



Letter No. 3622
Friday, June 24, 2011
Creative Media & Broadcast Center
202-215-3931

BROADCASTERS LETTER

#3622

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(June 23)

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY TOM VILSACK ON G-20 ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS FOOD SECURITY AND FOOD PRICE VOLATILITY

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack made the following statement today on the G-20 Action Plan to address food security and food price volatility:

"The consensus reached today by the G-20 Agricultural Ministers marks an historic union of resolve in combating the pressing challenges of hunger and food price volatility confronting our world with greater regularity. Together, the G-20 nations are committed to increasing agricultural production through use of improved practices and technologies and a commitment to new and expanded research and development. To that end, we support the launch of an International Research Initiative for Wheat Improvement to help nations coordinate research efforts on this crucial staple crop.

"Moreover, we recognize the need for participation in global agricultural monitoring systems and early warning systems to improve crop production projections and weather forecasting, and we call upon international organizations to create links between existing global, regional and national systems. The need for market transparency and consistency with science-based rule-making systems among our nations and the international community is stronger than ever. Purposefully then, we support establishing the groundwork for an international agricultural market information system, or AMIS, that if fully supported and utilized, will mitigate volatility and reduce market distorting signals by promoting greater shared understanding of food production and price information.

"We have also reaffirmed our opposition to erecting trade barriers through export bans. In particular, we recognize that food export bans restricting humanitarian aid penalize the most needy. Significantly, the G-20 members agree to remove food export restrictions for food purchased for humanitarian purposes. Furthermore, our work to support innovation in the development of non-food feedstocks and next generation renewable fuels will continue to help offset instability in the energy market, which accounts for the bulk of food and commodity price fluctuations in the past decade.

"In the end, this agreement is only as good as the actions we take together to aggressively confront food security's difficult challenges, but our cooperation as reflected today is a significant achievement for the nearly one billion people grappling with hunger each day."

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-4623
For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>
For Radio Story:

USDA STEPPING UP EFFORTS TO STOP SNAP PROGRAM FRAUD AND ABUSE

Even though SNAP program benefits are handled electronically, a USDA official says there is still a lot of illegal trafficking of SNAP benefits and a bigger effort to stop it.

For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15583>

SENATORS HEAR ALL ABOUT USDA EFFORTS TO REDUCE WASTE AND FRAUD

USDA officials were questioned Thursday by lawmakers on their efforts to cut waste and fraud in USDA programs.

For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15581>

(June 22)

USDA FOREST SERVICE AWARDS NEARLY \$3 MILLION FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

Federal grants support the development of clean renewable energy to help reduce the risk of wildfires and provide economic opportunities to rural communities. The money goes to 17 small businesses and community groups to develop wood-to-energy projects that require engineering services and will help expand regional economies and create new jobs. "Biomass is a vital part of America's clean energy future as we work to decrease our dependence on foreign oil," says Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "Projects like these will help grow regional economies, create new jobs, and improve and protect our environment. We will need architects and engineers to design these plants, skilled laborers to build them and well-trained technicians to operate them."

These projects will use woody material removed from forests during projects such as wildfire prevention, and that woody biomass will be processed in bioenergy facilities to produce green energy for heating and electricity. The awardees will use funds from the [Woody Biomass Utilization Grant](#) program to further the planning of such facilities by funding the engineering services necessary for final design, permitting and cost analysis.

Examples of possible projects include the engineering design of a woody biomass boiler for steam at a sawmill, a non-pressurized hot water system for a hospital or school, and a biomass-power generation facility. The grant program helps applicants complete the necessary design work needed to secure public or private investment for construction. For a listing of the 2011 woody biomass utilization grantees visit <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>.

Contact: Forest Service - Douglas Clawson (608) 231-9325

For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15577>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15574>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15576>

USDA OFFICIAL MEETS WITH PRODUCERS IN FLOOD-DAMAGED AREAS OF IOWA

The USDA Farm and Foreign Agriculture Service (FFAS) Acting Deputy Under Secretary Karis Gutter traveled to Iowa to tour areas damaged by flooding and meet with local producers to discuss USDA efforts to provide assistance. Gutter helps oversee two key agencies that can assist with the recovery: the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Risk Management Agency (RMA). His tour follows up on Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack's visit to affected areas of the Midwest earlier in the month.

"This historic flood is already causing substantial hardship for people who live and make their livelihoods along the Missouri River" says Gutter. "USDA has a variety of programs that can help, and Secretary Vilsack has promised that USDA will do everything possible to provide assistance to those affected by flooding."

In the wake of several disasters that have affected the Midwest, the USDA and the entire federal family have been working with state and local officials to provide relief to residents, farmers, ranchers, businesses and those who need it most.

The FSA administers several important programs that help producers recover from disaster damage and livestock deaths. Among the key programs available to address impacts from disasters are the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), and the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program.

Also, Secretary Vilsack announced recently that \$3 million has been allocated to the Emergency Watershed Protect Program administered by NRCS to carry out emergency restoration projects in five western states experiencing flooding or at risk for flooding.

Fact sheets for all FSA programs can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov; click on Newsroom, then Fact Sheets. For information about other disaster assistance [click here](#).

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-4623

For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15584>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15579>

(June 21)

USDA INCREASES FY11 RAW SUGAR TARIFF-RATE QUOTA

The U.S. Department of Agriculture today increased the fiscal year 2011 raw sugar tariff-rate quota (TRQ) by 120,000 short tons raw value (STRV). The increase is expected to yield a net increase in imports of 110,000 STRV due to normal TRQ slippage. The increase in sugar supplies is forecast to yield an ending FY 2011 stocks-to-use ratio of 15.0 percent and mitigate some of the summer 2011 sugar supply risk associated with late sugar beet plantings, uncertain Mexican imports, and a tight world sugar market. This increase in raw sugar imports is also expected to provide an adequate supply of sugar without the need for significant imports under the unrestricted high-tier tariff.

In a separate action, USDA increased the overall allotment quantity (OAQ) for domestic sugar marketing by 164,750 STRV to provide U.S. producers with the statutory minimum market share of 85 percent. This OAQ action increased both cane and beet sugar allotments given the sector proportions specified in statute. The increased cane sugar allotment was greater than the domestic cane sugar supply. Thus, the surplus cane sugar allotment was reassigned from domestic sugarcane processors to raw sugar imports. This reassignment, as well as the enlarged beet sugar allotment, is effective June 21. The individual company allocations that reflect the change in the OAQ can be found by visiting <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>. The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative will announce country allocations for the TRQ increase separately.

The USDA will closely monitor stocks, consumption, imports, and all sugar market and program variables on an ongoing basis. Additional adjustments to import TRQs and domestic marketing allotments may be needed later in FY 2011 to ensure an adequate sugar supply for the domestic market to prevent market disruptions. Within the next few months USDA will announce the FY 2012 sugar tariff-rate quota, and whether the periods for entry of raw sugar under the FY 2011 and/or FY 2012 raw sugar TRQs will be extended.

The Federal Register notice is viewable online here: http://www.ofr.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2011-15521_PI.pdf. (* Conversion factor: 1 metric ton = 1.10231125 short tons) To review the revised 2011 crop year cane and beet sugar marketing allotments and processor allocations, go to http://www.fas.usda.gov/info/Sugar_TRQ_chart.pdf.

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-4623
For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

WILDFIRE THREAT CONTINUES TO LOOM IN DESERT SOUTHWEST AND BURN THE SOUTHEAST

Not much relief is expected in Arizona and New Mexico soon as wildfires continue to engulf those states. While Florida has not seen as many wildfires as usual this time of season, Georgia has been hit this spring with significant blazes.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15564>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15565>

FORMER HEADS OF GOVERNMENT AWARDED 2011 WORLD FOOD PRIZE

Two former presidents, one from Ghana, the other from Brazil are the laureates for this year's World Food Prize. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack put a challenge to the USDA Wallace-Carver interns attending the announcement of the 2011 World Food Prize honorees, to carry on the work of the father of the green revolution Norman Borlaug.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15568>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15571>

(June 20)

RISING FLOOD WATERS RAISE CONCERNS ABOUT MOSQUITOES

Many folks in flood areas are wondering if mosquito populations will increase. Barb Ogg of University of Nebraska Extension explains the potential threat of increased mosquito populations due to flooding.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15549>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15550>

A VARIETY OF HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM OPTIONS THROUGH USDA

Rural Development offers programs to assist rural residents to buying a home.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15466>
USDA Related Blog Post: [Homeownership Month in Virginia-Special Gifts for a Job Well Done](#)

COTTON CONDITION AT ITS LOWEST POINT IN 16 YEARS

A drought that has covered most of the cotton growing regions of the South is behind very poor condition levels.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15558>

For more agriculture news go to www.usda.gov and click Newsroom on the toolbar.
Also, check out the [USDA Blog](#)



FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA CD # 26.11 – Summertime is fun time for many children, but it may also be a hungry time for millions of kids. During the school year many children get low or no cost nutritious meals at school. For some these meals are the only good meals they get. But what happens in the summer when there is no school? Gary Crawford takes a look at this question on this edition of AGRICULTURE USA.

CONSUMER TIME CD # 26.11 – Bringing Good Summertime Meals To Kids. A “Smarter” Nationwide Electric System Soon. Floods, Mosquito Threat, and West Nile Virus. Wildfire Preparedness In 2011. Be Safe With All That Fourth Of July Food.

AG UPDATE CD # 26.11 – USDA And Its Reassurance In Time Of Natural Disaster. Reaching A Milestone In Beef Trade. Changes In Chinese Corn Estimates. The Growing Concern About The Cotton Crop. Biodiesel Fuel Is Being Used For Home Heating.

UPCOMING ON THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE – June 28 – Crop Weather (WAOB). June 29 – Agricultural Prices Report (NASS). June 30 – Acreage Reports (NASS). July 4 – NO NEWSLINE (Independence Day Holiday) **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. The Radio Newsline carries many stories every day that are not listed in this lineup.**

Access the Radio Newsline at 202-720-6776, 5PM ET or go to www.usda.gov, click on Newsroom at top of page, scroll down on right side of page to Radio and TV.

Then click on Daily Radio News Service or Weekly Radio Feature Service.

Questions on USDA Radio's Features, fax name, station, and address to 202-690-2165.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

Dairy Prices At Grocery Store Going Up

Consumers are seeing a five to six percent increase in prices for dairy products

YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JH_cr64svpl

Windows: <mms://ocbmtcwmp.usda.gov/content/bmtc/vnr/foodp.wmv>

**A new TV feature is available on the USDA FTP site
Filename: dairy price feature**

Download instructions:

The host: <ftp://ocbmtcmedia.download.akamai.com>

User name: usdanews

Password: Newscontent1

The new file is in QuickTime Movie (H.264), MPEG 4, MPEG2 and HDV
Please email bob.ellison@usda.gov if you have problems or suggestions

Also, use this free ftp client if you have problems

<http://filezilla-project.org/download.php?type+client>

OFF MIKE



THE IOWA AGRIBUSINESS REPORT IS ON WHO HD-TV TURNS TWO –

The Des Moines based program was started by **Ken Root** (WHO-TV – Des Moines, Iowa <http://www.whotv.com>) in conjunction with the Agribusiness Association of Iowa at the request of WHO-TV. The station went to the High Definition format two months later. **Root** says he would have preferred that they go back to fuzzy black and white with his face on air twice daily. The report covers 34 counties in Iowa and reports on agribusiness news, markets, farm and food stories, and agricultural weather each day.

The team for the report consists of videographer and editor **Nathan Matta** and **Chet Hollingshead**, an NAFB Foundation Scholarship winner. He joined the team following graduation from Iowa State University this spring.



Ken Root of WHO HD-TV



WELCOME ABOARD – Michael Lear (MissouriNet - Jefferson City, Missouri <http://www.missourinet.com>) is no longer KWIX/KRES/KIRK/KTCM Radio. Lear informs us that he's accepted a position with the MissouriNet based in Jefferson City. Prior to his departure he wrote, "I want you all to know, it's been a pleasure working here the last 13+ years and working with each of you. I sincerely value the relationships I've built here over the years and I hope to continue those with my move to the MissouriNet. Thanks to you all for working with me over the years and I hope to work with you all again soon!" Lear can be reached at kresnews@regionalradio.com or bradb@regionalradio.com. After June 27 try him at mlear@missourinet.com.



FFA COLLEGIATE MEMBERS TO FIGHT HUNGER IN RWANDA – Seven Future Farmers of America (FFA) members on the college level have been chosen to participate in the FFA Global Outreach: Africa (FFA GO: Africa) program. The students will work from July 13-August 2 in Rwanda, Africa, to help local farmers fight hunger and poverty through sustainable agriculture. They will experience the reality of food insecurity, agriculture and conservation issues in a sub-Saharan African country where the average annual income is \$1,500 or below.

The 2011 FFA GO: Africa participants are: **Jeffrey Barnes** from Leland, Illinois, a student at Joliet Junior College; **Ashley Bretnauer** from Cedaredge, Colorado, a student at Oklahoma State University; **Elizabeth Eastep** from Yanceyville, North Carolina, a student at North Carolina State University; **Thomas Griffin** from Culver, Oregon, a student at Oregon State University; **Victoria Marsh** from Carbonado, Washington, a student at Washington State University; **Brett Monson** from Webster, South Dakota, a student at South Dakota State University; and **Jamie Renier** from Denmark, Wisconsin, a student at University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

The FFA GO: Africa group will be led by Trisha Bailey, chief operating officer for H. Beck Inc. and a former national FFA officer from Florida. “FFA believes it is imperative for students to learn how agriculture affects the global community and to understand how geography, politics and natural resources availability can impact agriculture’s ability to feed a rapidly growing world population,” says National FFA Organization CEO Dr. Dwight Armstrong. “Acquiring an appreciation for the dynamics and complexities of these issues will prepare students to play active roles of leadership and service in addressing critical needs, ensuring the sustainability of agriculture and promoting food security for all.”

Before heading out to overseas, the students will have a two-day orientation in the United States and then head to Kigali, Rwanda. There, they will live and work for two weeks with the staff of Catholic Relief Services; an organization that helps impoverished and disadvantaged people throughout the world. The students will participate in activities to gain a broad understanding of the challenges faced by small-scale farmers and the many environmental conflicts that arise from income- and food-insecure families.

***Broadcasters if you have any humanitarian or community service events
you’d like to share please forward to susan.carter@oc.usda.gov.***

***We love to hear about what you’re doing and
share it with others in the farm broadcaster family.***

From all of us to all of you ... thank you for what you do



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call (800) 795-3272 (voice), or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).*