



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Broadcasters Letter

Office of Communications

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Friday, October 12, 2012
Creative Media & Broadcast Center
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BROADCASTERS LETTER

#3687.2012

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(October 11)

JUST WHAT DO THE LATEST AG TRADE NUMBERS REVEAL?

Ag trade numbers appear strong both month-to-month and year-to-year in USDA's latest ag trade forecasts. USDA Economist Stephen MacDonald explained the import numbers for ag commodities month-to-month and for Fiscal Year 2012 to date

Radio Info: [What Do The Latest Ag Trade Numbers Reveal?](#)
[ACTUALITY: Latest USDA Ag Trade Import Numbers](#)

U.S. FOREST SERVICE AWARDS \$3M IN GRANTS TO PROTECT GREAT LAKES

The nearly \$3 million in grants are for trees, tree canopy, forest cover and clean water projects in Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, New York, Illinois, and Indiana. The grants are part of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, a cooperative effort between federal, tribal, state and local partners. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is the largest investment in the Great Lakes in two decades.

"The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative will improve the environmental health and economic vitality of the world's largest freshwater system," said USDA Undersecretary Harris Sherman. "The Forest Service, together with our partners, is working to improve America's treasured landscapes in more than 7,000 communities across the country."

The U.S. EPA-funded grants administered by the Forest Service will support community forestry efforts to improve the interception, evaporation, infiltration and storage of rainfall and storm water.

"Healthy forests and lands support healthy waters," said U.S. Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell. "These projects will put people to work increasing the number of trees, turning polluted industrial sites into beautiful parkland and improving habitat for wildlife."

A task force of 11 federal agencies is cleaning up toxins and areas of concern, combating invasive species, promoting near-shore health by protecting watersheds from polluted run-off and restoring wetlands and other habitats. Here's a list of the [awardees](#).

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

**THE USDA CUTS ITS CORN CROP FORECAST,
BUT RAISES SOYBEANS**

Here are some highlights from Thursday morning's USDA crop reports. Updated acreage data for corn was the focus of USDA's crop production report for October. Rain in the South is helping our nation's soybean crop rebound in acreage categories compared to the previous month. USDA Chief Economist Joe Glauber recapped some of the main points from this month's world wheat production and U.S. supply and demand estimates.

Radio Story: [USDA Cuts Its Corn Crop Forecast, But Raises Soybeans](#)
[Corn Production Estimates Slightly Revised And Its Meaning](#)
[Rain Boosts The Soybean Production Estimates](#)
[ACTUALITY: USDA Wheat Supply And Demand Highlights](#)

(October 10)

**USDA HOSTS SYMPOSIUM FOR MILITARY VETERANS
ON ACCESS TO AGRICULTURAL CREDIT**

Deputy Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services Karis Gutter led a symposium that offers U.S. military veterans information on agricultural credit as part of USDA's continuing efforts to expand opportunities for military families. Gutter, a U.S. Marine Corps reservist, along with the Jefferson County Development Authority of West Virginia and the Farmer Veteran Coalition, shared resources on USDA programs, grants, loans and small business contracts with service members who want to start their own rural business, farm or ranch.

"At President Obama's direction, USDA and the rest of the federal government are working to make sure our veterans in rural areas receive the medical care, training and employment support they deserve," said Gutter. "This is an opportunity for veterans to get information and learn about capital resources to help finance start-up operations or help farmers and ranchers with military backgrounds expand their current operations. America's veterans are leaders across rural America and we want to help them pursue their dreams by prioritizing innovative new approaches and attracting capital to continue economic development in rural communities."

The Kearneysville symposium provides veterans who have an interest in agricultural operations with financial and business planning information, including FSA farm loan programs and a newly proposed microloan program. The [microloan program](#) aims to help small and family operations progress through their start-up years with needed resources, while building capacity, increasing equity, and eventually graduating to commercial credit.

USDA also offers grants programs that support educational programs tailored to meet the particular needs and abilities of returning veterans. USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture's (NIFA) [Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program \(BFRDP\)](#) makes it possible to fill that gap in training. At the University of Arkansas, for example, Dr. Dan Donoghue used BFRDP funds to develop internships, workshops and online courses that focus on the needs of veterans interested in pursuing farming after their service to our country. The workshops, hosted in collaboration with the Farmer-Veteran Coalition and the National Center for Appropriate Technology, give veterans and their family's basic and practical on-farm skills for poultry and livestock production, as well as networking opportunities for veterans from all around the country.

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

FEWER NATIONAL FOREST TREES DYING FROM PESTS AND DISEASE

The mortality rate of trees in our nation's forests due to insects and disease is on the decline. Rob Mangold of the U.S. Forest Service discussed what is behind the consecutive years of decline in tree deaths in national forests due to insects. Mangold looked at the various pest threats associated with the forests of the Eastern United States.

Radio Story: [Fewer National Forest Trees Dying From Pests And Disease](#)
[ACTUALITY: Reason For Lower Insect Caused Tree Mortality Rate](#)
[ACTUALITY: Pest Threats To Eastern U.S. Tree Species](#)

THE PUMPKIN CROP IS PRETTY GOOD, DESPITE DROUGHT IN MANY AREAS

Will this past summer's drought and heat cause problems with our supply of Halloween pumpkins?

Radio Story: [A Pretty Good Pumpkin Crop, Despite Drought In Many Areas](#)

(October 9)

**SECRETARY VILSACK PARTICIPATES IN THE KICKOFF OF
FOUR REGIONAL WORKSHOPS ON U.S. DROUGHT RESPONSE**

The meetings highlight national and local efforts to identify solutions for intermediate and long-term drought relief. Omaha, Nebraska served as the backdrop for the opening session of the first of four regional workshops to outline resources available to assist with drought recovery efforts. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack told the participants the lack of a new five-year Food, Farm and Jobs Bill has the potential to delay and stifle the federal response.

"USDA is doing all we can, but key programs traditionally made available in times of disaster are in limbo because Congress has allowed our authority to deliver them to expire," said Vilsack. "As I travel the country, it is clear to me that farmers and ranchers are aware of the gravity of the situation, and the need for Congress to act."

President Obama had directed federal agencies to take every possible step to help farmers and ranchers, businesses, and rural communities recover as a result of one of the country's worst droughts in decades. USDA is partnering with local, state and federal partners to hold the workshops, working closely with the Department of Commerce, the Small Business Administration and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to facilitate these meetings.

The workshop was co-sponsored by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, the National Association of Counties, and the Mayor of Omaha. Among the federal officials joining Secretary Vilsack at the session was Thomas Guevara, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs at the Economic Development Administration.

At the direction of the President, Secretary Vilsack is helping coordinate an Administration-wide response that has included: the National Credit Union Administration's increased capacity for lending to customers including farmers; the U.S. Department of Transportation's emergency waivers for federal truck weight regulations and hours of service requirements to get help to drought-stricken communities; increased outreach and emergency lending by the Small Business Administration; and more.

The Obama Administration, with Agriculture Secretary Vilsack's leadership, has worked tirelessly to strengthen rural America, maintain a strong farm safety net, and create opportunities for America's farmers and ranchers. U.S. agriculture is currently experiencing one of its most productive periods in American history thanks to the productivity, resiliency, and resourcefulness of our producers. USDA's crop insurance program currently insures 264 million acres, 1.14 million policies, and \$110 billion worth of liability on about 500,000 farms. In response to tighter financial markets, USDA has expanded the availability of farm credit, helping struggling farmers refinance loans. Since 2009, USDA has provided more than 128,000 loans to family farmers totaling more than \$18 billion. Over 50 percent of the loans went to beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

As of October 2, 2012, USDA has designated all or parts of 39 states as natural disaster areas this year. USDA continues to encourage any farmer or rancher with questions to contact a USDA Service Center office, because even with limited legal authority, USDA has worked hard to offer tools to help. For more information on the fact sheet visit [President Obama's Leading Administration-wide Drought Response](#).

The next meeting will be at the Colorado State Fairgrounds in Pueblo October 15th to be followed by meetings in Pine Bluff, Arkansas October 17th and in Ohio during the week of October 22nd.

Contact: Office of Communications (202)720-4623

Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

Radio Story: [USDA Hosts First Regional Drought Meeting](#)

[Drought Response Complicated By Lack Of Farm Bill](#)

[ACTUALITY: Vilsack Talks About Drought Meeting In Omaha, Neb.](#)

THE WHITE HOUSE HONORS 4-H AND FFA MEMBERS AS "CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE"

There were 12 members of FFA and 4-H recognized by the White House as Champions of Change. For more than 100 years, youth and adults involved in 4-H have worked together to create sustainable change in their communities. Since 1928, FFA members have lived by the motto "Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve." The individuals being honored today carry on the tradition of service to communities and country that 4-H and FFA represent.

These individuals have devoted their time and effort to their communities across the country and will have the opportunity to share their stories with Administration officials and 4-H and FFA members around the globe. The Champions of Change program was created to honor ordinary Americans doing great work in their communities. Each week, a different sector is highlighted and groups of Champions, ranging from educators to entrepreneurs to community leaders, are recognized for the work they are doing to serve and strengthen their communities.

"The members of 4-H and FFA are shining examples of the positive change young Americans are bringing across the country, said Jon Carson, Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of Public Engagement. "Today we are not only celebrating the work of students having an impact on their communities, but we're also honoring the mentors and teachers who are fostering these leadership skills in the youth of today." Visit for a list of those honored.

NEW USDA CROP REPORTS WILL KEY IN ON U.S. PRODUCTION PROSPECTS

Thursday's USDA crop reports may help reduce the speculation about actual corn and soybean production this year. Gerry Bange, USDA Outlook Board Chairman, said that in addition to looking at the U.S. agricultural situation, his group will also be tracking developments in the Southern Hemisphere.

Radio Story: [New Reports Will Key In On U.S. Production Prospects](#)

[ACTUALITY: USDA Will Assess Southern Hemisphere Crop Situation](#)

For more agriculture news visit www.USDA.gov



[Read USDA's Latest Blog Posts](#)

**Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack's
WEEKLY RADIO ADDRESS**

[TV #40 Ag Sec Weekly Address - Enhancing Broadband For Rural America](#)



[USDA Celebrates 150 Years](#)

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

(Feature Line-Up Subject To Change Prior to Update On October 16, 2012)

AGRICULTURE USA CD # 42.12 – What are the latest forecasts from USDA's October Crop Production Reports and World Agricultural Supply And Demand Estimates? Rod Bain has the recap of the latest reports in this edition of "Agriculture USA".

CONSUMER TIME CD # 42.12 – Threats From Pests To National Forests Decline, Meat Characteristics Determined By Technology, Don't Dump Those Leaves – Use Them For Compost, Getting Your Farmers Market Ranked In The Top 20, Some Food Safety Tips To Make Halloween Fun And Safe.

AG UPDATE CD # 42.12 – Highlights From USDA October Crop Reports. Technology's Role In Conservation Efforts. Treatment For A Dairy Cow Ailment Under Study. Bringing Profitability From Canola To Michigan. A New View In Poultry Virus Details.

UPCOMING ON THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE – October 16 - Crop Weather Report (WAOB). October 17 – Livestock, Dairy, And Poultry Outlooks (ERS-WAOB). October 19 – Cattle On Feed Report (NASS). October 22 – 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

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OFF MIKE

RED RIVER FARM NETWORK

THE RED RIVER FARM NETWORK EXPANDS ITS FARM BROADCAST TEAM –



The Red River Farm Network (Grand Forks, North Dakota <http://www.rfn.com/>) announced the addition of **Jessie Topp** to its farm broadcast team. Topp is a native of Grace City, North Dakota and a recent graduate of North Dakota State University. She joins farm broadcast veterans **Mike Hergert**, **Don Wick** and **Randy Koenen**, to be part of the largest ag journalism team in the region. Topp actually isn't new to RRFN. She interned there in 2010 and 2011. This past summer, she interned with Bader Rutter & Associates. The past state FFA officer served as queen of the NDSU 'Little I.'



HOOSIER AG TODAY

HOOSIER AG TODAY HAS A NEW ADDITION ITS BROADCAST/SALES TEAM –



Cayla McLeland (Hoosier Ag Today - Indiana's Farm Network- Clermont, Indiana www.hoosieragtoday.com) has joined the HAT organization in the newly created position of Regional Sales Manager and Regional Farm Broadcaster. "Cayla will combine her on-air and sales skills to improve our customer service and news gathering throughout Indiana and into surrounding states," said **Gary Truitt**, President of Hoosier Ag Today. The native Cass County, Indiana resident comes from Cumulus Media where she served as Promotion Director, Account Executive, and Broadcast Personality at WMDH-FM in New Castle.

McLeland will work with HAT sponsors to maximize the impact of their marketing campaigns and integrate broadcast and digital products offered by Hoosier Ag Today. In addition to serving clients in Indiana, she will work with agribusinesses throughout the Midwest to add a multi-state dimension to their marketing plans. In this regard, **McLeland** will be working with the J.L. Farmakis organization to combine and coordinate regional broadcast coverage.

McLeland's talents will extend to join the award winning, broadcast team of **Gary Truitt** and **Andy Eubank** where she will provide added depth to HAT's farm news coverage and will extend that coverage to events outside of Indiana. **McLeland** will also spearhead Hoosier Ag Today's new video service which will deliver on-location video reports to a farmer's Smartphone via the Hoosier Ag Today Smartphone app.

***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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