

GLOBAL FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE WEEKLY NEWS BRIEF OF THE GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE



December 11th – December 17th, 2010

Quote of the Week: *“The QDDR is a blueprint for how we can make the State Department and USAID more nimble, more effective, and more accountable, a blueprint for how our country can lead in a changing world through the use of what I call “civilian power” – the combined force of all of the civilians across the United States Government who practice diplomacy, carry out development projects, and act to prevent and respond to crisis and conflict... A core message of the QDDR, following the President’s policy directive on development, is that development is a strategic, economic, and moral imperative, and that we must elevate it alongside diplomacy as a pillar of American civilian power. To do this we will focus our investments in key sectors where we have special expertise and the ability to make the biggest impact: in food security, global health, climate change, sustainable economic growth, democracy and governance, and humanitarian assistance. And we will emphasize the rights of women and girls throughout”.* – Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.S. Secretary of State, Remarks at Town Hall Meeting on the Release of the First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, “Leading Through Civilian Power”, December 15, 2010

For more information:

- The [Global Food for Thought Blog](#) provides expert commentary, debate, and updates on key developments in real time.
- Background information on the Global Agricultural Development Initiative, and previous editions of *Global Food for Thought*, can be found on the Initiative’s website: www.thechicagocouncil.org/globalagdevelopment.
- To receive *Global Food for Thought* weekly, please register [here](#).
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KEY ARTICLES AND REPORTS

The Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, U.S. Department of State, USAID, December 2010

The QDDR provides a blueprint for elevating American "civilian power" to better advance our national interests and to be a better partner to the U.S. military. Leading through civilian power means directing and coordinating the resources of all America's civilian agencies to prevent and resolve conflicts; help countries

lift themselves out of poverty into prosperous, stable, and democratic states; and build global coalitions to address global problems.

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/153109.pdf>

SEE ALSO: The Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review Fact Sheet

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/153109.pdf>

SEE ALSO: Remarks at Town Hall Meeting on the Release of the First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, "Leading Through Civilian Power", *Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.S. Secretary of State, Anne-Marie Slaughter, Director, QDDR, Patrick F. Kennedy, Under Secretary for Management, Rajiv Shah, USAID Administrator, December 15*

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/12/152934.htm>

SEE ALSO: Clinton Launches Reform of US Diplomacy, *Agence France-Presse, December 16*

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton launched a reform of US diplomacy that will turn ambassadors into corporate-like CEOs tasked with helping a country develop and avoid armed conflict. Wary of Republican calls for cost-cutting, Clinton promised that the reforms at the State Department and USAID seek to "minimize costs and maximize impacts, avoid overlap and duplication." "Professionals at the Department of Agriculture know how to boost crop yields and irrigate fields in Kansas and in Kandahar," the chief US diplomat told State Department and USAID colleagues.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hoBcOTzAjp9GN1krcQ3fAMGohyZQ?docId=CNG.f5101c535ed3b394f79d8c72e83edaba.6e1>

SEE ALSO: The Future of Engaging with the Rest of the World, *John Sullivan, Executive Director, Center for International Private Enterprise, Huffington Post, December 15*

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-sullivan/the-future-of-engaging-wi_b_797357.html

SEE ALSO: Clinton Presents Plan to Overhaul State Department Operations, *Bloomberg, December 15*

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-12-15/clinton-presents-plan-to-overhaul-state-department-operations.html>

SEE ALSO: State Department Review Calls for Emphasis on Averting Global Crisis, *Washington Post, December 16*

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/12/15/AR2010121507474.html>

SEE ALSO: NGO Community Likes State's QDDR but Worried about Implementation, *The Cable, Foreign Policy, December 16*

http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/12/16/ngo_community_likes_state_s_qddr_but_worried_about_implementation?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+foreignpolicy%2Fthecable+%28The+Cable%29

SEE ALSO: Weighing on Ambitious QDDR, *Council on Foreign Relations, December 16*

http://www.cfr.org/publication/23653/weighing_an_ambitious_qddr.html

SEE ALSO: Leading Through Civilian Power, *Rajiv Shah, USAID Administrator, December 15*

<http://blog.usaid.gov/2010/12/leading-through-civilian-power/>

Launch of the Foreign Assistance Dashboard, *U.S. Department of State, December 16*

The State Department and USAID are pleased to announce the launch of the Foreign Assistance Dashboard (www.foreignassistance.gov). This website provides a visual presentation of and access to key foreign assistance budget and appropriation data for the State Department and USAID.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2010/12/153031.htm>

The African Miracle, *Foreign Policy, December 2010*

Even agriculture, in which Africa has long lagged, is poised for takeoff. The continent is home to 60 percent of the world's uncultivated arable land. So if farmers brought more of it into use, raised the yields on key crops to 80 percent of the world average, and shifted cultivation to higher-value crops, the continent's farmers could increase the value of their annual agricultural output from \$280 billion today to around \$500 billion by 2020.

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/11/29/the_african_miracle?page=full

Climate Change Deal Agreed at Cancun, *Financial Times, December 11*

The world's governments reached agreement on modest steps to combat climate change and to give more money to poor countries, but put off until next year tough decisions on cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

<http://link.ft.com/r/S4XZQQ/5CNF9E/50A05/26jQA6/EWUCP5/E4/h?a1=2010&a2=12&a3=13>

SEE ALSO: US Says Financing Core Part of Cancun Climate Deal, *Reuters*, December 14

Despite tough economic times, rich countries must make good on short-term pledges of billions of dollars in financing to help developing countries tackle global warming, the U.S. climate envoy said. The climate deal forged among more than 190 countries at the annual U.N. talks in Mexico's Cancun beach resort on Saturday included agreements on measuring emissions, technology transfer and \$100 billion in financing for developing countries from 2020.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSN1429000420101214>

SEE ALSO: UN Climate Talks in Cancun Agree a Deal, *BBC*, December 11

UN talks in Cancun have reached a deal to curb climate change, including a fund to help developing countries.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-11975470>

SEE ALSO: Cancun Ends with Modest Climate Deal, *Politico*, December 11

<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1210/46269.html>

SEE ALSO: Climate Talks End with Modest Deal on Emissions, *New York Times*, December 11

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/12/science/earth/12climate.html?_r=1

SEE ALSO: Back from the Brink, *Economist*, December 16

http://www.economist.com/node/17730564?story_id=17730564&CFID=156986120&CFTOKEN=66508363

SEE ALSO: Small Steps on Global Warming, *Editorial*, *New York Times*, December 16

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/17/opinion/17fri3.html>

The Passing of Farmer Holbrook, *Op-Ed*, Douglas A. Wissing, *Huffington Post*, December 15

The death of Richard C. Holbrooke, the special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, has left a giant vacuum in Afghanistan policy circles -- particularly in regards to the agricultural development policy that Holbrooke championed as an essential counterinsurgency tool. He often termed agriculture "our number-one 'non-security' priority in Afghanistan" -- going on to say non-security was in quotes because agriculture and security are inextricably related in Afghanistan, where 80 percent of the population depends on agriculture for their livelihoods. Holbrooke was such a fervent proponent of interagency, civilian-military agricultural development in Afghanistan that Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton called the Manhattan-born diplomat "Farmer Holbrooke." Now officials in Washington and Kabul are unsure about the direction of U.S. agricultural policy in Afghanistan.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/douglas-a-wissing/the-passing-of-farmer-hol_b_797458.html

The Fight to Stem Africa's Rural Exodus, *CNN*, December 10

Estherine Lisinge-Fotabong, from the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the organization behind Rural Futures, said: "The growth and development in African countries has not benefited the rural world. "In the long term, agriculture should form the backbone of the continent, but to do that it needs to be transformed." One of its key goals will be to create jobs in the countryside by encouraging rural industries and agribusiness, said Lisinge-Fotabong. "Rural exodus in Africa is compounded by the development gap between the city and the rural areas, lack of basic rural amenities like water and electricity and lack of opportunities for young people," she said.

<http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/africa/12/10/africa.rural.exodus/?hpt=C2>

Bowling Against Hunger, Roger Thurow, Senior Fellow on Global Agriculture and Food Policy, *The Chicago Council on Global Affairs*, *Global Food for Thought Blog*, December 17

Raising the clamor on hunger through football; now that's something to cheer about. Cutting through the gluttony of the holidays to shout: Remember those who struggle to put food on the table for their family! "We have one goal: raise awareness and resources to give as many as 20 million meals to Feeding America," says Stephen Chriss, Kraft's senior director of corporate scale and marketing partnerships.

<http://globalfoodforthought.typepad.com/global-food-for-thought/2010/12/roger-thurow-outrage-and-inspire-bowling-against-hunger.html>

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs' Girls in Rural Economies Project Announces New Funding & its Advisory Group, *The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, December 2010*

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs today announces the addition of two funders – the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the United Nations Foundation – for its *Girls in Rural Economies* project, which received initial funding by the Nike Foundation as part of the *Girls Count* series. Additionally, the Council announces the formation of a high level advisory group for the project. The advisory group is comprised of government, business, and civic leaders - international experts in the fields of gender, development, agriculture, entrepreneurship and informal employment, and health. They will oversee this initiative, launched by The Chicago Council in July 2010, which examines the role of adolescent girls in rural economies in the developing world, with a particular focus on rural girls' participation in the agriculture and food sectors.
http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/taskforce_details.php?taskforce_id=16

RELEVANT U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Omnibus Bill, *Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.S. Secretary of State, U.S. Department of State, December 16*

I urge the Congress to approve an omnibus appropriation bill to fund the critical national security programs associated with the missions of the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development. The omnibus provides critical funding to achieve our key national security objectives in Afghanistan and Pakistan; provides sufficient funding for the transition in Iraq; funds vital development programs including global health, food security, and climate change; and gives us the necessary resources to respond to humanitarian emergencies. The full year Continuing Resolution proposed in the House would sharply cut our funding and severely weaken the Department and USAID's ability to execute our critical civilian missions, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq.

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/12/153046.htm>

Lucas Welcomes New Republicans on Agriculture Committee, *House Committee on Agricultural Republicans, December 16*

House Agriculture Committee Chairman-elect Frank Lucas of Oklahoma issued the following statement congratulating the new Republican members of the House Agriculture Committee for the 112th Congress.

<http://republicans.agriculture.house.gov/pr101216.shtml>

Vilsack Mulling Limits on Biotech Crop, *Des Moines Register, December 16*

The Obama administration is considering geographic limits on where biotech alfalfa can be grown, a restriction that would represent a shift in the government's policy toward genetically engineered crops.

<http://blogs.desmoinesregister.com/dmr/index.php/2010/12/16/vilsack-mulling-limits-on-biotech-crop/>

SEE ALSO: Amid Court Pressure, USDA Eyes GMO Alfalfa Compromise, *Reuters, December 16*

<http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6BF67V20101216>

SEE ALSO: U.S. Weighs Curbs on Biocrops, *Wall Street Journal, December 17*

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703395204576023902499144520.html>

US Delays Vote on Commodity Trade, *Financial Times, December 16*

US federal regulators unexpectedly postponed a long-awaited vote to introduce sweeping limits on commodity speculation amid internal discord about the timing of the rules.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/afb75c58-0930-11e0-ada6-00144feabdc0.html>

Senate Bill Would Stop Biomass Crop Subsidy, *Reuters, December 15*

A mammoth government funding bill awaiting a Senate vote would cut off funding for a program that pays farmers to experiment with biomass crops. Spending on the Biomass Crop Assistance Program, or BCAP, would be halted less than two months after the Obama administration unveiled rules for it. The Agriculture Department, which runs BCAP, urged senators on Wednesday "to make the corrections necessary so there are resources to continue building a sustainable biofuels industry."

<http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6BF03320101216>

Advancing Global Health Partnerships at European Development Days, *DipNote, U.S. Department of State Official Blog, December 13*

I recently attended the "European Development Days" meeting in Brussels, where I had the opportunity to meet with donor and country partners to discuss our shared health and development goals. Overall, I was encouraged by the desire for partnership and collaboration expressed by representatives of both multilateral and bilateral programs. I spoke on a panel entitled, "Creating a Global Health Policy Worthy of the Name." I presented on President Obama's Global Health Initiative and its role in helping to maximize the impact of our health investments, in conjunction with countries and other partners.

http://blogs.state.gov/index.php/site/entry/health_european_development_days

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence, *Eric Schwartz,*

Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration, U.S. State Department, December 10

Over the next year, the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration plans to provide at least \$11 million of targeted funding to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV), promote access to reproductive health care in emergencies, and support literacy and livelihood trainings for refugee women and girls, as well as promote women's participation and capacity building worldwide. Many of our efforts are directed through our multilateral partners, such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), to ensure that the needs of women and girls are at the forefront of programming supported by other donors as well.

<http://www.state.gov/g/prm/rls/news/152721.htm>

Feds Will Target Unfair Agribusiness Practices, *Des Moines Register, December 9*

Attorney General Eric Holder says the Justice Department is cracking down on unfair practices in agribusiness, aided by information gathered at a series of public meetings.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/article/20101209/BUSINESS/12090335/1029/BUSINESS/Feds-will-target-unfair-agribusiness-practices>

Remarks at TEDWomen Conference, *Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.S. Secretary of State, U.S. Department of State, December 8*

"The subjugation of women is, therefore, a threat to the common security of our world and to the national security of our country. That is why across all of our work in the last 23 months or so, from our initiatives on food security and climate change and global health to our efforts on peace and security, we have made this a primary focus."

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/12/152670.htm>

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Launch of the UK Global Food and Farming Futures Foresight Project Report

Date: February 9th, 2011

Location: London

The report will look out to 2050 and take a global view of the food system; considering issues of demand, production and supply as well as broader environmental issues. Because of the report's global perspective, the work will draw heavily on the skills and perspectives of leading experts and stakeholders from around the world. As with all Foresight reports, the Foresight Global Food and Farming Futures report will seek to apply leading edge scientific and other evidence and futures analysis to identify critical issues and their consequences, and to identify and analyse possible policies and interventions for addressing those challenges. Please RSVP to James Birch on birchj@parliament.uk <<mailto:birchj@parliament.uk>>

Leveraging Agriculture for Improving Nutrition and Health

Date: February 10th – 12th, 2011

Location: New Delhi, India

Agriculture impacts poor people's nutrition and health, and people's nutrition and health in turn affects their productivity. As a supplier of food, a source of income, and an engine of growth, agriculture has the potential to significantly and sustainably improve poor people's nutrition and health. This conference will inform,

influence, and catalyze action to better use investments in agriculture to achieve nutrition security and good health for the world's poor people.

<http://www.ifpri.org/2020-agriculture-nutrition-health>

USDA's 2011 Agricultural Outlook Forum: Today's Strategies & Tomorrow's Opportunities

Date: February 24th – 25th, 2011

Location: Arlington, VA

Secretary Tom Vilsack will deliver the Forum's keynote address followed by a distinguished speaker. Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan will deliver the Forum's welcome. Chief Economist Joseph Glauber will discuss the Domestic and Foreign Agricultural Economic Outlooks. Plenary and session speakers will be announced in the near future. Twenty-five breakout sessions will focus on a broad range of topical issues related to risk management, foreign trade and domestic markets, rural communities, conservation and the environment, renewable energy, broadband, nutrition and food safety, dietary guidelines, land tenure issues, and sustainability. The Forum also will feature traditional commodity and supply and demand outlook sessions.

<http://www.usda.gov/oce/forum/>

Getting Down to Business: Building Partnerships to Expand African Agricultural Development

Date: March 1st-2nd, 2011

Location: Washington, DC

The Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa is pleased to announce the third annual US-Africa Forum.

<http://www.partnership-africa.org/content/getting-down-business-building-partnerships-expand-african-agricultural-development>

Second World Conference of Humanitarian Studies

Date: June 2nd – June 5th, 2011

Location: Tufts University, Medford, MA

Humanitarian crises and the responses they trigger are evolving rapidly. This conference looks at the opportunities and threats for addressing these crises, as well as at the strengths and weaknesses of the actual responses. The conference provides a unique forum for both scholars and practitioners to present research and debate these issues. In particular, the conference focuses on four broad themes: emerging from protracted crises; new directions in policy; innovations in humanitarian practice; and advances in public health and food security in crises.

<http://www.humanitarianstudies2011.org/>

Leland Hunger Fellows Program – Now Accepting Applications

The Leland International Hunger Fellows Program is now accepting applications for the 6th class (2011-2013). Information on the fellowship and how to apply is accessible here:

<http://www.hungercenter.org/international/international.cfm>. Applications can be submitted online from now through January 7, 2011 at: <http://www.hungercenter.org/international/apply/>.

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

Reports:

The Value of Crop Protection, An Assessment of the Full Benefits for the Food Chain and Living Standards, *Crop Protection Association, November 2010*

Food is the most basic of all necessities and it is impossible to think of a modern developed economy that cannot supply its population with a wide choice of high quality food at affordable prices. This report estimates that without plant protection products, food security in the UK, and by implication in the EU and in most countries across the world, would be severely reduced and the cost of food would rise substantially.

<http://www.cropprotectionassociation.com/DocFrame/DocView.asp?id=1248&sec=-1>

Agriculture Development and Nutrition Security Special Feature: Supermarket Revolution in Asia and Emerging Development Strategies to Include Small Farmers, *Proceedings of the National Academy of the Sciences of the United States of America*, December 2010

A "supermarket revolution" has occurred in developing countries in the past 2 decades. We focus on three specific issues that reflect the impact of this revolution, particularly in Asia: continuity in transformation, innovation in transformation, and unique development strategies. First, the record shows that the rapid growth observed in the early 2000s in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand has continued, and the "newcomers"-India and Vietnam-have grown even faster. Second, Asia's supermarket revolution has exhibited unique pathways of retail diffusion and procurement system change. Third, several approaches are being tried to link small farmers to supermarkets.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21135250>

Food as the Basis for Development and Security, a Strategy for Yemen, *International Food Policy Research Institute*, 2010

Yemen has been facing severe development challenges in recent years, but rapidly depleting oil and water resources combined with large population increases and a lack of job-creating growth are making a difficult situation even more complicated. In order to provide opportunities for Yemenis to escape the current situation of widespread poverty and food insecurity, the Government of the Republic of Yemen, under the leadership of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, has developed a strategy to help all Yemeni people gain access to sufficient and nutritious foods in order to live active, productive, and healthy lives. The main objectives of the National Food Security Strategy, developed with the support of the International Food Policy Research Institute, are to (1) cut food insecurity by one-third by 2015, (2) reach moderate food security levels—meaning 90 percent of people have enough to eat year-round—by 2020, and (3) reduce child malnutrition by at least one percentage point per year.

<http://www.ifpri.org/publication/food-basis-development-and-security>

Media Articles:

War on Crop Disease Yields a Better Diet, *Financial Times*, December 16

The first sign of an attack is a yellow pattern spreading across the leaves of cassava plants, the region's staple crop. Starved of nutrients, the roots below, which would otherwise be pounded into a stodgy ball that forms the basis of almost every meal, do not grow. Each lost crop worsens a food crisis in a country where, according to UN figures, 69 per cent go hungry, the world's highest figure.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/8b4534bc-0872-11e0-80d9-00144feabdc0.html>

New Farming First Interviews at COP-16 in Cancun, *Farming First*, December 16

At COP-16 in Cancun, Farming First spoke with two experts about the links between agriculture and food security. Bruce Campbell, Director of the newly approved 10-year CGIAR research programme on climate change, agriculture and food security (CCAFS), discusses the challenges and opportunities of coordinating the efforts of various agricultural research centres around the world to support food security and climate mitigation and adaptation efforts. Sam Bickersteth, Senior Climate Change and Agriculture Advisor at DFID, discusses agriculture's link to food security, poverty alleviation and climate mitigation efforts.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/?shva=1#inbox/12cefbaf6670db7b>

Indian Farmers Turn to New Crops as Climate Gets Drier, *New York Times*, December 16

Recently, I have had several conversations with farmers in this area. They confirm a shift in farming patterns. Partly, this development is underpinned by a familiar tale of agricultural decline. Many traditional crops are labor or water intensive, drawing on two commodities in increasingly short supply. Farmers around Elvalapakkam can no longer afford to grow what their ancestors did. But the shift is also an indication of hope — however incipient — for agriculture in this part of South India. It is a sign that farmers are trying to adjust, coming up with new crops and strategies to accommodate what has in many respects been a painful decade.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/17/world/asia/17iht-letter17.html>

ACDI/VOCA Team Launches Support for Food Security Activities Website, *PR Newswire, December 16*

The ACDI/VOCA Support for Food Security Activities (SFSA) team, a consortium of nine food security and agricultural development organizations, announced the launch of its website, www.sfsa.com, a resource for USAID missions working to reduce hunger and poverty in eastern and southern Africa. The website (www.sfsa.com) offers a range of information and resources on the SFSA Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC), a five-year USAID mechanism to fund bilateral and regional agricultural development and food security programs in countries of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and Tanzania. <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/acdivoca-team-launches-support-for-food-security-activities-website-111995289.html>

EU Reduces Fishing Quotas to Save Cod, *UPI, December 15*

The European Union decided on deep cuts to fishing quotas to protect overfished species such as cod. http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2010/12/15/EU-reduces-fishing-quotas-to-save-cod/UPI-21201292435495/

Africa Has Ability to Be Self-Sufficient in Food, *AllAfrica, December 14*

Food security has emerged as the major challenge for African governments over the last three decades. The continent has been facing challenges of low agricultural productivity, lack of technology and scarcity of land for agricultural production due to high demand propelled by the increase in population. At the same time, climate change has posed a threat to the region's agriculture as farmers rely more on climate and environment for farming. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201012140015.html>

Scientists Report Progress on Livestock Disease, *Des Moines Register, December 14*

Government scientists say they've pinpointed how the virus that causes foot-and-mouth disease infects cattle, a finding that could lead to the development of more effective vaccines. <http://blogs.desmoinesregister.com/dmr/index.php/2010/12/14/scientists-report-progress-on-livestock-disease/>

Africa Crucial to Meeting World Food Needs, WFP's Sheeran Says, *Bloomberg, December 13*

Global food demand will outpace supplies by 2050 without substantial gains in crop production by African farmers, said Josette Sheeran, the executive director of the World Food Program. "The world will not be able to feed itself by the year 2050 without the African farmer," Sheeran said in an interview in Washington. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-12-13/africa-crucial-to-meeting-world-food-needs-wfp-s-sheeran-says.html>

Putting Urban Gardens on the Map, *IRIN, December 13*

Mame Penda Diouf talks over car horns and city bus engines as she shows off potted lettuce, mint and potato plants at a traffic circle in the Senegal capital, Dakar. A trader and horticulture trainer, she says micro-gardening creates jobs and allows people to better feed their families. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and many other international and local institutions are pushing just that message – that micro-gardening and other forms of urban horticulture can go a long way to boosting city dwellers' food security and improving living conditions. <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportID=91361>

Insured Loans Help Small Farmers Reduce Hunger, Climate Risks, *AlertNet, December 10*

The world's half-billion poor farmers, already struggling to get by, are facing growing pressure from droughts, flooding and other climate change impacts just as global demand for food is rising. How can the pressures on them be eased? Entrepreneur Steve Coffey thinks he has the answer: farm loans, backed by insurance. Small farmers typically lack money to buy good-quality seed, fertiliser and other things they need to boost crop production, he said, trapping them in a cycle of low subsistence production. Even that is increasingly threatened as extreme weather hits more often. <http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/insured-loans-help-small-farmers-reduce-hunger-climate-risks/>

Storing Up the Future, *Financial Times*, December 10

If someone were to design a poverty trap from scratch, it would probably resemble the one that snares the farmers of southern Niger. Yet the pattern can be broken with a transaction used by farmers as far back as ancient Rome. A warehouse and a loan are all that are required.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/164c3dec-0316-11e0-80eb-00144feabdc0.html#axzz180RhL7oM>

Altoona Military Man Helps to Educate Afghan Farmers, *Des Moines Register*, December 10

The Dirt Warriors, known formally as the 734th Agribusiness Development Team, is a group of 60 Iowa Air and Army National Guard members currently stationed in Kunar Province, Afghanistan, with one half protecting the other half that's teaching farmers there how to survive. Col. Greg Hapgood, public affairs officer for the Iowa National Guard, said the group has been teaching Afghan farmers modern farming techniques, improved veterinary practices and how to enhance their livestock and poultry markets.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/article/20101210/ALTOONA01/101210006/-1/ENT05/Altoona-military-man-helps-to-educate-Afghan-farmers>

China Agricultural Growth May Not Be Sustainable, Cabinet Official Says, *Bloomberg*, December 8

China's grain production capability may not be sustainable even as output increased for seven years, an agricultural official at the State Council said.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-12-09/china-agricultural-growth-may-not-be-sustainable-cabinet-official-says.html>

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

Media Articles:

World Bank Wins 18% Funding Boost for Poorest Nations, *Washington Post*, December 15

Officials meeting in Brussels this week agreed to contribute nearly \$50 billion over the next three years to the World Bank fund dedicated to the globe's poorest countries. The 18 percent boost marked the arrival of some previous aid recipients as donors. World Bank President Robert Zoellick said he could not provide details on individual donors until the World Bank board approves the funding package early next year.

<http://voices.washingtonpost.com/political-economy/2010/12/world-bank-wins-funding-boost.html>

SEE ALSO: World Bank Raises Record \$49.3 Billion in Donor Funds for Poorest Nations,

Bloomberg, December 15

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-12-15/world-bank-raises-record-49-3-billion-in-donor-funds-for-poorest-nations.html>

Water: Effort to Woo Neighbors on the Nile, *Financial Times*, December 15

After years of neglecting their southern neighbours, Egyptian officials have appeared in recent months to have suddenly rediscovered east Africa. Cairo has been on a diplomatic offensive in the region, bringing aid and investment to countries that had long been an afterthought in its foreign policy. The reason behind this renewed interest is that Egypt is worried about preserving its share of the Nile waters, as upstream countries attempt to redraft the rules that have governed river usage since colonial days.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/377230fe-0739-11e0-94f1-00144feabdc0.html#axzz180GvgvHW>

Socialism, Capitalism, and the Radia Tapes, *Wall Street Journal*, December 13

Where India settles in the spectrum that arcs from socialism to capitalism is for Indian voters to decide. But the danger now is that because of corruptions, voters are getting the worst of both systems, and the benefits of neither. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and other such heavy-handed, government-subsidized programs already have established that this is a government that likes to throw money at the poor, even if that money doesn't necessarily lead to improvements in productivity. The Food Security Bill fits with that ethos by proposing to expand food subsidies to the poor masses, with the agriculture department pushing for cash handouts in the event that there isn't sufficient grain in state coffers for the poor to access.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/indiarealtime/2010/12/13/socialism-capitalism-and-the-radia-tapes/>

UN Says Korea Aid Scheme on Verge of Failing, *Financial Times*, December 13

A UN aid programme that is supposed to provide food supplements to 2 million children and pregnant women in North Korea is reaching less than half the target population.

<http://link.ft.com/r/S4XZQQ/5CNF9E/50A05/26JQA6/NSOW6Y/E4/h?a1=2010&a2=12&a3=13>

China Has a Long Record of Helping Africa, *Guardian*, December 11

WikiLeaks cables have added to the western perception of China's self-interested presence in Africa. Is there any basis to these kinds of accusation? Not at all, in China's view.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/dec/11/china-long-record-helping-africa>

SEE ALSO: Leaked Cables: How the US Views China's Engagement in Africa, *Devex*, December 10

The U.S. is closely monitoring China's rising influence and engagement in Africa, according to U.S. diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks, a nonprofit media organization that specializes in leaking classified government information. The U.S. believes the emerging Asian donor is in Africa primarily for its own interest, one of the leaked cables said.

http://www.devex.com/en/blogs/49/blogs_entries/71626?source=MostPopularNews_5

Hunger and Anger in Afghanistan, *Op-Ed*, Kathy Kelly, *Co-Coordinator of Voices for Creative Nonviolence*, *Huffington Post*, December 11

In Afghanistan, a nation where 850 children die every day, about a quarter of the population goes hungry. The UN says that 7.4 million Afghans live with hunger and fear of starvation, while millions more rely on food help, and one in five children die before the age of five.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kathy-kelly/hunger-and-anger-in-afgha_b_795421.html

Enhancing Food Security in Central America, *FAO*, December 10

An FAO regional agricultural project funded by the Government of Italy will enable El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua to achieve higher food security levels through improvements in the commercialization of farm products.

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/48408/icode/>

Under Water, *Economist*, December 9

The very future of microcredit in India is in danger, which is a shame for the country's poor. Microcredit—small loans to the poor, ideally to start a tiny business—has until recently been seen as one of best hopes for the three-quarters of Indians who still live on less than \$2 a day.

http://www.economist.com/node/17675848?story_id=17675848

SEE ALSO: Microcredit is Not the Enemy, *Financial Times*, December 13

In the name of protecting India's poor, the state government of Andhra Pradesh has caused deep turmoil in microfinance. A new law clearly signals that borrowers need not repay their small-scale loans. Not surprisingly this has led to large-scale default, throwing the industry in India into a crisis it may not survive. This is having repercussions for microfinance worldwide. As a result, the sense is growing that microfinance itself is a flawed idea. Some have even drawn parallels between this crisis and the sub-prime disaster. But this is badly misguided. Microfinance institutions are highly focused on avoiding default. The historic default rates in India have been close to zero, reflecting trust built over many years.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/53e4724c-06f3-11e0-8c29>

[00144feabdc0.html?ftcamp=crm/email/20101214/nbe/AsiaPacificBusiness/product#axzz18CFtk1e](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/53e4724c-06f3-11e0-8c29/00144feabdc0.html?ftcamp=crm/email/20101214/nbe/AsiaPacificBusiness/product#axzz18CFtk1e)

SEE ALSO: India Rocked by Microfinance Crisis, *NPR*, December 10

India's nearly four billion dollar microfinance industry is facing collapse after politicians in one of the country's largest states called on borrowers to stop paying back their loans. More than five million Indians heeded the call and the crisis is threatening to spread nationally. Host Michel Martin speaks with Senior Fellow David Roodman of the Center for Global Development and Vijay Mahajan, President of the Microfinance Institutions Network about crisis.

<http://www.npr.org/2010/12/09/131935206/India-Rocked-By-Microfinance-Crisis>

ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

Media Articles:

Drought Hits Middle East Farmers, Again, *IPS, December 14*

Anxious farmers gather in their field on a warm, clear day in Syria's arid northern region of Al-Raqqa, near the banks of the Euphrates River. The ground in this corner of the 'fertile crescent' is barren, save for a small herd of sheep on the ten-hectare farm.

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=53853>

What Happened (and Why): An Assessment of the Cancun Agreements, *Robert Stavins, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University, December 13*

Fourth, the Agreements advance initiatives on tropical forest protection (or, in UN parlance, Reduced Deforestation and Forest Degradation, or REDD+), by taking the next steps toward establishing a program in which the wealthy countries can help prevent deforestation in poor countries, possibly working through market mechanisms (despite exhortations from Bolivia and other leftist and left-leaning countries to keep the reach of "global capitalism" out of the policy mix).

<http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/analysis/stavins/?p=876>

SEE ALSO: Forests of the Will, *Economist, December 10*

Getting a REDD deal in Cancun should help the fight against deforestation in many places, as long as the deal is sensibly and sensitively fleshed out over the coming months and years. Some areas are as yet vague, and others, including perhaps the details of how things should be financed, may be vaged up yet further in order to get through the conference's final plenary session. This is probably to the good; easier to get the details right, including important ones on the vexed question of how to stop demand for wood from simply being displaced from protected places to unprotected ones, away from the pressure of deadlined negotiations.

http://www.economist.com/blogs/newsbook/2010/12/correspondents_diary_0&fsrc=nwl

Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change, *US News and World Report, December 13*

The Global Crop Diversity Trust announced a major global search to systematically find, gather, catalogue, use, and save the wild relatives of wheat, rice, beans, potato, barley, lentils, chickpea, and other essential food crops, in order to help protect global food supplies against the imminent threat of climate change, and strengthen future food security. These wild plants contain essential traits that could be bred into crops to make them more hardy and versatile in the face of dramatically different climates expected in the coming years.

<http://www.usnews.com/science/articles/2010/12/13/adapting-agriculture-to-climate-change.html>

Heavy Rain Damages Up to 50% of Wheat Crops in Australia's Victoria State, *Bloomberg, December 13*

Rains may have cut as much as half of the wheat crop to feed-quality in Victoria, Australia's third-largest producing state, an agricultural department manager said today.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-12-13/heavy-rain-damages-up-to-50-of-wheat-crops-in-australia-s-victoria-state.html>

The 20-year Experiment, *Economist, December 13*

It turns out that if the watershed around the canal is well forested, this evens out the water supply throughout the year. Cut the trees down, and there the variability in the water supply rises. And the canal needs reliability, not variability. That is why the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama and the HSBC Climate Partnership are working on a 20-year study to understand the water-storage services provided by the surrounding forests, and 140,000 tree seedlings have been planted. It is important to understand how land-use decisions in this area affect the vital waterway—and how they may respond to climate change. The local chopping down of trees near the Panama canal could yet have global consequences.

http://www.economist.com/blogs/babbage/2010/12/panama_canal&fsrc=nwl

Land of Hope, *Time*, December 12

Africa's deserts, in short, are all kinds of dangerous. And climate change means the badlands are growing. The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization says that on the southern edge of the Sahara, an area the size of Somalia has become desert in the past 50 years. The U.N. Environment Programme (UNEP) says 14 African countries currently experience water scarcity or stress, a number that will rise to 25 by 2025. In a May 2008 report, the U.N. Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) said 46% of Africa is threatened by land degradation. UNCCD executive secretary Luc Gnacadja concluded that desertification is "the greatest environmental challenge of our times."

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2034377-1,00.html>

The Hot New Sector in Greentech: Adaptation, *Reuters*, December 12

The modest agreement that came out of the Cancun climate talks this weekend points tells me one thing: It's time to start talking a lot more about adaptation to climate change. While most of the work of the greentech sector is focused on mitigation technologies that can reduce carbon emissions, from clean power to energy efficiency, given that this latest agreement will not prevent the rise of global temperatures within the range that scientists say is needed (though it made some progress on other key issues), perhaps it's time for those in the greentech industry to start betting that adaptation will one day be a hot market.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/idUS28178967320101213>

Water is the Greatest Gift in the Desert, *National*, December 11

In a 15-point declaration, put together by the UAE in its role as the host of this year's summit, a broad plan was outlined to deal with one of the GCC's most "significant challenges" - a sustainable water supply. So in effect, the declaration called for a strategy that would take into consideration the effects of climate change, the impact of agricultural practices on the Gulf's water resources, the region's strategic water reserves and the effects of desalination on marine life and climate change.

<http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/comment/water-is-the-greatest-gift-in-the-desert>

A Donor's View on Climate Solutions through Agriculture, *Farming First*, December 9

Sam Bickersteth, Senior Climate Change and Agriculture Advisor at DFID, discusses agriculture's link to food security, poverty alleviation and climate mitigation efforts. Interviewed live at the United Nations climate talks in Cancun, Bickersteth sees a central role for agriculture in addressing the impacts of climate change. Not only do farmers require additional support to adapt to changing weather conditions, but they also can adopt new technologies and practices to reduce agriculture's emissions while boosting food security.

<http://vimeo.com/17644731>

Refilling the Basin, *Economist*, December 9

AFTER a ten-year drought, farmers along the Murrumbidgee River now face ruin from a devastating flood. But it is the government that riles them as much as any caprice of nature. Last month officials called for a cut of nearly 40% in the volume of river water they take for irrigation. At a rowdy meeting in Narrandera, a river town, John Bonetti, a third-generation farmer, drew cheers from about 900 farmers when he told visiting bureaucrats and scientists, "If you think this is the end of the fight, I can assure you it's only the bloody start."

http://www.economist.com/node/17681858?story_id=17681858&CFID=151358026&CFTOKEN=51163890

WOMEN & GIRLS

Media Articles:

Heroic, Female and Muslim, *Op-Ed*, *Nicholas Kristof*, December 16

Dr. Hawa, a 63-year-old ob-gyn who earned a law degree on the side, is visiting the United States to raise money for her health work back home. A member of Somalia's elite, she founded a one-room clinic in 1983, but then the Somali government collapsed, famine struck, and aid groups fled. So today Dr. Hawa is running a 400-bed hospital. Dr. Hawa supplies these 90,000 people with drinking water and struggles to find ways to feed them. She worries that handouts breed dependency (and in any case, United Nations agencies can't

safely reach her now to distribute food), so she is training formerly nomadic herding families to farm and even to fish in the sea.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/16/opinion/16kristof.html?emc=eta1>

UN Forms Commission on Use of Resources for Women's and Children's Health, *UN News Centre*, December 16

The United Nations is establishing a high-level commission charged with developing an accountability framework that will link resources committed to women and children's health with the results they are intended to achieve. "Strengthening accountability is critical if we are to save the lives of more women and children," said UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, on the establishment of the Commission. "We must ensure that partners deliver on their promises but, in turn, it is crucial that they know whether investments are leading to sustainable progress."

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37096&Cr=women&Cr1=>

SEE ALSO: Harper to Track World's Child, Maternal Health Aid Pledges, *Globe and Mail*, December 16

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/harper-to-track-worlds-child-maternal-health-aid-pledges/article1841594/>

SEE ALSO: Press Release, UN Establishes High-Level Commission to Track Results and Resources for Women's and Children's Health, *United Nations*, December 16

http://www.everywomaneverychild.org/userfiles/file/Press_release_accountability_16_Dec_final.pdf

Over 100 Million Worldwide are Child Workers, *Voice of America*, December 15

The U.S. Department of Labor has added 12 nations, all but one of them in Africa, to the list of countries that use child or forced labor to produce goods and services for the international market. The department released three reports on child and forced labor Wednesday. "The single largest concentration from a sectorized point of view is agriculture. That is because, where are the poor households? They are mainly in agriculture," said Undersecretary Sandra Polaski.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/usa/Report-Over-100-Million-Worldwide-Are-Child-Workers-111970709.html>

Why We Need Quotas for Women MPs, *Guardian*, December 14

If poverty is to become history, then discrimination and gender inequality have to be tackled. Women are disproportionately affected by poverty and violence, and they make up most of the world's poor and the world's illiterate people. This is exactly the context in which any discussion on women's political engagement should take place. As we strive to meet development goals, we must understand that if women are excluded from full participation in the business of their country, then its progress will be arrested by the absence of the strengths and talents of half the population. That is why the fundamental focus has to be on equality and women's empowerment.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/poverty-matters/2010/dec/15/women-parliament-quotas-gender-development>

A New Decade for Women-Focused Philanthropy, *Huffington Post*, December 13

Women-focused philanthropy is more than just a trend; over the past several years, it has become one of the most important models for creating tangible results in communities throughout the developing world. What's more, giving circles -- such as Dining For Women's platform -- may in fact be one of the most sustainable giving methods, having been around for hundreds of years in the form of mutual aid societies, which today we might call "parties with a purpose."

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kristi-york-wooten/a-decade-for-women_b_793664.html

MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

Reports:

China: Intellectual Property Infringement, Indigenous Innovation Policies, and Frameworks for Measuring the Effects on the U.S. Economy, *U.S. International Trade Commission, November 2010*

This is the first of two reports requested by the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance (Committee) on the effects of IPR infringement and indigenous innovation policies in China on U.S. jobs and the U.S. economy. In this report, the U.S. International Trade Commission (Commission or USITC) was requested to describe the principal types of reported IPR infringement in China, describe Chinese indigenous innovation policies, and outline an analytic framework for determining the effects of both IPR infringement and indigenous innovation policies on the U.S.

<http://www.usitc.gov/publications/332/pub4199.pdf>

SEE ALSO: US Seeks to Raise Trade Pressure on China, *Financial Times, December 14*

The US this week raised the pressure on China to improve market access for foreign companies with the release of a highly critical report examining Beijing's policies. On the same day, the US won a critical ruling from a panel at the World Trade Organisation over its imposition of 35 per cent duties on Chinese tyre imports.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/29eb9be2-075b-11e0-8d80-00144feabdc0.html?ftcamp=rss&ftcamp=crm/email/20101214/nbe/USMorningHeadlines/product#axzz18CJS20zv>

Competitor Promotional Activities Profile, *USDA, November 2010*

China continues to attract interest from food exporters across the world, many with promotional support from their industries and governments. This report profiles the market development activities of 14 competitors, including Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, France, Italy, Japan, Korea (R.O.K), New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Spain, the island of Taiwan, and Thailand (the selection is based not on export value, but on each country's role as a competitor to the U.S.).

<http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Competitor%20Promotional%20Activities%20Profile%20Beijing%20ATO%20China%20-%20Peoples%20Republic%20of%2011-18-2010.pdf>

Media Articles:

EU Official Welcomes US Trade Policy Shift, *Financial Times, December 17*

A top European Union official praised what he described as a shift in US trade policy towards greater engagement, as he warned that a deal in the Doha round of multilateral trade negotiations should be struck in 2011 to avoid the risk of global trade talks collapsing entirely.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/8e82ed32-097a-11e0-8c68-00144feabdc0.html>

Food Prices May Kill the Boom, *Financial Times, December 17*

Chinese inflation surged last month to 5.1 per cent year-on-year, well above Beijing's informal target of 3 per cent. The rise has come largely on the back of surging food prices, such as vegetable oil. Crop prices, both in the Chinese local market and on the international markets, have continued climbing, increasing the possibility of further spikes in the inflation rate. The cost of vegetable oil, a staple in China's expanding new middle class, and corn, a crucial livestock feed, continue to rise rapidly.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/bd7ec610-09ca-11e0-8b29-00144feabdc0.html>

EU Defers Decision on Higher Sugar Export Quota Into Next Year, *Bloomberg, December 16*

The European Commission deferred a decision on whether to raise its sugar export quota to next year because of a "continuous tightness" in supplies, according to Lars Hoelgaard, deputy director-general of agriculture and rural development.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-12-16/eu-defers-decision-on-higher-sugar-export-quota-into-next-year.html>

Wen Brings Finance to Cement India Ties, *Financial Times*, December 15

China has launched a bold financial move to deepen economic engagement with neighbouring India in an attempt to strengthen the often fractious ties between the world's fastest-growing big economies.

http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/0913f5d6-0864-11e0-8527-00144feabdc0.dwp_uuid=a6dfcf08-9c79-11da-8762-0000779e2340.html#axzz18Gv7cssg

Rising Prices Just Make China Dearer, *Financial Times*, December 15

As long as China's leaders continue to resist a nominal appreciation of the renminbi, a higher domestic general inflation rate is an ineluctable – and largely desirable – result. Food price inflation is a nightmare haunting any government – and rulers as insecure as those in Beijing are the most easily rattled of all. The strong impact of food prices on general inflation serves as a useful reminder of what a poor country China still remains

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e4a6b238-0881-11e0-80d9-00144feabdc0.html#axzz180MyAh2I>

Reaction to U.N.'s Iraq Sanctions Decision, *Reuters*, December 15

The U.N. Security Council on Wednesday allowed Iraq to develop a civilian nuclear program and ended a controversial oil-for-food program. The Security Council also set June 30, 2011, as the end of Iraq's immunity from claims related to the period when Saddam Hussein was in power.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6BE5D620101215>

WTO'S Lamy Tells Negotiators to Push for Doha Deal, *Reuters*, December 14

Members of the World Trade Organization are showing new energy and determination to reach a global trade deal but must now abandon fixed positions to clinch the agreement, the head of the WTO said on Tuesday. WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy said it was no longer enough to have "answering machines" around the table as the WTO's 153 members respond to a call by leaders of the G20 and APEC to finish the Doha round trade talks next year.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE6BD0K320101214>

Developing Nations Agree Tariff Cut to Boost Trade, *Reuters*, December 14

Nearly a dozen developing countries led by Brazil and India will sign an accord this week to cut tariff barriers and boost trade among themselves, a senior Brazilian government official said on Monday.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE6BD00320101214>

Mother of Acreage Battles, *Financial Times*, December 13

Each spring, US farmers decide how much land they will devote to each of the major agricultural commodities. The process, which shapes crop prices for the season, is known as the acreage battle or – as Cargill traders joke – the fight for dirt. The farmers' choice matters beyond US borders. Because the country's farmers export half the world's corn and a third of the world's soyabeans, changes in acreage and, hence, in output have a huge impact on global agricultural commodities prices. Amid multi-year high prices, farmers face the mother of all battles for acres in 2011.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/b57e7cce-068e-11e0-86d6-00144feabdc0.html>

More Ways Than One to Buy into A Supercycle, *Financial Times*, December 12

Soft commodities such as wheat, coffee, cotton and cocoa have had a roller-coaster ride in recent years, as the threat of global food shortages loomed, then receded, only to rear its head again in the second half of 2010.

Unlike for most commodities, supply issues are a big driver for soft commodity prices, as changing weather systems or even political problems can have significant short-term impact on production and therefore price. Most recently, for example, the El Niño system has been replaced by its sister, La Niña, which has historically disrupted grain production with drier conditions in Latin America. Dry weather also in Russia and the US has led to worse-than-hoped-for harvests, exacerbating the problem.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/d7d4e1b6-03bc-11e0-8c3f-00144feabdc0.html>

Africa No Longer a Trouble Spot but a Trade Opportunity, *Op-Ed, Scott Featherston, International Finance Corporation, World Bank, Sydney Morning Herald, December 11*

We should then build relationships with the continent around key areas of common interest. Agriculture, for example, is a big component of many African economies. It could be dramatically boosted through freer trade. Australia should invite Africa's big agricultural exporters into the Cairns Group. We need to focus on areas of long-term developmental need and where Australia has particular expertise.

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/africa-no-longer-a-trouble-spot-but-a-trade-opportunity-20101210-18sqx.html>

New UN Project Aims to Boost Food Security in Four Central American Nations, *United Nations, December 10*

The United Nations announced a new regional project that will enable food producers in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua to boost food security by increasing production and getting produce to markets more rapidly.

<http://un-foodsecurity.org/node/965>

Grain Market Set to be Reshaped by China, *Wall Street Journal, December 10*

China could emerge in the next few years as the world's biggest importer of corn, which would reshape global grain markets, according to a new report by agribusiness lending giant Rabobank Group. The report by analysts at Rabobank, which is a lender and investment banker to many of the world's biggest food concerns, predicts China's demand for imported corn will soar to about 25 million metric tons annually, or roughly one billion bushels, by 2015, from this year's 1.3 million metric tons, or about 51 million bushels.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704720804576009790503679556.html>

AGRIBUSINESS

Reports:

In-Demand Research Reports on Agribusiness Markets in Various Countries, *Business Monitor International, December 2010*

Market Publishers Ltd informs that new in-demand market research reports by Business Monitor International (BMI) have been added to its catalogue.

<http://marketpublishers.com/lists/8808/news.html>

Media Articles:

Cold Weather Alert Pushes up Orange Juice, *Financial Times, December 13*

Orange juice prices hit a 3½-year high as traders braced themselves for a damaged crop in Florida after a warning of a hard freeze hitting the world's second-largest producer. Orange juice is a \$20bn industry with prices affecting farmers in Florida and Brazil, processors, trading houses and bottlers such as Coca-Cola and PepsiCo.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/9accd492-06ad-11e0-86d6-00144feabdc0.html>

Industrialized Agriculture Deserves a Better Reputation, *Op-Ed, David Meisinger, Executive Director, U.S. Pork Center of Excellence at Iowa State University, Des Moines Register, December 10*

Too often these days, I see references to "industrialized agriculture" like it is a negative and something to bring shame. For nearly a century, technological innovation in agriculture has led to improved production efficiency, lower consumer prices, higher product quality, and the release of labor to other sectors of the economy.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/article/20101210/OPINION01/12100329/-1/groupblogs/Guest-column-Industrialized-agriculture-deserves-a-better-reputation>

Pepsi's Russian Challenge, *Economist*, December 9

PEPSICO'S special relationship with Russia began in 1959. Half a century later, Mr Kendall, who later became Pepsi's chief executive, flew back to Moscow with Indra Nooyi, who has the job today, to receive Vladimir Putin's blessing for Pepsi's takeover of Wimm-Bill-Dann, Russia's biggest food company. Russia will now be Pepsi's second-biggest market, after America.

http://www.economist.com/node/17675968?story_id=17675968

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