

Letter No. 3642  
Friday, November 11, 2011  
Creative Media & Broadcast Center  
202-720-7079

**BROADCASTERS LETTER**  
#3642  
Friday, November 11, 2011

**(November 11)**



**(November 10)**

**STATEMENT FROM AGRICULTURE SECRETARY TOM VILSACK ON RECORD GROWTH OF U.S. AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS IN FISCAL YEAR 2011**

"Thanks to the productivity of America's farmers, ranchers and producers, the American brand of agriculture is surging in popularity worldwide. Farm exports in fiscal year 2011 reached a record high of \$137.4 billion—exceeding past highs by \$22.5 billion—and supported 1.15 million jobs here at home. Furthermore, agriculture continues to bolster our nation's economy by contributing a trade surplus year after year. This year, that surplus hit a record \$42.9 billion. And next year looks equally strong for the U.S. agricultural economy, thanks in part to President Obama signing new trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia and Panama, which will add an additional \$2.3 billion to our export total and support nearly 20,000 American jobs.

"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, underscored by the increasing demand for U.S.

food and agriculture around the world. For the first full fiscal year, China was the lead export market for farm products, buying almost \$20 billion of goods such as soybeans, cotton, tree nuts and hides. There is no doubt that the Asia Pacific region recognizes the United States as a reliable supplier of the highest-quality food and agricultural products, and that's the message I will take to our trading partners when I travel next week to Vietnam and China to help expand markets and remove barriers to trade for U.S. farm products. Partnerships with growing markets like those in Vietnam and China are integral to the strength of the U.S. economy in the decades ahead.

"Strong export performance means higher incomes for farmers and ranchers, more opportunities for small businesses owners, and jobs for folks who package, ship, and market agricultural products. So, thank you to all of America's farmers, ranchers and producers who continue to make U.S. agriculture a bright spot in our nation's economy."

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

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### **AGRICULTURE SECRETARY GIVES AN UPDATES ON PROPOSED GIPSA RULE PROGRESS**

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack says different parts of the proposed changes in the so called GIPSA rule are being handled in different ways and are on separate tracks in the process.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=16664>

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### **CROP INSURANCE COULD BE MORE IMPORTANT IN NEW FARM BILL SAFETY NET**

The nation's top agricultural official says he expects crop insurance to play a bigger role in building a new farm bill safety net for farmers.

For Radio Story: [Crop Insurance Could Be More Important In New Farm Bill Safety Net](#)

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### **USDA EXPANDS PEOPLE'S GARDEN INITIATIVE TO SOW SEEDS FOR COMMUNITY-BASED AGRICULTURE ACROSS THE COUNTRY**

Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan visited a community garden in Baltimore to announce 10 grants to support 155 People's Gardens in neighborhoods from Maryland to Hawaii, continuing the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) efforts to combat malnutrition while supporting local and regional food systems. These sustainable community gardens will give residents direct access to fresh fruits and vegetables in underserved neighborhoods. A lack of access to fresh and nutritious food fuels obesity and domestic food insecurity—a condition where households experience limited or uncertain access to adequate food.

"The simple act of planting a garden can help unite neighborhoods around a common effort and inspire communities to find solutions to challenges facing our country—from hunger to the environment," said Merrigan. "The People's Garden Initiative has demonstrated that one direct and effective way of improving food access is to plant a garden. Since establishing our People's Garden Initiative, we're excited to see more and more people working together to create nurturing communities around these sources of nutritious food."

USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) manages the People's Garden Grant Program (PGGP), with funding from the Agriculture Marketing Service, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Forest Service, and the Natural Resources

Conservation Service. The grants announced today, totaling \$725,000, are the first awards given under the PGGP. USDA received more than 360 proposals requesting more than \$4 million. PGGP was designed to invest in urban and rural areas identified as food deserts or food insecure areas, particularly those with persistent poverty. In addition, PGGP seeks to address health issues closely related to malnutrition, including food insecurity, obesity, diabetes and heart disease, through onsite education programs.

Projects were funded in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maryland, Michigan and Ohio. For a list of the grant awardees go to [Latest USDA News Releases](#)

The People's Garden Initiative is a grass roots effort to grow healthy food, people and communities. There are more than 1,400 People's Gardens across the nation, three U.S. territories and nine foreign countries. USDA is working with over 600 local organizations to create school gardens, community gardens and small-scale agriculture projects in urban and rural areas, collectively referred to as community-based agriculture.

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

## **(November 9)**

### **AGRICULTURE SECRETARY VILSACK ANNOUNCES FUNDING TO REDUCE ENERGY COSTS FOR RURAL SMALL BUSINESSES**

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the USDA is funding projects to harness wind, solar, geothermal and hydroelectric power to reduce energy costs for farms and small business across rural America. Rural Development Deputy Under Secretary Doug O'Brien made the announcement on the Secretary's behalf during his address here today at the Rural Young Entrepreneur Summit (YES). "The Obama Administration is assisting small businesses, including farmers and ranchers, as they work to reduce their energy costs," O'Brien said. "When energy costs are reduced, American rural businesses become more competitive, allowing them to expand and create jobs."

One of the projects announced today will assist Hawkeye Tri-County Electric Cooperative in Cresco, Iowa, to install a geothermal heating and cooling system in its headquarters building. Coon Valley Turkeys, LLC, in Lake View, Iowa, is receiving funding to install a wind turbine to offset the cost of electricity. Gary Larson of Underwood, Iowa, will receive assistance to install a geothermal heating and cooling system in a shop that services his farming operations.

The YES event is sponsored by USDA Rural Development, the Community Vitality Center (CVC), Iowa State University's Extension, Outreach Community and Economic Development along with the U.S. Small Business Administration. For a complete list of funding recipients go to [Latest USDA News Releases](#).

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

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### **USDA AWARDS GRANTS AND LOANS TO HELP RURAL SMALL BUSINESSES**

Small businesses need credit and technical expertise to get started or to grow and a USDA program is helping. Deputy Under Secretary of Agriculture Doug O'Brien explaining why it's important to focus financial and technical help on very small rural businesses.

For Radio Story: [USDA Awards Grants And Loans To Help Rural Small Businesses](#)  
[ACTUALITY: Why Bother Helping Very Small Businesses](#)

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## **MOST U.S. CROP PRODUCERS FACE MORE FOREIGN COMPETITION**

A huge production year for crops in the rest of the world will have its effects on producers here.

For Radio Story: [Most U.S. Crop Producers Face More Foreign Competition](#)

**(November 8)**

## **USDA CELEBRATES VETERANS DAY, HONORING MORE THAN 10,000 VETERANS WORKING AT USDA**

In the time-honored tradition of standing with those who have served this nation in uniform, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is hosting a number of activities this week to recognize the soldiers, sailors, Marines, airmen and coastguardsmen who so ably serve. Their selfless and courageous contributions over generations mean that Americans enjoy the freedom and liberty our founders imagined.

"Today, we commemorate America's veterans and their achievements," Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said. "We can never fully repay our debt of gratitude to the service members who were wounded or died in battle. We can, however, recognize and thank the more than 20 million living American veterans. And we can offer special thanks and acknowledgment to the more than 10,000 veterans working at USDA."

USDA has a strong connection with those who have served in uniform. Today, about 6.1 million veterans live in rural communities – a higher concentration than anywhere else in the country. The Department has increased the number of veterans hired each year since President Obama signed an executive order on veteran employment in 2009. This year, nearly one quarter of its permanent new hires are veterans.

A Department-wide Veterans Day observance in USDA's Jefferson Auditorium will be held November 10, "Honoring All Who Served." Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan will speak. Secretary Vilsack's weekly column commemorated Veterans Day [USDA BLOGS: Ag Secretary Column Honoring Veterans](#)

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-4623

For More Story Info: [Latest USDA News Releases](#)

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## **VILSACK LOOKING FOR FAIR BUDGET CUTS THAT RETAIN FARM SAFETY NET**

It's still all up in the air as to exactly how much money will be cut from agricultural spending and from where those cuts might come.

For Radio Story: [Vilsack Looking For Fair Budget Cuts That Retain Farm Safety Net](#)

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## **ROLLING OUT SEAFOODHEALTHFACTS.ORG**

A new website created by several land grant universities was the focus of a recent conference to discuss issues of seafood health information.

For Radio Story: [Rolling Out SeafoodHealthFacts.Org](#)

**(November 7)**

**NEW USDA PRODUCTION, DEMAND, STOCKS  
AND PRICE FORECASTS COMING**

Gary Crawford spoke with World Outlook Board Chair Gerry Bange looking at the past season's U.S. crop production and of what will happen to that crop this marketing year. Bange says this month's crop report will include information on many major agricultural nations.

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-4623

For More Story Info: [Latest USDA News Releases](#)

For Radio Story: [New USDA Production, Demand, Stocks And Price Forecasts Coming](#)

[ACTUALITY: New USDA Forecasts Include Many Foreign Countries](#)

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**DAY USE FEES WAIVED AT NATIONAL FORESTS  
ON VETERANS DAY WEEKEND**

The Forest Service hopes waiving day use fees at national forests will encourage more visitors to the great outdoors this three day weekend.

For Radio Story: [Day Use Fess Waived At National Forests On Veterans Day Weekend](#)

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



**[The Latest USDA Blog Posts](#)**

World Vet Year: Dr. Jack Shere on World Veterinary Year 2011 **(APHIS)**

Helping Homeless Veterans One Hero at A Time **(FNS)**

Youth Education Blooming at Poland's People's Gardens **(FAS)**

Ranch allows disabled vets to hunt, Washington **(NRCS)**

How Are You Adding Fruits and Vegetables? Your Plate Could Win \$1,500 **(FBNP)**

Who Are You Calling Chicken? Poultry Outgrows Its Nicknames **(FSIS)**

Veterans Day blog **(FAS)**

Garlic Mustard, Not Your Average Garnish **(FS)**

SMAP project, by Deputy Under Secretary Ann Mills (soils satellite/NASA) **(NRCS)**

Finding Federal Employment: Appreciation and Insight for Veterans **(AMS)**

Forest Service Northeastern Area funding supports Chesapeake Bay restoration projects **(FS)**

It takes a community to prepare the Capitol Christmas Tree **(FS)**

## FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

*(Feature Line-Up Subject To Change Prior to Update On November 15)*

**AGRICULTURE USA CD # 46.11** – Several ag interests are trying to see what patterns and programs may come out of the 2012 Farm Bill debate in Congress. Rod Bain talks with some stakeholders to get their viewpoints in this edition of "Agriculture USA".

**CONSUMER TIME CD # 46.11** – Turkey May Cost You A Little More This Year. Thanksgiving Meal Prep Equals Being Prepared. Plenty Of Cranberries Expected This Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving History Surprises. Research Hopes To Improve Poinsettias.

**AG UPDATE CD # 46.11** – More Credit And Other Help On The Way For Rural Small Businesses. Less US Wheat Could Bring Record Prices. Crop Insurance And New Farm Bill Safety Net. Food Commodity Price Spikes And Their Impacts. A Thankful Season For Turkey Producers..

**UPCOMING ON THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE** – November 15 – Crop Weather (WAOB). November 16 – Livestock, Dairy, And Poultry Outlook (ERS –NASS). November 18 – Cattle On Feed Report (NASS). November 21 – Crop Progress Report (NASS). **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](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.

## FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

### How Americans Rate Their Diet Quality

A new TV feature is available on the USDA FTP site.

The new feature can also be seen on USDA's YouTube channel and downloaded as a video podcast.

See below for details.

#### FTP Download instructions:

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

User name: usdanews

Password: Newscontent1

Filename: diet perception feature

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

**YouTube:** [USDA on YouTube: HOW AMERICANS RATE THEIR DIET QUALITY](#)

**Video Podcast:** [USDA Video Podcast: HOW AMERICANS RATE THEIR DIET QUALITY](#)

**RSS Feed:** [USDA RSSs Feed: HOW AMERICANS RATE THEIR DIET QUALITY](#)

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



**IT'S NAFB 2011** – November 9-11 farm broadcasters from across the country gathered in Kansas City, Missouri for the annual National Association of Farm Broadcasting annual convention. NAFB President Elect **Tom Steever** (Brownfield Ag News - Jefferson City, Missouri <http://brownfieldagnews.com>) says it's that rare annual event when all of the Brownfield farm broadcasters are in one place at the same time. "Brownfield Affiliate Relations Manager Mike Cady, himself an experienced broadcaster, stays at the studio to do the live market broadcasts, while the Brownfield reporters at the NAFB convention produce news programs at the site of the convention. Most of the 155 NAFB Broadcast Council members attend the annual convention."

**HOOSIER AG TODAY AWARDS 4-H COMMUNICATIONS SCHOLARSHIP** – The Indiana 4-H Congress brings together top 4-H youth for leadership training and for the awarding of over \$30,000 in scholarships. **Gary Truitt** (Hoosier Ag Today - Indianapolis, Indiana <http://www.hoosieragtoday.com>) says Hoosier Ag Today was pleased to sponsor the Communications Scholarship which was awarded to **Julie Furnish** from Switzerland County, a 4-Her with plenty of experience. **Furnish** is a 10 year 4-H member having served as President of her 4-H club for four years and President of her county Jr. Leader organization for two years. She says her 4-H experience changed her life in many ways. **Furnish** is freshman at Purdue University and plans to pursue a career in radiology and feels her 4-H experience will be quite valuable.

"Agriculture is in need of good communicators to help tell the story of modern food production and of the value of our rural communities," says **Truitt**. This is the 3rd year that HAT has sponsored the Communications Scholarship. The National 4-H Congress was discontinued in 1994. It was that Indiana started its own state congress to provide leadership, training, and recognition of achievements to the state's outstanding 4-Hers.



Gary Truitt and Julie Furnish



**KEY LEADERSHIP MOVES AT NATIONAL 4-H COUNCIL** – 4-H says the leadership moves will ensure continued positive momentum and progress toward a new set of strategic goals. The staff adjustments are said to also help achieve the organization's mission of increasing investment and participation in high quality, 4-H positive youth development programs around the world. Among the moves:

**Jennifer Sirangelo** is named Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. Ms. Sirangelo, formerly Chief Development Officer at National 4-H Council, led an effort that quadrupled the funds raised to support 4-H programs around the world. Sirangelo also led Council's recent strategic planning effort that focused on increasing investment and participation in 4-H.

**Jill Bramble** has been named Senior Vice President and Chief Development Officer. In her former position as Vice President, Resource Development, Ms. Bramble led National 4-H Council's team of fundraisers, managing a portfolio of strategic corporate sponsorships that provides more than \$16 million annually in funding to the 4-H movement. She will work to continue to accelerate positive momentum in Resource Development. Jill is a life-long 4-Her from Maryland, and understands the needs and challenges of the 4-H system.

**Lyla Houglum, PhD** will serve as special advisor to National 4-H Council's CEO, and liaison to Extension Directors and Administrators. Dr. Houglum has a long and distinguished leadership record in Cooperative Extension, including service as Dean and Director of the Oregon State University Extension Service for almost 10 years, as well as chairing the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy

(ECOP) in 2002. Lyla is currently the Executive Director of the Western Extension Directors Association and the Director of Special Initiatives for the Oregon State University Extension Service. She will continue to serve in the Western Extension Executive Director role in addition to her work with National 4-H Council.

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***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



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