UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
USDA
Broadcasters Letter
Office of Communications
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Letter No. 3676.2012
Friday, July 27, 2012
Creative Media & Broadcast Center
202-720-7079

BROADCASTERS LETTER

#3676.2012

Friday, July 27, 2012

(July 27)

SUPPORT FOR PRODUCERS TO GROW RENEWABLE FEEDSTOCKS FOR ADVANCED BIOFUELS

This is part of 'all of the above' energy strategy by President Obama. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced payments for 125 advanced Biofuel producers across the country to support the production and expansion of advanced biofuels from a wide variety of non-food sources, including waste products.

"Advanced biofuels are a key component of President Obama's 'all-of-the-above' energy strategy to reduce the Nation's reliance on foreign oil and take control of America's energy future," said Vilsack. "These payments represent help spur an alternative fuels industry using renewable feedstocks grown in America, broadening the range of feedstock options available to biofuels producers, helping to create an economy built to last."

The funding is being provided through USDA's Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels, which was established in the 2008 Farm Bill. Under this program, payments are made to eligible producers based on the amount of biofuels a recipient produces from renewable biomass, other than corn kernel starch. Examples of eligible feedstocks include but are not limited to: crop residue; animal, food and yard waste material; vegetable oil; and animal fat. Through this and other programs, USDA is working to support the research, investment and infrastructure necessary to build a biofuels industry that creates jobs and broadens the range of feedstocks used to produce renewable fuel.

For a list of those receiving payments click here .

Contact: Weldon Freeman (202) 690-1384
Story Info: USDA Newsroom
Radio Story: USDA Announces Payments For Advanced Biofuels Producers

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THE EXTREME DROUGHT IS GETTING PARTIAL BLAME FOR THE YEAR'S NASTY FIRE SEASON

This fire season is one of the worst in a long time and the drought may be one reason.

Radio Story: DROUGHT GETTING PARTIAL BLAME FOR NASTY FIRE SEASON

THREE AGRICULTURAL SCIENTISTS GIVEN PRESIDENTIAL EARLY CAREER AWARD

President Barack Obama has named three agricultural scientists as winners of the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE), the highest honor bestowed by the United States Government on science and engineering professionals in the early stages of their independent research careers. They are Joseph E. Jakes, USDA, U.S. Forest Service; Ian Kaplan, Purdue University; and Christina L. Swaggerty, USDA, Agricultural Research Service (ARS).

Dr. Ian Kaplan's research on pests and beneficial insects in plant systems was funded by USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). Kaplan was honored for his outstanding work on insect predator ecology and plant-insect interactions in specialty crops. Kaplan's research is significant because it may lead to the use of environmentally safe chemical compounds derived from plants.

Dr. Joseph Jakes is a research materials engineer at the U.S. Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory and a University of Wisconsin graduate. His expertise is in the development and employment of methodology to understand material properties at the nanoscale. In forest products research, his efforts are leading to improved wood adhesives and the development of new high performance wood-based composite materials, including those utilizing nanocellulose. Ultimately, Jakes' goal is the development of new and improved forest products that lead to the efficient utilization and management of forest resources.

Dr. Christina L. Swaggerty, a member of the USDA ARS Food and Feed Safety Research Unit, College Station, Texas, conducts research to enhance the safety, security and wholesomeness of the U.S. food supply. Swaggerty's research has employed a functional genomics approach to identify key innate immune genes in chickens that are associated with increased resistance against Salmonella and Campylobacter, the two leading causes of foodborne enteritis in the world.

PECASE nominees are selected for their innovative research at the frontiers of science and technology. Nominees show exceptional potential to shape the future through intellectual and inspired leadership. Educational activities reflect a spirit of community service to help understand the nature and implications of scientific research.

Contact: Tracy Havermann (202) 720-5369
Story Info: USDA Newsroom

(July 26)

U.S. FORESTS CONTINUE TO CREATE JOBS AND BOOST ECONOMY THROUGH TOURISM; RESTORATION EFFORTS AND WOOD-TO-ENERGY INITIATIVES; AND NANO-CELLULOSIC BREAKTHROUGHS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture highlighted how the nation's forests are contributing billions of dollars to the economy and creating jobs through tourism, restoration, and renewable energy initiatives. The U.S. Forest Service released its annual visitor survey which showed Forest Service lands attracted 166 million visitors in 2011, and that visitor spending in nearby communities sustained more than 200,000 full- and part-time jobs. The Forest Service also announced that restoration efforts contributed $21 million to local economies and reduced fire threats on 123,000 acres of land nationwide.

Additionally, the Forest Service announced an award of $4 million for wood-to-energy projects and the opening of a first of its kind, $1.7 million nanocellulose lab. The lab will support an emerging market for new wood-derived renewable materials that will create jobs and contribute billions of dollars to the economy, becoming the country's leading producer of forest-based nanomaterials.

"Our nation's forests are a precious natural resource providing multiple economic opportunities that are creating jobs and contributing billions of dollars in economic activity across the country," said Vilsack. "Nearly 166 million visitors to Forest Service lands helped sustain over 200,000 jobs last year, while restoration and fuel thinning efforts contributed $21 million to local economies, producing 121 million board feet of lumber and 267,000 tons of woody biomass for bio-energy production. Today's announcement of an additional $4 million for wood-to-energy projects and the opening of an innovative lab will ensure that our forests continue to provide new bio-based manufacturing opportunities that create good, sustainable jobs in rural communities."

Contact: Office of Communications (202)720-4623
Story Info: USDA Newsroom
Radio Story: Forests Seen As Source Of More Jobs, Energy And Opportunities
ACTUALITY: New Forest Service Nano Technology Pilot Plant
ACTUALITY: Highlights Of New National Forest Visitor Survey

THE NATION'S DRIEST CORN AREAS ARE GETTING DRIER AS THE DROUGHT INTENSIFIES

The latest USDA report on drought conditions has very little good news for corn and soybean areas. Brad Rippey, USDA meteorologist, givies a general description of this week's new USDA drought monitor report. Rippey adds that recent rains did not help the driest corn and soybean areas.

Radio Story: Driest Corn Areas Are Getting Drier As Drought Intensifies
ACTUALITY: Drought Expanding Slowly, But Intensifying
ACTUALITY: Worst Drought Area Conditions Getting Even Worse

THE IMPACT OF THE USDA WORLD SUPPLY AND DEMAND ESTIMATES ARE STUDIED UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

A study looked at the question, "Do the World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates still have impact in the commodity markets?" Economist, Michael Adjemian, explains the reasons behind a study of the impact of USDA's monthly World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates report on commodity markets.

Radio Story: Impact Of USDA World Supply And Demand Estimates Studied
ACTUALITY: Supply/Demand Report Studied For Market Impact

(July 25)

USDA DESIGNATES AN ADDITIONAL 76 COUNTIES IN 6 STATES AS PRIMARY NATURAL DISASTER AREAS DUE TO WORSENING DROUGHT

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today designated 76 additional counties in six states as primary natural disaster areas due to damage and losses caused by drought and excessive heat. During the 2012 crop year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has designated 1,369 counties across 31 states as disaster areas—1,234 due to drought—making all qualified farm operators in the areas eligible for low-interest emergency loans. The additional counties designated today are in the states of Indiana, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Nebraska and Wisconsin. The U.S. Drought Monitor currently reports that two-thirds of the continental United States is in a moderate to exceptional drought.

"President Obama requested that USDA take the steps within our existing programs to support struggling farmers and ranchers and we announced these new measures earlier this week," said Vilsack. "The President and I are committed to ensuring that agriculture remains a bright spot in our nation's economy by sustaining the successes of America's agricultural economy through these difficult times. As USDA officials visit drought-stricken areas to stand with our producers and rural communities, the urgency for Congress to pass a food, farm and jobs bill is greater than ever. The hardworking Americans who produce our food and fiber, feed for our livestock, and contribute to a home-grown energy policy—they need action now. That is why USDA is taking every possible step to help farmers through this difficult time."

During the week ending July 22, the portion of the U.S. corn crop rated in very poor to poor condition climbed to 45 percent, according to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service.. Soybeans rated very poor to poor rose to 35 percent. Such ratings for both commodities have increased for seven consecutive weeks. During the same period, from June 3 to July 22, the portion of the U.S. corn rated good to excellent fell from 72 to 26 percent. Soybeans rated good to excellent tumbled from 65 to 31 percent. The current corn and soybean ratings represent the lowest conditions at any time of year since 1988. At the same time, more than half—or 55 percent—of the nation's pastures and rangeland are rated in very poor or poor condition.

Increasingly hot and dry conditions from California to upstate New York have caused significant crop damage to many crops, including corn and soybeans, as well as pastures and rangeland. Vilsack has instructed USDA subcabinet leaders to travel to affected areas to augment ongoing assistance from state-level USDA staff and provide guidance on the department's existing disaster resources. To deliver assistance to those who need it most, the Secretary effectively reduced the interest rate for emergency loans from 3.75 percent to 2.25 percent, while creating greater flexibility for ranchers within the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) for emergency

haying and grazing purposes. In addition, the disaster designations announced today fall under a new, streamlined process that simplifies Secretarial disaster designations and will result in a 40 percent reduction in processing time for most counties affected by disasters.

USDA released an infographic that helps to illustrate how growth and diversity in the U.S. agriculture sector since the 1988 drought has better positioned American agriculture to endure the current natural disaster. For this and other updates about USDA's efforts to respond to the drought, please visit www.usda.gov/drought.

*******These figures are subject to change as the extreme dry and hot weather continues*******

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

PRICES FOR DIFFERENT FOODS REACT DIFFERENTLY TO FARM PRICE HIKES

An expert says retail food prices do react when prices for raw farm commodities surge, but the reactions can differ depending on the food product.

Radio Story: Prices For Different Foods React Differently To Farm Price Hikes

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BETTER IDEA OF ACTUAL CROP YIELDS AND PRODUCTION IS COMING SOON

Just how much damage is the drought doing to potential crop yields and production? USDA will have a better answer to that question in a couple of weeks.

Radio Story: Better Idea Of Actual Crop Yields And Production Is Coming Soon

(July 24)

NEW EFFORT TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH IN LOW INCOME COMMUNITIES IN THE SOUTHWEST

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that low-income rural areas will benefit from changes in the way USDA funds water and wastewater projects. Rural Development Acting Deputy Under Secretary Judith Canales made the announcement on Vilsack's behalf while she toured the wastewater treatment system in the City of Peñitas, Texas.

"This change in our water and wastewater funding process will provide more assistance to colonias to address significant health risks in communities along the U.S.-Mexico border," said Canales. "Many of these areas are not served by water and waste facilities. The change to our funding process will assign priority points for projects in colonias, which will help increase investments needed to strengthen these communities and improve the quality of life for their residents."

Water and waste funding is made through USDA's Rural Utilities Service (RUS), a Rural Development agency. USDA outlined the changes to the funding process in a regulation published on page 43149 of the July 24, 2012 Federal Register. Colonias are defined as those recognized by states or counties before October 1, 1989. They must lack adequate infrastructure, including water and sewer facilities.

Peñitas is an Hidalgo County colonias that received a USDA Rural Development loan and grant in 2011 to construct a water treatment plant. There is currently no sewer system in place, and residents use onsite septic tank systems that pose a health hazard.

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-4623
Story Info: USDA Newsroom
Radio Story: USDA Funded Water Project Makes Big Impact For Small Towns
ACTUALITY: The Impact Of USDA Funding For Water Treatment Plant

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USDA ISSUES ITS FIRST FOOD PRICE INFLATION FORECAST FOR 2013

The current drought will cause a larger than normal hike in retail food prices next year.

Radio Story: USDA Issues Its First Food Price Inflation Forecast For 2013

DROUGHT MAY HAVE SURPRISING EFFECTS ON 2012 FOOD PRICES

The drought may affect the price we pay for certain foods this year, but not all the effects will result in higher prices.

Radio Story: Drought May Have Surprising Effects On 2012 Food Prices

(July 23)

THE AG SECRETARY ANNOUNCES NEW STEPS TO HELP DROUGHT STRICKEN FARMERS

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced new flexibility and assistance in the Department's major conservation programs to get much-needed help to livestock producers as the most wide-spread drought in seven decades intensifies in the United States. The Secretary also announced plans to encourage crop insurance companies to provide a short grace period for farmers on unpaid insurance premiums, as some farming families can be expected to struggle to make ends meet at the close of the crop year.

"President Obama and I are committed to getting help to producers as soon as possible and sustaining the success of America's rural communities through these difficult times," said Vilsack. "USDA will open opportunities for haying and grazing on lands enrolled in conservation programs while providing additional financial and technical assistance to help landowners through this drought. And we will deliver greater peace of mind to farmers dealing with this worsening drought by encouraging crop insurance companies to work with farmers through this

challenging period. As severe weather and natural disasters continue to threaten the livelihoods of thousands of our farming families, we want you and your communities to know that USDA stands with you."

The assistance announced uses the Secretary of Agriculture's existing authority to help create and encourage flexibility within four USDA programs: the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), and the Federal Crop Insurance Program.

Contact: Office of Communications (202)720-4623
Story Info: USDA Newsroom
Radio Story: Vilsack Announces New Steps To Help Drought Stricken Farmers
Vilsack Continues To Ask For Action On Food, Farms And Jobs Bill
ACTUALITY: Vilsack Says With No Legislation Livestock Folks In Trouble
ACTUALITY: More Flexibility In The EQUP Program Due To Drought

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CONSUMERS CAN EXPECT RETAIL BEEF PRICES TO GO EVEN HIGHER

Consumers are already paying near record high prices for beef, but those prices may be going even higher over the next year. USDA Radio's Gary Crawford spoke with analyst Shayle Shagam.

Radio Story: Expect Retail Beef Prices To Go Even Higher

DESPITE RECENT RAINS, THE NATION'S CORN CONDITION CONTINUES TO DETERIORATE

Rain in parts of the Corn Belt provided some benefit, but not enough to offset the impacts of drought to the nation's corn crop. USDA Meteorologist Brad Rippey updates various corn crop development categories for the period ending July 22.

Radio Story: Corn Condition Continues Deterioration Despite Rains
ACTUALITY: On Latest Corn Crop Development Numbers

For more agriculture news visit **www.USDA.gov**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
USDA Blog
-Reaching Out, Every Day in Every Way-

The Latest USDA Blog Posts

Recovery Act Water Project Removes High Iron Concentration from a Michigan Community's Water Supply (**RD**)
Poarch Band of Creek Indians Hosts White House Rural Council Roundtable in Alabama (**OTR**)

California neighborhood comes together in urban forestry project (**FS/KYF**)
Under Secretary Inspects Indiana Water Quality and Hospital Projects Funded by USDA (**RD**)

Learn more about President Lincoln's agricultural legacy here.

USDA Celebrates 150 Years

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

(Feature Line-Up Subject To Change Prior to Update On July 31, 2012)

AGRICULTURE USA CD # 31.12 – When we planted those tomatoes in the spring, we had such high hopes, but many of us are ending up disappointed in what we are seeing...or NOT seeing. On this edition of Agriculture USA, Gary Crawford has some tips from experts that may even help this summer's harvest.

CONSUMER TIME CD # 31.12 – Heat Drought And Your Trees, Preparing For A Flood Weather Emergency, Using Micronutrients To Fortify Food Aid, Laser Light Labeling Making Its Mark On Citrus, Plastic Bags Are Convenient For People And Bad For Animals.

AG UPDATE CD # 31.12 – New USDA Cattle Reports Show Herds Continue To Shrink, Advice For Producers Filing Crop Insurance Loss Claim, Making Ag Irrigation Systems Good To The Last Drop, A New Means To Destroy Disease Causing Bacteria, The Value OF Field Crop Scouting Cards.

UPCOMING ON THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE – July 31 – Crop Weather Report (WAOB); Agricultural Prices Report (NASS). August 2 – Farm Production Expenditures Report (NASS). August 3 – Land Values And Cash Rents Report (NASS). August 6 – Crop Progress 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**,** 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

ACTUALITIES - Drought Holding Steady In Large Areas

A USDA meteorologist says there will be no short term weather relief for drought stricken areas

New TV actualities and b-roll are available on the USDA FTP site
Filename: drought coverage and maps

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ACTUALITIES – Most Recent Crop Conditions

USDA Chief Economist Joe Glauber talks about the current drought and compares it to the 1988 drought

New TV actualities are available on the USDA FTP site
Filename: Glauber July 24 bites
Download instructions:
The host: ftp://ocbmtcmedia.download.akamai.com
User name: usdanews
Password: Newscontent1
The new file is in QuickTime Movie (H.264)

Please email Bob.Ellison@OC.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

AGNET WEST RADIO NETWORK HIRES NEW SALES REPRESENTATIVE – The new member of the Network is J. L. Farmakis, Inc. who will work as a National Sales Representative. AgNet West Radio Network (Ocala, Florida/Clovis, California www.AgNetWest.com) on the network launched July 9. The newcomer is a welcome addition. "It's about time California finally has its own farm network. We're proud to add AgNet West to our prime time lineup. Audience response is very positive," said KROP Owner/Operator **Teresa Allen**. The Brawley,

California station covers the Coachella and Imperial Valley farming regions of southern California and was the first of several to sign up even before the network went on air.

AgNet West was co-founded by **Gary Cooper** and **Robin Loftin**, owner-operators of Southeast AgNet Media Group, and **Patrick Cavanaugh** and **Laurie Greene** in California. **Cavanaugh** is editor of several California-based agricultural magazines, two of which he co-owns including *Pacific Nut Producer* and *Vegetables West*. He has also been an independent farm broadcaster in the region for the past several years.

Bill Farmakis, President of J.L. Farmakis, Inc. says he's excited about extending the firm's relationship and looks forward to working with the AgNet West partnership. J.L. Farmakis, Inc.'s State Farm Radio Network group is the largest ag radio group in the country covering 34 states with 22 networks and over 725 stations. They also represent ag publications and digital media including the statewide *Ag Alert* publication in California.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR THE 69TH ANNUAL NAFB CONVENTION – The National Association of Farm Broadcasting will be held November 7-9, 2012 in Kansas City, Missouri at the Westin Crown Center hotel. The 69th NAFB Convention features a line-up of speakers and professional development opportunities as well as the legendary Trade Talk event.

Our Rich Heritage
A Bridge to the Future
www.nafb.com
National Association of Farm Broadcasting
November 7-9, 2012 • Kansas City, Missouri

Visit www.nafb.com for details, including the tentative agenda, online registration form, and a link to reserve your room at the Westin Crown Center.

EQUINE EVENTS ARE BACK FOR THE 2012 STATE FAIR OF VIRGINIA –

SCHEDULING EQUINE EVENTS FOR 2012 FAIR

The State Fair of Virginia is back and will hold the annual event September 28 through October 7, 2012. The Fair is reinstating equine events at its facility in Doswell, Virginia, in Caroline County, and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services encourages horse owners to participate.

Due to the bankruptcy of the former State Fair, many agricultural groups and livestock shows made other plans for their shows and exhibitions this year. But the fair is back in business under the ownership of the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation and Universal Fairs LLC, and they are ready to welcome horses and their owners to the track in Doswell. Given the historic association between the park, formerly known as Meadow Farm, and Triple Crown winner Secretariat, a full slate of equine events is a priority at the new State Fair of Virginia.

Horse owners interested in competing in the fair or in holding events should contact statefairhorses@statefairva.org. An online registration form is available at statefairva.org. Interested parties should **contact the fair or fill out the online form by Aug. 9, 2012,** to assist in creating a complete schedule of equine events.

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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. 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

Compiled and Edited by **Susan Carter**
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USDA Broadcasters Letter

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