



THE CHICAGO COUNCIL
ON GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Global Food For Thought

Global Agricultural Development Initiative
Weekly News Brief



December 28th – January 4th, 2013

Quote of the Week: *"The Administration, from President Obama to the State Department, the White House National Security Council, USAID and USDA, has put global food security front and center ... Africa contains a majority of the world's under-utilized agriculture land. Helping Africans bring the green revolution to Africa is important to the economic growth of Africa but it is also the key to global food security."* - Marshall Matz in "Talking Agriculture to Democrats", Agri-Pulse, December 31, 2012

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.
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KEY ARTICLES AND REPORTS

President Obama's Global Development Council, *The White House, December 2012*

President Barack Obama announced his intent to appoint the following individuals to key Administration posts: Mohamed A. El-Erian; Richard C. Blum; Sylvia Mathews Burwell; Esther Duflo; Sarah Beardsley Degnan Kambou; James M. Manyika; William K. Reilly; Steven Schwager; Smita Singh.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/12/21/president-obama-announces-more-key-administration-posts>

China Move, Crop Outlook Pressure Soybeans, *Wall Street Journal, January 3*

Soybean prices touched a six-week low, pressured by China's latest cancellation of a U.S. soybean purchase and by a favorable weather outlook for crops in South America. For the third time in two weeks, the U.S. government said China, the world's largest soybean importer, had canceled purchases. The U.S. Department

of Agriculture reported that China scratched orders totaling 315,000 metric tons.

<http://professional.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324374004578219900939196358.html>

SEE ALSO: Soybeans Slump to Six-Week Low on South America Outlook, *Bloomberg*, January 2

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-01-02/soybeans-tumble-as-crops-improve-in-south-america-corn-declines.html>

Data DRIP: 'Smart' Handpumps Send Signal That Water Has Run Out, *Guardian*, January 1

This is how their idea works: the team implant a mobile data transmitter into the handle of a water pump in a rural village. The transmitter monitors how much the handle moves, giving a rough estimation of the volume of water that is being pumped from the well. The device, which is powered by a long-life battery, sends periodic text messages to relay this information to research teams in Nairobi and Oxford.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/poverty-matters/2013/jan/01/data-drip-smart-handpumps-water>

Foresight Africa: Top Priorities for the Continent in 2013, *Brookings*, January 2013

Africa has changed, moving from economic stagnation to above 5 percent GDP growth on average. The continent is now home to some of the fastest growing economies in the world: Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique and Tanzania. The following briefs in the Foresight Africa collection are meant to create a dialogue on what matters in Africa for 2013, and it is our hope that this dialogue will continue through the year.

<http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports/2013/01/foresight-africa-2013>

Talking Agriculture to Democrats, *Opinion*, Marshall Matz, *Agri-Pulse*, December 31

Global food security is important to the President, urban Members of Congress and editorial writers. The Administration, from President Obama to the State Department, the White House National Security Council, USAID and USDA, has put global food security front and center. In addressing the Symposium on Global Food Security on May 18th, the President said, "As the wealthiest nation on Earth, I believe the United States has a moral obligation to lead the fight against hunger and malnutrition and partner with others...Food security is a moral imperative but it is also an economic imperative...We have a self interest in this."

<http://www.agri-pulse.com/talking-agriculture-to-Democrats-Matz-123112.asp>

Our Fading Footprint for Farming Food, *Wall Street Journal*, December 21

A paper published this week does just that, persuasively arguing that a centuries long trend is about to reverse: the use of land for farming. The authors write: "We are confident that we stand on the peak of cropland use, gazing at a wide expanse of land that will be spared for Nature."

<http://professional.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324907204578185491352529884.html>

SEE ALSO: Food And Farmland – Peaking?, *Financial Times*, December 21

A counter-intuitive study argued that the amount of land needed to grow crops worldwide is at its peak and will fall by a 10th in the next 50 years. The UN FAO, by contrast, believes the world might need 16 per cent more productive land.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/3/dcba2a6e-49bb-11e2-a7b1-00144feab49a.html>

SEE ALSO: Full Report: Peak Farmland and the Prospect for Land Sparing, *Rockefeller University*, December 2012

<http://phe.rockefeller.edu/docs/PDR.SUPP%20Final%20Paper.pdf>

Recent Patterns Of Crop Yield Growth And Stagnation, *Nature*, December 18

We examined the trends in crop yields for four key global crops: maize, rice, wheat and soybeans. Although yields continue to increase in many areas, we find that across 24–39% of maize-, rice-, wheat- and soybean-growing areas, yields either never improve, stagnate or collapse.

<http://www.nature.com/ncomms/journal/v3/n12/full/ncomms2296.html>

SEE ALSO: Global Crop Production Shows Some Signs Of Stagnating, *Post*, December 24

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2012/12/24/is-production-of-key-global-crops-stagnating/>

SEE ALSO: Study Maps Areas of Stagnating Crop Yields, *VOA News*, December 20

<http://www.voanews.com/content/study-maps-areas-of-stagnating-crop-yields/1568479.html>

Prospects for the Russian Chairmanship of the G20, *Council of Council, December 2012*

On December 1, 2012, Russia assumed the rotating chair of the G20, the premier forum for global economic coordination. The eleven CoC contributions included here provide diverse opinions and perspectives regarding the G20's recent performance, its current challenges, and its potential future directions.

www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/CoC-Moscow-Memos-Web.pdf

At Datajam, Innovators and Entrepreneurs Unleash Open Data for Global Development, *Opinion, Rajiv Shah and Todd Park, Impact Blog, January 3*

When you apply your vision and expertise to this task—when you add to the growing stores of data for use in new and creative ways—you are helping an infant take its first easy breath and live to celebrate her fifth birthday. You are helping farmers grow more nutritious foods, fostering healthy families and prosperous communities. You are helping end the enduring outrage of human trafficking. This is the power of open data.

<http://blog.usaid.gov/2013/01/at-datajam-innovators-and-entrepreneurs-unleash-open-data-for-global-development/>

Emerging Voices: Amanda Richardson on Land Rights for Women, *Landesa, January 3*

The fact is that women make up only a fraction of the agricultural landholders in most developing regions. In fact, the number is often less than 5 percent and generally less than 20 percent. This means the overwhelming majority of women farmers in the developing world don't have secure rights to the land they till. However, secure land rights mean more than just access to credit. When women have secure rights to the land they use, they have incentives to make the land more productive with, for instance, better seeds and fertilizer.

<http://blogs.cfr.org/development-channel/2013/01/03/emerging-voices-amanda-richardson-on-land-rights-for-women/>

VIDEO: A New Kind of Development, *USAID, December 2012*

In 2011, USAID, JP Morgan, and the Gates, Gatsby, and Rockefeller Foundations announced a first-of-its-kind effort to invest \$25 million in the African Agricultural Capital Fund, which delivers much needed growth capital to boost the productivity and profitability of Africa's undercapitalized agriculture sector.

<http://youtu.be/U5iEtbTp010>

A Hunger of the Soul, *Opinion, Roger Thurow, Guideposts, December 2012*

Let me tell you about an African woman named Leonida Wanyama. For Christmas dinner her family had boiled bananas. That's all there was. In the hills of western Kenya, Christmas comes during the dry season when fall harvests are often already depleted. Farm families live on tiny portions of corn, tea, bananas, sweet potatoes, beans and a few vegetables. Babies cry with hunger. Children's eyes dull with exhaustion. It happens every year. Here, as in so many parts of Africa, farmers, the women and men who grow the food, go hungry.

<http://www.guideposts.org/inspiration/inspirational-stories/hunger-of-the-soul>

RELEVANT U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Lucas Announces GOP Roster for Agriculture Committee, *House Agriculture Committee, January 4*

Chairman Frank Lucas announced the complete list of Republican members who will serve on the House Agriculture Committee in the 113th Congress. Republican members are listed below.

<http://agriculture.house.gov/press-release/lucas-announces-gop-roster-agriculture-committee>

Peterson Announces Ag Committee Democrats, *House Agriculture Committee, January 4*

U.S. House Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Collin C. Peterson, D-Minn., today announced 19 of the 21 Democrats appointed to the Committee for the 113th Congress.

<http://democrats.agriculture.house.gov/press/PRArticle.aspx?NewsID=1151>

Royce Welcomes New Members to Foreign Affairs Committee, *House Committee on Foreign Affairs, January 3*

Rep. Ed Royce, incoming Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, announced the new Republican

Members who are expected to serve on the House Foreign Affairs Committee in the 113th Congress.
<http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/news/story/?2670>

Cochran Selected As Senate Agriculture Committee Ranking Member, *AgriPulse*, January 3

Sen. Thad Cochran, R-Miss., asserted his seniority today and was selected to take over as ranking GOP member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry. Cochran previously served as committee chairman from 2003 to 2005.

<http://www.agri-pulse.com/Cochran-selected-as-Senate-Agriculture-Committee-ranking-member-01032013.asp>

Chairman Rogers Announces Subcommittee Chairs for the 113th Congress, *House Appropriations Committee*, December 31

House Appropriations Chairman Hal Rogers today announced that the Republican Steering Committee has approved the 12 Appropriations subcommittee Chairs for the 113th Congress.

<http://appropriations.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=315979>

Draft Environmental Assessment and Preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact Concerning a GE Atlantic Salmon, *Federal Register*, December 26

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-12-26/pdf/2012-31118.pdf>

SEE ALSO: FDA Closer To Approving Biotech Salmon, Critics Furious, *Reuters*, December 21

The FDA affirmed earlier findings that the biotech salmon was not likely to be harmful.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/21/us-usa-fish-gmo-idUSBRE8BK16020121221>

FDA Releases Long-Awaited Food Safety Rules, *Agri-Pulse*, January 4

The first rule, which will primarily affect farmers, proposes a number of safety standards for the production of fruits and vegetables. The second rule will require food producers to “develop a formal plan for preventing their food products from causing foodborne illnesses,” according to an FDA press release.

<http://www.agri-pulse.com/FDA-releases-long-awaited-food-safety-rules-asp>

SEE ALSO: F.D.A. Offers Sweeping Rules to Fight Food Contamination, *New York Times*, January 4

Changes include requirements for better record keeping, contingency plans for handling outbreaks and measures that would prevent the spread of contaminants in the first place.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/05/business/fda-offers-rules-to-stop-food-contamination.html>

SEE ALSO: Current Good Manufacturing Practice and Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food, *Federal Register*, January 4

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/public-inspection.federalregister.gov/2013-00125.pdf>

House Approves Foreign Aid, Veterans Bills, *The Hill*, December 30

In a 390-0 vote, the House passed H.R. 3159, the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act. The bill requires the government to set goals for foreign aid, and comes amid growing questions about whether U.S. foreign aid is advancing U.S. interests.

<http://thehill.com/blogs/floor-action/house/274925-house-approves-foreign-aid-veterans-bills>

SEE ALSO: FULL TEXT: H.R. 3159: Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act of 2012

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/112/hr3159/text>

UPCOMING EVENTS

World Soybean Research Conference 2013

Date: February 17-22, 2013

Location: Durban, South Africa.

<http://www.wsrc2013.co.za/>

USDA 2013 Agriculture Outlook Forum: Managing Risk in the 21st Century

Date: February 21-22, 2013

Location: Arlington, VA

www.usda.gov/oce/forum/

Commodity Classic

Date: February 28-March 2, 2013

Location: Kissimmee, Florida.

<http://www.commodityclassic.com/>

President Obama's Africa Policy: Just Right Or Not Enough?

Date: February 28, 2013

Location: Chicago, IL

<http://bit.ly/ZlKTFD>

Political Economy of Agricultural Policy in Africa

Date: March 13, 2013

Location: Washington, D.C.

<http://csis.org/event/sahel-deepening-crisis-and-its-humanitarian-consequences>

CropLife America National Policy Conference

Date: May 22, 2013

Location: Washington, D.C.

<http://www.croplifeamerica.org/National-Policy-Conference-2013>

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

Media Articles:

After Reprieve Last Year, Stink Bugs Could Mount A Comeback This Spring, *Washington Post*, January 4

The stink bugs, known to feed on over 300 varieties of host plants, resulted in about \$37 million in losses from damage to apple crops alone in 2010; crops of raspberries and blackberries were also ravaged, and many organic farmers saw significant damage to crops of tomatoes, peppers and beans, experts reported.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/after-reprieve-last-year-stink-bugs-could-mount-a-comeback-this-spring/2013/01/04/c46c0178-49f5-11e2-ad54-580638ede391_story.html

Food Vs. Fuel Debate: It's About Much More Than Corn, *Opinion, Jeremy Martin, Christian Science Monitor*, January 2

Our research suggests there is enough nonfood feedstock in this country to meet the total 36 billion gallon biofuel target if we are patient enough to allow the cellulosic industry to develop. To prevent the associated problems to our environment, economy, and climate, EPA should not increase mandates for food-based biofuels.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/Environment/Energy-Voices/2013/0102/Food-vs.-fuel-debate-It-s-about-much-more-than-corn>

James Hutton Institute Warns Potato Famine Fungus 'Still Dangerous', *BBC*, December 21

Phytophthora infestans is a fungus like organism that causes late blight in potatoes. It infects leaves, stems and tubers and can cause devastating crop losses.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-20819496>

SEE ALSO: Potato Late Blight Still A Threat To Global Food Security, *Ag Professional*, January 3

Through DNA-based forensic analysis, research leader David Cooke, Ph.D., and partners describe the emergence and spread of highly aggressive lineages of *Phytophthora infestans*, the pathogen that causes potato late blight, that have rapidly displaced other genotypes in Europe, making the plant disease more difficult to manage.

<http://www.agprofessional.com/news/Potato-late-blight-still-a-threat-to-global-food-security-185432272.html>

SEE ALSO: Genome Analyses of an Aggressive and Invasive Lineage of the Irish Potato Famine

Pathogen, *PLOS*, December 2012

<http://www.plospathogens.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.ppat.1002940>

Nigeria: BT Technology Can Assist Nigeria's Food Security - Solomon, *AllAfrica.com*, December 31

Prof. Bamidele Ogbe Solomon, Director General, Nigeria Biotechnology Development Agency, is a sad person in the sense that he is pained by the inability of the country to benefit from biotechnology in agriculture because of lack of enabling law. He revealed his pains and others on the issue of biotechnology in agriculture in Nigeria and why the country has been left behind by other countries on the continent.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201212310807.html?>

Worms Produce Another Kind of Gold for Growers, *New York Times*, December 31

New research suggests that the product whose manufacture he helped pioneer, a worm-created soil additive called vermicompost, offers an array of benefits for plants — helping them grow with more vigor, and making them more resistant to disease and insects, than those grown with other types of composts and fertilizers. Some experts and entrepreneurs hope earthworms can also help with another problem: the growing piles of animal waste from dairy farms and other agricultural operations.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/01/science/worms-produce-another-kind-of-gold-for-farmers.html>

Reaching Farmers Where it is Needed Most, *Opinion, Dustrin Andres, USAID Impact Blog*, December 24

Traditionally, farming associations or other organizations will employ extension agents to visit communities and train others – thus, “showing” farmers new techniques instead of simply “telling.” But there is a fundamental problem with this model: Too much ground to cover. Because more than 80 percent of the food produced in “developing” places is grown by smallholder farmers, extension services can be expensive, difficult to scale and to sustain. It is critical to address these issues with whatever tools are at our disposal.

<http://blog.usaid.gov/2012/12/video-of-the-week-reaching-farmers-where-it-is-needed-most/>

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

Media Articles:

Concern Grows At Lack Of Humanitarian Access In Central African Republic, *Guardian*, January 4

The UN secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon, and the security council have condemned the attacks and called on the rebels to halt hostilities. Aid agencies have pulled most of their staff out of the diamond-producing city of Bria, leaving just skeleton staff to deal with people who have fled the fighting.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/2013/jan/04/humanitarian-access-central-african-republic>

SEE ALSO: US Shuts Embassy In Central African Republic, *AP*, December 27

<http://news.yahoo.com/us-shuts-embassy-central-african-republic-023509212--politics.html>

SEE ALSO: A Look At Why Quick Intervention Happened In Central African Republic Rebellion But Not Mali's, *Washington Post*, January 4

The simple answer lies in the vastly different challenges faced by intervention forces. Northern Mali is home to al-Qaida-linked militants who are stocking weapons and possess stores of Russian-made arms from former Malian army bases as well as from the arsenal of toppled Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/a-look-at-why-quick-intervention-happened-in-central-african-republic-rebellion-but-not-malis/2013/01/04/e24dedc6-5663-11e2-89de-76c1c54b1418_story.html

Canada's Foreign Aid Is Getting Results, *Opinion, Julian Fantino, Minister of International Cooperation, Huffington Post*, January 3

CIDA is not in the business of subsidizing mining companies or any Canadian companies. Nor do we subsidize NGOs, for that matter. We are an outcomes driven agency. We use any and all legitimate vehicles available to us -- including the private sector -- to meet our stated objectives. The fact is, without economic growth people living in developing economies will not be able to rise out of poverty. Our government will continue to be

there when humanitarian crises strikes the world's most vulnerable.

http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/the-honourable-julian-fantino/cida-co-operation-private-sector_b_2398198.html

From Emergency Aid To Early Recovery In Northern Uganda, *IRIN, January 2*

Some 7,000 smallholders in the Acholi subregion of northern Uganda are involved in Purchase for Progress, a commercial cereal farming initiative of the UN World Food Programme. The project is in line with the donor-funded, government-administered Peace Recovery Development Plan, currently in its second phase.

Programmes like P4P are welcome in a region that is now peaceful but remains extremely poor.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/97165/Analysis-From-emergency-aid-to-early-recovery-in-northern-Uganda>

Haiti's Long Road, *Editorial, New York Times, January 1*

A recently announced 10-year and \$2.2 billion effort to rid Haiti and the Dominican Republic of cholera by improving water and sanitation will require close coordination among the Haitian government, the United Nations, United States and other partners. Senator John Kerry, who has paid astute attention to Haitian issues in the Senate, will be well placed to do so if he becomes the next secretary of state. As long as the miseries continue, the need for the world to get this right remains.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/02/opinion/haitis-long-road.html?>

International Aid, But Not As We Know It, *Opinion, Andy Sumner and Richard Mallet, Guardian, December 31*

Aid 2.0 might be framed as follows: the "problem" is that poverty is a "global bad" and the "answer" is that collective global action is needed. Further, the role of "aid" in development would shift from being an external driver – filling gaps in a predictable and linear fashion – to support inclusive policy processes, co-financed global public goods, knowledge sharing/transfer and development policy coherence. Following from this logic would be four principles for global development co-operation.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/2012/dec/31/international-aid-book-extract-sumner-mallett>

SEE ALSO: BOOK: The Future of Foreign Aid, *December 2012*

<http://us.macmillan.com/thefutureofforeignaid/AndySumner>

One In Four Support Britain's Foreign Aid Policies, *Telegraph, December 29*

Only 6 percent of people in the Ipsos-Mori poll strongly disagreed with the idea that foreign aid is wasted. A further 20 per cent tended to disagree with the statement. That equates to 26 percent – a little more than a quarter. 61 per cent said that development money is being wasted. But David Cameron has defended his government's policies and his target of spending 0.7 percent of the UK's income on foreign aid. It will mean an increase of 30 per cent in 2013 from £8.65 billion this year.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/david-cameron/9770644/One-in-four-support-Britains-foreign-aid-policies.html>

MADAGASCAR: Funding Gap Threatens School Lunches, *IRIN, December 28*

The provision of school lunches to 215,000 children in 1,200 primary schools in southern Madagascar could be suspended by the end of January 2013 if the World Food Programme fails to make up a funding shortfall of US\$4.84 million. The funds are needed to cover the cost of running the feeding scheme from December 2012 to May 2013.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/97144/MADAGASCAR-Funding-gap-threatens-school-lunches>

Africa Image Harming Aid Effort, Says Charity Oxfam, *BBC, December 26*

A negative image of Africa in the UK is harming efforts to raise food aid in the continent, charity Oxfam has said. It found that three out of four people had become desensitized to images showing hunger, drought and disease. Three-quarters thought it was possible to end hunger in Africa, but just one in five believed they could play an active role in achieving it. In a separate recent Oxfam poll, more than half of people immediately mentioned hunger, famine or poverty when speaking about Africa.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-20842827>

ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

Media Articles:

Urban Water Woes, *IRIN, January 2*

Different continents, same problem: City populations continue to grow above ground while water resources shrink underfoot, leaving emptying aquifers to satiate growing needs, and compounding existing problems with wastewater collection. As of March 2012, three years ahead of schedule, the world achieved one of its MDGs: providing safe drinking water to half of the 2.6 billion people who struggled without it in 2000. Even so, 2.5 billion people in the developing world lack adequate sanitation and 780 million of them lack clean water.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/97161/SANITATION-Urban-water-woes>

Holiday Rains in Water-Weary Argentina Could Affect Global Grain Prices, *VOA News, December 26*

Christmas rainstorms in Argentina further delayed soy and corn planting, keeping markets guessing about whether the grains powerhouse can produce enough this season to help bring high-flying global food prices down to earth. The South American country is the world's No. 2 corn exporter after the United States and its No. 1 soybean and soybean meal supplier. Global food markets face further volatility in 2013 as stocks and supply of key cereals have tightened.

<http://www.voanews.com/content/holiday-rainfall-for-argentine-soy-corn-farmers/1572646.html>

West Antarctica Warming Much Faster Than Expected, *Christian Science Monitor, December 24*

West Antarctica is warming almost twice as fast as previously believed, adding to worries of a thaw that would add to sea level rise from San Francisco to Shanghai. Several ice shelves - thick ice floating on the ocean and linked to land - have collapsed around the Antarctic Peninsula in recent years. Once ice shelves break up, glaciers pent up behind them can slide faster into the sea, raising water levels.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/Environment/2012/1224/West-Antarctica-warming-much-faster-than-expected>

WOMEN & GIRLS

Media Articles:

A Woman's Journey: Helping Bring Literacy to Tanzanian Children, *VOA News, January 3*

Girls have specific reasons for not attending, including early marriage. Holmer says in most cases, 13-year-old girls who are not in school get married by age 14 and give birth a year later.

<http://www.voanews.com/content/a-womans-journey/1577131.html>

SWAZILAND: Women Find Strength In Numbers, *IRIN, January 3*

Swazi women are organizing to promote their rights and welfare, convinced that discriminatory laws are at odds with the essential roles they play in their families and in their country's economy. The new constitution stipulates that a third of members of parliament should be women, but the actual proportion is about a quarter - and parliament's role is limited to raising and debating issues, as legislation can only be drafted by cabinet.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/97168/SWAZILAND-Women-find-strength-in-numbers>

From Dhaka to the World: A Challenge to Leave Poverty Behind, *Opinion, Michael Switow, Huffington Post, January 3*

No group has been excluded globally more than women, who comprise the majority of the world's impoverished. Yet Bangladesh sets an example for the world in this area when it comes to political leadership. It is one of about 20 countries globally with a female head of state, but more than that, several of its most powerful ministers are women, including those with portfolios for agriculture, foreign affairs, labor, women & children and until recently, home affairs.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-switow/from-dhaka-to-the-world-a_b_2386727.html?

MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

Media Articles:

China to Release Cotton Reserves; Futures Decline, *Wall Street Journal*, January 4

China has decided to release cotton in its state reserves, a move that has the potential to shake up the global market for the fiber. China, the world's No. 1 cotton producer and consumer, has been stockpiling the fiber since late 2011, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture forecasts that China would possess 47% of the world's raw-cotton stocks by July 31. Its purchases of U.S. cotton had supported futures prices. Selling cotton from its reserves could mean fewer imports and less demand for U.S. cotton, analysts said.

<http://professional.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323374504578221633044835040.html>

UK Government's Enthusiasm For GM Not Matched In Developing Nations, *Guardian*, January 4

Britain wants GM food to be grown commercially. Britain is spending around £100m on support for GM crops, supposedly for the world's poor people, while organizations including the Gates foundation, USAID, and the Cgiar network of agricultural research stations are backed by other rich countries to develop the technology. But despite billions of dollars spent on research by rich countries on feeding hungry people, most developing countries remain suspicious of the claims, or convinced that the benefits will go mainly to the corporations that control the seeds and chemicals needed to grow the crops.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/poverty-matters/2013/jan/04/uk-government-enthusiasm-gm>

For Small Exporters, Security-Related Regulations Can Be A Thicket, *Washington Post*, January 4

Big companies such as Northrop Grumman, Boeing and General Electric have sophisticated export compliance operations that help them navigate Washington's labyrinth of regulations and avoid becoming ensnared in a foreign military's hunt for sensitive technology. Kincaid has nothing like that.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/for-small-exporters-security-related-regulations-can-be-a-thicket/2013/01/04/f9eedf34-5448-11e2-a613-ec8d394535c6_story.html

Cost Of Food 'Not Going To Stop' Rising, Warns UK Chief Scientist, *The Telegraph*, January 2

Sir John Beddington has warned that demand for food and energy will jump 50 percent by 2030 and for fresh water by 30 percent, as the global population tops 8.3 billion. He added: "The second complicating factor, of course, is climate change. We are going to see the extremes in rainfall, either floods or droughts. Food prices in Britain have risen by 32 percent since 2007, double the EU average.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/foodanddrink/foodanddrinknews/9776144/Cost-of-food-not-going-to-stop-rising-warns-UK-chief-scientist.html>

Fixing Our Food Problem, *Opinion*, Mark Bittman, *New York Times*, January 1

The root of that dangerous diet is our system of hyper-industrial agriculture, the kind that uses 10 times as much energy as it produces. We must figure out a way to un-invent this food system. It's been a major contributor to climate change, spawned the obesity crisis, poisoned countless volumes of land and water, wasted energy, tortured billions of animals... I could go on. The point is that "sustainability" is not only possible but essential: only by saving the earth can we save ourselves, and vice versa.

<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/01/01/fixing-our-food-problem/>

U.S. Considers Opening Ambitious Trade Talks With EU, *Wall Street Journal*, December 28

The U.S. is considering the initiation of talks soon on a trans-Atlantic trade deal aimed at opening Europe's protected agriculture markets, eliminating tariffs, and cutting regulations that curb trade and cross-border investment. U.S. officials are more open to the idea than they have been in years. They view a sweeping trade agreement as a way to pry open Europe's agricultural markets and possibly loosen restrictions on GM crops that the U.S. has long criticized.

<http://professional.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324731304578191454025824778.html>

AfDB President Says Africa's Development on Track Despite Global Financial Crisis, *African Development Bank, December 27*

The AfDB President said the next important agenda for African countries was building resilience to these external shocks, highlighting the first step as the implication for economic policy, especially for developing countries and the needed paradigm shift.

<http://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/article/afdb-president-says-africas-development-on-track-despite-global-financial-crisis-10184/>

China's Hunger for Fish Upsets Seas, *Wall Street Journal, December 27*

Investment bank Rabobank estimates that seafood imports to China—where consumers have for centuries considered fish beneficial to the brain—will total \$20 billion by the end of the decade from around \$8 billion currently. Beijing has big plans for expanding its fishing armada to feed that appetite, aiming to increase its long-range fishing fleet by 16% by the end of 2015 to about 2,300 ships compared with 2010. By comparison, the U.S. distant-waters fishing fleet totals around 200 ships.

<http://professional.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324669104578205041179985354.html>

Hungering for a Solution to Food Losses, *Opinion, Anna Lappe and Danielle Nierenberg, Wall Street Journal, December 25*

One of the biggest myths about the food system is that we don't produce enough to feed the world—and that food scarcity is the reason why nearly one billion across the planet are hungry. In fact, we produce enough calories to feed every man, woman and child—and that's on top of wasting roughly 1.3 billion tons of food each year world-wide. There are ways to prevent waste—and hunger—in both developing and industrialized countries alike. Many of the strategies throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America are simple, and often inexpensive, innovations.

<http://professional.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324461604578191860349076882.html>

Crops Lead The Field For Commodities, *Financial Times, December 21*

The cost of wheat, the most important commodity for global food security, is up nearly 30 per cent this year; corn and soyabean prices are also up. The current surge in food commodities prices is the third since 2007, leading some policymakers, industry executives and analysts to worry that there is a structural problem: from climate change to years of underinvestment in farming. Grain analysts and traders are expecting prices to remain high in early 2013 as inventories are depleted.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/cb6e8bf6-49d9-11e2-a625-00144feab49a.html>

AGRIBUSINESS

Media Articles:

Five Reasons Why Companies And Small-Scale Farmers Are Not In Business Together, *How We Made It in Africa, January 4*

While it would be mutually beneficial for companies and smallholders to do business together, they frequently find it difficult to enter into productive commercial relationships, with both sides often lacking trust and access to the other. The report has identified five structural challenges that need to be addressed, and understood, in order to improve this business relationship for both parties.

<http://www.howwemadeitinafrica.com/five-reasons-why-companies-and-small-scale-farmers-are-not-in-business-together/23079/>

Hormel Foods Buying No. 2 Peanut Butter Skippy For About \$700 Million, *AP, January 3*

Hormel Foods apparently has a hankering for a peanut butter and bacon sandwich. The company primarily known for Spam and other cured, smoked and deli meats said that it's buying Skippy, the country's No. 2 peanut butter brand, in its biggest-ever acquisition.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/hormel-foods-buying-skippy-peanut-butter-product-line-from-unilever-for-about-700-million/2013/01/03/1508cde4-55a6-11e2-89de-76c1c54b1418_story.html?hpid=hp_hp-top-table-main-skippy-peanut-butter%3Ahomepage%2Fstory&hpid=hp_hp-top-table-main-skippy-peanut-butter%3Ahomepage%2Fstory

Fertilizer Groups Look To Potash Contract, *Financial Times*, January 3

Leading fertilizer companies are hoping that a sales deal between China's Sinofert and Canpotex will spur new agreements in potash, which had stalled at the end of last year. With the end of the uncertainty about China's intentions, the world's largest potash importer, suppliers are hoping that the agreement will help the overall return in demand after a slump in the fourth quarter.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/69d5647e-55c2-11e2-bbd1-00144feab49a.html>

Can Cargill Cook Up A Success With Its Vegetable Oil Strategy?, *Business Standard*, January 2

The company has been building its business in India through acquisitions - the latest being that of Sunflower Vanaspati. Its greatest challenge, though, will be one of mindset, say analysts. This was the third acquisition by Cargill in the country's Rs 75,000-crore edible oil market in the past three years, which has taken the number of brands in its portfolio to five: Gemini, Nature Fresh, Rath, Sweekar and Sunflower. With the acquisition, it has also become the third largest player in the market in terms of oil processing capacity.

<http://www.business-standard.com/taketwo/news/can-cargill-cook-upsuccesits-vegetable-oil-strategy/497441/>

Agribusiness Survey Sees China as Continued Economic Engine, *Farm Futures*, December 26

There are two key issues that a recent Rabobank poll shows as key for the North American food, beverage and agribusiness for 2013. First is China's continued influence on ag commodity demand and global economic growth and the second is increasing weather extremes.

<http://farmfutures.com/story-agribusiness-survey-sees-china-continued-economic-engine-0-72031>

SEE ALSO: China To Drive Farm Commodities For Next Decade, *Farm Press*, December 26

Forty one percent of respondents said China would drive the global economy for between five and 10 more years, while 40 percent said China will remain the primary driver of global economic growth for the next 50 years.

<http://southeastfarmpress.com/markets/china-drive-farm-commodities-next-decade>

The Science Behind Maize Hybrids, *DuPont*, December 2012

Maize hybrids are created by crossing, or breeding, two different inbred parent lines with desired characteristics to combine into a hybrid. Farmers value hybrids because they are stronger and perform better across different environments than their inbred parent lines or open pollinated varieties. With the impacts of climate change and rising populations, hybrids play an important role in combating world hunger.

<http://www2.dupont.com/inclusive-innovations/en-us/gss/global-challenges/food/science-behind-maize-hybrids.html>

Private Firms Should Team Up With NGOs, *The Daily Star*, December 24

Geoffrey Dennis, chief executive officer of CARE International UK, shared the view in an interview with The Daily Star last month. "I think it's important to get the corporate sector involved in the work we are doing," said Dennis. According to Dennis, development organizations like CARE work with the people at the grassroots level. So, if the private sector joins hands, it will enable them to reach that consumer base.

<http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=262323/#fb010412pm>