

GLOBAL FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE WEEKLY NEWS BRIEF OF THE GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE



February 26th – March 5th, 2010

Quote of the Week: “As part of the Administration’s invigorated emphasis on food security, President Obama has asked that Secretary Clinton lead a U.S. government-wide initiative to craft a global hunger and food security strategy that aims to improve the lives of the world’s poor through sustainable agriculture-led growth. We encourage donor countries to remain committed to the Rome principles, to contribute to the Multi-donor food security trust fund managed by the World Bank in an effort improve the transparency and sustainability of monetary donations, and to support negotiated reforms of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization and the Committee on Food Security.” – Statement by the Delegation of the United States of America, Panel on the Financial and Economic Crisis, Human Rights Council, 13th Session, Geneva, March 2.

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

U.S. Policies and Programs for Global Development: USAID and the FY 2011 Budget Request, U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, March 3

http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/hearing_notice.asp?id=1155

Chairman Berman’s Opening Remarks

“We should strive to achieve those goals not only in countries where the risk of violent extremism is most pronounced, but everywhere that children go hungry, women die in childbirth for lack of skilled assistance, and communities are ravaged by a preventable disease. I’m particularly gratified that the President’s budget places an emphasis on global health, food security and climate change.”

<http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/111/berman030310.htm>

Testimony by Dr. Rajiv Shah, Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development

“To support food security, we propose investing \$1.2 billion for State Department and USAID food security and agricultural programs, in addition to the \$200 million set aside for nutrition programs that support the goals of improved global health and food security. These funds are in addition to the emergency and non-emergency food assistance we provide. There is a strong link between security and hunger, made clear in 2008 when the global food crisis led to a dramatic rise in food riots in more than 30 countries around the globe. With these additional funds, we will work in countries in Africa, Central America, and Asia to combat poverty and hunger. Our work will draw upon relevant expertise across the United States government to deliver the most effective programs possible.”

<http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/111/sha030310.pdf>

See Also: Effective Foreign Assistance Can Help Make the World Better and Safer, Berman Says at Hearing with New USAID Administrator, *United States House of Representatives, March 3*

http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/press_display.asp?id=713

Communiqué from OECD Agriculture Ministers, *Meeting of the Committee for Agriculture at Ministerial Level, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, February 26*

“Specifically, Ministers recognized that an integrated approach to food security is needed involving a mix of domestic production, international trade, stocks, safety nets for the poor, and other measures reflecting levels of development and resource endowment, while, poverty alleviation and economic development are essential to achieve a sustainable solution to global food insecurity and hunger in the longer term.”

http://www.oecd.org/documentprint/0,3455,en_2649_34487_44664898_1_1_1_1.00.html

Remake Haiti’s Agriculture, *Op-Ed, Joseph E. Edmunds, Former Ambassador of St. Lucia to the United Nations, United States, and Organization of American States, Miami Herald, March 4*

The need to resettle a large part of the population that lost its dwellings in and around the capital creates a unique opportunity to use investments in agriculture as a resettlement anchor and source of revenue for this population. If it has not already been contemplated and put into action, there is need for an immediate categorization of regions in the country into productive agricultural zones based upon soil types, topography, water resources, roads and ports.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2010/03/04/v-print/1512178/remake-haitis-agriculture.html>

See Also: A Future for Agriculture, a Future for Haiti, *Beverly Belle, Huffington Post, March 2*

What would it take to transform Haiti’s economy such that its role in the global economy is no longer that of providing cheap labor for sweatshops? What would it take for hunger to no longer be the norm, for the country no longer to depend on imports and hand-outs, and for Port-au-Prince’s slums no longer to contain 85% of the city’s residents? What would it take for the hundreds of thousands left homeless by the earthquake to have a secure life, with income? According to Haitian peasant organizations, at the core of the solutions is a commitment on the part of the government to support family agriculture, with policies to make the commitment a reality.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/beverly-bell/a-future-for-agriculture_b_482393.html?view=print

We Can’t Wish Away Climate Change, *Op-Ed, Al Gore, Former Vice President of the United States, New York Times, February 28*

Almost all of the ice-covered regions of the Earth are melting — and seas are rising. Droughts are getting longer and deeper in many mid-continent regions, even as the severity of flooding increases. The seasonal predictability of rainfall and temperatures is being disrupted, posing serious threats to agriculture.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/28/opinion/28gore.html>

India Confident of Reaching Growth Target, *Financial Times, March 3*

Weakness in agriculture had checked the speed of India’s economic recovery after growth of 9 per cent a year before the global financial crisis, he said. However, a better harvest and strong contributions from the services and manufacturing sectors would propel the country towards its targeted double-digit growth rate.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/8dd87bac-26f6-11df-8c08-00144feabdc0.html>

See Also: A Step in the Right Direction, *Op-Ed, Mark T. Robinson, Financial Times, March 2*

The budget proposals represent a laudable effort in ensuring that the economy builds momentum across important business sectors especially infrastructure development and agriculture while pushing for inclusive growth and greater public accountability.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/fe2242be-25f5-11df-b2fc-00144feabdc0.html>

See Also: More Hype than Reality, *Op-Ed, Kunal Kumar Kundu, Financial Times, March 2*

This budget also failed to address the needs of the agricultural sector adequately. Despite the impact that the failed monsoon had on the Indian agriculture during the current year, the budget does not talk about any agricultural reform or any major thrust for the sector, other than a few announcements.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/84702992-25e4-11df-b2fc-00144feabdc0.html>

See Also: Subsidy Reform Can Help India Spend Better, *Column, David Pilling, Financial Times, March 3*

Subsidies produce unintended economic distortions. They have, for example, encouraged the production of nitrogenous-based fertiliser, degrading the soil and lowering agricultural productivity. Likewise, a policy of giving electricity free to farmers has left India chronically short of power, since few businesses go out of their way to produce electricity that no one will pay for.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/d26dd0c2-26f7-11df-8c08-00144feabdc0.html>

See Also: Government May Still Have to Rework Food Security Bill, *Times of India, March 3*

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/5634523.cms?prtpage=1>

EU Clears 5 GMO Crops, Eyes Proposal on Cultivation, *Reuters, March 2*

The European Commission approved 5 genetically modified crops, and said it might let EU countries decide whether or not they grow GM crops on their soil.

<http://www.reuters.com/assets/print?aid=USLDE62111520100302>

See Also: BASF Wins First EU Approval for Biotech Planting in a Decade, *Bloomberg, March 2*

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20670001&sid=aqEmeN2jOzFU>

See Also: GM Potato Cleared for EU farming, *BBC News, March 2*

<http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8545503.stm?ad=1>

See Also: Genetically Modified Potato Wins EU Approval, *Financial Times, March 2*

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e00b505a-2630-11df-aff3-00144feabdc0.html>

Agricultural Productivity in Changing Rural Worlds, *Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 2010*

This report emphasizes three ways that the United States can contribute to raising agricultural productivity in poor countries—investing in agricultural productivity from a longer-term, resource-based, farmer-centered perspective; revamping the way that technology is developed and diffused to better diagnose and solve the practical problems of rural people; and complementing investments in the “hard” infrastructure of markets (roads, rural electrification) with investments in “soft” infrastructure, including rules, regulations, policies, financial and market information systems that kick-start private-sector investments.

http://csis.org/files/publication/100223_Smale-Mahoney_AgProductivity_WEB.pdf

See Also: Can Private Sector R&D Reach Small Farms?, *Marco Ferroni, Executive Director, Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture, February 2010*

Millions of small farmers are reached commercially every day as they buy seeds and crop protection products, fertiliser, cell phones, machinery and tools, taking advantage of the science and research embodied in these products. The market for agricultural inputs is large, and the role of the private sector as a purveyor of technology and services is growing. It is in the nature of the private sector to bring products to the market and deliver value, including to small farmers. But the private sector goes where there is a commercial incentive.

<http://csis.org/files/attachments/Can%20private%20sector%20RD%20reach%20small%20farmers.pdf>

Marching Forth, *Roger Thurow, Senior Fellow, Global Agriculture and Food Policy, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Global Food for Thought Blog, March 4*

A revolution, that's what we're talking about here. A grassroots revolution that will overturn the neglect of agriculture development and spark a new Green Revolution specifically tailored to the farming and nutritional needs of Africa and the environmental conditions of today.

<http://globalfoodforthought.typepad.com/global-food-for-thought/2010/03/roger-thurow-outrage-inspire-universities.html>

The Global Child Nutrition Foundation Gala, *The Hill*, March 3

The Global Child Nutrition Foundation held its annual awards gala Tuesday night, which honored former Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman for his lifelong efforts to promote child nutrition causes.

<http://washingtonscene.thehill.com/party-events-pictures/archive/2515-the-global-child-nutrition-foundation-gala>

Agricultural Prices, *National Agriculture Statistics Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture*, February 26

<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/nass/AgriPric/2010s/2010/AgriPric-02-26-2010.pdf>

RELEVANT U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Testimony Before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations Committee on Appropriations House of Representatives Regarding the Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request, *Dr. Rajiv Shah, Administrator U.S. Agency for International Development*, March 4

“To support food security, we propose investing \$1.2 billion for State Department and USAID food security and agricultural programs, in addition to the \$200 million set aside for nutrition programs that support the goals of improved global health and food security.”

http://appropriations.house.gov/Witness_testimony/SFOPS/Rajiv_Shah-3-4-10.pdf

See Also: Statement to House Appropriations Subcommittee on State Foreign Operations and Related Programs, *Congresswoman Nita M. Lowey, Chairwoman*, March 4

“The budget’s request of \$1.35 billion for food security and agricultural development would support the “Feed the Future” strategy, an impressive, accountable and realistic plan that should increase agricultural development, especially among the poorest of the poor. How will USAID coordinate with other private and multilateral efforts in this arena? Will current Millennium Challenge Corporation investments in agriculture be adjusted to ensure that the core principles of the initiative are incorporated in their programs?”

http://appropriations.house.gov/pdf/Lowey_Opening_Statement-3-4-10.pdf

Statement Before the House Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Committee on Appropriations, *U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Thomas Vilsack*, March 2

“A productive agricultural sector is critical to increasing global food security. USDA plays a major role in helping American farmers and ranchers improve the efficiency of agricultural production, including the safe use of biotechnology and other emergent technologies. New technologies and production practices can enhance food security around the world by increasing the availability of food as well as providing developing nations tools for increasing their self reliance and giving them greater control over their production decisions.”

<http://appropriations.senate.gov/ht-agriculture.cfm?method=hearings.download&id=d8c10f03-81e9-44aa-a3a9-d8592674795b>

See Also: USDA’s Food for Progress Program Expected to Benefit More than 3.4 Million People in Emerging Democracies This Year, *U.S. Department of Agriculture*, March 2

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that USDA will donate more than \$145 million in international assistance under the Food for Progress Program in fiscal year 2010.

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/.s.7.0.A/7.0.1RD?printable=true&contentidonly=true&contentid=2010/03/0093.xml>

U.S. 2010 Trade Policy Agenda and 2009 Annual Report, *U.S. Trade Representative*, March 2

“The President’s Trade Policy Agenda for 2010 advances a robust American role in the global trading system by further outlining what trade can mean for American exports, jobs, and economic growth – and also for global economic recovery and well-being. It addresses how our trade policy partners the United States with the developing countries of the world.”

<http://www.ustr.gov/2010-trade-policy-agenda>

See Also: Testimony of Ambassador Ron Kirk, U.S. Trade Representative, Before Senate Finance Committee Hearing on “The President’s Trade Agenda,” March 3

“We’ve been asked to break down barriers to agriculture exports. We did so by reaching agreement with the European Union to expand access for American beef after more than two decades of dispute and by challenging in the WTO the European Union’s unfounded ban on U.S. poultry exports.”

<http://finance.senate.gov/hearings/testimony/2010test/030310rktest.pdf>

See Also: President’s 2010 Trade Policy Agenda Focuses on Growing American Jobs through New Market Access and Enforcing Trade Rules, Statement by Ron Kirk, U.S. Trade Representative, March 1

<http://www.ustr.gov/about-us/press-office/press-releases/2010/march/kirk-comments-2010-trade-policy-agenda>

See Also: Kirk Gets Pressure on Trade Deals, Washington Times, March 4

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/mar/04/kirk-gets-pressure-on-trade-deals//print/>

Statement by Ambassador Melanne Verwee, U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women’s Issues, at the Fifty-fourth Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, at United Nations Headquarters, United States Mission to the United Nations, March 3

“The empowerment of women is also a major cross-cutting theme in the MDGs to end hunger. President Obama’s food security initiative, which Secretary Clinton has been leading, focuses on addressing hunger through greater agricultural productivity, and, especially, women’s access to agricultural training and markets. Women, as we know, are the majority of the world’s farmers, which is why the Rome Principles of Sustainable Food Security, unanimously adopted by 193 countries – including the United States – at the November 2009 World Summit on Food Security, pay particular attention to their needs.”

<http://usun.state.gov/briefing/statements/2010/137772.htm>

See Also: Remarks by Ambassador Susan E. Rice, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, at a Briefing of NGO Representatives, at the U.S. Mission, during the Commission on the Status of Women, United States Mission to the United Nations, March 4

“The Obama administration is also working with our partners internationally to improve women’s welfare through targeted investments in agriculture, nutrition, and health, as well as through programs that empower women to contribute to economic and social progress in their own communities.”

<http://usun.state.gov/briefing/statements/2010/137830.htm>

Testimony Before the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs Committee on Oversight and Government Reform U.S. House of Representatives, James Bever, Director, Afghanistan-Pakistan Task Force, U.S. Agency for International Development, March 3

“USAID has been involved in agriculture and alternative development activities in Afghanistan since 2002 and including 2010 resources has obligated over \$ 1.839 billion (\$746 million in agriculture and \$1.093 billion in alternative development) to this effort. Agriculture is one of the priority elements of the United States Government (USG) counternarcotics strategy. More than 85 percent of Afghans depend on some form of agriculture or related agribusiness and marketing, so our work in these areas is vital.”

http://www.usaid.gov/press/speeches/2010/ty100303_1.html

U.S. House Panel Rejects Obama Cuts in Farm Supports, Reuters, March 3

The House Agriculture Committee rejected President Barack Obama’s proposals to reduce crop subsidies to higher-income farmers and federal support for crop insurance. There was little discussion as the committee refused farm cuts requested by the president for the second year in a row.

<http://www.reuters.com/assets/print?aid=USN0319258520100304>

See Also: FY2011 Budget Views Estimates, Letter from the House Agriculture Committee

<http://agriculture.house.gov/inside/pubs/FY2011BudgetViewsEstimatesLetterDRAFT.pdf>

Lugar Praises EU Approval of First Biotech Crop in a Decade, *Office of Senator Richard G. Lugar, March 2*
U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar praised the decision by the European Union to approve the first new biotech crop for domestic growing in more than a decade. “The world’s population will grow from our current 6 billion people to 9 billion people by 2050. Bioscience solutions will need to be part of the answer to feeding this growing population, especially if we want to conserve land and water, reduce use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers, and enhance human health,” Lugar said.

<http://lugar.senate.gov/press/record.cfm?id=322704&&>

Carson Cites 'Powerful Success Stories' and Reiterates U.S. Commitment to Political and Economic Progress, *All Africa, February 28*

Since taking office in May as the lead policymaker on Africa for the U.S. administration, Johnnie Carson has been on the go. As assistant secretary of state for Africa, he has made seven trips to the continent - most recently this month, when he visited four countries following the Africa Union (AU) summit in Addis Ababa. In an interview this week, he provided an overview of U.S. policy priorities and listed the reasons he's bullish on Africa.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/201002280002.html>

Statement by the Delegation of the United States of America, *Panel on the Financial and Economic Crisis, Human Rights Council, 13th Session, Geneva, March 2*

“As part of the Administration’s invigorated emphasis on food security, President Obama has asked that Secretary Clinton lead a U.S. government-wide initiative to craft a global hunger and food security strategy that aims to improve the lives of the world’s poor through sustainable agriculture-led growth. We encourage donor countries to remain committed to the Rome principles, to contribute to the Multi-donor food security trust fund managed by the World Bank in an effort improve the transparency and sustainability of monetary donations, and to support negotiated reforms of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization and the Committee on Food Security.”

<http://geneva.usmission.gov/2010/03/02/statement-us-hrc/>

Lincoln Urges that Steps Be Taken to Reopen Chinese Market to American Pork, *United States Senate, February 26*

U.S. Senator Blanche Lincoln, D-Ark., Chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, urged the Chinese government to reopen its market to American pork exports. China pledged five months ago to reopen its market but this commitment has yet to be honored.

http://216.40.253.202/~usscanf/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2009&Itemid=2

See Also: Lincoln Recognized for Advocacy on Behalf of Land-Grant Universities, *Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, February 24*

<http://www.aplu.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=1499>

A New Home at USAID, *Ruth Levine, Vice President for Programs and Operations, and Senior Fellow, Center for Development, Global Development Blog, February 26*

On Monday, I will join USAID as Director of Evaluation, Policy Analysis & Learning.

<http://blogs.cgdev.org/globaldevelopment/2010/02/a-new-home-at-usaid.php>

See Also: Ruth Levine Named to Senior Position at USAID, *Center for Global Development, March 1*

<http://www.cgdev.org/content/article/detail/1423909/>

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Searches for New Staff Director, *Politico, March 1*

After the departure of David McKean at the end of the year to become CEO of the JFK Library Foundation, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is in the market for a new staff director. Chairman John Kerry is interviewing people, sources say.

http://www.politico.com/blogs/laurarozen/0310/SFRC_searches_for_new_staff_director.html

Longtime House Top Staffer for House Ag G.O.P Joins McLeod, Watkinson, and Miller, *Press Release, March 1*

Long time GOP staff leader of the House Agriculture Committee, Bill O'Conner, retired on March 1, after nearly 30 years of service in a variety of policy roles on both Capitol Hill and at USDA.

<http://www.farmpolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/OConner-Release-3-1-10-1.pdf>

FOR MORE SUMMARIES OF AND LINKS TO U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND RESOURCES ON ISSUES RELATED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD SYSTEMS, AND FOOD SECURITY, PLEASE VISIT OUR [AG & FOOD POLICY LIBRARY](#)

NEW REPORTS/POLICY BRIEFS/BOOKS

African Poverty is Falling... Much Faster than You Think!, *National Bureau of Economic Research, February 2010*

The conventional wisdom that Africa is not reducing poverty is wrong. The authors estimate income distributions, poverty rates, and inequality and welfare indices for African countries for the period 1970-2006. They show that: (1) African poverty is falling and is falling rapidly; (2) if present trends continue, the poverty Millennium Development Goal of halving the proportion of people with incomes less than one dollar a day will be achieved on time; (3) the growth spurt that began in 1995 decreased African income inequality instead of increasing it; (4) African poverty reduction is remarkably general: it cannot be explained by a large country, or even by a single set of countries possessing some beneficial geographical or historical characteristic.

<http://www.nber.org/papers/w15775>

See Also: Africa Begins to Make Poverty History, *Guardian, March 3*

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2010/mar/03/africa-makes-poverty-history/print>

See Also: African Poverty is Falling – Do We Dare Believe It? *Overseas Development Institute, March 4*

http://blogs.odi.org.uk/blogs/main/archive/2010/03/04/falling_african_poverty_national_bureau_economic_research.aspx

Agribusiness and Innovation Systems in Africa, *World Bank, 2010*

This book examines how agricultural innovation arises in four African countries – Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda – through the lens of agribusiness, public policies, and specific value chains for food staples, high value products, and livestock. Determinants of innovation are not viewed individually but within the context of a complex agricultural innovation system involving many actors and interactions. The volume is based on qualitative interviews with agribusiness representatives that were designed to shed light on their experiences on public policies that either enhances or impedes innovation in Africa's agriculture sector.

<http://info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/library/252086/WBI%20Agribusiness%20and%20Innovation.pdf>

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in an Era of Global Uncertainty: Asia-Pacific Regional Report 2009/10, *United Nations Development Program, March 2010*

A joint report by the United Nations and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) warns that the global economic crisis could trap an additional 21 million people in the Asia-Pacific region in extreme poverty, living on less than \$1.25 a day.

<http://issuu.com/escap-publications/docs/mdg-report-2009-10?viewMode=magazine&mode=embed>

Science and Innovation for Development, *UK Collaborative on Development Sciences, March 2010*

Two academics challenged policy-makers worldwide to raise the profile of science and maximise the benefits of scientific progress for people living in poor countries. Their book, *Science and Innovation for Development*, emphasises the potential of new technologies – Information and Communication Technology (ICT), nanotechnology and biotechnology – to reduce poverty.

http://www.ukcds.org.uk/assets/file/book/science_innovation_book_lowres.pdf

Meals per Gallon: The Impact of Industrial Biofuels on People and Global Hunger, *ActionAid, March 2010*

Biofuels are a hot topic of debate. Once celebrated as the 'green' alternative to fossil fuels, this report argues that mass producing biofuels contributes to climate change and takes land needed for food crops, leaving many people without their main source of food.

http://www.actionaid.org.uk/doc_lib/meals_per_gallon_final.pdf

UPCOMING EVENTS

Rural Development Institute's Annual Women & Land Luncheon

Date: March 11th, 2010

Location: Seattle, Washington

Together, we will raise awareness and support for women's land rights – the most important asset for the world's poorest families to thrive and create a safer, better world.

http://www.rdiland.org/PDF/IWD2010_Evite.pdf

FamilyFarmed EXPO

Date: March 11th - 13th, 2010

Location: UIC Forum, Chicago, Illinois

FamilyFarmed EXPO is a three day gathering of Chicago-area fans of locally grown and responsibly produced food and artisanal goods. Thursday and Friday feature business-to-business connections. Saturday features cooking demos, interactive seminars and a busy Kids Corner. There will also be over 120 exhibitors offering a wide selection of local food, gifts and lots of useful information that will help you eat healthy year-round, while supporting local, family-run businesses.

<http://www.familyfarmedexpo.com>

Global Harvest Initiative 2010 Symposium

Date: March 17th, 2010

Location: Washington, D.C.

The Global Harvest Initiative has commissioned a four-part study to provide additional perspective on the difficulty of the agricultural challenges ahead, as well as the global consequences of not closing the productivity gap. This work will be presented by the authors at a symposium on Wednesday, March 17, 2010 in Washington, D.C.

<http://www.globalharvestinitiative.org/events.php>

Fostering Growth and Reducing Poverty and Hunger in Asia and Latin America

Date: March 22nd - March 24th, 2010

Location: Swissotel, Lima, Peru

<http://www.ifpri.org/event/fostering-growth-and-reducing-poverty-and-hunger-asia-and-latin-america>

Africa Rice Congress 2010

Date: March 22nd – 26th, 2010

Location: Bamako, Mali

Africa Rice Congress 2010 will have as its main theme: 'Innovation and partnerships to realize Africa's rice potential'. The Congress will bring together representatives from the public and private sector, civil society organizations, farmer associations and research and extension communities engaged in the development of Africa's rice sector.

<http://www.africarice.org/AfricaRiceCongress2010/index.html>

Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD)

Date: March 28th - 31st, 2010

Location: Montpellier, France

The GCARD process will address the below questions: What are the development needs where AR can play its best role? How best do we turn research in development impacts at scale? How can more effective pathways be developed to create impact for the poor? What investments, institutions, policies and capacities are necessary?

<http://www.egfar.org/egfar/website/gcard>

AGRA Middle East 2010

Date: March 29th – 31st, 2010

Location: Dubai, United Arab Emirates

AGRA Middle East 2010 is one of the biggest consumer markets for agribusiness, poultry & livestock, fishing & aquaculture and flower & garden in the region. AGRAME is a leading regional platform which offers immense opportunities for regional agribusiness professionals, international manufacturers and service providers involved in the agribusiness industry. The event co-locates four distinct yet closely linked vertical exhibitions at one comprehensive and powerful B2B platform, providing opportunities for agribusiness professionals from all over the world.

<http://www.tradechakra.com/events/dubai-United-arab-emirates/agra-middle-east-2009-311.php>

18th Annual Food and Agriculture Policy Conference

Date: April 21st – 22nd, 2010

Location: Washington, DC

Hosted by Informa Economics Inc.

For more information, contact [Theresa Stephens](#)

Informa Economics - 18th Annual Food and Agriculture Policy Conference

Date: April 22nd-23rd, 2010

Location: Arlington, Virginia

http://www.informaecon.com/Washington_Conference.asp

2010 Spring Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group

Date: April 24th – 25th, 2010

Location: Washington, D.C.

The 2010 World Bank and International Monetary Fund Spring Meetings will be held on April 24 and 25 in Washington, DC. All CSO representatives interested in participating in the Spring Meetings must obtain individual accreditation. Representatives are encouraged to apply for accreditation which will open on Monday, March 8 and close on Monday, April 12. Those interested will be able to apply online for accreditation, and the link will be posted here on March 8.

<http://go.worldbank.org/D56FCO900>

2010 U.S.-Africa Infrastructure Conference

Date: April 27th – April 29th, 2010

Location: Washington, DC

This year's conference, which is themed "Building Dynamic Growth in Africa," focuses on key economic sectors in Africa, including information and communication technology, alternative energy, and human security. The effects of climate change on Africa are also a focus, along with available instruments for project finance. Immediately following the World Bank spring 2010 meetings, the conference brings together senior U.S. and African private sector and government officials; key decision makers from leading U.S. infrastructure companies; financial institutions; and international organizations with a vested interest in infrastructure investment and growth on the continent.

<http://guest.cvent.com/i.aspx?5S.M3.f2a576ef-3b24-4af2-81ed-33bf7d9b760b>

Building Food Security in the Face of Climate Change – CCAFAS Launch Conference

Date: May 4, 2010

Location: Nairobi, Kenya

The CCAFAS Launch Conference is a one day event that will bring together the research and development community, policy makers, public and private research organizations, donors, and development agencies, both governmental and non-governmental.

<http://www.ccafs.cgiar.org/ccafts-launch-conference.php>

2010 Borlaug Dialogue - "Take It to the Farmers": Reaching the World's Smallholders

Date: October 13th-15th, 2010

Location: Des Moines, Iowa

Inspired by the last words of Nobel Laureate and World Food Prize Founder Dr. Norman Borlaug, the 2010 Borlaug Dialogue international symposium will gather the top minds and foremost leaders in global agriculture, food, and development this October in Des Moines – with a special focus on the world's small-scale farmers.

<http://www.worldfoodprize.org/symposium/2010.htm>

The International Rice Congress 2010

Date: November 8th – November 12th, 2010

Location: Hanoi, Vietnam

Hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

<http://www.ricecongress.com/cmsdetail.php?id=1>

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

Why the Developing World Needs More Urban Farmers, *Change.org*, March 4

For the first time in history, the majority of the world population will soon live in urban (as opposed to rural) areas. In the developing world, the breakneck rate of urban growth far exceeds cities' abilities to produce employment, adequate housing, infrastructure, or basic services for its new residents. Meanwhile, food security is becoming an even greater concern, and you don't have to look far to see why. The best agricultural land in many countries is being reserved for the production of overseas-bound cash crops like coffee and soy beans (or in some cases, sold to foreigners outright).

http://globalhealth.change.org/blog/view/why_the_developing_world_needs_more_urban_farmers

E.U. Tries to Head Off Future Natural-Gas Shortages, *New York Times*, March 4

Environmental groups and some E.U. officials are seeking to scale back a goal, agreed upon by E.U. governments at the end of 2008, that 10 percent of road fuels should come from renewable and low-carbon sources by the end of the next decade. One of the models examined by commission officials shows that E.U. targets for using biofuels could destabilize crop prices, leading to food shortages.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/05/business/global/05iht-energy.html?pagewanted=print>

Gordhan Says S. Africa to 'Restructure' to Boost Jobs, *Bloomberg*, March 4

South African Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan said the government needs to restructure the economy, developing industries such as mineral processing and agriculture, if it wants to slash unemployment.

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2010-03-04/gordhan-says-s-africa-to-restructure-to-boost-jobs-update1-.html>

China Says Has Not Allowed Imported GMO Grain Seeds for Planting, *Reuters*, March 3

China will accelerate development of its own genetically modified (GMO) crops, seeking to secure food security and international competitiveness, an official from the country's Ministry of Agriculture said. The official from the Ministry's biosafety administration office also denied recent media reports that China had already approved imported GMO grain seeds for widespread planting.

<http://www.reuters.com/assets/print?aid=USTOE62109P20100303>

Afghanistan Launches Poppy Eradication Program, *Agence France-Presse*, March 3

Afghanistan announced plans to wipe out opium poppies across most of the country, starting in the south where the Taliban have long held sway. But areas where military operations are underway -- such as Marjah in Helmand province -- would not be targeted until the rebels had been pushed out and development programmes launched, said deputy interior minister Mohammad Daud Daud. Daud said the campaign was in three stages -- public awareness, prevention of cultivation and, finally, eradication, with farmers offered help in planting alternative crops, including cereals.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hhxAHFpmTr2zuAMjxtRowW5vBeA>

South Africa Black-Owned Farms 'Failing,' *BBC News, March 3*

Some 90% of farms redistributed to South Africa's black population from white farmers are not productive, the government has said.

<http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8547621.stm?ad=1>

Drought Threatens Syria Economy as Refugees Flee Parched Farms, *Bloomberg, March 2*

The water shortage is undermining efforts to maintain economic growth in a country where agriculture until recently accounted for about 25 percent of gross domestic product. The drought is also a potential source of tension as Syria seeks to increase its political influence in the region, where it competes for shared river resources with Turkey, Iraq and Israel.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20670001&sid=aj5si5DHQo38>

NSF, Gates Foundation Come Together to Fund Agricultural Research for the Developing World,

Genome Web, March 1

The National Science Foundation and the Gates Foundation have teamed up to fund research that will enable agricultural development, particularly in the third world. This joint \$48 million program, called BREAD, will fund upstream agricultural research with a focus on synergistic — especially international — partnerships and innovative approaches, as the program officers from NSF and Gates said at a session at the Plant and Animal Genome meeting this January.

<http://www.genomeweb.com/print/934930>

For Pennies, a Disposable Toilet That Could Help Grow Crops, *New York Times, March 1*

A Swedish entrepreneur is trying to market and sell a biodegradable plastic bag that acts as a single-use toilet for urban slums in the developing world. The bag, called the Peepoo, is the brainchild of Anders Wilhelmson, an architect and professor in Stockholm. "Not only is it sanitary," said Mr. Wilhelmson, who has patented the bag, "they can reuse this to grow crops."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/02/science/02bag.html?pagewanted=print>

Biotechnologies Should Benefit Poor Farmers in Poor Countries, *Food and Agriculture Organization, March 1*

The focus of modern and conventional biotechnologies should be redirected so as to benefit poor farmers in poor countries and not only rich farmers in rich countries, FAO said. "Modern and conventional biotechnologies provide potent tools for the agriculture sector, including fisheries and forestry," said Modibo Traore, FAO Assistant Director-General, addressing the international technical conference on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Developing Countries in Guadalajara, Mexico.

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/40390/icode/>

Suit Seeks to Bar Genetically Modified Sugar Beets, *Washington Post, March 1*

Organic farmers fear this year's spring breezes will be carrying pollen from genetically altered sugar beets, which they say could render their crops worthless, and they hope to persuade a federal judge this week to halt the plantings nationwide. Experts and industry groups say such an injunction could jeopardize U.S. sugar supplies, about half of which comes from the biotech beets planted on more than 1 million acres in 10 states stretching from Michigan to Oregon.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/01/AR2010030100132_pf.html

Reducing Poverty and Hunger in Yemen, *Dialogue with Clemens Breisinger, Research Fellow, Development Strategy and Governance Division, International Food Policy Research Institute, February 26*

Yemen has been hard hit by the recent global food crisis and ongoing global recession due to its high dependency on oil exports and food imports. Recent IFPRI research shows an eight percent increase since 2006 in the number of people living in poverty. In a forthcoming publication, IFPRI reports that 32 percent of the people lack access to sufficient food, and nearly 58 percent of all children are malnourished.

<http://www.ifpri.org/blog/reducing-poverty-and-hunger-yemen>

How Locavores Could Save the World, *Foreign Policy, February 26*

To be sure, the life of a subsistence farmer is not an easy one. Subsistence farmers make up a large proportion of the world's poor. But local farmers growing local food can create a much more sustainable life for themselves and those around them than Western agribusinesses can. At the very least, locavores should be an important part of the mix.

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/02/26/how_locavores_could_save_the_world?print=yes&hide_comments=yes&page=full

Hunger Is a Problem of Poverty, Not Scarcity, *OECD Insights Blog*, February 23

It's true that several factors are combining to boost demand. For a start, there's the mechanical effect of population growth. Output will have to double over the next 40 years to feed a world population of 9 billion in 2050. Added to that, although there will be crises and recessions in the future, the trend is for the world to get richer, and for more people to adopt Western-style diets rich in meat, dairy and other foodstuffs that demand higher inputs than diets based on cereals or tubers. Food production is facing competition for land from other uses, including biofuels. Finally, environmental pressures on agriculture are growing, with climate change introducing a number of uncertainties, and expected to have the worst impacts on countries least able to cope.

<http://oecdinsights.org/2010/02/23/hunger-is-a-problem-of-poverty-not-scarcity/>

Beans in Rwanda: The Day ISAR Released 15 New Bean Varieties, *Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa*, February 17

Earlier last month, agricultural researchers high in the hills of Rwanda invited hundreds of smallholder farmers, government officials and development partners to the release of 15 newly bred and improved climbing, bush or snap varieties of beans, a staple food and major source of protein diets in Rwanda. The varieties could triple the yield of ordinary varieties grown by farmers. The new varieties have great potential to improve food security and nutrition for rural households in Rwanda.

<http://www.agra-alliance.org/content/news/detail/1123>

The Browning of Biofuels: The Political Economy of Policy Failure, *C. Ford Runge, World Politics Review*, February 16

Biofuels were hailed in the first half of the last decade as a green solution to reliance on imported petroleum, and a savior to farmers seeking higher prices for commodities in surplus. But in the second half of the decade, biofuels emerged as real and imminent threats to both environmental quality and food security, while being a costly and ill-conceived response to energy concerns.

<http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/article.aspx?id=5130>

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

Bob Geldof Rages at BBC over Claim Live Aid Millions Were Used to Buy Arms, *London Times*, March 4

Bob Geldof reacted angrily to claims broadcast on the BBC that millions of dollars raised by Band Aid were diverted to Ethiopian rebels. The allegations that 95 per cent of aid money donated to help victims of the 1985 Ethiopian famine were siphoned off were made in a BBC radio programme broadcast.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/africa/article7048914.ece?print=yes&randnum=1267731178793>

Bangladesh to Get Share of U.S. Food Security, *Daily Star*, March 4

The US will provide Bangladesh with a major share of its food security fund in the coming years, US Ambassador James F Moriarty said. Bangladesh will also get special focus on this issue in the G-8 summit scheduled to be held in July, the US envoy told Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury during a meeting at the latter's office. "The US president will prioritise Bangladesh in his speech in the G-8 summit," Moriarty told Matia, says a press release of the agriculture ministry.

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=22522

Haiti Wants More Information on Foreign Aid, *Reuters*, March 3

Haiti's prime minister demanded more information about foreign aid pouring into the earthquake-stricken country and urged that his government not be sidelined in reconstruction efforts.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6225UO20100303>

Germany to Fund Food Security Projects, *Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations, March 3*
Germany will provide funding of more than \$6 million to five FAO projects aimed at strengthening the food security of smallholders in Africa and elsewhere.

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/40393/icode/>

The Next Battles for Marja, *New York Times, March 2*

In Helmand, opium is the only way farmers can acquire credit: they take out small loans, called salaam, from narcotics smugglers or Taliban officials, often in units of poppy seed, and pay back that loan in opium paste after harvest. If they cannot harvest their opium, they are in danger of defaulting on their loan — a very dangerous proposition. Western aid groups distributed wheat seeds last fall, but there was little follow-up and it seems few farmers used them. This year, the aid workers should be prepared to pay farmers compensation for any opium crops they are unable to harvest as a result of the fighting, and the Western coalition should help the groups develop a microcredit system.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/03/opinion/03foust.html?pagewanted=print>

Niger Junta's Alarm Is Break with Past, *Reuters, March 2*

An acknowledgement by Niger's new military leader that millions face hunger is a policy volte-face for the West African state that may help it avert famine and even worse instability. Major Salou Djibo, who ousted President Mamadou Tandja in a coup on Feb. 18, has said that all means would be available to deal with a crisis that aid workers warn will leave millions hungry and over 200,000 children with severe acute malnutrition.

<http://www.reuters.com/assets/print?aid=USLDE6201KE>

Malawi, Zambia Set for Big U.S. Infrastructure Aid, *Reuters Africa, March 2*

Malawi and Zambia are set to win hundreds of millions of dollars in U.S. infrastructure grants in the next two years due to steady improvements in the way they are run, U.S. aid officials said.

<http://af.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=AFJOE6210FP20100302>

U.N. Is Faulted as Lacking Coordination of Aid and Security in Haiti, *New York Times, March 2*

Humanitarian efforts by the United Nations in Haiti have lacked sufficient coordination with local organizations in delivering aid and establishing security, according to an independent assessment. One consequence was a surge in the sexual abuse of women and girls living in camps for the displaced, with some young girls trading sex for shelter, said Emilie Parry, an aid consultant who helped write the evaluation of the United Nations' effort for Refugees International, a nonprofit organization that advocates on behalf of refugees.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/03/world/americas/03haiti.html?pagewanted=print>

See Also: Haiti: From the Ground Up, *Refugees International, March 2*

http://www.refugeesinternational.org/sites/default/files/030210_haiti_groundup.pdf

Somali Rebels Tell UN Food Agency to Halt Operations, *Business Week, March 1*

Somalia's Islamist al-Shabaab militia ordered the World Food Programme to halt operations in the country, accusing the United Nations agency of undermining domestic agriculture and supporting foreign troops.

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2010-03-01/somali-rebels-tell-un-food-agency-to-halt-operations-update1-.html>

See Also: Somali Insurgents Ban WFP as Four Million Go Hungry, *Telegraph, March 1*

Somali insurgents barred the World Food Programme from the famine and war-plagued Horn of Africa country, where the UN says four million people - half the population - needs emergency food aid.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/somalia/7340833/Somali-insurgents-ban-WFP-as-four-million-go-hungry.html>

See Also: Somali Islamists Ban UN Food from Rebel-Held Areas, *Washington Post, March 1*

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/01/AR2010030100468.html>

A Crisis of Hunger for Haiti's Children, *Miami Herald*, February 26

Although nurses and food experts say it's still too early to determine the extent of malnutrition cases, they say it's a growing problem as Haitians cope with squalor in tent cities, unhealthy food preparation and the rupture of livelihood in a country where hunger has been a perennial concern.

http://www.miamiherald.com/2010/02/26/1503041_relief-groups-worry-that-acute.html

U.S. Lawmakers Get Details of Pakistan Aid Plan, *Reuters*, February 26

The Obama administration sent lawmakers this week a plan for \$1.45 billion in aid for Pakistan this year, funding water, energy and other projects as well as a media campaign to counter extremist views.

<http://www.reuters.com/assets/print?aid=USTRE61Q0JS20100227>

World Food Programme Urges Doctor and Nurses to Join Fight Against Malnutrition, *World Food Programme*, February 26

WFP Executive Director Josette Sheeran has urged doctors and medical experts to put their knowledge to work to support the battle against malnutrition, a factor in 10,000 child deaths every day. "We need to take the knowledge we have now and use it," she said. Speaking at the Royal Society of Medicine in London, Sheeran said that the world already had the ability and knowledge to tackle the challenge of malnutrition. What was lacking was the coordinated focus and political will, she said.

<http://www.wfp.org/stories/wfp-urges-doctors-join-fight-against-malnutrition>

ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

The Health Risks of a Big Carbon Footprint, *Interview with Dr. Tony Waterston, Consultant Pediatrician and Chair of the Advocacy Committee, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, BBC News*, March 3

Malnutrition is already linked with most deaths in the developing world, and is increasing as a result of the effect of climate change on food crops. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), climate change is projected to increase the percentage of the population of Mali at risk of hunger from 34% to 64-72% by the 2050s. Both droughts and flooding will become more common and both interfere with growing seasons especially in countries already prone to such disasters.

<http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/8533937.stm?ad=1>

Water: A Matter of Life and Death, *Refugees International*, March 2

When my colleague Melanie Teff and I visited Upper Nile and Southern Kordofan states a few weeks ago, we spent a lot of time hearing and talking about water. Sudan had been experiencing a drought, and harvests had yielded far less than normal. People were worried. The international community was worried. The UN's World Food Programme (WFP) announced that it was increasing its expected number of beneficiaries for food aid in south Sudan this year from 1.1 million to 4.3 million people, a massive increase.

<http://www.refugeesinternational.org/print/4033>

Water Crisis Grips Syria, *New York Times*, March 2

A few kilometers beyond an irrigated golf course on the outskirts of Damascus, scores of refugees fleeing drought in Syria's northeastern breadbasket have settled into tents on a rocky field. The water shortage is undermining efforts to maintain economic growth in a country where agriculture until recently accounted for about 25 percent of gross domestic product.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/03/world/middleeast/03iht-letter.html?pagewanted=print>

Water Shortage Rains on the Parade of Dancers at Indian Holi Festival, *Times Online*, March 1

A chronic water shortage will put a dampener on the Hindu festival of Holi in India after revellers were warned not to use dangerously low drinking supplies for traditional rain dances. Experts fear that such crisis measures will become more common. India's water needs are expected to double by 2030 as the population expands, the agricultural sector strains to supply enough food and more people acquire proper plumbing.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article7044713.ece?print=yes&randnum=1267559815566>

India and Pakistan (Barely) Talk, *Editorial, New York Times, February 27*

In 2007, after three years of secret negotiations, the two sides were reportedly close to a deal to create an autonomous, demilitarized region in Kashmir. That ended when President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan resigned in 2008. The initiative should be revived. Meanwhile, the two governments should share information on troop movements in Kashmir and encourage trade and people-to-people exchanges. Talks on water and environmental issues are another way to seek common ground.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/27/opinion/27sat2.html>

Independent Board to Review Work of Top Climate Panel, *New York Times, February 27*

An independent board of scientists will be appointed to review the workings of the world's top climate science panel, which has faced recriminations over inaccuracies in a 2007 report, a United Nations environmental spokesman said. The board's work will be part of a broader review of the body, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, said Nick Nuttall, a spokesman for the United Nations Environment Program, who spoke on the sidelines of an international meeting of environment ministers here.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/27/science/earth/27climate.html>

See Also: A Perfect Storm Is Brewing for the IPCC, *Telegraph, February 27*

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/christopherbooker/7332803/A-perfect-storm-is-brewing-for-the-IPCC.html>

WOMEN

Women: The Most Effective Solution for Combating Hunger, *World Food Programme, March 4*

Women form the backbone of the agricultural sector in many countries and play a key role in getting food onto the table. Speaking ahead of International Women's Day, Isatou Jallow, chief of WFP's Gender Unit, explains the central role that women play in fighting hunger.

<http://www.wfp.org/stories/women-are-most-effective-solution-combating-hunger>

U.N. Women's Agency Remains Politically Paralyzed, *Inter-Press Service, March 3*

A longstanding proposal for the creation of a special U.N. agency for women - officially called a "gender entity" - is apparently moving at the sluggish pace of a paralytic snail.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/print.asp?idnews=50538>

Gender Equality Stressed at Conference on Eliminating Food Insecurity, *Media Global, March 2*

Food insecurity in Africa is a massive and multifaceted problem that experts have been trying to solve for years. One common theme that has emerged in the dialogue about African hunger is the role empowering women can play in increasing food security. Women in Africa often have trouble gaining access to credit, legal rights to own land, and knowledge about farming techniques and innovations that thereby limit their ability to profit from agriculture.

<http://mediaglobal.org/article/2010-03-02/gender-equality-stressed-at-conference-on-eliminating-food-insecurity>

Restoring Hope for Women in Africa, *Dana Perino, Former White House Press Secretary, Fox News, March 2*

You may have heard that going to Africa can change your life forever. That's certainly been true for me on the trips I've taken there. Recently, I had the opportunity to travel to Freetown, Sierra Leone with the ONE campaign to learn more about maternal and child health, girls' education and women's empowerment in Africa.

<http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/ci.DANA+PERINO%3A+Restoring+Hope+for+Women+In+Africa.opinionPrint>

UN: More Must Be Done to Empower Women, *Voice of America, March 1*

The U.N.'s female deputy secretary-general opened the organization's 54th Commission on the Status of Women Monday, warning that it is time to "move from commitment to action." Asha-Rose Migiro told hundreds of female delegates that 15 years after the so-called Beijing Declaration platform of action for women's rights progress has been achieved, there is still a long way to go.
<http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/human-rights/UN-More-Must-Be-Done-to-Empower-Women-85865477.html>

MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

Brazil Sets April for U.S. Cotton Aid Retaliation, *Reuters, March 3*

Brazil will retaliate against U.S. cotton subsidies in April unless both sides reach a negotiated solution to the long-standing trade dispute, Brazil's foreign minister said on Wednesday. The South American agricultural giant will present a list next week of U.S. products on which tariffs would be imposed, Foreign Minister Celso Amorim told a news conference after meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.
<http://af.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=AFN0325384420100303>

U.S. Industry Groups Warn on Obama Trade Plan in Asia, *Reuters, March 2*

President Barack Obama's plan to negotiate an Asia Pacific free trade pact could have a devastating impact on the dairy, sugar and textile sectors in the United States, U.S. industry groups warned.
<https://research.tdwaterhouse.ca/research/public/Markets/NewsArticle/1314-N02161631-1>

Weak Doha Trade Deal Would Hurt WTO, U.S. Says, *Reuters, March 2*

The United States defended its position in the eight-year-old Doha round of world trade talks, saying it could not agree to a weak deal because that would damage the World Trade Organization.
<http://in.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=INIndia-46569320100301>

Russia-U.S. Talks on Poultry Continue – Vilsack, *Reuters, March 2*

Top U.S. and Russian officials are looking at poultry processing alternatives to chlorine in the hopes of finding a solution to a trade spat that has shut U.S. chicken out of its top export market, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said on Tuesday.
<http://www.reuters.com/assets/print?aid=USN0225311520100302>

Rapid Global Trade Recovery Continues, *Financial Times, March 1*

Global trade in goods has continued to bounce back rapidly from its huge fall a year ago, with an authoritative index recording the fastest monthly increase in December in its 19-year history.
<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/296dedc0-2564-11df-9cdb-00144feab49a.html>

See Also: World Trade Monitor: December 2009, *Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis, March 1*
<http://www.cpb.nl/eng/research/sector2/data/trademonitor.pdf>

Taiwan, China to Hold Trade Accord Talks This Month, *Bloomberg, March 1*

Taiwan and China will hold a second round of talks on a trade accord this month, a Taiwanese official said after the mainland signaled a softer stance on issues affecting the island's farmers and small businesses.
<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20670001&sid=aaJ6KVteTDol>

Regional Players Cry Foul Over Unfair Trade with the U.S. Market, *AllAfrica.com, March 1*

The East African Community is not reaping maximum benefits from the African Growth and Opportunity Act, as the value of exports to the US market diminishes. This has been blamed on agricultural subsidies in the US as well as inadequate trade facilitation, ballooning production and flight costs.
<http://allafrica.com/stories/201003011060.html>

WTO Lamy: Doha Trade Pact Possible In 2010, Wouldn't Say Probable, *Wall Street Journal, February 26*
World Trade Organization chief Pascal Lamy said that completing the Doha round of global trade talks is still possible this year, though he stopped short of predicting it would get done. Speaking to the Bretton Woods

Committee's annual meeting via video conferencing, Lamy noted the U.S. is still insisting on greater market access to manufacturing in developing countries, which are in turn looking for safeguards to protect their agricultural sectors.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/BT-CO-20100226-708897.html>

AGRIBUSINESS

Solar Powered Weather Stations and Mobile Phone Technologies Drive Groundbreaking Micro-Insurance Plan for Kenya's Drought-Stricken Farmers, *Kilimo Salama, March 5*

As East Africa recovers from the worst drought in decades, an innovative program launched today will use a low-cost, mobile phone payment and data system, and automated, solar powered weather stations, to offer thousands of farmers in parts of Western and Central Kenya affordable, "pay as you plant" insurance to protect their investments in desperately needed high-yielding seeds, fertilizers, as well as other farm inputs. The program, called "Kilimo Salama," which in Kiswahili means "safe farming," is a partnership between the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture, UAP Insurance, and telecoms operator Safaricom.

http://kilimosalama.files.wordpress.com/2010/02/syngenta_kilimo-salama_release_final3.pdf

FDA Warns over Health Claims on Food Labels, *Financial Times, March 4*

The US Food & Drug Administration disclosed on Wednesday that it warned 17 food manufacturers last month that labelling on the packaging of 22 products broke the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act. Warning letters sent to companies such as Nestlé, Gorton's, the largest US producer of frozen seafood, Dreyer's Ice Cream and baby food maker Beech-nut asserted that they used misleading or unsubstantiated claims to present products as healthy or low in fat even though their ingredients did not substantiate the claims.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/fac6bcd8-2723-11df-b84e-00144feabdc0.html>

See Also: UK Scientists Devise Worldwide Food Alert System, *Science Daily, March 4*

Countries producing food containing harmful bacteria and toxins could be named and shamed more quickly using a worldwide alert system devised by a team of scientists from Kingston University in South West London. The team, led by Professor Declan Naughton, says the easy to use computer tool can be used to monitor contaminated products; helping to prevent them reaching shop shelves and ensuring that food is safe to eat.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/03/100304112320.htm>

Pioneer Brought on Its Own Distress, Rival Says, *Des Moines Register, February 28*

Monsanto Chief Executive Hugh Grant says the dispute between his company and Pioneer Hi-Bred comes down to the fact that the Iowa company changed direction.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/fdcp/?1267545124975>

Caterpillar Moves to Cut Links with Iran, *Financial Times, February 28*

Caterpillar, the US building equipment group, has become the latest company to bow to a lobbyists' "name and shame" campaign by announcing steps to sever trading links with Iran. The company said it would bar its non-US subsidiaries from accepting orders for products that they knew were destined for delivery to Iran.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/75f16576-248a-11df-8be0-00144feab49a.html>

Monsanto Fights Its 'Bad Boy' Public Image, *Des Moines Register, February 28*

Monsanto has an image problem, Chief Executive Hugh Grant says. The company's image is improving as it promotes its efforts to feed the world, provide more healthful grains and use the Earth's resources more responsibly, Grant said. Specialists said genetically modified seeds could help boost food production, which must rise 70 percent by 2050 to feed a growing population, according to the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization. Grant said lines of biotech seeds are planned that will require less water and nitrogen, helping put Monsanto on the right side of environmental and climate change debates.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/article/20100228/BUSINESS01/100226045/-1/GETPUBLISHED03wp-rss2.php/Monsanto-fights-its-bad-boy-public-image>

Banner Photograph: © Ray Witlin / World Bank