



Letter No. 3654  
Friday, February 24, 2012  
Creative Media & Broadcast Center  
202-720-7079

## **BROADCASTERS LETTER**

#3654

Friday, February 24, 2012

**(February 24)**

### **AG SEC TOM VILSACK SAYS CURRENT TAX LAWS ARE BARRIERS TO BEGINNING FARMERS**

Current tax laws are big barriers to new people trying to get into farming.

For Radio Story: [Vilsack Says Current Tax Laws Are Barriers To Beginning Farmers](#)

---

### **ANOTHER DIFFICULT YEAR FOR CATTLE FEEDLOTS**

The nation's feedlot operators are facing a year with more than the usual number of worries and concerns.

For Radio Story: [Cattle Feedlots Have Another Difficult Year To Face](#)

---

### **THERE'S A NEW TECHNIQUE TO DEAL WITH PATHOGENS IN MEAT**

At this year's Agricultural Outlook Forum a research microbiologist stressed that DNA sequencing is where the industry is headed in its effort to combat and deal with salmonella poisoning in meat. Dayna Harhay, USDA Research Microbiologist for Meat Safety and Quality, reminds that raw pork, beef and poultry aren't the only carriers of salmonella in foods. Harhay says very young children are the most susceptible to the threat of salmonella food poisoning.

For Radio Story: [New Technique To Deal With Pathogens In Meat](#)  
[ACTUALITY: Raw Meat Not The Only Breeding Ground For Salmonella](#)  
[ACTUALITY: Young Children Most Vulnerable To Salmonella Poisoning](#)

-----

## **USDA GOES THE EXTRA MILE FOR PRODUCERS, HELPING TO MEET DEMAND FOR U.S. CATTLE**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has been taking extra steps to meet the needs and ensure the success of some of its most important customers—U.S. exporters. "Overall, U.S. farmers and ranchers are experiencing their best period in history in terms of agricultural exports, and USDA's support is an important part of that success," said Rebecca Blue, Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs. "To ensure continued success, APHIS took a hard look at where it can improve processes to serve its many stakeholders, and facilitating exports was an obvious choice. Through flexible approaches, such as the approval of temporary export facilities, APHIS has adapted to meet the needs of animal exporters while maintaining its high standards for animal health and welfare."

Responding to a surge in demand in 2011 from Russia, Turkey and Kazakhstan for live cattle exports from the United States, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) approved seven temporary export inspection facilities, or EIFs, to supplement the work done at the Agency's approved permanent facilities. These facilities reduce the distance animals have to travel prior to export and help exporters meet strict shipping deadlines.

With the establishment of EIFs, APHIS has been able to keep commerce moving, adapting to a level of cattle exports that doubled in 2011 on top of a 50 percent increase in 2010. Last year, APHIS processed 25 shipments—totaling about 17,000 head of livestock, mostly dairy cattle—through a temporary EIF in Turner, Maine. In December alone, APHIS' new approach helped facilitate shipments of more than 7,100 cattle from Galveston, Texas, to Kazakhstan and Russia. The Agency is continuing to work with exporters on upcoming shipments of cattle.

Animals that are approved through temporary facilities are inspected by APHIS personnel and must meet the same animal health and welfare standards as animals exported through permanent facilities. Thursday, February 23, USDA forecast fiscal year 2012 agricultural exports to reach the second-highest level on record, maintaining a robust trade surplus and supporting more than 1 million jobs. The forecast for livestock, poultry and dairy was increased \$1.9 billion, paced by demand for cattle from Russia and Turkey.

Contact: Workabeba Yigzaw (301) 734-7255 Lyndsay Cole (970) 494-7410  
For More Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

## **(February 23)**

## **USDA KICKS OFF 150TH ANNIVERSARY AT 2012 AG OUTLOOK FORUM**

What made this Outlook Forum special was having nine Secretaries of Agriculture joined together on a panel to discuss the future of American agriculture. Current Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack kicked off the commemoration of the department's 150th anniversary focused on "Moving Agriculture Forward" addressing issues impacting agriculture in 2012 and beyond. To commemorate the USDA's history as well as its potential, Secretary Vilsack moderated a panel discussion with former Secretaries of Agriculture Ed Schafer, Mike Johanns, Ann Veneman, Dan Glickman, Mike Espy, Clayton Yeutter, John Block, and Bob Bergland.

"Nine Secretaries of Agriculture, representing 35 years of service, in one place at the same time was an incredible opportunity to learn about USDA's contributions to the strength and health of this nation with an eye for the impact the department can have in the future," said Vilsack. "As we reflect on the

department's 150 years, this historic gathering will help us guide how we transform USDA into a more modern and efficient service provider."

At the forum, the USDA introduced a short film titled "Secretaries of Agriculture – 30 Leaders, 150 Years," available at <http://www.usda.gov/USDA150>, which looks at the history of USDA from the viewpoints of its nine most recent Secretaries. Each Secretary shared reflections on his or her time at USDA and then presents ideas and challenges to the future of American agriculture. The film explores the history and role of USDA in American life, and why it continues to be known by the name given it by its founder, President Abraham Lincoln, "The Peoples Department."

President Lincoln established USDA because he recognized the potential of America's farmers and ranchers to provide a safe, ample food supply for our nation and the world. Throughout 2012, USDA will recognize important events, such as President Lincoln's signing of an [Act to establish the Department of Agriculture](#) on May, 15, 1862 and the July signing of the [Morrill Act](#) to establish public land grant universities. Employees in USDA field offices across the country will also find ways to celebrate this landmark anniversary. [Learn more](#) about President Lincoln's agricultural legacy.

Visit <http://www.usda.gov/USDA150> to sign-up for daily email alerts and fun facts about USDA's history. You can [view photos](#) from our USDA gallery and the National Archives and

Contact: USDA Office of Communications (202) 720-4623

For More Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

For Radio Story: [A Historic Gathering Of Agriculture Secretaries](#)

[Ag Secretaries Weigh In On Future Of Agriculture](#)

[Honest Abe Kicks Off USDA 150th Anniversary Celebration](#)

[USDA Outlook Forum Opens With An Optimistic Tone](#)

-----  
**THIS YEAR, WILL A NEW FARM BILL  
BE DEVELOPED?**

At the USDA's Outlook Forum former Agriculture Secretary and current U.S. Senator, Mike Johanns of Nebraska, shared his thoughts about a new Farm Bill being developed in 2012. USDA Radio team member Rod Bain caught up with Johanns.

For Radio Story: [Will A New Farm Bill Be Developed This Year?](#)

-----  
**THE CALL IS RENEWED BY AG SEC TOM VILSACK  
FOR IMMIGRATION REFORM**

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack is urging lawmakers to enact comprehensive immigration reform.

For Radio Story: [Agriculture Secretary Renews Call For Immigration Reform](#)

-----  
**USDA CONTINUES TO WORK WITH LABOR DEPARTMENT  
ON FARM SAFETY RULES**

Farmers and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack are continuing to submit their input into any decision by the Labor Department on farm safety regulations.

For Radio Story: [USDA Continues To Work With Labor Dept. On Farm Safety Rules](#)

**(February 22)**

**USDA ENTERS INTO AN INTERESTING  
MATCH UP INVOLVING THE FOREST SERVICE**

A series of public service announcements connected to film based on a popular Dr Seuss book is designed to encourage more youth to explore our nation's forests. U.S. Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell discusses a website designed to promote more activity in our nation's forests - a website promoted through public service ads connected to the movie, "The Lorax".

For Radio Story: [The Forest Service And The Lorax Team Up](#)  
[ACTUALITY: On Discovertheforest.Org](#)

-----  
**USDA AWARDS 23 AGRABILITY GRANTS TO EXPAND  
ACCESS TO FARMING FOR DISABLED AMERICANS**

Responding to the needs of a growing population of farmers and ranchers living with a disability, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded 23 grants to organizations to help thousands of people with disabilities continue their chosen agricultural professions. The USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) awarded the grants, totaling \$4.1 million, through the AgrAbility program. The typical award provides up to \$180,000 per year for up to four years to qualifying universities.

"Thanks to the hard work and dedication of all Americans devoted to agriculture, U.S. agriculture is a bright spot in our economy and provides a livelihood for 1 in 12 Americans," said Dr. Catherine Woteki, USDA Chief Scientist and Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics. "Nearly 2 million individuals working in agriculture in the United States live with a disability that affects their work and daily life. The AgrAbility program provides these producers with the training and resources they need to remain profitable, to maintain their quality of life, and to continue to contribute to our nation's supply of food, feed, fiber and fuel."

NIFA awarded the funds to land-grant universities that have joined with nonprofit disability organizations to address the specialized needs of American farmers and ranchers with disabilities. Projects include educating professionals on how to assist those with disabilities and directly training disabled agricultural workers. Past AgrAbility projects have improved customers' financial stability, access to life activities and the ability of states and regions to deliver timely services to those with disabilities. For more information, visit [www.agrability.org](http://www.agrability.org).

A listing of the Fiscal Year 2011 grant recipients are [here](#).

Contact: Jennifer Martin (202) 720-8188

For More Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

-----  
**COLLISIONS ON RURAL ROADS INVOLVING  
FARM MACHINERY ARE ON THE RISE**

Some call it rural road wars---the conflicts and collisions involving farm machinery and non-farm drivers.

For Radio Story: [Collisions On Rural Roads Involving Farm Machinery Are Increasing](#)

**(January 21)**

**WE CAN'T WAIT: OBAMA ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES STEPS TO BOOST THE RURAL ECONOMY, PROMOTE JOB CREATION**

As part of the Obama Administration's "We Can't Wait" efforts to strengthen the economy, create jobs and support business growth, Administration officials announced three significant actions to expand the government's purchase of bio-based products, promote regional rural job creation efforts, and develop a rural healthcare workforce, all of which build on the historic investments the Administration has made in rural America over the past three years. The three announcements were recommended by federal agencies participating in the White House Rural Council, and leverage existing programs and funding, but the new actions will expedite job creation in rural parts of the country.

"President Obama understands that a strong American economy is tied to a healthy, vibrant rural economy," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, who chairs the White House Rural Council. "The actions we are taking will bring new economic investments to our rural communities, to ensure the people who live in these towns have a better, brighter future."

"This Administration will not be satisfied until everyone who wants a job, has a job – both in rural and urban communities," said Commerce Secretary John Bryson. "Today's announcements are just the latest example of federal partners aligning all of their efforts and resources to help businesses grow, create jobs, and ensure that our economy is built to last."

"Health information technology has the potential to improve the quality, access, and efficiency of health care delivery, especially in our nation's rural areas. To achieve this aim, it is essential that we have a skilled health IT workforce," said Mary Wakefield, Ph.D., R.N., Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration. "This memorandum of understanding with our colleagues at the Department of Labor will build on existing collaborations to help ease the challenges of geographic isolation and staff shortages faced by rural communities and help move us toward our mutual goal of Health IT workforce development." "There is a real need to expand the rural health IT workforce and our MOU with the Department of Health and Human Services will help ensure that job training programs are quickly and effectively addressing this need," said Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training Administration Jane Oates.

USDA Office of Communications (202) 720-4623

For More Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

For Radio Story: [The We Can't Wait Program Expands Its Efforts](#)

[Rural Council Unveils Ways To Strengthen Rural Areas](#)

[ACTUALITY: Creating A Rural Health Info Technology Workforce](#)

-----  
**USDA ANNOUNCES NEW HIGHLY ERODIBLE CROPLAND INITIATIVE FOR CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM**

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced a new conservation initiative to protect up to 750,000 acres of the nation's most highly erodible croplands. The new initiative will assist producers with targeting their most highly erodible cropland (land with an erodibility index of 20 or greater) by enabling them to plant wildlife-friendly, long-term cover through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Producers can enroll land on a continuous basis beginning this summer at their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) county office. With the use of soil survey and geographic information system data, local FSA staff can quickly determine a producer's eligibility for the initiative.

"As we work towards President Obama's vision for an economy that is built to last, America's natural resources must play an important role. Lands in CRP help support strong incomes for our farmers and ranchers and are the source of good middle class jobs related to outdoor recreation, hunting, and fishing,"

said Vilsack. "This announcement will strengthen CRP by focusing on protecting the most environmentally sensitive land. It targets limited resources where they can make the most difference for farmers, ranchers and to drive economic growth. I urge landowners who have highly erodible land to visit their county office to learn more about this program."

Lands eligible for this program are typically the least productive land on the farm. In many cases the most cost-effective option to reduce erosion is to put the land into a wildlife friendly cover, which will improve habitat and reduce sediment and nutrient runoff and reduce wind erosion. Programs such as CRP are important conservation safeguards. They prevent the return of the dust storms of the 1930s and the ravages of unmitigated gully erosions of our past.

CRP is a voluntary program designed to help farmers, ranchers and other agricultural producers protect their environmentally sensitive land. Current CRP participants with eligible land expiring on Sept. 30, 2012, may make new contract offers. Meantime, the USDA will also conduct a four-week CRP general signup, beginning on March 12 and ending on April 6. Currently, about 30 million acres are enrolled in CRP. Interested producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office or visit FSA's website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/crp](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/crp) for additional information regarding CRP.

USDA Office of Communications (202) 720-4623  
For More Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

---

### USDA'S SUMMER FOOD PROGRAM GEARS UP FOR WHEN SCHOOL IS OUT

The Agriculture Department is trying to bring more free meals to kids this summer through a special program. Under Secretary of Agriculture Kevin Concannon says budget problems have kept many schools closed all summer, posing a challenge to find sponsors and sites for USDA's Summer Food Program.

For Radio Story: [USDA Looking To Bring More Free Meals to Kids This Summer](#)  
[ACTUALITY: Summer Food Program Searching For More Sponsors](#)

---

For more agriculture news visit [USDA.gov](http://USDA.gov) and click Newsroom on the toolbar



Secretary's Column (**OC**)

Organic 101: What the USDA Organic Label Means (**AMS**)

New Forest Service program encourages growth of community forests and economies (**FS**)

New Website Showcases the Opportunities of U.S.-Korea FTA (**FAS**)

Dramatic image captures California firefighters at ocean's edge (**FS**)

Alaska USDA Officials Promote Business Opportunities at Native Conference With USDA support, a

Minnesota Oil Producer Sees a Sunny Future Blueprint (**FSA**)

150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Blog (**ARS**)

Blueprint (**APHIS**)

Organics Take A Major Step Forward with U.S.-EU Partnership (**OC**)  
Eight Former Secretaries of Agriculture Speaking at USDA's 2012 Agricultural Outlook Forum (**OCE**)  
Unique collaboration strategy brings trail users together in Georgia national forests (**FS**)  
The United States is China's Soybean Supplier of Choice (**FAS**)  
24 Students Take Part in USDA's 2012 Agricultural Outlook Forum Student Diversity Program (**OCE**)  
Thanks to Support from USDA, Residents of a Mississippi Town Have Clean Drinking Water (**RD**)

## FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

*(Feature Line-Up Subject To Change Prior to Update On February 28)*

**AGRICULTURE USA CD # 09.12** – In conjunction with USDA's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, seven former Agriculture Secretaries recently joined current Secretary to share visions of the future in agriculture. Rod Bain shares the discussion among, and the views of, this distinguished panel in this edition of "Agriculture USA".

**CONSUMER TIME CD # 09.12** – Helping Our US Farmer By Helping Struggling Cocoa Farmers, The Lorax And The Forest Service Team Up, Saving And Investing Go Hand In Hand, Don't Treat Your Soil Like Dirt, How TO Make Family Meal Time Happen, Even With An On The Go Family.

**AG UPDATE CD # 09.12** – Equivalency Brought To Organic Trade With NEW US-EU Agreement, Leptospirosis Vaccine Promising For Cattle, Historic Loan Guarantee Backs Biofuel Refinery, Some Veterinarians That Help Large Animals Get Help Themselves, Alliance To Conserve Texas Water Resource

**UPCOMING ON THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE** – February 28 – Crop Weather Report (WAOB).  
February 29 – Agricultural Prices Report (NASS)

**These are USDA reports we know about in advance. The USDA Radio Newsline carries many stories every day that are not listed in this lineup.**

**USDA Radio Newsline, 202-720-6776, 5:00pm ET**

Or go to [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov), click on Newsroom at top of the page, scroll down on right side of page until you see Radio and TV. Then click on Daily Radio News Service or Weekly Radio Feature Service.  
For questions about USDA Radio's Features, fax name, station, and address to 202-690-2165.

[USDA Radio and TV Programming](#)

## FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

### **Secretaries of Agriculture -- 30 Leaders; 150 Years**

Secretaries of Agriculture -- 30 Leaders; 150 Years; looks at the history of USDA from the viewpoints of its nine most recent Secretaries. Each shares reflections on his or her time at USDA and then presents ideas about future challenges for USDA and American agriculture. This 16 minute film explores the rich history and prominent role of USDA in American life; and why it continues to be known by the name given it by its founder; Abraham Lincoln: The Peoples Department.

YouTube: [USDA on YouTube: Secretaries of Agriculture -- 30 Leaders; 150 Years](#)  
RSS Feed: [Secretary Vilsack Sees Continued Strong Farm Economy And New Opportunities](#)

-----

## Secretary Vilsack Testifies On Farm Bill, Budget

This new TV feature can be seen and downloaded as a video podcast.

**RSS feed:** [USDA RSS Feed: Secretary Vilsack Testifies On Farm Bill, Budget](#)  
**Video Podcast:** [USDA Podcast: Secretary Vilsack Testifies On Farm Bill, Budget](#)

-----

## USDA Commemorates the New Year of the Trees

A new TV feature is available on the USDA FTP site. The new TV feature can also be seen on USDA's YouTube channel and seen and downloaded as a video podcast.

### FTP Download instructions:

The host: <ftp://ocbmtcmedia.download.akamai.com>  
User name: usdanews  
Password: Newscontent1  
Filename for **TV Feature**: tree planting

The new file is in QuickTime Movie (H.264), MPEG 4, MPEG2 and HDV

**YouTube:** [USDA on YouTube: USDA Commemorates the New Year of the Trees](#)  
**Video Podcast:** [USDA Podcast: USDA Commemorates the New Year of the Trees](#)  
**RSS Feed:** [USDA RSS Feed: USDA Commemorates the New Year of the Trees](#)

Please email [bob.ellison@usda.gov](mailto: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



**USDA BROADCAST TEAM ATTENDS AG OUTLOOK FORUM** – Rod Bain, Susan Carter and Gary Crawford of the USDA Radio team and Bob Ellison of the USDA TV team provided extensive coverage of the 2012 Agricultural Outlook Forum. Secretary Vilsack welcomed and moderated a panel of former Ag Secretaries. The team also covered the various concurrent sessions and will have more coverage in this week's Newsline and Radio and TV Features.



**LEADERSHIP CHANGES @ THE CENTER FOR RURAL AFFAIRS BOARD ANNOUNCES** – **Chuck Hassebrook**, Executive Director and long-time staff member of the [Center for Rural Affairs](#) has been granted an extended leave of absence up to ten months of unpaid leave. He is stepping into politics and requested the leave in order to run for public office. **Hassebrook** has been with the Center for 34 years and was named Director in 1996, serving in that capacity for the last 16 years. **Assistant Executive Director Brian Depew** has been tapped to fill the role of Acting Executive Director. Depew will assume the interim position on March 1, 2012.



**FIRST INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURE AWARD TO HONOR YOUNG FIELD RESEARCHERS** – The award goes to those young researchers that emulating the late Dr. Norman Borlaug, founder of The World Food Prize. Nominations are being accepted for the first annual Norman Borlaug Award for Field Research. The \$10,000 annual award will be presented for the first time in October 2012. It will recognize a young extension worker, research scientist or development professional.

**Dr. Borlaug's** breakthroughs helped feed millions of hungry people and earned him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970. His dedication, perseverance and innovation were demonstrated while Borlaug worked in the field with farmers in Mexico during the 1940s and '50s.

The award recipient will be under the age of 40 who is working closely and directly in the field or at the production or processing level with farmers, animal herders, fishers or others in rural communities, in any discipline or enterprise across the entire food production, processing and distribution chain.

**Dr. Judith Rodin**, president of the Rockefeller Foundation said, "This new award will focus attention on those young scientists engaged in field research and application of the type Norm Borlaug and his Rockefeller colleagues pioneered when they were early in their careers working in Mexico, Columbia and India, and other countries in the developing world."

Nominations for the Norman Borlaug Award for Field Research and Application, Endowed by the Rockefeller Foundation, are invited now through June 30, 2012. Nomination information can be found at [www.worldfoodprize.org/borlaugfieldaward](http://www.worldfoodprize.org/borlaugfieldaward). Additional award information and guidelines are available by contacting Judith Pim, the World Food Prize director of secretariat operations: 515-245-3796 or [jpim@worldfoodprize.org](mailto:jpim@worldfoodprize.org).

\*\*\*\*\*

**Broadcasters if you have any humanitarian or community service events  
you'd like to share please forward to [susan.carter@oc.usda.gov](mailto: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



United States Department of Agriculture  
Office of Communications  
Room 402-A  
Washington, DC 20250-1300

---

*USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write:  
USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or  
call (800) 795-3272 (voice), or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).*