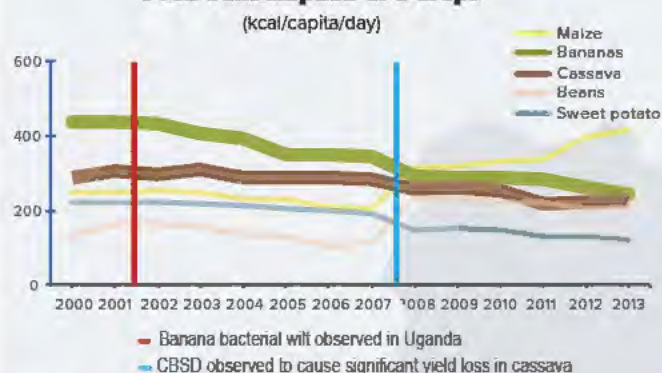
* Range accounts for difference among region



Predictive economic results **UGANDA**

Predictive economic studies were conducted by African economists and agricultural experts to identify the potential local value of crops in development through modern biotechnology. To help decisionmakers, a project called Biotechnology and Biosafety Rapid Assessment and Policy Platform (BioRAPP), conducted research in 5 countries on improved crops. In Uganda, the work is focused on specific technologies in cassava and banana and is not an exhaustive economic study.

Food Consumption of 5 crops



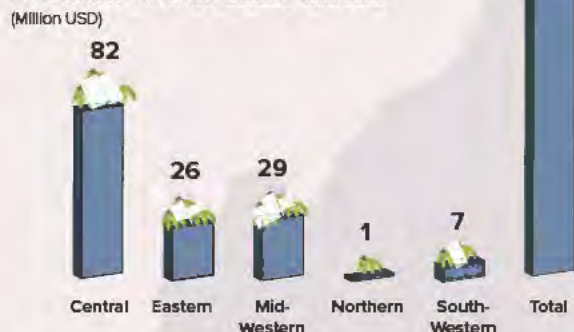
Estimated **banana losses** due to bacterial wilt:
USD 542
(per ha/year)

Estimated **cassava losses** due to brown streak disease:
USD 120
(per ha/year)

Source: FAO, FAOSTAT, 2019

Source: Kikulwe et. al, 2019

Annual average benefits from adoption of bacterial wilt resistant banana



For every dollar invested

the country gains:



USD 338
for Banana

Source: Kikulwe et. al, 2019

Source: Kikulwe et. al, 2019

Annual average benefits from adoption of cassava brown streak disease



For every dollar invested

the country gains:



USD 1,281
for Cassava

Source: Kikulwe et. al, 2019

Source: Kikulwe et. al, 2019

*Results presented are under review and will undergo local and peer-review before finalized.
Source: Estimations from Kikulwe et. al (2019), IFPRI/UNCST Discussion Paper, forthcoming

PROGRAM FOR BIOSAFETY SYSTEMS

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May 2019



From: [Matthew O'Mara](#)
To: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: Automatic reply: [-EXTERNAL-] Declined: FW: Harmonization Webinar - BIO/CLI/USG
Date: Tuesday, April 6, 2021 10:43:29 AM

I am on (b)(6) . I will respond as soon as possible.

Best, Matt

From: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
To: [James Nyangulu](#)
Subject: RE: Touch base - Biotechnology Issues
Date: Tuesday, March 23, 2021 2:06:00 PM

Hello,
I hope we are not having technical difficulties! I joined the meeting but don't see anyone else. Please feel free to call my cell at (b)(6) if that is easier.
Thanks,
Anastasia

-----Original Appointment-----

From: James Nyangulu <james.nyangulu@bayer.com>
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021 11:42 AM
To: James Nyangulu; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC
Subject: Touch base - Biotechnology Issues
When: Tuesday, March 23, 2021 2:00 PM-2:30 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).
Where: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer or mobile app
[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Join with a video conferencing device

teams@pex-a.video.bayer.biz

Video Conference ID: 128 583 575 0

[Alternate VTC dialing instructions](#)

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From: [James Nyangulu](#)
To: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: RE: Introduction
Date: Monday, March 22, 2021 11:43:54 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

I have just sent a meeting invitation for tomorrow afternoon. If that doesn't work, please feel free to propose an alternate time and/or date.

James

From: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 8:47 AM
To: James Nyangulu <james.nyangulu@bayer.com>
Subject: RE: Introduction

Good morning,
Thanks so much for the reminder – I am looking forward to speaking with you. My calendar is surprisingly open March 19-24 if there might be any times that would work for you.
Thanks,
Anastasia

Anastasia Bodnar, PhD (she/her)
Agricultural Biotechnology Advisor
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Pest Management Policy
South Building 1400 Independence Avenue SW Washington, DC 20250
Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov (202) 720-0066

From: James Nyangulu <james.nyangulu@bayer.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 8:06 AM
To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: FW: Introduction

Good morning,
Just following up on my early note from last week, just in case you hadn't received it.
Thanks
James

From: James Nyangulu
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 11:03 AM
To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: Introduction

Hi Anastasia,
Congratulations on your new role within OPMP.

I don't think we have met in person before but we look forward to meeting you and sharing some of our cool plant biotechnology projects we are engaged in.

Let me know your availability and I will set up a Skype or Microsoft Teams call, which ever works best for you.....no rush.

Looking forward to connecting with you.

James

Freundliche Grüße / Best regards,

James Nyangulu PhD
Federal Engagement Lead



Regulatory Engagement
Collaborating Across Organizations



Bayer U.S. – Crop Science
801 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004

Office: (b)(6)
Cell: (b)(6)

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From: [Wray-Cahen, Diane - FAS, Washington, DC](#)
To: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#); [Zankowski, Paul - OSEC, Washington, DC](#); [Peterson, Chris - FAS, Washington, DC](#); [Jones, Elizabeth - FAS, Washington, DC](#); [Pearson, Alan - APHIS](#)
Subject: RE: [External Email]CFI/USB Earning Trust in Gene Editing webinars
Date: Thursday, March 18, 2021 9:58:15 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

(b)(5) DPP

FDA has been presenting the Feed Your Mind material in international platforms (most recently at IICA), including at the FAO (<http://www.fao.org/3/cb2022en/CB2022EN.pdf>). The underlying messaging included in what FAO communication materials being developed should (b)(5) DPP

[REDACTED]

Diane Wray-Cahen, Ph.D.
USDA
(b)(6) – mobile phone

From: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Sent: Thursday, March 18, 2021 8:36 AM
To: Wray-Cahen, Diane - FAS, Washington, DC <Diane.Wray-Cahen@usda.gov>; Zankowski, Paul - OSEC, Washington, DC <Paul.Zankowski@usda.gov>; Peterson, Chris - FAS, Washington, DC <Chris.Peterson@usda.gov>; Jones, Elizabeth - FAS, Washington, DC <Elizabeth.Jones@usda.gov>; Pearson, Alan - APHIS <alan.pearson@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: [External Email]CFI/USB Earning Trust in Gene Editing webinars

Thanks for sharing. This is particularly useful as Feed Your Mind plans (b)(5) DPP
(b)(6) (b)(6)

Best,
Anastasia

From: Wray-Cahen, Diane - FAS, Washington, DC <Diane.Wray-Cahen@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 4:11 PM
To: Zankowski, Paul - OSEC, Washington, DC <Paul.Zankowski@usda.gov>; Peterson, Chris - FAS,

Washington, DC <Chris.Peterson@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Jones, Elizabeth - FAS, Washington, DC <Elizabeth.Jones@usda.gov>; Pearson, Alan - APHIS <alan.pearson@usda.gov>
Subject: FW: [External Email]CFI/USB Earning Trust in Gene Editing webinars

FYI – may be of interest, feel free to share . . .

Diane Wray-Cohen, Ph.D.
USDA
(b)(6) – mobile phone

From: Julie DeYoung <julie.deyoung@FoodIntegrity.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 3:30 PM
Subject: [External Email]CFI/USB Earning Trust in Gene Editing webinars

[External Email]

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I apologize for the belated heads-up on this. CFI received funding from the United Soybean Board to develop programming on developing trust in gene editing for the soybean community. A Communications Resource, similar to the one developed by the Coalition but updated and made specific to soybeans, has been produced, and CFI and USB are holding webinars to share the information with soybean farmers. The first was held today with about 40 participants, and two more are scheduled for tomorrow at 9 a.m. Central and next Tuesday, 3/23, at 9 a.m. Central.

You can learn more about the webinars and the communications resource, Gene Editing and Soy: Engage in the Conversation, here: <http://foodintegrity.org/programs/us-soy-earn-trust-in-gene-editing/>.

	<p><u>US Soy: Earn Trust in Gene Editing - The Center for Food Integrity</u></p> <p>The public is asking questions about gene editing. Are you prepared to respond? It's an exciting time for soybean farmers, with advancements in gene editing...</p> <p><u>foodintegrity.org</u></p>
---	--

Please let Charlie or me know if you have any questions about this complementary work to

help build trust in gene editing in agriculture.



JULIE DEYOUNG
THE CENTER FOR FOOD INTEGRITY

julie.deyoung@foodintegrity.org
2900 NE Brooktree Lane, Suite 200, Gladstone, MO 64119

(b)(6) office

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From: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
To: [Wray-Cahen, Diane - FAS, Washington, DC](#); [Zankowski, Paul - OSEC, Washington, DC](#); [Peterson, Chris - FAS, Washington, DC](#); [Jones, Elizabeth - FAS, Washington, DC](#); [Pearson, Alan - APHIS](#)
Subject: RE: [External Email]CFI/USB Earning Trust in Gene Editing webinars
Date: Thursday, March 18, 2021 8:35:00 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[2021 CFI-Gene-Editing-and-Soy-Communication-Guide-FINAL.pdf](#)

Thanks for sharing. This is particularly useful as Feed Your Mind plans (b)(5) DPP [REDACTED] (b)(6) [REDACTED]. (b)(6) [REDACTED].

Best,
Anastasia

From: Wray-Cahen, Diane - FAS, Washington, DC <Diane.Wray-Cahen@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 4:11 PM
To: Zankowski, Paul - OSEC, Washington, DC <Paul.Zankowski@usda.gov>; Peterson, Chris - FAS, Washington, DC <Chris.Peterson@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Jones, Elizabeth - FAS, Washington, DC <Elizabeth.Jones@usda.gov>; Pearson, Alan - APHIS <alan.pearson@usda.gov>
Subject: FW: [External Email]CFI/USB Earning Trust in Gene Editing webinars

FYI – may be of interest, feel free to share . . .

Diane Wray-Cahen, Ph.D.
USDA
(b)(6) [REDACTED] – mobile phone

From: Julie DeYoung <julie.deyoung@FoodIntegrity.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 3:30 PM
Subject: [External Email]CFI/USB Earning Trust in Gene Editing webinars

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[in-gene-editing/](#).

	<p>US Soy: Earn Trust in Gene Editing - The Center for Food Integrity</p>
	<p>The public is asking questions about gene editing. Are you prepared to respond? It's an exciting time for soybean farmers, with advancements in gene editing...</p>
	<p>foodintegrity.org</p>

Please let Charlie or me know if you have any questions about this complementary work to help build trust in gene editing in agriculture.



JULIE DEYOUNG
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THE CENTER FOR
FOOD INTEGRITY™

THE COALITION FOR RESPONSIBLE
GENE EDITING IN AGRICULTURE

GENE EDITING & SOY

ENGAGE IN THE CONVERSATION



GeneEditing.FoodIntegrity.org

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2024 FAS 03918-F
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An Informed Dialogue on Gene Editing

Gene editing technology is one of today’s most promising innovations, with tremendous potential to benefit society, farming and food production.

It’s an exciting time for soybean farmers, with advancements in gene editing to improve crops and help solve pressing challenges in farming and food production. That includes helping farmers keep pace with the growing demand for healthier, more abundant and affordable food, while using less water, land and other resources. Specifically, gene editing is a tool that can:

- Produce soybean crops resistant to herbicides
- Enhance soybean nutrition
- Improve yield
- Help plants resist disease
- Reduce environmental footprint
- Reduce allergens
- Reduce food waste

In the midst of this promise, the success of gene editing hinges on public support. Market acceptance grants permission – or social license – to responsibly develop and use gene editing in farming and food production.

As more applications are developed and begin to enter the marketplace, it’s imperative that those researching and using gene editing participate in an open, public dialogue about the shared benefits of gene editing and their commitment to responsible use.

Consumers Want to Know



2 out of 3 consumers

want to know about **how** food is produced and **who’s** producing it.

Source: The Center for Food Integrity (CFI)



More than half of consumers

indicated they want to learn **more** about **CRISPR**.

Source: CFI Best Food Facts video series

Consumers are inherently curious about food production and generally have open-minded attitudes about gene editing. They want to learn more and deserve balanced, credible information from sources they can trust. It’s an environment where effective, long-term engagement can provide information the public wants and needs to make informed decisions about gene editing.

The key is to engage in the most meaningful way.

Traditionally it has been assumed that sound science and appropriate government oversight will result in social acceptance of innovation. But what consumers want first and foremost, according to research from The Center for Food Integrity (CFI), is to know that food producers care about the same things they do, like producing safe, affordable, nutritious food in a responsible manner that protects and sustains our environment.

Communication Resources

From the CFI Coalition for Responsible Gene Editing in Agriculture

Consider the following guidance and resources as you communicate about gene editing – whether that’s one-on-one or online conversations, presentations, media interviews, or educational and promotional materials.

These recommendations are the result of collaboration with associations, academic and health institutions, and others who have conducted research on consumer perceptions about biotechnology and gene editing. A foundation is the CFI trust model that demonstrates the importance of communicating shared values. The approach sets the stage for meaningful, long-term engagement with audiences who are open to learning more about gene editing.

In this guide, you’ll find:

- 4 Consumer Perceptions About Gene Editing in Food & Agriculture
- 5 Effective Communication Approaches
- 12 The Power of Shared Values
- 15 Glossary of Genetic Terms
- 21 The Coalition for Responsible Gene Editing

The CFI Coalition for Responsible Gene Editing in Agriculture is a diverse group working together to earn consumer confidence and trust in gene editing. United Soybean Board serves as a Coalition Leader. The coalition has developed Responsible Use Guidelines to openly and transparently communicate with stakeholders about how gene editing technology is being used in a responsible manner as more products begin to enter the marketplace.

WHAT IS GENE EDITING?



A METHOD OF SELECTIVE BREEDING THAT MAKES **PRECISE, INTENTIONAL** AND **BENEFICIAL** CHANGES IN THE GENETIC MATERIAL OF PLANTS AND ANIMALS USED IN FOOD PRODUCTION, WHICH CAN **IMPROVE** HEALTH, NUTRITION AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP.



OFTEN MIRRORS CHANGES THAT COULD **OCCUR IN NATURE** OR THROUGH **TRADITIONAL BREEDING**.



HELPS FARMERS KEEP PACE WITH THE GROWING DEMAND FOR MORE AND BETTER FOOD, WHILE **USING LESS** WATER, LAND, NUTRIENTS AND OTHER RESOURCES.



Consumer Perceptions about Gene Editing in Food & Agriculture

In reviewing various studies about consumer opinions on the role of science in food production, The Center for Food Integrity found these consistent themes.

Key Takeaways

- There is a considerable knowledge gap among consumers – in science, genetics and modern plant and animal breeding.
- Most people have very little understanding about gene editing, so defining it in easy-to-understand terms is critical.
- People worry that gene editing could have unintended consequences; their concern about risks can outweigh support for benefits.
- Gen Z consumers are more comfortable with the use of technology to solve food production challenges than older generations.
- Before describing gene editing, it's helpful to show the evolution of genetic improvement in plants and animals.
- The public wants information from credentialed experts, but they do not want an academic explanation.
- Analogies and visuals are important to explain science, and they should be understandable without being oversimplified.
- Consumers show strongest support for benefits related to environmental stewardship, animal wellbeing, healthier food and disease resistance.
- Consumers have additional questions about use of science in animals, compared to plants.

The knowledge gap

The public knowledge gap around science and genetics is validated by a significant number of publications.

▶ CONSUMERS WANT TO LEARN MORE*



▶ 2015 PLANT BREEDING FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

- Some consumers had **no knowledge** that plants are bred
- Most consumers are **unaware** of the benefits in environmental stewardship brought by modern crop production
- Most respondents said they had **little understanding** of plant breeding
- There is **limited knowledge** about breeding methods that have been used for several decades, like conventional selection and mutagenesis

▶ CONSUMERS HAVE LIMITED UNDERSTANDING ABOUT GENETICS IN FOOD



*Consumer Research, 2017 **FMI Foundation, 2020



Engage Effectively in the Conversation

5 Effective Communication Approaches

1. Explain gene editing in simple terms and focus on public benefits and values
2. Connect to gene editing solutions for human health
3. Talk about evolution of genetic improvement, not revolution
4. Leverage expert spokespeople who are credentialed and relatable, show integrity and share values
5. Share analogies and visuals that explain science but are not oversimplified or condescending

1 EXPLAIN GENE EDITING IN SIMPLE TERMS AND FOCUS ON PUBLIC BENEFITS AND VALUES

Consumers are curious about and generally supportive of science when its use is positive for the environment, for disease resistance or to improve nutrition of food.



Consumers of various age demographics consistently rate positively the phrase, "producing more food with fewer resources – like using less water, land or other natural resources."

Focus on yield improvements is not effective as a standalone benefit, but yield can resonate if connected to the compelling benefit of "producing enough with less."

In a nationwide survey released in 2020, consumers who were given information about the benefits of gene editing technology were significantly more likely to purchase gene-edited foods. They were most interested in ways gene editing benefits the environment and consumers rather than benefits to farmers. When consumers are informed of the benefits of gene editing, the market potential for gene-edited products exceeds 15 percent.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

"Gene editing helps farmers keep pace with the growing demand for more and better food, while using less water, land, nutrients and other resources."

2 CONNECT TO GENE EDITING SOLUTIONS FOR HUMAN HEALTH

Research shows advancements in human medicine are the strongest entry in conversations about gene editing in food...

because most people know someone impacted by cancer, leukemia, hemophilia or sickle cell disease where gene editing could be life-saving. Gene editing is a valuable tool to develop vaccines for viruses and respond to future outbreaks.

Enter conversations about gene editing through human health applications, and then share about disease resistance and other applications in plants and animals.

How do Americans feel about gene editing for human health?

In a survey of **1,600** people, **TWO-THIRDS** or more think gene editing for human therapeutic purposes is acceptable.

Scheufele et al. 2017

CONVERSATION STARTERS

“Gene editing shows great potential to cure or prevent disease in humans. Gene editing can also help plants and animals resist disease.”

Key Points

- Share benefits that matter most to **consumers** - **not** only food producers.
- Share benefits to the **environment, like protecting and conserving our natural resources** - **not** increased efficiency.
- Share benefits to **animals, like improving animal well-being and reducing disease** - **not** increased productivity.
- Share benefits to **plants, like tolerance to disease or weather conditions** - **not** increased yields.



3 TALK ABOUT EVOLUTION OF GENETIC IMPROVEMENT, NOT REVOLUTION

Farmers and scientists can be proud of advancements in genetics; however talking about how science can “revolutionize” food production does not resonate with consumers. In fact, “revolutionize” can invoke concerns about risk of newer technologies, perceived as less-tested.

The public is more supportive when gene editing is described within a continuum of plant and animal genetic improvement, which has a legacy of safe, responsible use spanning several generations. Consumers are more comfortable when gene editing is approached as an “evolution” or “next iteration” of improvement.

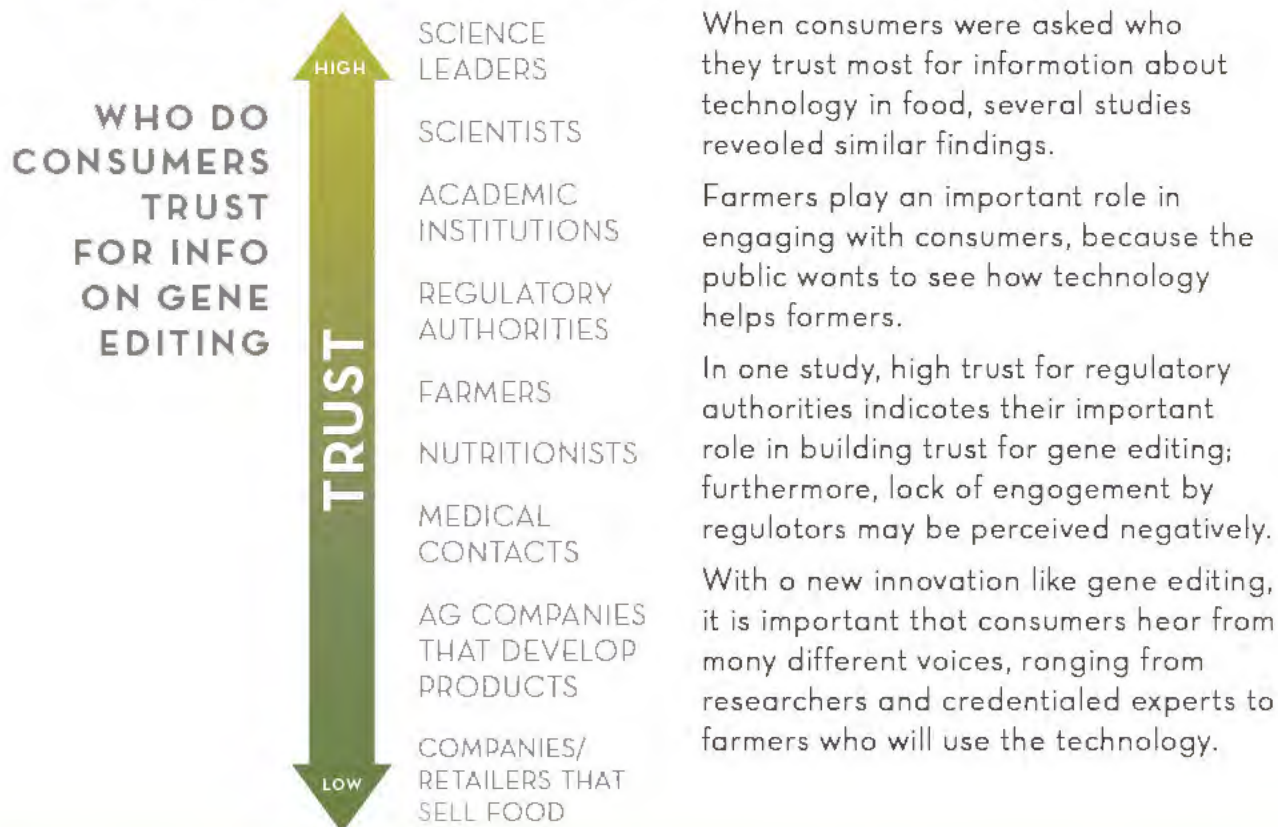
CONVERSATION STARTERS

“Throughout history, farmers have been breeding plants for the best characteristics, like disease resistance and drought tolerance. The lengthy process of observing, selecting and breeding could take years or even decades to complete. Today, plant scientists can use gene editing to make more precise, targeted changes to improve plants and provide solutions to a variety of challenges.”

“Farmers and animal scientists have used genetic diversity and natural selection for several decades by choosing animals with the most desirable characteristics as the parents of the next generation. Gene editing is the next iteration to improve animals’ native genes. Gene editing allows for precise and small but important changes, which often mirror changes that could occur in nature or through traditional genetic selection.”



4 LEVERAGE EXPERT SPOKESPEOPLE WHO ARE CREDENTIALLED AND RELATABLE, SHOW INTEGRITY AND SHARE VALUES



▶ HOW INFORMATION FROM TRUSTED SOURCES MOVED THE NEEDLE

Presenting information about gene editing from trustworthy sources in a relatable, credible and understandable way can make a significant difference. Consider how support increased after a group of consumers watched a three-part video series on CRISPR from **BestFoodFacts.org**. This series is hosted by a blogger and digital influencer on a mission to learn more about the use of CRISPR who conducted interviews with human health and agriculture experts. Over half of the consumers surveyed found the videos **APPEALING, CREDIBLE** and **UNDERSTANDABLE** and they were interested in learning more. Acceptance of CRISPR grew significantly after watching the videos. For example, after viewing “*How can CRISPR Improve Food? Part 3*” consumer support for use of CRISPR grew from 49% before to 62% after.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

“Gene editing is being used to develop soybeans that reduce the environmental impact of farming by controlling weeds.”

CONVERSATION STARTERS

“GENE EDITING CAN HAVE A VERY POSITIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.”

- Farmers have an obligation to meet the growing demand for healthy, wholesome food while also preserving our natural resources. Gene editing technology can help farmers achieve both.
- Gene editing can help make plants more resilient, which often means they will consume fewer natural resources.
- Gene editing holds great promise to ensure the survival of plants in changing weather patterns. Gene editing can make plants hardier to survive in droughts and floods, and to grow more successfully in regions of the world facing food shortages and malnutrition.

“GENE EDITING CAN HELP ENSURE THE AVAILABILITY, QUALITY AND NUTRITION OF FOODS.”

- Gene editing technology has been used to develop soybeans that produce oil with zero trans fat.
- Scientists say gene editing may provide the best solution for citrus greening disease, which is destroying Florida orange groves, by improving the trees’ genetic code so they are resistant to the pathogen that causes the disease.
- For those with gluten sensitivity, scientists have successfully used gene editing to modify wheat, producing strains that are significantly lower in gluten.
- Gene editing has been used to develop soybeans that produce oil high in oleic acid, which is healthier.

5 SHARE ANALOGIES AND VISUALS THAT EXPLAIN SCIENCE BUT ARE NOT OVERSIMPLIFIED OR CONDESCENDING

For those less familiar with science and genetics, analogies, videos and graphics are very helpful to explain technology. Effective analogies are relatable, logical and safe, but not oversimplified. To date, common analogies for gene editing are “genetic scissors,” “word processor” and “find-and-replace function”; however, research shows some other analogies are more effective.

MORE EFFECTIVE ANALOGIES

Refer to the improvements of gene editing within the framework of a larger, yet tangible, context like these analogies.

AN ENCYCLOPEDIA

“DNA is like a long encyclopedia of information – and increasingly, scientists can identify the exact page, the exact paragraph and even the exact word they want to study. With this knowledge, they can use gene editing tools to make corrections or improvements to specific areas of the genome.”

HOUSE BLUEPRINT

“Like the blueprints used to build a house, DNA provides the information for building every living thing. Builders can make small changes to the blueprint – like modifying a defect or adding a feature – to improve the house. These are small, targeted changes relative to the entire house. Likewise, scientists can make small, targeted changes in DNA.”

WORDS THAT WORK

These phrases are perceived more favorably, as shown through consumer research.

- Help farmers manage environmental challenges
- Grow enough food with less water and fewer resources
- Reduce pesticide use
- Protect plants
- Help plants/animals thrive
- Improve plants/animals
- Next iteration or next evolution (of plant improvement or animal genetics)
- Based on a natural process
- Includes no foreign DNA

What about “Feeding the World?”

Recent consumer insights show people have concern about food insecurity and healthy, affordable food for all.

When talking with people, especially younger generations, use phrases such as “Gene editing and technology helps me produce more healthy, affordable food with fewer natural resources.”

Other needs that resonate with the American public.

- Growing enough food with less
- A commitment to doing what’s right for people, animals and our earth
- People’s basic right to consistently have access to safe, nutritious, affordable food

The Power of Shared Values

Consumer Trust Research from The Center for Food Integrity

In conversations with consumers about food production,

VALUES ARE 3 TO 5 TIMES MORE IMPORTANT THAN FACTS.

*Yes, science and data are important,
but we must first establish shared values.*

CFI's peer-reviewed and published trust model demonstrates that Confidence (value similarity), Competence (skills and expertise) and Influential Others (credentialed and/or credible individuals) are the primary factors in building trust, which leads to the public granting social license and the freedom to operate. Confidence, or value similarity, is the key driver.

CFI research shows that shared values are much more important to earning trust than communicating with science or demonstrating technical skills and expertise. Simply sharing science and facts actually galvanizes opposing viewpoints and makes it harder to find common ground.



WHAT DRIVES CONSUMER TRUST?

Shared values are 3-to-5 times more important to building trust than sharing facts/science or demonstrating technical skills/expertise

Consumers simply want to know the food industry shares their values for safe, affordable, nutritious food and high standards of animal care and environmental stewardship.

Keys to Shared Values Communication

▶ EMBRACE SKEPTICISM

You can embrace skepticism without validating misinformation. Listen for the underlying value. What's the source of the concern? Environment, food safety, corporate influence? "I appreciate your interest in the environment. I know protecting the environment is critical to farmers. I'd like to share my perspective on that issue..."

▶ DON'T CHALLENGE BELIEFS

Challenging strongly held beliefs will cause people to become defensive and dismissive. "I can tell you feel very strongly about this issue. I respect your commitment and share your concern about... (food safety, our environment, etc.). We may not share the same beliefs about the issue, but I respect and appreciate your perspective..."

▶ LEAD WITH VALUES

Don't discuss science or data until you've listened and expressed shared values. "I can tell you're passionate about food safety. I am, too..."

▶ BE WILLING TO TALK ABOUT THE HARD ISSUES WITH AUTHENTIC TRANSPARENCY

Who you are is more important than what you know. Consumers want to know you genuinely care and that you are open to discussing the tough questions. "I can tell this is an issue that's important to you and it's important to me, too. I may not have all the answers, but I'll do my best to address your questions..."

LISTEN - ASK - SHARE

Actively listen, without judgment, for agreement and points of connection to understand how their concern is tied to their underlying values.

Ask questions to invite dialogue and clarify their perspective. Show that you heard them by acknowledging what they said.

"I understand why there are questions. What concerns you most?"

Share your values-based perspective first to build trust

"People all around the world and the U.S. deserve safe, healthy and affordable food. That's why I farm (or work with farmers) and keep up with research and technology that improves how we grow food."





CONVERSATION STARTERS

“I’m a farmer and I’m a parent, too. Producing healthy, affordable, safe food is important to me and I rely on science and innovation to do just that.”

“People in the U.S. and all around the world deserve safe, healthy and affordable food. That’s why I farm and continually work to improve how we raise crops and animals.”

“New technologies have enabled us to take better care of crops and reduce our environmental footprint. Gene editing holds tremendous promise on both fronts.”

“I’m excited about the tremendous potential of gene editing - in human health and in agriculture. Medical researchers are working on ways that gene editing can prevent and cure disease in humans. Plant and animal scientists are making progress, too, as to how gene editing can improve the health and disease resistance of animals and plants for food.”

Glossary of Genetic Terms

Earning trust in gene editing requires communicating in a way that makes science meaningful to a general public that is less familiar with genetic terms and scientific processes. When communicating with non-scientific audiences, consider describing the following terms with less jargon to help make the science more understandable. Using consumer-friendly images and analogies can also be very useful in making information relatable.

These terms can be introduced into a conversation about the continuum of genetic improvement in plants and animals, with gene editing as a next iteration in genetic improvement, or what farmers and scientists have been doing for years.

Another helpful resource is the glossary from [Innovative Genomics Institute](#)

Gene Editing

GENE EDITING (also known as **Genome Editing**)

1) Gene editing makes precise, intentional and beneficial changes in the genetic material of plants and animals used in food production, which can improve health, nutrition and environmental stewardship. This often mirrors changes that could occur in nature or through traditional breeding. Gene editing helps farmers keep pace with the growing demand for more and better food, while using less water, land, nutrients and other resources.

NOTE: The work of the Coalition for the Responsible Use of Gene Editing in Agriculture is focused on gene editing applications that produce variation in native alleles that could occur or be achieved through selective breeding between species that are sexually compatible.

SOURCE: [CFI Coalition for Responsible Gene Editing in Agriculture](#)

2) The process of making precise, targeted changes in the DNA of living cells and organisms.

SOURCE: [Council for Agricultural Science and Technology](#)

Gene Editing Techniques

CRISPR

CRISPR refers to a specific type of gene editing and stands for “Clustered Regularly Interspersed Short Palindromic Repeats.” Like other gene editing processes, CRISPR can precisely change the genetic code, or DNA, within a living thing.

Adapted from [Best Food Facts](#)

Glossary (continued)

MEGANUCLEASES

Meganucleases can be described as molecular scissors that cut DNA at a very specific location. Meganucleases target large DNA sequences, thus the word “mega.” Such large sequences in DNA rarely occur. Meganucleases can be used as highly specific tools to modify or eliminate a particular gene, for example.

Adapted from [Meganucleases by Cellectis](#)

TALENs

Transcription Activator-like Effector Nucleases, or TALENs, refers to one technique used for gene editing. Its first reported success came in 2012 when researchers at Iowa State University used the technique to develop disease-resistant rice. The technique has also been used to create naturally hornless cattle and soybeans with higher quality oil.

SOURCE: [Genetic Literacy Project](#)

ZINC FINGER NUCLEASES (ZFNS)

ZFNs is the oldest of the gene editing technologies, developed in the 1990s. It has been primarily used in research for a variety of human diseases, including HIV/AIDS and hemophilia. It is used in plants to stimulate the cell’s naturally occurring DNA repair processes.

SOURCE: [Genetic Literacy Project](#)

Other Genetic Terms

CISGENESIS

The introduction into an organism’s genome of a gene from a member of the same species or a closely related species.

SOURCE: [Council for Agricultural Science and Technology](#)

CROSSBREEDING (ANIMALS)

In genetic improvement, mating two purebred animals that come from different breeds or varieties, with the intent of producing offspring that would acquire desired, or beneficial, traits of the parents. This is commonly practiced by animal breeders, especially when the desired traits would be beneficial to the offspring, such as when its health is enhanced.

SOURCE: [Biology Online Dictionary](#)

CROSSBREEDING (PLANTS)

Classical plant breeding crosses closely or distantly related plants to produce new crop varieties with desirable characteristics.

Adapted from [Science Daily](#)

DNA

DNA, which stands for deoxyribonucleic acid, is a unique genetic code that, like a recipe, holds the instructions for making all the proteins in organisms. DNA tells cells how to grow, function and reproduce.

Adapted from [Your Genome](#)

Glossary (continued)

GENE

A segment of DNA that encodes the information used to make a protein. Each gene is a set of instructions, like a recipe, for making a particular molecular machine that helps a cell, organism or virus function.

Adapted from [Innovative Genomics](#)

GENOME

A genome is an organism's complete set of DNA, including all of its genes. Each genome contains all of the information needed to build and maintain that organism. In humans, a copy of the entire genome – more than 3 billion DNA base pairs – is contained in all cells that have a nucleus.

SOURCE: [Genetics Home Reference](#)

GMO

GMOs are crops developed through **genetic engineering**, which allows plant breeders to take a desirable **trait** found in nature and transfer it from one plant or organism to the plant they want to improve, as well as make a change to an existing trait in a plant they are developing. The 10 genetically modified crops available today include: alfalfa, apples, canola, corn (field and sweet), cotton, papaya, potatoes, soybeans, squash and sugar beets.

SOURCE: [GMOanswers.com](#)

HYBRID

A hybrid is an animal or plant that has been bred from two different breeds or varieties of animal or plant, similar to crossbreeding.

SOURCE: [Collins Dictionary](#)

HYBRID BREEDING

Two different varieties or breeds are crossed to produce an offspring with stable characteristics and hybrid vigor, where the offspring is much more productive than either parent.

SOURCE: [Crops.org](#)

MUTAGENESIS

Changing the genetic material of an organism in a stable manner, resulting in a mutation.

SOURCE: [Biotech Articles](#)

MUTATION

A change from one genetic letter (nucleotide) to another. Variation in DNA sequence gives rise to the incredible diversity of species in the world, and even occurs between different organisms of the same species. While some mutations have no consequence at all, certain mutations can directly cause disease. Mutations may be caused by DNA-damaging agents such as UV light or may arise from errors that occur when DNA is copied by cellular enzymes. They can also be made deliberately via gene editing and other methods.

SOURCE: [Innovative Genomics](#)

Glossary (continued)

PLANT BREEDING

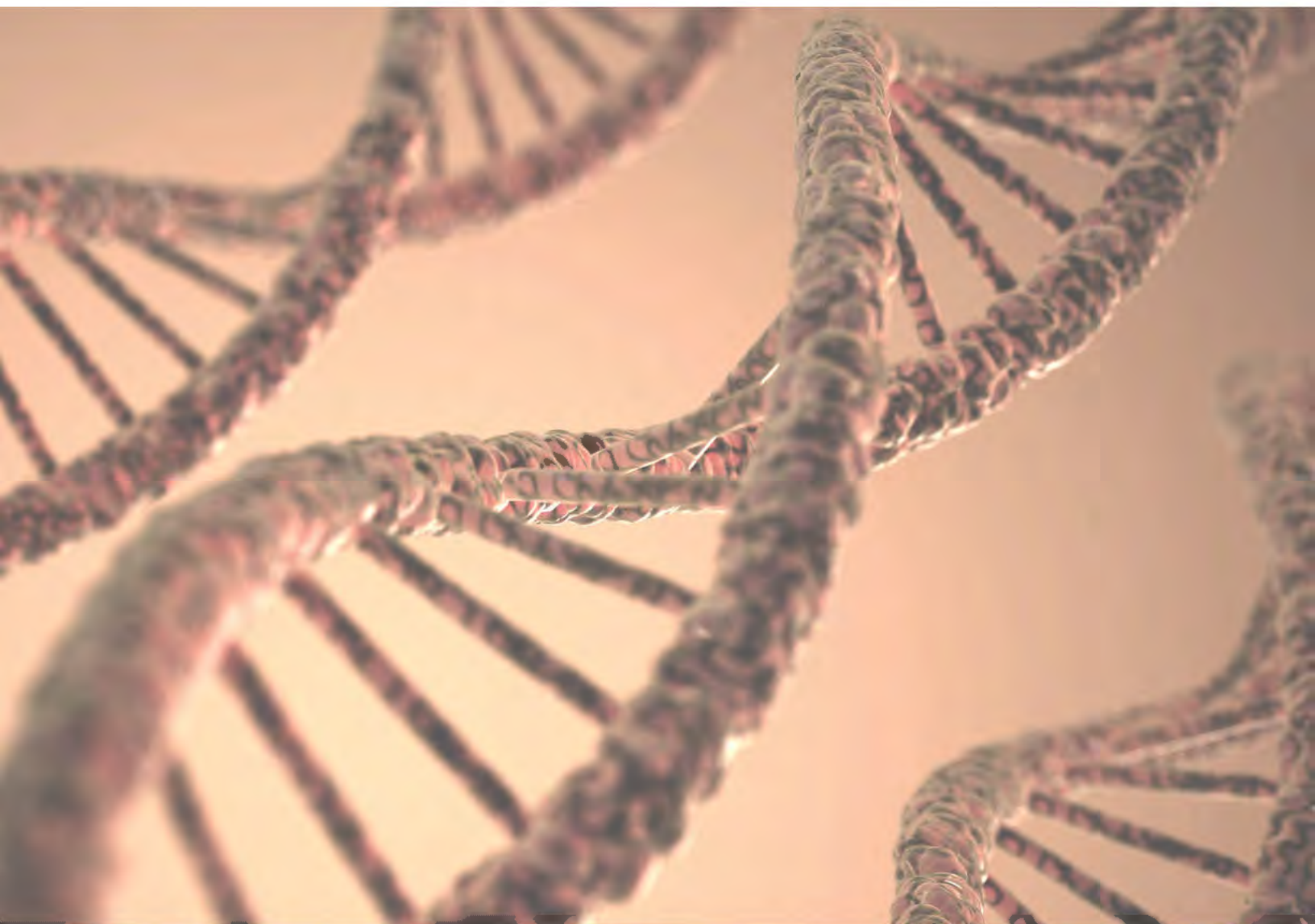
Since plants were first domesticated, gardeners, farmers and plant scientists have been observing, selecting and breeding for their most desirable traits. In the past, this involved looking at a plant's observable advantages – like growth, disease resistance and taste – then selecting and planting the seeds from those plants. Over time, this resulted in better, stronger plants, which breeders continued to improve over time.

SOURCE: [American Seed Trade Association](#)

TRANSGENIC

Transgenic refers to the movement or insertion of a gene into an organism that normally does not have a copy of that gene.

SOURCE: [GMOAnswers.com](#)



Resources

ARTICLES & BLOGS

- Best Food Facts - [CRISPR – Why is it used in Food?](#)
- Best Food Facts - [How Did Science Create an Apple that Doesn't Brown?](#)
- Best Food Facts - [New Potatoes Solve History Problem](#)
- FMI - [Findings Suggest Consumers Largely Unaware of the Benefits to Environment and Animal Welfare from Groundbreaking Technology](#)
- Gates Foundation - [Gene Editing for Good: How CRISPR Could Transform Global Development](#)
- Ketchum - [A Rising Generation of Food Consumers Is More Open to New Food Technology, Says Ketchum Study](#)
- University of California Davis - [What is Gene Editing? By Dr. Alison Van Eenennaam](#)
- Live Science - [What is CRISPR? With Dr. Jennifer Doudna \(video included\)](#)

IMAGES

- Corteva Agriscience - [Here's How CRISPR-Cas Works](#)
- Danforth Center Gene Editing with CRISPR-Cas9 - [Gene Editing with CRISPR-Cas9 Infographic](#)
- Genetic Literacy Project - [Public embrace of CRISPR gene editing key to future of agriculture](#)
- Innovative Genomics Institute - ["The Future of Genome Editing" IGI Infographic](#)
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology - [CRISPR Cuts](#)
- National Pork Board - [Producer Shares Views on Gene Editing](#)

VIDEOS

- American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) - [Seed Innovation Video Library](#)
- American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) - [Saving the Orange](#)
- American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) - [Plant Breeding Innovation Animation](#)
- Bayer - [What is Gene Editing?](#)
- Best Food Facts - [What is CRISPR Technology? Part 1](#)
- Best Food Facts - [How Can CRISPR Treat Disease? Part 2](#)
- Best Food Facts - [How Can CRISPR Improve Foods? Part 3](#)
- Bill Nye The Science Guy - [Genes Episode](#)
- Bozeman Science - [What is CRISPR?](#)
- CommonGround - [Plant Breeding Innovation 1](#)
- CommonGround - [Plant Breeding Innovation 2](#)
- Corteva Agriscience - [CRISPR-Cas for Healthy Seed Development](#)

VIDEOS

- Nature Methods - [CRISPR Gene Editing and Beyond](#)
- Purdue University - [Interview with Dr. Williams M. Muir, Biotechnologist](#)
- TED Talk with Jennifer Doudna - [How CRISPR Lets Us Edit Our DNA](#)
- The Roslin Institute - [Three Videos on Advantages and Potential of Gene Editing](#)
- University of California Berkeley - [What is CRISPR-Cas9 Gene Editing and How It Works with Jennifer Doudna](#)
- University of California Berkeley - [The Ethics of Gene Editing with Jennifer Doudna](#)

WEBSITES

- American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) [Resource Library](#)
- American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) [FAQs](#)
- American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) [Plant Breeding Innovation Animation](#)
- Best Food Facts [BestFoodFacts.org](#)
- CommonGround [Plant Breeding](#)
- CRISPRcon [CRISPRcon.org](#)
- FDA [Feed Your Mind](#)
- Genetic Literacy Project [Gene Editing/CRISPR](#)
- Innovative Genomics Institute [Media Library](#)
- Innovature [Nourishing Tomorrow](#)
- National Human Genome Research Institute [Genome Editing](#)
- NIH U.S. National Library of Medicine [Genome Editing](#)


CONVERSATION STARTERS

“Improving plants to eliminate allergens means fewer people will have to worry about an allergic reaction to food.”

“Gene editing helps farmers protect plant health and produce more food using fewer natural resources.”

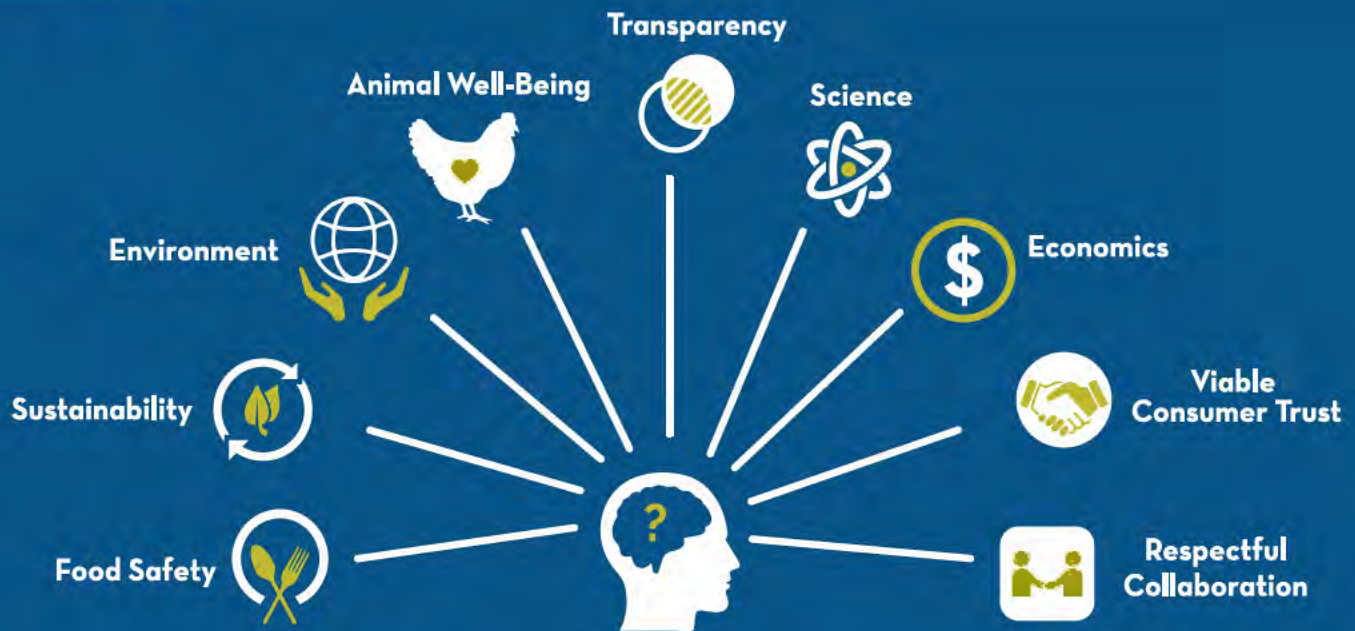




 Visionary ag leaders and The Center for Food Integrity formed a Coalition in 2016 with the vision to earn trust in gene editing for food and agriculture. In 2021, the coalition introduced the Responsible Use Guidelines that provide assurance to society and food system stakeholders that those who use gene editing per the guidelines are doing so in a way that's worthy of trust.

Coalition participants have a shared goal of engaging in an informed, open dialogue about the potential of gene editing to provide safe, nutritious and affordable food produced in sustainable systems. These values will guide coalition efforts.

VALUES



For more about the CFI Coalition for Responsible Use of Gene Editing visit geneediting.foodintegrity.org or contact The Center for Food Integrity at learnmore@foodintegrity.org • 816.880.5360



THE CENTER FOR
FOOD INTEGRITY™

**THE COALITION FOR
RESPONSIBLE GENE EDITING
IN AGRICULTURE**

GeneEditing.FoodIntegrity.org

The Center for Food Integrity is a not-for-profit organization with the mission of helping today's food system earn consumer trust. Our members and project partners, who represent the diversity of the food system, are committed to providing accurate information and working together to address important issues in food and agriculture. The Center does not lobby or advocate for individual companies or brands.

Contact The Center for Food Integrity for more information at learnmore@foodintegrity.org or **816.880.5360**

   FoodIntegrity.org

From: [James Nyangulu](#)
To: [Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC](#)
Cc: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: RE: OPMP Agricultural Biotechnology Coordinator
Date: Thursday, March 11, 2021 10:58:39 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Hi Sheryl,
Thanks for the introduction.
I will certainly reach out to Anastasia right away.

James

From: Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC <sheryl.kunickis@usda.gov> **On Behalf Of** Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 10:53 AM
To: James Nyangulu <james.nyangulu@bayer.com>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: Re: OPMP Agricultural Biotechnology Coordinator

Hi James!
You heard correctly. Dr. Anastasia Bodnar is the new Biotech Coordinator. She comes to us from OPMP. She formerly served as our Eco Risk Assessor, but her passion has always been biotech. I have cc'd her on this message so that you can reach her easily.
Nice to hear from you!
Sheryl

Sheryl H. Kunickis, Ph.D., Director
USDA/OCE- Office of Pest Management Policy
1400 Independence Ave., SW;
Washington, D.C. 20250-3817
(b)(6) Cell phone
sheryl.kunickis2@usda.gov

From: James Nyangulu <james.nyangulu@bayer.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 10:47 AM

To: Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>
Subject: OPMP Agricultural Biotechnology Coordinator

Good morning Sheryl,
Hope this note finds you well.

I heard from someone that you have hired a new Agricultural Biotechnology Coordinator but they didn't know their name. Who is it and where are they coming from? Would love to get to meet and know them better. We have a couple of projects which may be of great interest to OPMP.

Thanks

James

Freundliche Grüße / Best regards,

James Nyangulu PhD
Federal Engagement Lead



Regulatory Engagement
Collaborating Across Organizations

////////////////////
Bayer U.S. – Crop Science
801 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004

Office: (b)(6)
Cell: (b)(6)

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From: [Pablo Ivan Orozco](#)
To: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Cc: [Sarah Davidson Evanega](#); gjaffe@cspinet.org
Subject: Follow up Pablo Orozco from Alliance for Science
Date: Thursday, February 25, 2021 8:32:53 AM

Dear Anastasia

Thanks for making the time to connect yesterday! It was a very informative meeting. I just wanted to follow up on a second call specifically on areas within my portfolio as we discussed on the call. I am happy to set up a calendar invite for a zoom call for a time and date that works for you well in advance to have something on the books.

Looking forward to hearing from you and best regards

Pablo

From: [George Sabbagh](#)
To: [Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: RE: BE discussion: Setting a follow up Call
Date: Wednesday, February 10, 2021 1:10:08 PM
Attachments: [image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image001.png](#)

Thanks.

Freundliche Grüße / Best regards,

George Sabbagh, Ph.D.
Head Regulatory Engagements



Regulatory Engagement
Collaborating Across Organizations



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801 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004
Cel: (b) (6)
E-mail: (b) (6) @bayer.com
Web: <http://www.bayercropscience.com>

From: Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2021 1:09 PM
To: George Sabbagh <george.sabbagh@bayer.com>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: BE discussion: Setting a follow up Call

Yes – I corrected based on the dates, we are free for the morning timeslots you indicated on either Thursday (2/25) or Friday (2/26).

Cameron

Cameron Douglass, Ph.D.
Agronomist/Weed Scientist, Office of Pest Management Policy
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Cell: (b) (6)
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Room 3859 (Mail Stop 3817)

Washington, DC 20250-3191

From: George Sabbagh <george.sabbagh@bayer.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2021 1:07 PM
To: Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: BE discussion: Setting a follow up Call

Cameron, want to make sure that you are confirming Thursday and Friday, and not the Tuesday/Wed. listed in error in the Table.

Freundliche Grüße / Best regards,

George Sabbagh, Ph.D.
Head Regulatory Engagements



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Collaborating Across Organizations



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E-mail: george.sabbagh@bayer.com
Web: <http://www.bayercropscience.com>

From: Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2021 9:23 AM
To: George Sabbagh <george.sabbagh@bayer.com>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: BE discussion: Setting a follow up Call

George,

Thanks for following up with us, it looks like 10-11 am on either Febr. 25 or 26th would work for us.

Cameron

Cameron Douglass, Ph.D.
Agronomist/Weed Scientist, Office of Pest Management Policy

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Cell: (b)(6)

1400 Independence Ave. SW
Room 3859 (Mail Stop 3817)
Washington, DC 20250-3191

From: George Sabbagh <george.sabbagh@bayer.com>

Sent: Tuesday, February 9, 2021 12:33 PM

To: Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>

Subject: BE discussion: Setting a follow up Call

Hello Doug and Anastasia,

Following up on the conversation we had end of January to set up another call last week in February for updates on response to the Glyphosate BE. Can you indicate your availability for the proposed dates/time below (available/not available). Also, please feel free to propose additional time/dates if you want.

Date	Time	Availability	
		Cameron	Anastasia
Tuesday, 2/25	10:00 - 11:00 a.m.		
	4:00 - 5:00 p.m.		
Wednesday, 2/26	4:00 - 5:00 p.m.		
	10:00 - 11:00 a.m.		
Monday, 3/1	1:00 - 2:00 p.m.		
Other 1			
Other 2			
Other 3			

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Freundliche Grüße / Best regards,

George Sabbagh, Ph.D.
Head Regulatory Engagements



Regulatory Engagement
Collaborating Across Organizations



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801 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004
Cel: (b)(6)
E-mail: george.sabbagh@bayer.com
Web: <http://www.bayercropscience.com>

-----Original Appointment-----

From: Amelia Jackson - Gheissari <amelia.jackson-gheissari@bayer.com>

Sent: Friday, January 29, 2021 3:13 PM

To: Amelia Jackson - Gheissari; Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC; George Sabbagh; Philip Manson; Tilghman Hall; Frank Wong; Sarah Berger; Thomas Orr

Subject: BE discussion

When: Friday, January 29, 2021 3:00 PM-4:00 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).

Where: teams

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer or mobile app

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teams@pex-a.video.bayer.biz

Video Conference ID: 129 342 097 1

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From: [Jay Byrne](#)
To: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Cc: [Erin Borrini](#)
Subject: [External Email]RE: Biotech terminology
Date: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 12:59:12 PM

[External Email]

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Just following up to see if you had any questions. I hope all's well and we look forward to anyway we can be helpful.

Jay Byrne, president
v-Fluence

Toll Free: 877-835-8362 (b)(6)
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From: Jay Byrne
Sent: Friday, April 2, 2021 12:02 PM
To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Cc: Erin Borrini <Erin.Borrini@v-fluence.com>
Subject: RE: Biotech terminology

Yes, we do have data (language analysis – LA) on biotech terminology and we can (with some limitations) generate reports on languages and use outside of the U.S. An example of the terminology used across general ag biotech-related concepts in the U.S. is attached. It's from 2018. (b)(4)
(b)(4). We haven't had to run a generic top level review since 2018. We find that the more specific the focus the more useful the data. In addition, more specific topic areas provide more useful trends insights when compared over time.

(b)(4)
(b)(4)

(b) (4) [Redacted]
[Redacted] The search engines collect and sell this data to support advertisers. [Redacted]
(b) (4) [Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

For the general (North American) review of biotech terminology used in search we found the following attributes.

(b) (4)

(b) (4) [Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted] The 2018
online environment for this broad category ranked list of sites is attached.

(b) (4)

Let me know if you'd like to discuss or look at some more narrow concepts. If you have some specific projects in mind I can see what we can do pro-bono and give you a sense of what we'd have to charge.

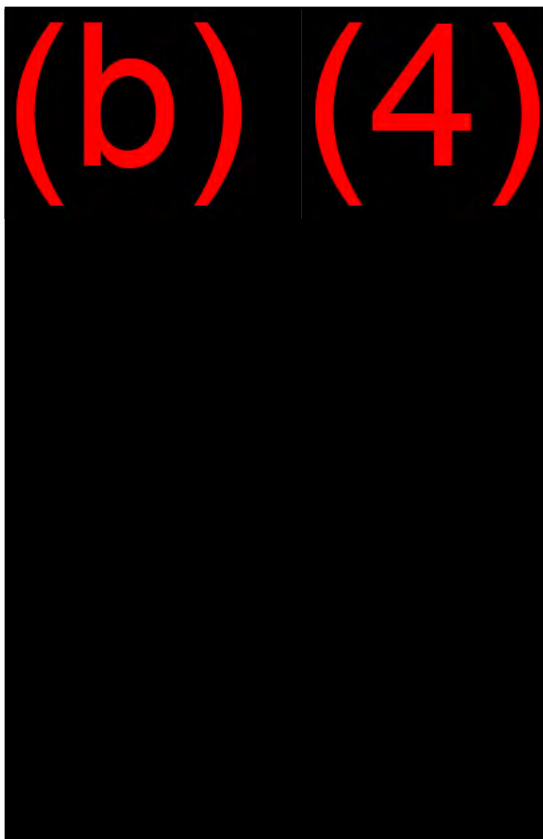
(b) (4)

(b) (4)



(b) (4)





Jay Byrne, president
v-Fluence

Toll Free: 877-835-8362 ext. (b)(6)
USA +1 314-880-8000 ext (b)(6)
Mobile: (b)(6)
LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/jaybyrne>
Fax: 877-568-4848
SKYPE: (b) (6)

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From: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 1, 2021 2:47 PM
To: Jay Byrne <Jay.Byrne@v-fluence.com>
Subject: Biotech terminology

Hi Jay,

When we met in February, we talked a bit about biotech terminology, like which terms are more commonly used and which are more positive or negative. Did you have any work on that? Possibly domestic and in other countries? I would appreciate any information along those lines that you could share.

Thanks,
Anastasia

Anastasia Bodnar, PhD (she/her)
Agricultural Biotechnology Advisor
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Pest Management Policy
South Building 1400 Independence Avenue SW Washington, DC 20250
Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov (202) 720-0066

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To: [Andrew R. Kniss](#); [Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#); [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: Re: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion
Date: Monday, May 24, 2021 9:25:17 AM

Thanks Andrew,

I downloaded some of the papers Carl used as references for the eco-efficiency work (Wiebner, Stockfish, and Marlander 2010; Gomez-Limon, Picazo-Tadeo, and Reig Martinez 2012; and Pelletier, Arsenault, and Tyedmers 2008). I will try to read them sometime before our next meeting.

(b) (5) DPP

Do you have free time later this week (perhaps on Wednesday or Thursday) for a short conversation with the team? Following our conversation, you and I can start working together to get some of the cooperative agreement paperwork finalized.

Best from this end, and happy Monday,

Seth

From: Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 4:42 PM
To: Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>; Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: Re: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion

(b) (5) DPP

(b)(6)
(b) (5) DPP

(b) (5) DPP

(b) (5) DPP

(b) (5) DPP

(b) (5) DPP

agree it would be super interesting if we could figure out a path to do it.

I have not investigated (b) (5) DPP... looks very interesting and potentially very useful! Thanks for the info.

Andrew

From: Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 11:26 AM
To: Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>; Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: Re: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion

Hello Andrew,

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I hadn't until a colleague referred to them the other day. (I think (b) (5) DPP .)

That's all for now, but we'll be in touch soon. OPMP is having a meeting tomorrow morning to discuss our project. And, there are some other forms for you and I to discuss/complete.

Talk soon,

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From: Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>

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Subject: Re: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion

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[REDACTED]

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Subject: Re: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion

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[REDACTED]

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Thanks!
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Cc: Andrew R. Kniss

Subject: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion

When: Monday, April 26, 2021 3:00 PM-4:00 PM.

Where: (b) (6)

USDA OPMP is inviting you to a scheduled ZoomGov meeting to discuss:

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2. Begin discussions on framework for cooperative research agreement on relative pesticide toxicity

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Subject: Re: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion
Date: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 1:27:53 PM
Attachments: [DiBartolomeis et al \(2019\), An assessment of acute insecticide toxicity loading \(AITL\) of chemical pesticides used on agricultural land in the United States.pdf](#)
[Douglas et al. \(2020\), County-level analysis reveals a rapidly shifting landscape of insecticide hazard to honey bees on US farmland.pdf](#) Attachments 1 & 2 are not attached - articles are public.

Hello Andrew,

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? ?

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Subject: Re: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion

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Cc: Andrew R. Kniss
Subject: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion
When: Monday, April 26, 2021 3:00 PM-4:00 PM.
Where: (b) (6)

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Subject: Re: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion
Date: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 12:33:00 PM
Attachments: [EcoEfficiencyPolarPlot.png](#)

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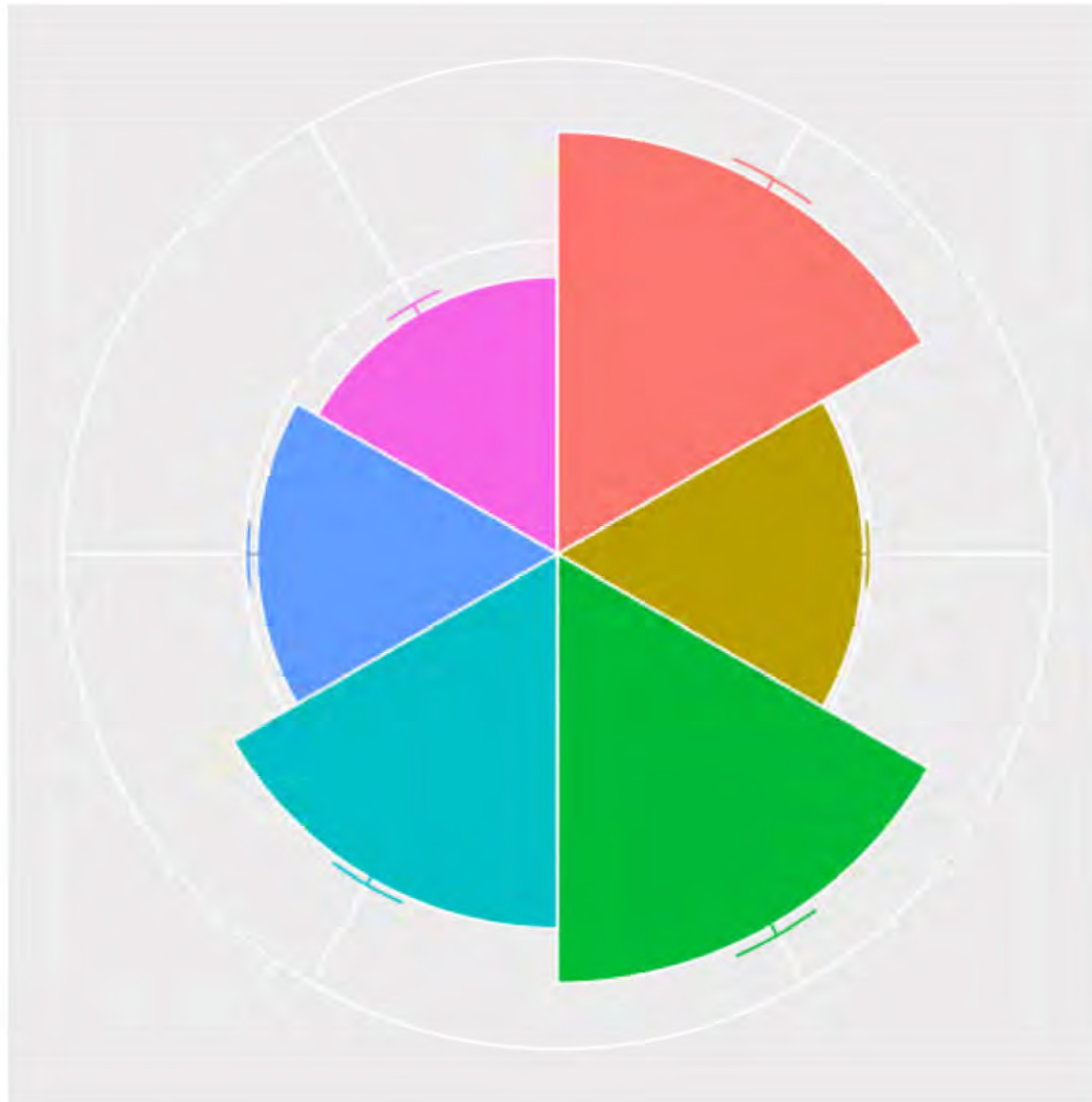
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- Aquatic invertebrate
- Bird
- Fish
- Groundwater
- Honeybee
- Mammal

From: [Andrew R. Kniss](#)
To: [Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#); [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: Re: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion
Date: Thursday, May 13, 2021 12:39:32 AM
Attachments: [DRAFT-CooperativeAgreement.docx](#) Attachment (3 pgs.) is withheld in full under FOIA Ex. 5: Deliberative/Pre-decisional.

Hi all, I'm not particularly proud of this draft (yet) but I think all the nuts and bolts are started here. Would be interested in any thoughts/additions/comments you have. I

(b) (5) DPP

Be happy to chat by zoom or over email depending on what's easiest and what kind of a timeline were wanting to pursue.

The current draft is (b) (5) DPP

That's the part I think I'm most excited about, but we'll have to kind of figure that out on the fly, I think. If we need more details, I'd be happy to work on that but would need some help from Seth.

Thanks!
Andrwe

From: Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 27, 2021 6:18 AM
To: Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>
Subject: Re: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion

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See below. :)

From: Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 27, 2021 8:17 AM
To: Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>
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From: Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC
Sent: Monday, April 19, 2021 3:38 PM
To: Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>; Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>; Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Cc: Andrew R. Kniss
Subject: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion
When: Monday, April 26, 2021 3:00 PM-4:00 PM.
Where: (b) (6)

USDA OPMP is inviting you to a scheduled ZoomGov meeting to discuss:

1. Schulz et al. paper
2. Begin discussions on framework for cooperative research agreement on relative pesticide toxicity

Join ZoomGov Meeting

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Meeting ID: (b) (6)

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Subject: [External Email]AfS & USDA
Location: Via zoom

Start: Thu 4/29/2021 2:00 PM
End: Thu 4/29/2021 3:00 PM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Organizer: Sarah Davidson Evanega

[External Email]

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(b) (6)

pass=(b)(6)

Sarah Evanega is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Sarah Evanega's Personal Meeting Room

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Meeting ID: (b) (6)

Passcode: (b)(6)

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162.255.36.11 (US East)

115.114.131.7 (India Mumbai)

115.114.115.7 (India Hyderabad)

213.19.144.110 (Amsterdam Netherlands)

213.244.140.110 (Germany)

103.122.166.55 (Australia Sydney)

103.122.167.55 (Australia Melbourne)

149.137.40.110 (Singapore)

64.211.144.160 (Brazil)

69.174.57.160 (Canada Toronto)

65.39.152.160 (Canada Vancouver)

207.226.132.110 (Japan Tokyo)

149.137.24.110 (Japan Osaka)

Meeting ID: (b) (6)

Passcode: (b) (6)

Join by Skype for Business

(b) (6)

From: [Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC](#)
To: [Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#); [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#); [Andrew R. Kniss](#)
Subject: Re: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion
Date: Tuesday, April 27, 2021 8:18:57 AM
Attachments: [APHIS Cooperative Agreement - two phase preproposal.docx](#) Attachment (3 pgs.) is withheld in full under FOIA Ex. 5: Deliberative/Pre-decisional.

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Meeting ID: (b) (6)

Find your local number: <https://www.zoomgov.com/u/ackGOLFTJg>

Subject: Pesticide Toxicity Research Discussion

Location: (b) (6)

Start: Mon 4/26/2021 3:00 PM

End: Mon 4/26/2021 4:00 PM

Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC

Required Attendees Andrew R. Kniss; Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC; Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC

zmMeetingNum: (b) (6)

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Find your local number: <https://www.zoomgov.com/join/ackGOLFTJg>

From: [Kunickis, Sheryl - OCE, Washington, DC](#) on behalf of [Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC](#)
To: [Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Andrew R. Kniss](#)
Cc: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#); [Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: Re: Pesticide Usage Analysis
Date: Thursday, April 15, 2021 7:13:47 PM

Awesome to hear! Andrew- congrats! We met in Montana almost two years ago!
Sounds like an excellent project! (b)(6) we have an outstanding staff
that will be working with you!
Sheryl
Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2021 4:37:55 PM
To: Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>
Cc: Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>; Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Pesticide Usage Analysis

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I look forward to discussing more details soon. Thanks so much!

Clayton Myers, Ph.D.

(he/him/his)

Acting Director, Entomologist

USDA-Office of Pest Management Policy

1400 Independence Ave. Room 3871, South Building

Washington, DC 20250

From: Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 5, 2021 1:00 AM
To: Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Peterson, Chris - FAS, Washington, DC

<Chris.Peterson@usda.gov>; Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>;
Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Chao, Julie - OCE-
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Thanks for the information Seth. Been thinking about our discussion over the break a bit.

The Biotech Risk Assessment Grant (BRAG) RFA came out just a few days before our last discussion ([link to RFA](#)). It requests an (optional) letter of intent for January 21, and full applications are due February 24. Those are fairly tight timelines, but I've written grants in less time (some successful, some less so).

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Would be happy to chat in more detail about project ideas, but figured I'd see what level of interest you all may have first.

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AK

From: Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>

Sent: Friday, December 18, 2020 4:13 PM

To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Peterson, Chris - FAS, Washington, DC <Chris.Peterson@usda.gov>; Myers, Clayton - OCE, Washington, DC <clayton.myers@usda.gov>; Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP,

Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>; Joseph Grey Ballenger <jballeng@uwyo.edu>; FAS-RMB-
Calendar TPGA BioTech <CalendarTPGABioTech@usda.gov>

Subject: Re: Pesticide Usage Analysis

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Happy Holidays!

Seth

Seth Wechsler, Ph.D.

U.S. Department of Agriculture/Office of the Chief Economist/Office of Pest Management Policy

South Building, Room 3871; 1400 Independence Ave., SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-3817

(b)(6)

seth.wechsler@usda.gov

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Cc: [Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC](#); [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#); [Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC](#); [Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: Re: Pesticide Usage Analysis
Date: Thursday, April 15, 2021 5:22:10 PM

Hi Clayton, this is excellent news! I'm excited to discuss further. I agree that the Shultz paper illustrates the need for a more nuanced and careful look at pesticide tox trends. Will look forward to more info.
Andrew

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Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2021 2:37 PM
To: Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>
Cc: Kunickis, Sheryl - OSEC <Sheryl.Kunickis2@usda.gov>; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC <seth.wechsler@usda.gov>; Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC <Cameron.Douglass@usda.gov>; Chao, Julie - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <julie.chao@usda.gov>
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(b)(6)
seth.wechsler@usda.gov

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Subject: Pesticide Toxicity Discussion Placeholder

Start: Mon 4/26/2021 3:00 PM

End: Mon 4/26/2021 4:00 PM

Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Organizer: Douglass, Cameron - USDA-OCE, Washington, DC

Required Attendees Wechsler, Seth - OCE, Washington, DC; Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC; Andrew R. Kniss

Wanted to send out this placeholder - I'll follow with a Zoom meeting invitation.

From: [Jay Byrne](#)
To: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Cc: [Erin Borrini](#)
Subject: [External Email]RE: Biotech terminology
Date: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:23:18 PM

[External Email]
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Just checking to see if this was responsive to your needs?

Jay Byrne, president
v-Fluence

Toll Free: 877-835-8362 ext. (b)(6)
USA +1 314-880-8000 ext (b)(6)
Mobile: (b)(6)
LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/jaybyrne>
Fax: 877-568-4848
SKYPE: (b)(6)

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From: Jay Byrne
Sent: Friday, April 2, 2021 12:02 PM
To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Cc: Erin Borrini <Erin.Borrini@v-fluence.com>
Subject: RE: Biotech terminology

Yes, we do have data (language analysis – LA) on biotech terminology and we can (with some limitations) generate reports on languages and use outside of the U.S. An example of the terminology used across general ag biotech-related concepts in the U.S. is attached. It’s from 2018.

(b) (4)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]. We haven’t had to run a generic top level review since 2018. We find that the more specific the focus the more useful the data. In addition, more specific topic areas provide more useful trends insights when compared over time.

(b) (4)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

(b) (4) [redacted] The search engines collect and sell this data to support advertisers. [redacted]
(b) (4) [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted].

For the general (North American) review of biotech terminology used in search we found the following attributes.

(b) (4)

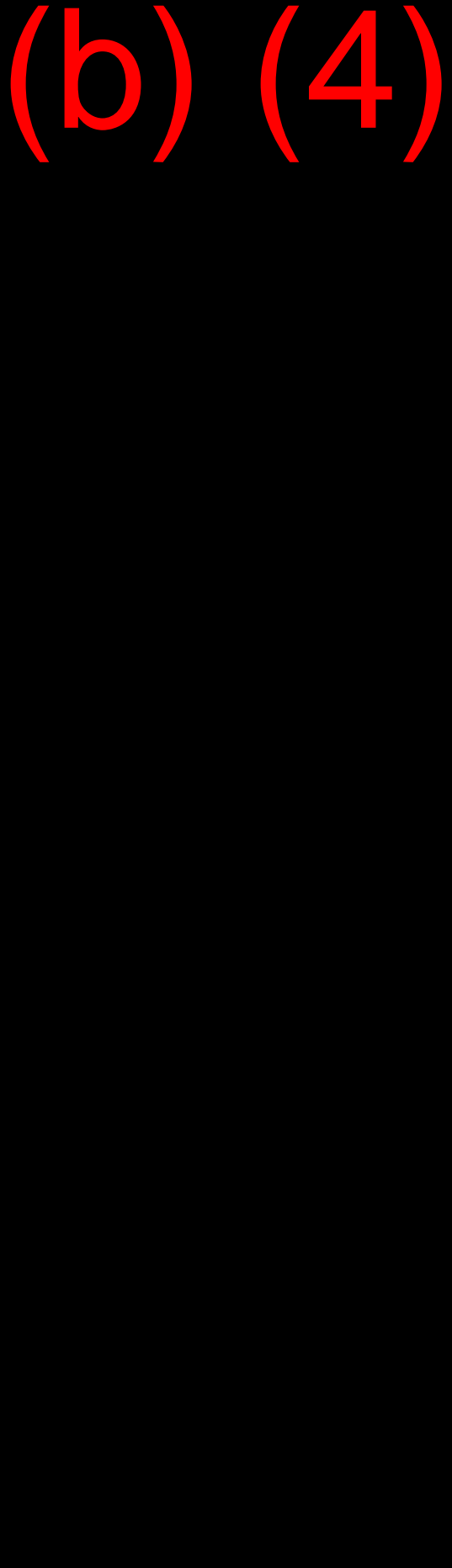
(b) (4) [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] The 2018
online environment for this broad category ranked list of sites is attached.

(b) (4)

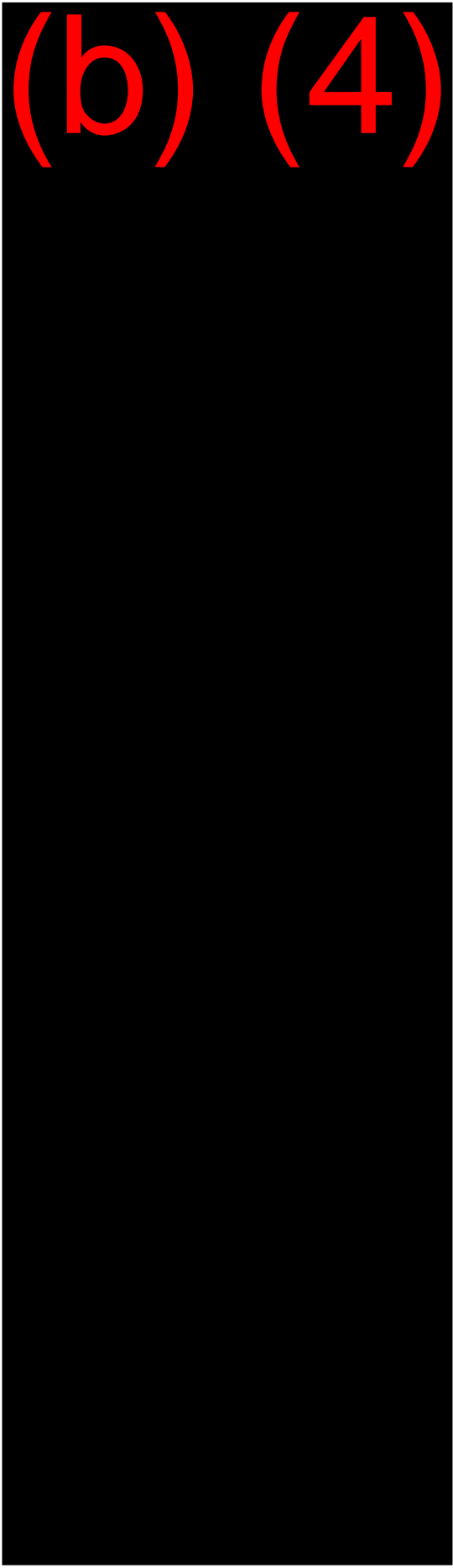
Let me know if you'd like to discuss or look at some more narrow concepts. If you have some specific projects in mind I can see what we can do pro-bono and give you a sense of what we'd have to charge.

(b) (4)

(b) (4)



(b) (4)





Jay Byrne, president
v-Fluence

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From: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 1, 2021 2:47 PM
To: Jay Byrne <Jay.Byrne@v-fluence.com>
Subject: Biotech terminology

Hi Jay,

When we met in February, we talked a bit about biotech terminology, like which terms are more commonly used and which are more positive or negative. Did you have any work on that? Possibly domestic and in other countries? I would appreciate any information along those lines that you could share.

Thanks,
Anastasia

Anastasia Bodnar, PhD (she/her)
Agricultural Biotechnology Advisor
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Pest Management Policy
South Building 1400 Independence Avenue SW Washington, DC 20250
Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov (202) 720-0066

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From: [Pamela Ronald](#)
To: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: Re: Virtual coffee?
Date: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 5:21:29 PM

Let's aim for next week. Take care!

All the best,
Pam

From: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 2:08:49 PM
To: Pamela Ronald <pcronald@ucdavis.edu>
Subject: RE: Virtual coffee?

Ah I am so sorry, I am a little bit done after the meeting – could we do another day?
If late afternoon works for you, that time is generally good for me.

From: Pamela Ronald <pcronald@ucdavis.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 5:01 PM
To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: Re: Virtual coffee?

It would be great to catch up. I have time at around 4:30 pacific time? How about you? Another day/time is also fine. I look forward to seeing (b) (6)

All the best,
Pam

From: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 12:29:30 PM
To: Pamela Ronald <pcronald@ucdavis.edu>
Subject: Virtual coffee?

Good afternoon,
It was really nice to hear you speak in the IGI workshop today.
If you have a little time in the next few weeks, I'd love to catch up!
Best,
Anastasia

Anastasia Bodnar, PhD (she/her)
Agricultural Biotechnology Advisor
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Pest Management Policy
Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov (202) 720-0066

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From: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
To: [Sarah Davidson Evanega](#)
Cc: [Joan Conrow](#)
Subject: RE: Biotech terminology
Date: Monday, April 5, 2021 9:32:00 AM

Thanks, Sarah. No rush, (b) (6). I hope all is ok.
I'm seeking any data that will help inform which terms we use on outreach products, both on gene editing and other biotechnology. For example, what terms are used in neutral or positive media articles most frequently compared to what terms are used in negative media articles.

Best,
Anastasia

From: Sarah Davidson Evanega <snd2@cornell.edu>
Sent: Sunday, April 4, 2021 7:18 PM
To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Cc: Joan Conrow <joanconrow@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: Biotech terminology

Anastasia,

Let me pull some resources together for you. Remind me: gene editing only or also other biotechnologies? I may be slow the next few days. (b)(6)
(b)(6) Life and its surprises! I'm copying Joan as well to see if she has anything packaged to share.

Cheers,
Sarah

From: "Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC" <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Date: Thursday, April 1, 2021 at 3:44 PM
To: Sarah Davidson <snd2@cornell.edu>
Subject: Biotech terminology

Hi Sarah,

When we met in February, we talked a bit about the Alliance's work on terminology, like which terms are more commonly used and which are more positive or negative. Possibly domestic and in some other countries? I would appreciate any information along those lines that you could share.

Thanks,
Anastasia

Anastasia Bodnar, PhD (she/her)
Agricultural Biotechnology Advisor

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Pest Management Policy
South Building 1400 Independence Avenue SW Washington, DC 20250
Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov (202) 720-0066

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From: [Jay Byrne](#)
To: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Cc: [Erin Borrini](#)
Subject: RE: Biotech terminology
Date: Friday, April 2, 2021 1:01:57 PM
Attachments: [Biotech_US_Language_Analysis-2018.pdf](#) Attachment 1 (13 pages) and Attachment 2 (19 pages) are withheld in full under FOIA Exemption 4.
[Copy of BE_SEA_2018.pdf](#)

Yes, we do have data (language analysis – LA) on biotech terminology and we can (with some limitations) generate reports on languages and use outside of the U.S. An example of the terminology used across general ag biotech-related concepts in the U.S. is attached. It's from 2018.

(b) (4)

. We haven't had to run a generic top level review since 2018. We find that the more specific the focus the more useful the data. In addition, more specific topic areas provide more useful trends insights when compared over time.

(b) (4)

. The search engines collect and sell this data to support advertisers.

(b) (4)

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For the general (North American) review of biotech terminology used in search we found the following attributes.

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(b) (4)

The 2018 online environment for this broad category ranked list of sites is attached.

(b) (4)

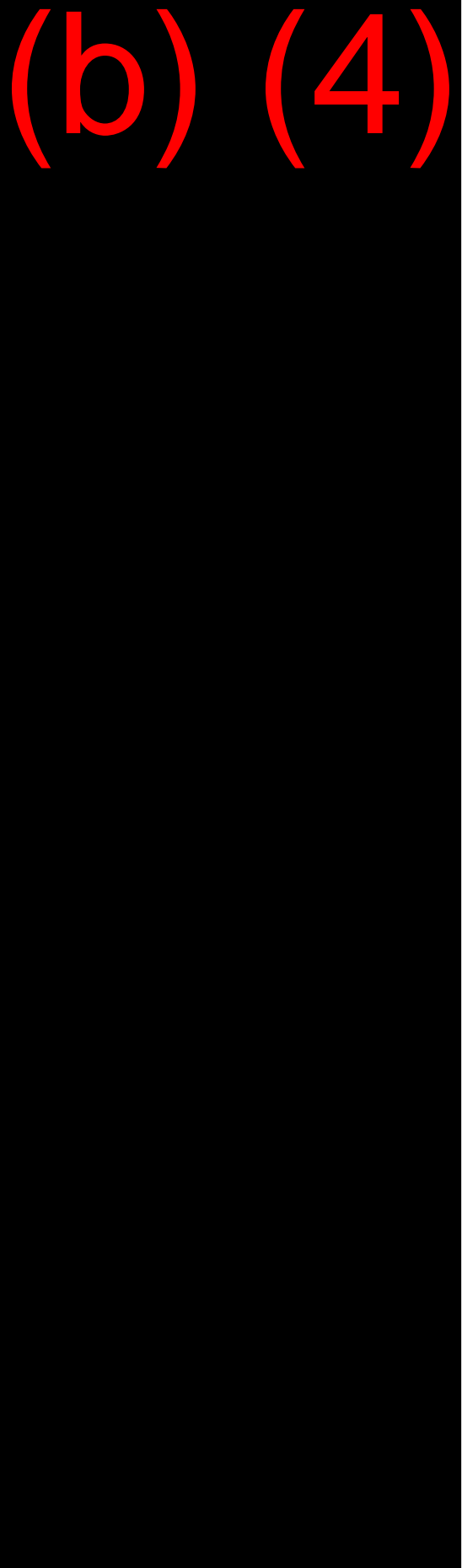
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(b) (4)

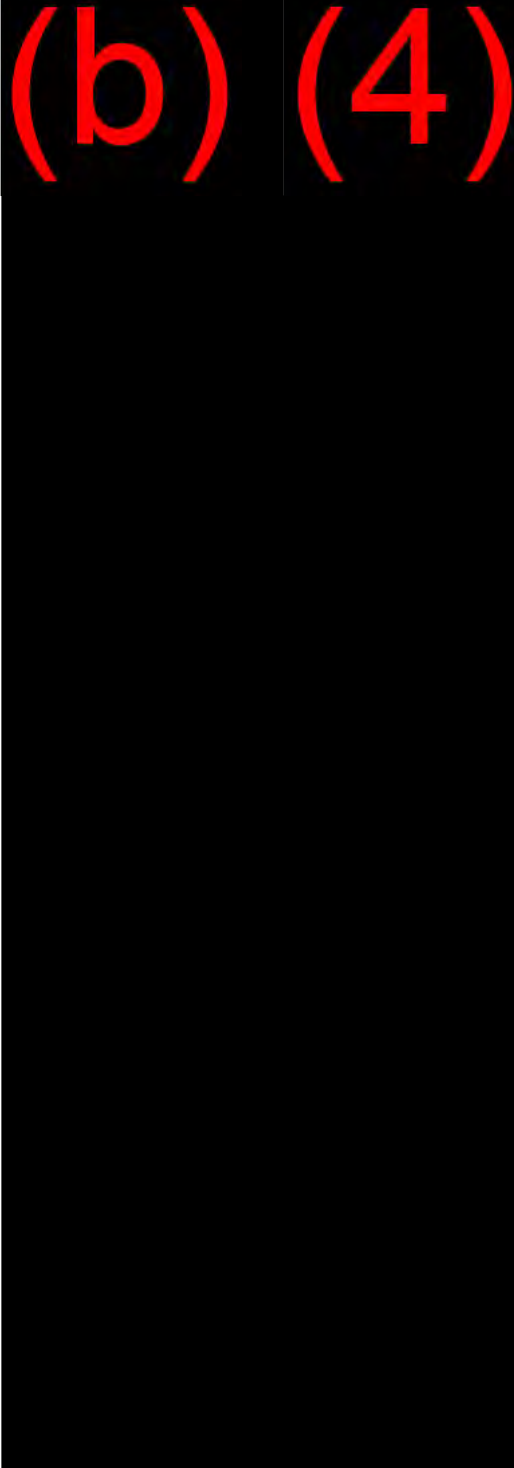
Let me know if you'd like to discuss or look at some more narrow concepts. If you have some specific projects in mind I can see what we can do pro-bono and give you a sense of what we'd have to charge.

(b) (4)

(b) (4)



(b) (4)



Jay Byrne, president
v-Fluence

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USA +1 314-880-8000 ext (b)(6)
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LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/jaybyrne>
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From: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 1, 2021 2:47 PM
To: Jay Byrne <Jay.Byrne@v-fluence.com>
Subject: Biotech terminology

Hi Jay,

When we met in February, we talked a bit about biotech terminology, like which terms are more commonly used and which are more positive or negative. Did you have any work on that? Possibly domestic and in other countries? I would appreciate any information along those lines that you could share.

Thanks,
Anastasia

Anastasia Bodnar, PhD (she/her)
Agricultural Biotechnology Advisor
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From: [Sarah Davidson Evanega](#)
To: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: [External Email]FW: 2020 Biotech media report
Date: Thursday, April 1, 2021 7:27:59 PM
Attachments: [Alliance for Science 2020 Year in Review - 2018 Data Version.pptx](#) Attachment (22 pages) withheld in full under FOIA Ex. 4.

[External Email]

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Anastasia,

This is not a direct answer to your question (I'll get to that) but these reports may be useful none the less. See attached.

Cheers,
Sarah

From: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
To: [Jay Byrne](#)
Subject: RE: [External Email]FW: Log in issue
Date: Tuesday, March 9, 2021 11:01:00 AM

Thanks so much for resolving that.

Best,
Anastasia

From: Jay Byrne <Jay.Byrne@v-fluence.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 9, 2021 9:42 AM
To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: [External Email]FW: Log in issue

Sorry Anastasia – that was on my side and I’ve just fixed and updated.

We’d updated your login on BE but I forgot to change the email distribution on Constant Contact for newsletters. If you wish to make any future changes (i.e., stopping one or more of the newsletters) just let me know and I can adjust on our end. If you click unsubscribe, it will remove you from all BE communications and it’s quite difficult to add you back (a Constant Contact feature to prevent unwanted solicitations).

Regards,

Jay Byrne, president
v-Fluence

Toll Free: 877-835-8362 ext. (b)(6)
USA +1 314-880-8000 ext (b)(6)
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LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/jaybyrne>
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From: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 9, 2021 8:36 AM
To: Jay Byrne <Jay.Byrne@v-fluence.com>

Subject: RE: [External Email]FW: Log in issue

Good morning,

Just wanted to say thank you for speaking with me last week, it was nice to catch up and hear what projects V-Fluence is working on.

One quick question for you on the BE site – I'm still getting the Favorable Outcomes Newsletter to my personal email address. I am not sure how to change it to my USDA email address.

Thanks,
Anastasia

From: Jay Byrne <Jay.Byrne@v-fluence.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 28, 2021 10:59 AM
To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: [External Email]FW: Log in issue

Happy to catch up over online coffee anytime.

We're currently working on several USDA and USAID-funded projects that have intersections with ag biotech (all ex-US) and have various daily, weekly and monthly reports (in addition to the BE online resources) that might be helpful in your role.

I'm typically pretty flexible Mon/Wed 11 – 2 Eastern window, Tues/Thurs 3 – 5 Eastern, or Fri 11-1 Eastern. Let me know if any of those windows works for you and which days.

Jay Byrne, president
v-Fluence

Toll Free: 877-835-8362 ext. (b)(6)
USA +1 314-880-8000 ext (b)(6)
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From: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Sent: Friday, February 26, 2021 3:15 PM
To: Jay Byrne <Jay.Byrne@v-fluence.com>
Subject: RE: [External Email]FW: Log in issue

Good afternoon,

Thank you so much for sending this and updating my account. How are you? I find myself back in the biotech space as the USDA biotech coordinator, so I'm immersing myself on all the relevant biotech-related info I can, including the resources in Bonus Eventus. Would you perhaps be available sometime in the next few weeks for virtual coffee?

Thanks,
Anastasia

Anastasia Bodnar, PhD
Agricultural Biotechnology Advisor
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Pest Management Policy
South Building 1400 Independence Avenue SW Washington, DC 20250
Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov (202) 720-0066

From: Jay Byrne <Jay.Byrne@v-fluence.com>
Sent: Friday, February 26, 2021 2:40 PM
To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: [External Email]FW: Log in issue

[External Email]

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ICYMI

From: Jay Byrne
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2021 5:51 PM
To: Anastasia Bodnar <anastasia@biofortified.org>
Cc: Nina Helgeson <(b) (6) @v-fluence.com>
Subject: RE: Log in issue

Anastasia – hope you are well and sorry you are having access issues with Bonus Eventus.

Your account is set up with you USDA email – if you have forgotten your password you can reset it by visiting the login page and click the lost password link:

(b) (6) - enter your USDA email and you will be sent a reset link (check your spam folder).

If for any reason you do not receive that email (some firewalls block those automated response emails) then just ping me back and I can reset your password manually for you.

Regards,

Jay

Jay Byrne, president
v-Fluence

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USA +1 314-880-8000 ext (b)(6)
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From: Anastasia Bodnar <anastasia@biofortified.org>
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2021 3:51 PM
To: Info <(b)(6)>
Subject: Log in issue

To whom it may concern,

I previously had a log in for Bonus Eventus with my personal email account, but I am unable to log in or reset my password. It may be under (b)(6) or (b)(6). Would it be possible to switch to my work email anastasia.bodnar@usda.gov?

Thanks,
Anastasia

Anastasia Bodnar, PhD

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Subject: Virtual coffee
Location: (b) (6)
Start: Fri 3/5/2021 11:00 AM
End: Fri 3/5/2021 11:30 AM
Show Time As: Tentative
Recurrence: (none)
Meeting Status: Not yet responded
Organizer: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC
Required Attendees: Jay Byrne <Jay.Byrne@v-fluence.com>

Hope this time works for you. Looking forward to speaking with you.
Best,
Anastasia

Join ZoomGov Meeting

(b) (6)

Meeting ID: (b) (6)

One tap mobile

+16692545252, (b) (6) US (San Jose)

+15512851373, (b) (6) US

Dial by your location

+1 669 254 5252 US (San Jose)

+1 551 285 1373 US

+1 646 828 7666 US (New York)

+1 669 216 1590 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: (b) (6)

Find your local number: <https://www.zoomgov.com/u/ayQGuBbXL>

From: [Jay Byrne](#)
To: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Subject: [External Email]Accepted: Virtual coffee

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Subject: Afs & USDA
Location: Via zoom

Start: Thu 4/29/2021 2:00 PM
End: Thu 4/29/2021 3:00 PM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Organizer: Sarah Davidson Evanega

(b) (6)

pass=(b) (6)

From: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
To: [Sarah Davidson Evanega](#)
Subject: Accepted: AFS & USDA

From: [Pablo Ivan Orozco](#)
To: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
Cc: [Sarah Davidson Evanega; gjaffe@cspinet.org](#)
Subject: Follow up Pablo Orozco from Alliance for Science
Date: Thursday, February 25, 2021 8:32:53 AM

Dear Anastasia

Thanks for making the time to connect yesterday! It was a very informative meeting. I just wanted to follow up on a second call specifically on areas within my portfolio as we discussed on the call. I am happy to set up a calendar invite for a zoom call for a time and date that works for you well in advance to have something on the books.

Looking forward to hearing from you and best regards

Pablo

From: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
To: [Sarah Davidson Evanega](#)
Subject: RE: Congratulations!
Date: Thursday, February 11, 2021 8:30:00 AM

Good morning,
Either date works for me. I have met both Greg and Pablo, and would definitely welcome them to chat as well!
Thanks,
Anastasia

From: Sarah Davidson Evanega <snd2@cornell.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2021 4:54 PM
To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Subject: Re: Congratulations!

Anastasia,

Thanks for being willing to meet with us. (b)(6)

If we look at the last week of the month, I'll suggest the following times as good possibilities: Wednesday, Feb 24th or Friday, Feb 26th from 1-3 PM. Hopefully one of those windows will work for you. Once you send me a signal for a good time, I can send a cal and zoom invite. If okay with you, I'd like to include Greg and Pablo from our team who are engaged on the policy issues both domestically as well as at international forums like the COP.

I look forward to connecting!

Cheers,
Sarah

Sarah Evanega

Research Professor
[Department of Global Development](#)

International Research Professor (joint)
[School of Integrative Plant Sciences](#)

Director
[Cornell Alliance for Science](#)

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Cornell University
Phone: (b)(6)
Email: snd2@cornell.edu
@sarah_evanega

Websites:

[Faculty Profile](#)
[Alliance for Science](#)

Cornell University is located on the traditional homelands of the Gayogohó:nq' (the Cayuga Nation). The Gayogohó:nq' are members of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, an alliance of six sovereign Nations with a historic and contemporary presence on this land. The Confederacy precedes the establishment of Cornell University, New York State, and the United States of America. We acknowledge the painful history of Gayogohó:nq' dispossession, and honor the ongoing connection of Gayogohó:nq' people, past and present, to these lands and waters.

From: "Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC" <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>
Date: Wednesday, February 10, 2021 at 1:27 PM
To: Sarah Davidson <snd2@cornell.edu>
Subject: RE: Congratulations!

Hi Sarah,
Nice to hear from you, and thanks! I'm excited for this opportunity, and glad to be back in the biotech space. Would you have some time in the next few weeks to chat? I'd like to learn how Fan-Li interacted with AfS and talk about how we can collaborate in the future.
Thanks,
Anastasia

Anastasia Bodnar, PhD
Regulatory Risk Assessor (until February 15, 2021)
Agricultural Biotechnology Advisor (after February 15, 2021)
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Pest Management Policy
South Building 1400 Independence Avenue SW Washington, DC 20250
Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov (202) 720-0066

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Sarah Davidson Evanega** <snd2@cornell.edu>
Date: Tue, Feb 9, 2021 at 1:34 PM
Subject: Congratulations!

Hello Anastasia,
I hope you and your family are doing well, all covid considered.

(b)(6)

On happier professional platform news, I heard from Chris Peterson last week that you have been appointed to lead the USDA's biotechnology program. Congratulations on the new position! Please let me know the email address that I should use for correspondence in that capacity. We will look forward to working closely with you on a number of AfS programs! Very exciting! Lots of good news to usher in 2021!

Cheers,
Sarah

Sarah Evanega

Research Professor
[Department of Global Development](#)
International Research Professor (joint)
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From: [Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC](#)
To: [Andrew R. Kniss](#); [Joseph Grey Ballenger](#)
Subject: RE: Pesticide toxicity research - budget request due Feb 11
Date: Thursday, February 11, 2021 7:46:00 AM

This is perfect, thank you so much. Will get back to you soon to ask for a meeting on next steps!

From: Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2021 10:26 PM
To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Joseph Grey Ballenger <jballeng@uwyo.edu>
Subject: Re: Pesticide toxicity research - budget request due Feb 11

Hi Anastasia,
On short notice, with lots of other balls in the air, this is what I came up with:

(b) (5) DPP

If this is too much, we could probably figure out a way to do some cool work without a postdoc - but we'd have to think pretty hard about how to make it work.

Anyway, happy to discuss more. I'm in and out of meetings all day Thursday, but could carve out a few minutes to chat if it would be helpful.

Phone number is (b)(6) .
Thanks,
Andrew

Sent from a phone

From: Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2021 1:38:30 AM

To: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>; Joseph Grey Ballenger <jballeng@uwyo.edu>

Subject: Re: Pesticide toxicity research - budget request due Feb 11

Hi Anastasia,

I'll try to put something together. Will be tricky without having a better idea of what we'll actually try to do, but time is time, I suppose - so should be able to figure out a reasonable salary figure to get some work done.

AK

From: Bodnar, Anastasia - OCE-OPMP, Washington, DC <Anastasia.Bodnar@usda.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, February 9, 2021 10:51 AM

To: Andrew R. Kniss <AKniss@uwyo.edu>; Joseph Grey Ballenger <jballeng@uwyo.edu>

Subject: Pesticide toxicity research - budget request due Feb 11

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Good afternoon,

Just wanted to let you know we are making progress on the (b) (5) DPP that we'd previously discussed. OPMP is meeting with EPA this week to get their thoughts on topics, then we will schedule another meeting with you.

Could you please provide a ballpark budget, preferably by tomorrow? It's premature of me to ask, but we must submit our office budget this Thursday (we just found out today), and we'd like to pencil in this research.

(b) (5) DPP

Please feel free to give me a call if that would be helpful.

Thanks,
Anastasia

Anastasia Bodnar, PhD
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