



Letter No. 3662
Friday, April 20, 2012
Creative Media & Broadcast Center
202-720-7079

BROADCASTERS LETTER

#3662

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(April 20)

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT CELEBRATES EARTH DAY BY INVESTING IN WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

As part of USDA's Earth Day celebration, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced support for projects that will improve water and wastewater services and benefit the environment across the country.

"It is critical that communities across the country have reliable, clean and abundant water," said Vilsack. "These [water and wastewater projects](#) demonstrate how USDA is helping provide critical services to rural communities that have the added benefit of protecting the environment. This Earth Day, USDA is commemorating 150 years of working with Americans to protect the land. In the years to come, we will help address the changing needs of agriculture and rural America – and find strategies for managing our public and working lands that promote a strong middle class today while preserving the environment for generations to come.

In all, 54 water and wastewater projects in 33 states will be funded. Earth Day is observed annually on April 22 to raise awareness about the role each person can play to protect vital natural resources and safeguard the environment. Since the first Earth Day celebration in 1970, the event has expanded to include participation by citizens and governments in more than 195 countries.

As part of today's announcement, [USDA Rural Development](#) is providing more than \$150.8 million to improve water quality and provide a safe and healthy environment for rural Americans. In addition, nearly \$22.5 million is being invested for technical assistance training through the [Technical Assistance and Solid Waste Management](#) programs.

Contact: USDA Office of Communications 202-720-4623

USDA CELEBRATES EARTH DAY 2012 WITH NEW PROJECTS

USDA is using Earth Day as the backdrop to unveil new environmental and conservation projects. Jonathan Adelstein USDA Rural Utilities Service Administrator talks about Earth Day projects and monetary commitments for helping the environment and nature.

For Radio Story: [USDA Celebrates Earth Day 2012 With New Projects](#)
[ACTUALITY: What The Rural Utilities Service Is Doing For Earth Day](#)

CREATIVE WAY TO GET THE WORD OUT ABOUT EARTH DAY 2012

Getting the word out about Earth Day has proven to be exciting this year. Click on [FSA Earth Day 2012 English & Spanish PSA](#) to hear the PSA's in both English and Spanish. For radio stations feel free to run the PSA leading up to Earth Day.

For Radio Story: [CREATIVE WAY TO GET THE WORD OUT ABOUT EARTH DAY 2012](#)

(April 19)

AG SEC THANKS AMERICA'S FARMERS, RANCHERS, AND RURAL COMMUNITIES FOR HELPING STRENGTHEN OUR NATION'S ECONOMY

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack touted America's farmers, ranchers and growers as some of our nation's greatest assets, responsible for one out of every 12 jobs: providers of our food, feed, fiber, and fuel while helping to drive our national economy. He highlighted ways the USDA and the Obama Administration have worked to improve the lives of rural Americans and grow the agricultural economy over the past three years by developing new markets at home and abroad, maintaining a strong safety net, investing in conservation and research, and encouraging the next generation of farmers.

"Thanks to the productivity of America's hardworking farmers, ranchers and producers, U.S. agriculture continues to be a bright spot in America's economy and a driving force behind export growth, job creation, and our nation's competitiveness," said Vilsack. "U.S. agriculture accounts for 1 in 12 jobs, provides American consumers with safe and affordable foods, contributes to record incomes for farm families, and is helping reduce our reliance on foreign oil. Through our efforts at USDA and the work of the White House Rural Council, the Obama Administration is supporting farmers, ranchers, and rural communities as they help strengthen our nation's economy."

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

VILSACK URGES MORE POSITIVE TALK ABOUT FARMING AND AGRICULTURE

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack says the agricultural industry has not done a very good job of promoting itself and getting young people interested in agriculture as a career.

For Radio Story: [Vilsack Urges More Positive Talk About Farming And Agriculture](#)

CALIFORNIA SNOWPACK MAKING OUT OF SEASON COMEBACK

A four week period of significant precipitation may help salvage what looked to be a very, very thin mountain snowpack season for the Sierra Nevada.

For Radio Story: [California Snowpack Making Out Of Season Comeback](#)

(April 18)

USDA AND EDUCATION HOST WHITE HOUSE RURAL COUNCIL MEETING AND SIGN INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT TO PROMOTE CAREER PATHWAYS AND POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

The U.S. Departments of Education and Agriculture have teamed up to enhance agricultural education and related programs that promote postsecondary and career pathways, including teaching, according to an interagency agreement to advance agricultural education. U.S. Education and Agriculture Secretaries Arne Duncan and Tom Vilsack announced the agreement today during a White House Rural Council meeting with local educators at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

"Agricultural education is central to the future of American prosperity," said Duncan. "Many Americans may not realize that agriculture supports 1 in 12 jobs across the nation. For the U.S. economy to continue to rebound and grow, agriculture has to help lead the way. Agricultural educators face unique challenges—but they also can tap into unique strengths within their tight-knit communities. Agricultural education is very much about the jobs of the future—and not a backwards-looking curriculum to preserve the past."

"American agriculture makes incredible contributions to health of our economy and the strength of our nation as a whole. That's why it's so important to recruit the best and brightest of the next generation to pursue careers in agriculture," said Vilsack. "USDA works each day to help educate, train and support the scientists, farmers and ranchers we'll need to provide America's families with the food and energy they need. This partnership with the Department of Education will help us offer even greater opportunities for young people who want to dedicate their lives to agriculture, food and natural resources."

The agreement calls for the Departments to exchange a variety of information and participate in joint activities, including webinars, conferences, outreach materials, and helping each other identify industry-validate standards, assessments, best practices, accreditations, and certifications. The Departments also will work jointly to find and use pathways and career programs of study that can prepare students for rewarding careers related to agriculture, food and natural resources.

Contact: USDA Office of Communications 202-720-4623

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

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF A BIOECONOMY BREAKTHROUGH

In Wisconsin, this week Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack visited a small company that's one of many working to reduce our use of oil, by changing a common everyday product.

For Radio Story: [Another Example Of A Bioeconomy Breakthrough](#)

A NEW EFFORT TO BOOST RURAL EDUCATION

The Secretaries of Education and Agriculture are vowing to work together to boost rural education in this country.

For Radio Story: [A New Effort To Boost Rural Education](#)

(April 17)

USDA PARTNERS WITH CANADA TO INCREASE USE OF AGROFORESTRY PRACTICES BY LANDOWNERS

A partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Canada's Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food will promote agroforestry to help landowners improve water quality, control soil erosion and boost their agriculture production. The Memorandum of Understanding establishing the cooperative partnership will allow USDA's National Agroforestry Center — jointly sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service — and Canada's Agri-Environment Service Branch's Agroforestry Development Centre to collaborate on research and development, including the advancement of agroforestry science and tools for climate change mitigation and adaptation in temperate North America.

The two centers will also support the Global Research Alliance on Agriculture Greenhouse Gases, of which both countries are members. Information will be shared with landowners, managers, and natural resource professionals.

"We support agroforestry as a land management approach because it helps landowners achieve certain natural resource goals, such as clean water and productive soils," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "But it does much more. Clean water is a precious natural resource, and America's economic success is directly related to a continuous and abundant supply of clean water."

"Canada and the U.S. have a strong relationship with regards to many aspects of the agricultural sector," said Canada's Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz. "I'm pleased that we can now add agroforestry to that growing list, as agroforestry is an area that is not only good for the environment, but also for our farmers' bottom lines."

Agroforestry practices range from traditional windbreaks protecting soil, crops and livestock to emerging science-based practices that protect water and air quality and help boost landowner profits. Agroforestry practices can serve multiple purposes. For example, pine trees can shelter grazing cattle and also produce a sellable crop. Those same trees also serve as filters between crops and sources of water; store carbon; reduce noise and erosion; and provide food, shelter, nesting and travel corridors for wildlife.

Agroforestry practices are not limited to rural settings. They can connect urban communities to the surrounding rural landscape. Cumulatively, these conservation practices contribute to the overall health and sustainability of a community and its surroundings.

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

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

GERMPLASM BANKS PLAY VITAL ROLE IN PREVENTING GLOBAL FOOD PROBLEMS

Maintaining plant germplasm collections around the world could help the effort to develop new crop varieties in food insecure countries. Retired Canadian geneticist Ken Richards explains what plant seed resources there are in the world and where some are located.

For Radio Story: [Germplasm Banks Play Vital Role In Preventing Global Food Problems](#)
[ACTUALITY: On Plant Germplasm Banks And Resources](#)

GRANTS TO HELP CONNECT LOCAL PRODUCERS WITH LOCAL SCHOOLS

USDA is launching a new national program to provide new economic opportunities for producers of all kinds. Just what does the new Farm to School Program grant offer? USDA Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan talks about the significance of USDA investing in farm to school programs.

For Radio Story: [Grants To Help Connect Local Producers With Local Schools](#)
[Grants Are Available To Bridge The Food Gap In Local Schools](#)
[ACTUALITY: National Funding For Farm To School Programs](#)

For more agriculture news visit USDA.GOV and click Newsroom on the toolbar



Safer Skies for Navy Fliers and Vultures (**APHIS**)
Michigan Earth Team Volunteer Enjoys Giving Back (**NRCS**)
Dedicated volunteers help care for Alabama's Talladega National Forest (**FS**)
Brighter Days Ahead for African-Americans with Vitamin D Deficiency (**REE**)

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

(Feature Line-Up Subject To Change Prior to Update On April 24)

AGRICULTURE USA – # 17.12 PIECING TOGETHER COLONY COLLAPSE DISORDER CLUES

Several researchers nationally and globally are taking specific pieces of the puzzle that somehow are linked to the mysterious disease in honeybees - Colony Collapse Disorder. Rod Bain takes a look at two examples of this research, and more in this edition of "Agriculture USA".

CONSUMER TIME # 17.12 – Seeking Alternatives To Gluten Based Products; Now Is The Time To Get That Air Conditioner Ready For Summer; Leave That Hungry Pest Behind; Leave That Hungry Pest Behind

AG UPDATE # 17.12 – What Is Driving The Growing Brazilian Economy?; How The Number Of Plants Impact The Quality Of The Product; Proposed Changes And Benefits To Poultry Inspection System; Sierra Nevada Snowpack Makes A Comeback; A New Effort To Boost Rural Education

UPCOMING ON THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE – April 23 Crop Progress (NASS). April 24 Crop Weather Report (WAOB). April 25 Crop Production Report (NASS). April 26 U.S. Export Sales (FAS). **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. The USDA Radio Newslines carries many stories every day that are not listed in this lineup.**

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

Or go to 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

Forest Service Chief On Earth Day

FTP Download instructions:

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

User name: usdanews

Password: Newscontent1

Filename for TV Feature: **Earth Day 2012**

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

YouTube: [Earth Day](#)

Video Podcast: [Earth Day Podcast](#)

RSS Page: [Earth Day RSS](#)

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>

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The Importance Of Earth Day

FTP Download instructions:

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

User name: usdanews

Password: Newscontent1

Filename for TV Feature: **Tonsager Earth Day**

The new file is in QuickTime Movie format.

YouTube: [Earth Day Tonsager](#)

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>

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Warm Spring On Tap For Most Of The U.S.

FTP Download instructions:

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

User name: usdanews

Password: Newscontent1

Filename for TV Feature: **Spring 2012 Wx**

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

YouTube: [warm spring](#)

Video Podcast: [warm spring Podcast](#)

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



FIRST WORLD FOOD PRIZE IOWA YOUTH INSTITUTE DRAWS 300 – The high school students, teachers and experts will gather April 30 from across Iowa. Attendees are those interested in STEM education areas such as science, agriculture, engineering, and more. This new program is an extension of the World Food Prize's existing youth programs, aimed at challenging and inspiring Iowa students to think globally and consider opportunities in the sciences as they embark on their careers and postsecondary studies.

The daylong program will have students touring research facilities, labs and other ongoing projects on the Iowa State University campus; presenting research papers they've written on a chosen aspect of global food security; and interacting with Iowa business and industry leaders, academics, legislative officials and their peers. Teachers will also gain professional development experience by attending the events, garnering resources, and connecting with colleagues in all fields.

Expected to be in attendance: Governor Terry Branstad, Lieutenant Governor Kim Reynolds, Iowa State University President Steven Leath, and World Food Prize President Amb. Kenneth M. Quinn.



4-H HONORS COUNTRY MUSIC SINGER SUGARLAND'S JENNIFER NETTLES – The presentation took place at the third annual *4-H Legacy Awards Gala* to honor extraordinary individuals and corporations that have made a lasting impact through their efforts to cultivate America's [4-H youth development program](#).

The 2012 4-H *Distinguished Alumni Medallion* was presented to 4-H alumna and Grammy Award-Winning Singer and Songwriter Jennifer Nettles. Nettles, lead vocalist for international super duo Sugarland, has become one of the most popular singer-songwriters in music today. Before becoming a famed musician, Nettles honed in on her talent and aspirations as a member of Coffee County, Georgia 4-H. She was a member of Clovers & Company - Georgia's official 4-H performing arts group - for seven years. In addition to serving on the Junior and Senior State Boards and as camp counselor at Rock Eagle 4-H Center, Nettles won Georgia State 4-H Congress honors for her Performing Arts project.

The Gala was held at the Hilton New York hotel in New York City, and featured Celebrity Chef, Host of the ABC daytime show, *The Chew*, and Tennessee 4-H alumna, Carla Hall as the Master of Ceremonies. Awards were presented to several distinguished 4-H individuals and partners.

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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USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or
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