



Letter No. 3619  
Friday, June 3, 2011  
Creative Media & Broadcast Center  
202-215-3931

## **BROADCASTERS LETTER**

#3619

Friday, June 3, 2011

**(June 3)**

### **FRAMEWORK AND MAP TO IMPROVE HEALTH OF AMERICA'S WATERSHEDS**

A new map characterizes the health and condition of National Forest System lands in more than 15,000 watersheds across the country. The U.S. Forest Service's Watershed Condition Classification Map is the first step in the agency's [Watershed Condition Framework](#), and is the agency's first national assessment across all 193 million acres of National Forest lands. The watersheds on national forests and grasslands are the source of 20% of the drinking water supply in the United States.

"Clean, healthy forests are vital to our efforts to protect America's fresh water supply," says Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "Our nation's economic health, and the health of our citizens, depends on abundant, clean and reliable sources of freshwater. The Watershed Condition Framework and map will help provide economic and environmental benefits to residents of rural communities."

The map establishes a baseline that will be used to establish priorities for watershed restoration and maintenance. The national Watershed Condition Framework establishes a consistent, comparable, and credible process for characterizing, prioritizing, improving, and tracking the health of watersheds on national forests and grasslands. The Framework also builds added accountability and transparency into the Integrated Resource Restoration program, which is included in President Obama's budget proposal for the next fiscal year. For details on the framework go to <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>. The Forest Service expects to have national and regional Watershed Condition Classification maps posted electronically on an agency Web site early next week, with an interactive mapping tool available by the end of the month, according to agency officials.

Contact: Forest Service Press Office (202)205-1134

For full story: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15410>

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### **THE USDA TARGETS FOOD DESERTS IN FUNDING FOR FARMERS MARKET PROMOTION PROGRAM GRANTS**

The USDA allocates nearly \$10 million in funding for the Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) to help increase availability of local agricultural products in communities throughout the country.

"These grants will put resources into rural and urban economies to create and support direct marketing opportunities for farmers" says Deputy Secretary Of Agriculture Kathleen Merrigan. "Consumer and farmer enthusiasm for direct marketing has never been greater. This year we will place emphasis on food deserts because America's low income and underserved communities need greater access to healthy, fresh food."

In fiscal year 2011, USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will competitively award grants to projects that develop producer-to-consumer market outlets, including but not limited to farmers markets, community supported agriculture, and road-side stands. Priority status will be granted to those projects that expand healthy food choices in food deserts. AMS will continue to target 10 percent of grant funding toward new electronic benefits transfer projects at farmers markets.

The USDA, in coordination with the Departments of the Treasury and Health and Human Services, seeks to eliminate food deserts in the U.S. by increasing access to fresh, healthy and affordable food choices for all Americans, while expanding market opportunities for farmers and ranchers. Through a suite of funding options, the federal partners are targeting food deserts, or areas with limited access to affordable and nutritious foods in urban, rural and tribal neighborhoods. Earlier this year, The USDA's Economic Research Service released a Food Desert Locator tool online. The Food Desert Locator is an Internet-based mapping tool that pinpoints the location of food deserts around the country and provides data on population characteristics of census tracts where residents have limited access to affordable and nutritious foods. To use the Locator, visit [www.ers.usda.gov/data/fooddesert](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/fooddesert).

Information on how to apply for a FMPP grant was published in the June 1, 2011, Federal Register, and posted to <http://www.ams.usda.gov/FMPP>. FMPP deadline requirements have changed. This year complete applications must be received – not postmarked – by AMS no later than close of business on July 1, 2011. Applications received after the deadline – and incomplete applications – will not be considered.

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

For full story: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

**For radio story:** <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15435>

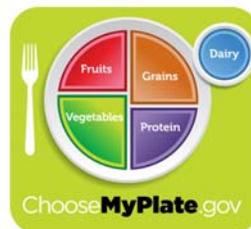
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15408>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15409>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15430>

## (June 2)

### **NEW ICON REPLACES THE LONGSTANDING FOOD PYRAMID ICON HERALDS A "MONUMENTAL EFFORT" TO IMPROVE AMERICA'S HEALTH**



The First Lady Michelle Obama and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack launch the new food icon as a reminder to help consumers make healthier food choices replacing the *MyPyramid* image as the government's primary food group symbol. Why a new icon you may ask? It seems the pyramid really doesn't capture the public's attention anymore says Robert C. Post, deputy director of the USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion. "Consumers can look forward to a new, simple, easy-to-understand cue to prompt healthy choices. You will get this monumental effort across all agencies as well as the private sector."

You'll be seeing the icon everywhere. Every relevant federal agency will be doing its part with The White House playing a leading role, coordinating the new USDA/HHS dietary guidelines with Michelle Obama's Let's Move initiative.

The USDA makes this comparison of the old versus new diet plan. The old plan was to tell Americans what they should eat and hope for the best. The new plan is vastly more active and will reach people at home, at school, at work, at play, and especially at supermarkets and restaurants.

Kathleen Zelman, RD, WebMD's Director of Nutrition, says of the USDA plan, this icon really has the potential to trigger an 'aha!' moment, where people say, "Hey, this is not that hard, I can do this. These 'aha!' moments are what make people finally change their behavior."

"What we learned is it is not just giving information, it is a matter of making people understand there are options and practical ways to apply this to their lifestyle," says Post. "There will be a 'how-to' that will resonate with individuals. That is the behavioral part that is needed. We need to transcend information -- 'here's what the science says' -- and give people the tools and the opportunities to take action."

The first point of advice is to "make half of your plate fruits and vegetables" supported by a wide array of guidance on exactly how to do this. For example, one might add fruit to a leafy green salad or replace a sugary dessert with a bowl of fruit.

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

For full story: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15425>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15423>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15428>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15421>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15420>

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## **U.S. OFFICIALS "KEEPING AN EYE" ON EUROPEAN E. COLI OUTBREAK**

As U.S. officials eye the E. coli situation in Europe, efforts continue to reduce the risk of such outbreaks in this country.

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15438>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15422>

## **(June 1)**

### **JUNE KICKS OFF HOMEOWNERSHIP MONTH**

Agriculture events across the country highlight housing's role in rural job creation and economic activity with the theme "*Rural Housing/Rural Jobs*." Since the start of the current fiscal year, which began last October 1, USDA Rural Development has financed approximately 80,000 home loans for rural residents.

"Housing drives rural economies and supports healthy rural communities," Vilsack said. "About 50 million Americans call rural areas home, and safe, sanitary housing is a basic human need in rural America. USDA Rural Development's housing programs do more than provide a place for families to live. They stimulate economic activity through single-family home construction, rental assistance for those who need it, and funding for eligible very-low-income homeowners to enable them to keep their dwellings in good repair."

The economic impact of housing development goes far beyond home sales and construction. According to the National Association of Realtors (NAR), the sale of an existing median-priced home (\$173,000 in 2010) generates \$58,529 in economic activity. This includes \$15,570 in direct real estate industry support (fees for real estate agents, title companies, mortgage brokers); \$5,235 in furniture, home furnishings, landscaping, etc.; and \$9,987 in stimulated economic activity. New home sales

generate even more economic activity, including the costs of construction materials and construction jobs, according to NAR.

Behind every one of the housing loans made in rural America is a powerful individual story. For more on the stories go to <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>. To learn more about Homeownership Month events near you, contact your nearest USDA Rural Development office. A list of these offices is available at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/StateOfficeAddresses.html>.

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-4623

For full story: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

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### **A DROUGHT NAMED AFTER AN INTERSTATE HIGHWAY**

The drought now spreading across the southern tier of the U.S. may be the first to be named after an interstate highway.

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15403>

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### **FERAL PIGS ARE A GROWING PEST CONCERN**

The populations of these wild animals are growing at a faster than normal rate and leading to problems throughout the country.

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15216>

**(May 31)**

### **INTERIM DIRECTIVE COVERING ROADLESS AREAS IN NATIONAL FORESTS RENEWED**

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack says he's renewing an interim directive regarding inventoried roadless areas within our National Forests and Grasslands for an additional year. This is the third one-year, interim directive issued by Secretary Vilsack that governs projects in roadless areas in our National Forests.

"As we await a ruling on the 2001 Roadless Rule from the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, I will continue to work with the U.S. Forest Service to ensure we protect roadless areas on our National Forests," said Vilsack. "Renewing this interim directive for a third year reflects this Administration's commitment to conserve our forests by ensuring that projects in roadless areas receive a higher level of scrutiny by this department."

The directive provides decision-making authority to the Secretary over proposed forest management or road construction projects in inventoried roadless areas. It also ensures a consistent national review of all proposed projects. In 2009, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the 2001 Roadless Rule. The Rule is currently under appeal in the 10th Circuit. A ruling on that case is expected soon.

This interim directive does not affect roadless areas on National Forest System lands in Idaho. Idaho developed its own roadless rule through the Administrative Procedures Act. The Idaho rule provides strong protections for roadless areas.

Vilsack has approved 38 projects under the two, previous interim directives.

Contact: Press Office (202) 205-1134

For full story: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

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## RUSSIAN WHEAT EXPORTS WILL MEAN MORE COMPETITION FOR U.S AND EU

With Russia set to lift its grain export ban July 1st, what effect will that have on world and U.S. wheat markets? Jerry Norton, USDA grains analyst, says already pretty obvious that Russia will have a much better crop this year and will be a major exporter. Norton also gives some background on the soon to be lifted Russian grain export ban

For radio story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15392>  
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15391>  
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15390>

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



## FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

**AGRICULTURE USA CD # 23.11** – What has transpired since the 2006 e coli outbreak in California spinach has been a growing awareness that food safety and conservation concerns need to be balanced. Rod Bain looks at this example and how lessons learned could be applied on a nationwide scale in this edition of "Agriculture USA".

**CONSUMER TIME CD # 23.11** – Don't Be A Hot Head When Buying A New Air Conditioner. Preventing Gypsy Moth Migration. Summer Cookout Food Safety Is A Hit. Young Entrepreneurs On The Farm. Keeping Summer Camp Children From Being Homesick.

**AG UPDATE CD # 23.11** – Ag Leaders Urge Comprehensive Immigration Policy Reform. Revised Ag Export Forecast Numbers Trend Up Again. CoManagement Lessons For Ag Land Balance. Ag Producers Sought For Produce Safety Group. Benefits Of New Migratory Bird Habitat Along Texas Coast.

**UPCOMING ON THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE** – June 7 – Crop Weather (WAOB). June 9 – Crop Production Reports (NASS) and World Agricultural Supply And Demand Estimates (ERS-WAOB). June 10 – Oilseed, Cotton, and Rice Outlooks (ERS – WAOB). June 13 – Wheat and Feed Grain Outlooks (ERS – WAOB); Crop Progress Report (WAOB). **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](http://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

## ACTUALITIES – First Lady, Agriculture Secretary and Surgeon General Unveil New MyPlate Icon For Healthier Food Choices

The new MyPlate icon to help consumers make healthier food choices was introduced at the USDA Headquarters (June 2, 2011)

### 1. USDA Unveils New Food Icon

URL:<http://mfile3.akamai.com/23747/wmv/ocbmtcmedia.download.akamai.com/23747//DA/060211oc.asx>

### 2. Press Conference

URL:<http://mfile3.akamai.com/23747/wmv/ocbmtcmedia.download.akamai.com/23747//DA/060211o2.asx>

### **New actualities are available on the USDA FTP site**

**Filename:** my plate

#### **Download instructions:**

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

User name: usdanews

Password: Newscontent1

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>

## ACTUALITIES – Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Testifies On Budget and Farm Bill

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack testified to the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee on proposed cuts to the USDA budget and the Farm Bill

### **New actualities are available on the USDA FTP site**

**Filename:** vilsack test52611

#### **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](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

**TEXAS FINALLY GETS SOME RAIN, BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH** – Despite rainfall for a few a weeks, it doesn't seem to have been enough because severe drought conditions persist. **Don Atkinson** (Oklahoma Agrinet - Oklahoma City, Oklahoma <http://www.oklahomaagrinet.com>) says the Texas Agrilife Extension Service estimates drought losses from November 2010 through May 2011 at \$1.2 billion. "The most recent outlook expects that to reach \$1.5 billion or more." According to the latest Drought Monitor reading, all of Texas is abnormally dry with 82% in extreme or exceptional drought. Some friends in Lubbock tell me that they've barely gotten any rainfall. Cotton growers are getting close to insurance deadlines so that's a concern."

**CATTLEMEN'S BALL OF NEBRASKA HAS NOTED EMCEES** – **Max Armstrong** and **Orion Samuelson** (WGN Radio – Chicago, Illinois [www.wgnradio.com](http://www.wgnradio.com)) have been tapped to help out in a big way with the organization's annual fundraiser. The two will serve as masters of ceremonies for the weekend June 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> "Plowing Cancer Under" event. The goal is to raise close to \$1 million for cancer research. This year's event is being held on the Knobbe Farm at West Point, Nebraska. Country singer and songwriter Sara Evans will be performing.

**IT'S EDUCATION TIME FOR ILLINOIS** – **Carrie Muehling** (WJBC Radio - Bloomington, Illinois <http://wjbc.com>) tells us that it rained, but it didn't pour thanks to a Good Samaritan from John Deere. The dealership donated equipment and technology to help some Illinois FFA chapters plant their soybean plot this spring. "When they got rained out last week, the John Deere employee instead took the equipment to the school and gave the students a lesson on how the technology works. Although it is a rural community, out of 70 students in agriculture classes there, only two come from farming families."

**Muehling** says The Illinois' Agriculture in the Classroom program expands its materials to include more offerings for younger elementary and early childhood students. Also, a local student turns reporter for the Illinois FFA convention. "We've had some wet and stormy weather, but enough dry days to get most of the corn in the ground. Some farmers are still working on putting soybeans in. We're also seeing a lot of farmers side dressing nitrogen this year."

**\$100,000 PLUS RAISED FOR FFA CHAPTERS NATIONWIDE** – The funding comes thanks to the Red Brand's 'Home Grown' initiative. The fence manufacturer announced it's making the campaign an annual event. For every roll of Red Brand agricultural fencing purchased by a participating retailer, \$1 is donated to a designated local FFA chapter or chapters of their choice. In the first year Red Brand helped out more than 700 FFA chapters with each receiving an average of \$400. In one instance an FFA chapter in Platte, South Dakota was awarded more than \$4,000.

"Red Brand's financial support of FFA is critically important to growing and developing stronger FFA experiences for students at the local level of our organization," says National FFA Foundation executive director **Rob Cooper**. "More than 500 Red Brand retailers are participating in this initiative. The initial year of Home Grown was certainly a success and we thank Red Brand for their continued commitment of FFA in 2011."

The 2011 Home Grown program is currently under way. The potential benefits are enormous. When stocking Red Brand agricultural fence products and supporting FFA with a \$750 donation, gold-level Red Brand retailers are eligible to offer rebates of up to \$200 per household on product purchases; gold-level retailers also receive an array of no-cost marketing tools they can utilize to spread the word about how the Home Grown initiative benefits FFA. Blue-level retailers participating in the program receive a host of no-cost marketing materials to promote Home Grown.

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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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Office of Communications  
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