



Letter No. 3624
Friday, July 8, 2011
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BROADCASTERS LETTER

#3624

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(July 7)

DOE OFFERS CONDITIONAL COMMITMENT FOR A \$105 MILLION LOAN GUARANTEE FOR FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND CELLULOSIC BIO-REFINERY IN IOWA

The project will create more than 200 jobs and displace an estimated 13.5 million gallons of gasoline a year. The loan guarantee will support the development of the nation's first commercial-scale cellulosic ethanol plant. Project LIBERTY, sponsored by POET, LLC, will produce up to 25 million gallons of ethanol per year and will be located in Emmetsburg, Iowa. POET estimates the project will generate approximately 200 jobs during construction and 40 permanent jobs at the plant. POET estimates the project will also bring approximately \$14 million in new revenue to area farmers.

"This project will help decrease our dependence on oil, create jobs and aid our transition to clean, renewable energy that is produced here at home," says Energy Secretary Chu. "The innovations used in this project are another example of how we are seizing the opportunity to create new economic opportunities to win the clean energy future."

"Projects like the one we are announcing today show that our investments in next generation biofuels are paying off," says Agriculture Secretary Vilsack. "Project LIBERTY will produce up to 25 million gallons of ethanol per year, create over 200 jobs, and generate millions of dollars in revenue for the local economy. This project is an important step in the Obama Administration's effort to break our nation's unsustainable dependence on foreign oil and move toward a clean energy economy."

"POET has given this initiative the very apt name Project Liberty, and it is appropriate that this announcement comes so close to Independence Day," said Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), a senior member and former Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee. "This is all about decreasing American's dependence on oil from unstable and often hostile foreign sources. And this pioneering facility will kick-start a major domestic industry producing advanced biofuels from plentiful feedstocks like crop residues, native grasses and woody materials, creating thousands of jobs in rural America. I thank Secretary Chu and the Department for their commitment to accelerating America's transition from dependence on imported oil to greater reliance on to clean, domestically produced biofuels."

USDA Office of Communications (202) 720-4623

DOE Office of Communications: (202) 586-4940

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15678>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15679>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15682>

FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS DEBATED BY CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES

Lawmakers on Capitol Hill are beginning to debate and take some actions on three pending free trade agreements.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15683>

USDA CONTINUES STUDY OF GIPSA RULE COMMENTS

USDA officials are studying the various comments and concerns presented on proposed changes to the nation's premiere livestock marketing rule. Changes in the livestock and poultry industries over the last 90 years are behind USDA efforts to update the rule governing those sectors.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15673>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15675>

LAWMAKERS WORK TO DECIDE WHAT PROGRAMS GET CUT AND BY HOW MUCH

The House Committee on Agriculture hears from two USDA officials as it examines conservation programs in its agriculture program audit on what to axe. Meantime, Congressman Tim Holden of Pennsylvania expressed concern about recent monetary reductions in conservation programs for farmers, ranchers and producers.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15684>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15681>

USDA ANNOUNCES IMPROVEMENTS IN SCHOOL WELLNESS PROMOTION

The changes will engage local communities to promote healthier lifestyles for children. Local wellness policies are an important tool for parents, local educational agencies and school districts to promote student wellness, prevent and reduce childhood obesity, and provide assurance that school meal nutrition guidelines meet the minimum federal school meal standards. Schools participating in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program were required to have local wellness policies in place beginning in the 2006-2007 School Year.

"Parents understand that our commitment to teaching children healthy lifestyles requires local communities working together to make wellness a priority." says Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "The updated local school wellness policies will help bring more people into this process in order to ensure kids are surrounded by a healthy school environment."

Provisions set forth in the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 supersede previous requirements and expand the scope of wellness policies. The law now requires that additional stakeholders be included in the development, implementation and review of the wellness policies. Schools are now required to inform and update the public (including parents, students, and others in the community) about the content and implementation of the local wellness policies. These provisions will be effective beginning in the coming 2011-2012 school year.

The Food and Nutrition Service will be updating the local wellness policy materials on the FNS website: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/healthy/wellnesspolicy.html>. FNS is also working with the Centers for

Disease Control and Prevention and the Department of Education to provide technical assistance on local wellness policies for local educational agencies, school food authorities, and State agencies. By working with agencies and authorities vested in students' health and wellness, we are convinced that we can ensure a healthier school environment for children.

Contact: FNS Communications (703) 305-2281
For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

(July 6)

AG SEC TOM VILSACK'S STATEMENT ON THE U.S.-MEXICO AGREEMENT TO RESOLVE THE CROSS-BORDER TRUCKING DISPUTE

"The agreement signed today between the governments of Mexico and the United States to resolve the cross-border long-haul trucking dispute is a major win for U.S. agriculture, American jobs and our nation's economic prosperity. President Obama and President Calderon announced a path forward in March to resolve the dispute, and today the U.S. Department of Transportation—after months of hard work with Mexican counterparts—closed a deal that will provide tariff relief for numerous U.S. agricultural products and manufactured goods.

This dispute has cost U.S. businesses more than \$2 billion. For U.S. farm exports to Mexico, exports of affected commodities were reduced by 27 percent. But today, thanks to the persistent work of the Obama Administration, we have an agreement that not only will ultimately eliminate punitive tariffs, but it also provides opportunities to increase U.S. exports to Mexico and helps to expand jobs on both sides of the border. Moreover, the agreement puts the United States and Mexico on equal footing pertaining to our obligations under the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, by authorizing Mexican and U.S. long-haul carriers to engage in cross-border operations subject to certain requirements. Officials at the Department of Transportation say that the new long-haul cross-border trucking program with Mexico established by this agreement will begin a phased-in program built on the highest safety standards.

The phase-ins begin on July 8, when Mexico reduces the existing tariffs on U.S. goods by 50 percent. The remaining 50 percent will be suspended within five business days from the date on which the first Mexican carrier receives authorization under the new program. Potentially, we're looking at a total lifting of the punitive tariffs in as little as 45 days. Moreover, Mexican carriers participating in the program are subject to certain requirements which will not allow them to haul domestic cargo between points within the United States, which creates additional opportunities for American businesses and workers."

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=15668>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15670>

ANOTHER HUGE DUST STORM HITS PHOENIX

Weather experts say we are not in another dust bowl era, but residents of Phoenix, Arizona and other areas of the southwestern U.S. may have reason to doubt it.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15665>

(June 5)

APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED TO PROMOTE USDA'S REGIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION EFFORTS

Almost \$2.5 million is available through the USDA Rural Development's Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) program. The program promotes sustainable economic development in rural communities and regions with exceptional needs. Last year, for example, Ecotrust in Oregon received a RBOG grant to increase recruitment of producers and buyers in rural communities throughout the Pacific Northwest. It also used the grant to provide training and assistance for FoodHub, which is an online directory and marketplace designed to connect wholesale food buyers and sellers. The system will help agricultural producers tap into the consumer demand for food, help link food buyers and producers and shorten the supply chain between producers and wholesalers.

The RBOG program provides training and technical assistance grants for business development, entrepreneurs, and economic development officials and assists with economic development planning. Funding is available to rural public bodies, nonprofit corporations, Native American tribes and cooperatives with primarily rural members that conduct activities for the mutual benefit of the membership.

Applications for Rural Business Opportunity Grants are due August 1, 2011. Application instructions may be obtained from the July 1, 2011 Federal Register, page 38604, www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-07-01/html/2011-16555.htm or by contacting a [USDA Rural Development State Office](#).

Contact: Weldon Freeman (202) 690-1384

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

LESSONS LEARNED FROM NEW MEXICO WILDFIRE

A wildfire in New Mexico over a decade ago is helping those in the path of the current Los Conchas blaze. Doug Cram of New Mexico State University Extension explains how a wildfire eleven years ago is helping those in the path of the Los Conchas fire be better prepared in this situation. Cram says studying two similar fires a decade apart in his state should reveal what improvements to wildfire preparation and management have been made over that time.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15652>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15653>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15654>

STRATEGIES FOR PLANTING AND MAINTAINING RIPARIAN BUFFERS

A forester says trees and bushes meant for conservation along waterways involves a site specific process as part of an overall strategy. Kansas State Forester Billy Beck explains some of the things to consider when planting and maintaining a successful zone of trees and bushes along waterways for use in conservation and wildlife habitat.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15626>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15628>

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 # 28.11 – More rural landowners are using various forms of agritourism enterprises to bring economic and other benefits to themselves and the areas they live in. Rod Bain looks at this rural form of entrepreneurial spirit in this edition of "Agriculture USA".

CONSUMER TIME CD # 28.11 – Using Laughs To Help Solve A Serious Problem. Growth In Agritourism Industry Continues. Assaulted By Salt. People's Garden School Pilot Program. Tea 101 – Teaching Health Benefits.

AG UPDATE CD # 28.11 – Corn Acreage Numbers Still Surprising To Many. Another Boost In Cotton Plantings. Livestock Profits Hard To Come By, Even With High Prices. Irrigation Could Help Pre-Bloom Cotton In Maturity. Keeping Nutrient Management Records Important.

UPCOMING ON THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE – July 12 – Crop Weather (WAOB); Crop Production Reports (NASS) and World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates. July 13 – Oil Crop, Cotton, and Rice Outlooks (ERS-WAOB). July 18 – Crop Progress Report (WAOB); Livestock, Dairy, And Poultry Outlook (ERS-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, 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

USDA Forest Service Awards Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl Poster Contest Winner

A 9 year old girl from California is the winner of this year's Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl Poster Contest.

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5cjLFsYTLTI>

WMV: <mms://ocbmtcwmp.usda.gov/content/bmtc/vnr/posterCAP.wmv>

A new TV feature is available on the USDA FTP site

Filename: poster contest winner

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

NORTH CAROLINA QUIETLY HARVESTS RECORD WHEAT CROP – This is being done despite problems with the wheat harvest in the Midwest. **Rhonda Garrison** (Southern Farm Network – Raleigh, North Carolina <http://www.sfntoday.com>) tells us, “Executive Director of the North Carolina Small Grain Growers Association Dan Weathington says that in the past 10 years, average yield has been about 46.9 bushels per acre, and last year the average was 37, but this year it's looking like the average will be in the 70's.” **Garrison** adds several fields in various parts of the state have brought in yields well over 100 bushels per acre.

***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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