

GLOBAL FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE WEEKLY NEWS BRIEF OF THE GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



July 10th – July 17th, 2009

For more information on the L'Aquila G-8 Summit, the Global Agricultural Development Project, and previous editions of *Global Food for Thought*, please visit www.thechicagocouncil.org/globalagdevelopment.

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CONTENTS

Special Coverage of L'Aquila G-8 Summit

Key Articles

Relevant U.S. Administration and Congressional Activities

New Reports/Policy Briefs/Books

Upcoming Events

Agricultural Issues

Foreign Assistance

Environment (Water/Climate)

Global Economic Crisis in the Developing World

Women

Market Access and Trade Issues

Agribusiness

SPECIAL COVERAGE OF L'AQUILA G-8 SUMMIT

"L'Aquila" Joint Statement on Global Food Security, L'Aquila Food Security Initiative (AFSI), July 10

[http://www.g8italia2009.it/static/G8_Allegato/LAquila_Joint_Statement_on_Global_Food_Security\[1\],0.pdf](http://www.g8italia2009.it/static/G8_Allegato/LAquila_Joint_Statement_on_Global_Food_Security[1],0.pdf)

Press Conference of President Obama at G-8 Summit, The White House, July 10

"Finally, we have committed to investing \$20 billion in food security -- agricultural development programs to help fight world hunger. This is in addition to the emergency humanitarian aid that we provide. And I should just note that going into the meeting we had agreed to \$15 billion; we exceeded that mark and obtained an additional \$5 billion of hard commitments. We do not view this assistance as an end in itself. We believe that the purpose of aid must be to create the conditions where it's no longer needed -- to help people become self-sufficient, provide for their families, and lift their standards of living."

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Press-Conference-by-the-President-in-LAquila-Italy-7-10-09/

AGRA Statement to G8: Shortest Path to Food Security is through Africa's Breadbaskets, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, July 11

When the leaders of the G8 countries met in L'Aquila, Italy, they had the opportunity to make good on their commitment to boost aid for Africa. They did not disappoint. The world's wealthiest countries committed to

raising \$20 billion over three years to promote food security and agricultural development in poor countries. The question now moves from *whether* one should invest in Africa's farms to *how* to invest.
<http://www.agra-alliance.org/content/news/detail/966/>

The G-8 Announcement on Agricultural Development: Can it Save the World From Hunger? *Dan Glickman and Catherine Bertini, Huffington Post, July 10*

President Obama, Secretary Clinton, and others in the Administration, as well as the other G-8 leaders, have taken the first step towards solving the problem of world hunger by including a commitment to agricultural investment as a key part of the solution. Agricultural policies may not hold the same appeal or glamour as those on climate change or energy (although they are inextricably linked), but the first Green Revolution proves that if funded and sustained, agricultural development can change the world and materially alleviate poverty. The commitment of the G-8 leaders, if given the right support, and especially the right leadership, can have this same impact.

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dan-glickman/the-g-8-announcement-on-a b 229811.html>

G8's historic shift needs applause, *Christopher Barrett, IRIN, July 14*

Last year's global food crisis awakened world leaders to the need for renewed commitment to agriculture in charting a sustainable path out of chronic poverty for the one billion people who live on a dollar a day or less. The consequences of climate change are expected to hit the rural poor in developing countries especially hard. As US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton said last month, "The question is not whether we can end hunger, it's whether we will." The G8 announcement of a developing country food security fund is a welcome step in that direction.

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/IRIN/65c6f26972762a776ed6c4688b16bcd1.htm>

Africa's reforms have gone unnoticed, *William A. Masters (Expert's Committee Member), Financial Times, July 16*

The pay-offs to Africa's reforms depend largely on the availability of new technologies. Where high-performing seeds have not yet arrived, African farmers have no choice but to replant traditional varieties – so they get traditional yields, no matter what new incentives their government may offer. Africa's own trade reforms have now raised the stakes, however, so African farmers now have unprecedented incentives to adopt and scale up the best new technologies.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/7296ad1a-71a1-11de-a821-00144feabdc0.html>

Food security is G8 chance of relevance, *Editorial, Financial Times, July 10*

The world's poor, already smarting from record food prices, now have to contend with the recession's devastating effect on incomes. This year, there will for the first time be more than 1bn chronically hungry people. It does not have to be this way. The world is rich enough and humanity sufficiently inventive to secure food for everyone.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/b9ce76a2-6d84-11de-8b19-00144feabdc0.html>

Growing Aid, *Editorial, Washington Post, July 11*

There have been pledges of aid before, not all of them kept. It's not clear how much of the \$20 billion promised yesterday is new money and how much a repackaging of previous commitments. For its part, the Obama administration said that the United States would contribute \$3.5 billion, of which half would represent new funds. Still, the program is potentially significant in that it would emphasize investment in poor countries' own agricultural production, rather than simply more gifts of grain from the developed world.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/11/AR2009071100489_pf.html

Obama's Africa: More talk than policy, *Politico, July 11*

To many of his African listeners, he came not as a finger-wagging outsider but as a deeply disappointed son of Africa – giving President Barack Obama's sharp critique of corruption and repression an added resonance. But as Obama returns home, it's not at all clear that the force of his message will be converted into major changes in U.S. policies toward the continent, or, ultimately, to the dismal conditions of life on the ground for millions in Africa. "Is it going to change U.S. policy hugely? I'd say no, because they're going to be constrained by the economic situation," said Jennifer Widner, a professor at the Woodrow Wilson School.

<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0709/24813.html>

G-8 Promises \$20 Billion in Agricultural Aid: Real Change or Business as Usual?, *Paula Crossfield, Huffington Post, July 10*

For the first time, instead of being given directly as food aid, these funds are set to be allotted for building an agricultural economy in nations in need, specifically in Africa. Just what this agricultural infrastructure entails (the fine print mentions fertilizer and seed, grain storage vessels and plant variety research) could be the key to whether the plan actually seeks to feed many of the billion people on earth who are now hungry, or whether the U.S. and other nations will, instead, further fuel the food crisis.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/paula-crossfield/g8-promises-20-billion-in_b_229526.html

In quotes: G8 food pledge assessed, *BBC News, July 10*

<http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8144649.stm>

Instant View: G8 summit pledges \$20 bln to boost food output, *Reuters, July 10*

Following are comments from aid experts on the G8 summit's global food security initiative, which pledged \$20 billion over three years to spur agricultural investment in poorer countries to fight hunger.

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/LA446460.htm>

Behind the G8 food security initiative: Gates Foundation role, *Seattle Times, July 10*

The Gates Foundation has focused on seeds, fertilizer, irrigation and market access in its own programs, spending \$2.6 billion on global development so far, most of it for agriculture in Africa. The Gates Foundation has also funded policy studies and advocacy campaigns. It gave nearly \$1 million to the **Chicago Council on Global Affairs** to fund a project on the U.S. role in global agricultural development, and Gates Foundation Senior Fellow Catherine Bertini co-authored the report. At the beginning of the Obama Administration, the Chicago Council released the report with recommendations for a new policy on agriculture as a way to restore the United States "as a force for positive change in the world." The report, "Renewing American Leadership in the Fight Against Hunger and Poverty: The Chicago Initiative on Global Agricultural Development," made five recommendations and more than 20 specific suggestions, calling for a renewed U.S. commitment to alleviating global poverty through agricultural development in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. The recommendations include increasing support for agricultural education, research, including genetic engineering, and infrastructure.

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/thebusinessofgiving/2009450410_gates_foundation_moves_behind.html

G8: Does world need new rules on food security?, *Christian Science Monitor, July 8*

The trend of rich countries buying and leasing large tracts of land to farm in the developing world is causing such consternation in United Nations, diplomatic, and nongovernmental circles that the Group of 8 will be urged as they meet this week to discuss new rules that could somehow regulate the phenomenon. According to Olivier de Schutter, the UN special rapporteur on food, some 30 million hectares (74 million acres) of developing world land – an area roughly half the size of France – have been targeted in scores of deals over the past three years.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2009/0708/p06s17-wogn.html>

KEY ARTICLES

Africa's starving could treble to 600m in decades, *The Telegraph (U.K.), July 13*

A new demographic analysis has said there needs to be a "green revolution" to grow more food as the global population rises from 6.7 billion to 9.2 billion by 2050. Almost all of this expansion will take place in Africa, Asia and the Middle East and much of it will be concentrated in the countries least able to feed themselves.

Dan Glickman, a former US agriculture secretary who chairs a "global leaders' group" on this issue, said: "We've stepped up to the plate on food aid, but we have to step up to the plate on agricultural development otherwise we'll have not just an acute problem but a chronic problem which will spill over into the political realm as well."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/greenpolitics/population/5796133/Africas-starving-could-treble-to-600m-in-decades.html>

Higher food costs still a concern, *BBC News*, July 13

Food prices soared in 2007 and early 2008, throwing hundreds of millions of people around the world into poverty. Since last year's peak, trends in global food price have been more complex. But despite this, the BBC's own research suggests rising food costs remain a major problem for lots of people in lots of places.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8144008.stm>

The planet's future: Climate change 'will cause civilisation to collapse', *The Independent (U.K.)*, July 12

An effort on the scale of the Apollo mission that sent men to the Moon is needed if humanity is to have a fighting chance of surviving the ravages of climate change. The stakes are high, as, without sustainable growth, "billions of people will be condemned to poverty and much of civilisation will collapse". This is the stark warning from the biggest single report to look at the future of the planet – obtained by The Independent on Sunday ahead of its official publication next month. Backed by a diverse range of leading organisations such as Unesco, the World Bank, the US army and the Rockefeller Foundation, the 2009 State of the Future report runs to 6,700 pages and draws on contributions from 2,700 experts around the globe.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/climate-change/the-planets-future-climate-change-will-cause-civilisation-to-collapse-1742759.html>

Leaders seek trade deal by 2010, *Financial Times*, July 10

The world's biggest economies agreed on Thursday to conclude a comprehensive trade deal in 2010, in the latest attempt to revive the stalled Doha round and give a shot in the arm to the world economy.

http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/f42cf9e2-6c7e-11de-a6e6-00144feabdc0,dwp_uuid=1491273a-66fd-11de-925f-00144feabdc0.html

See Also: G8 injects new momentum in Doha Round push, *Reuters*, July 10

<http://in.reuters.com/article/businessNews/idINIndia-40956220090710?sp=true>

See Also: Tangled Trade Talks, *Editorial*, *The New York Times*, July 10

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/11/opinion/11sat1.html>

Clinton: Vetting for USAID job 'ridiculous', *Associated Press*, July 14

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton is blaming an exhaustive White House vetting process for the fact that the Obama administration has not yet named a person to run the U.S. Agency for International Development. Six months into the administration's tenure without having appointed someone to the agency's top spot, Clinton told USAID employees that several people had turned down the job due to overly burdensome financial and personal disclosure requirements that she called a "nightmare," "frustrating beyond words" and "ridiculous."

http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5i_hcij79P41PHkVtaG2GejkfEUFwD99DN0700

Agriculture at a Crossroads: Synthesis Report, *International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development*, July 2009

This Synthesis Report captures the complexity and diversity of agriculture and agricultural knowledge, science and technology (AKST) across world regions. It is built upon the Global and five Sub-Global reports that provide evidence for the integrated analysis of the main concerns necessary to achieve development and sustainability goals. It is organized in two parts that address the primary animating question: how can AKST be used to reduce hunger and poverty, improve rural livelihoods, and facilitate equitable environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable development?

Full Report:

[http://www.agassessment.org/reports/IAASTD/EN/Agriculture%20at%20a%20Crossroads_Synthesis%20Report%20\(English\).pdf](http://www.agassessment.org/reports/IAASTD/EN/Agriculture%20at%20a%20Crossroads_Synthesis%20Report%20(English).pdf)

Executive Summary: http://www.agassessment.org/docs/IAASTD_EXEC_SUMMARY_JAN_2008.pdf

Issues in Brief - Bioenergy and Biofuels: Opportunities and Constraints:

http://www.agassessment.org/docs/10505_Bioenergy.pdf

Issues in Brief - Business as usual is not an option: The role of institutions:

http://www.agassessment.org/docs/10505_Institutions.pdf

Issues in Brief - Business as Usual is Not an Option: Trade and Markets:

http://www.agassessment.org/docs/10505_Trade.pdf

Issues in Brief - Food Security in a Volatile World: http://www.agassessment.org/docs/10505_FoodSecurity.pdf

Issues in Brief - Food Safety, Plant and Animal Health: Human Health and Sustainability Dimensions:

http://www.agassessment.org/docs/10505_FoodSafe.pdf

Issues in Brief - Human Health and Nutrition: http://www.agassessment.org/docs/10505_HumanHealth.pdf

Issues in Brief - Towards Multifunctional Agriculture for Social, Environmental and Economic Sustainability:

http://www.agassessment.org/docs/10505_Multi.pdf

Agriculture at a Crossroads: Global Report, *International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development*, July 2009

Agriculture is multifunctional. It provides food, feed, fiber, fuel and other goods. It also has a major influence on other essential ecosystem services such as water supply and carbon sequestration or release. Agriculture plays an important social role, providing employment and a way of life. Both agriculture and its products are a medium of cultural transmission and cultural practices worldwide. Agriculturally based communities provide a foundation for local economies and are an important means for countries to secure their territories. Agriculture accounts for a major part of the livelihood of 40% of the world's population and occupies 40% of total land area; 90% of farms worldwide have a size of less than 2 hectares.

Full Report:

[http://www.agassessment.org/reports/IAASTD/EN/Agriculture%20at%20a%20Crossroads_Global%20Report%20\(English\).pdf](http://www.agassessment.org/reports/IAASTD/EN/Agriculture%20at%20a%20Crossroads_Global%20Report%20(English).pdf)

Summary for Decision Makers of the Global Report:

http://www.agassessment.org/docs/IAASTD_GLOBAL_SDM_JAN_2008.pdf

Summary for Decision Makers of the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) Report:

http://www.agassessment.org/docs/IAASTD_SSA_SDM_JAN_2008.pdf

Summary for Decision Makers of the East and South Asia and the Pacific (ESAP) Report:

http://www.agassessment.org/docs/IAASTD_ESAP_SDM_JAN_2008.pdf

Summary for Decision Makers of the Central and West Asia and North Africa (CWANA) Report:

http://www.agassessment.org/docs/IAASTD_CWANA_SDM_JAN_2008.pdf

Summary for Decision Makers of the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Report:

http://www.agassessment.org/docs/IAASTD_LAC_SDM_JAN_2008.pdf

Summary for Decision Makers of the North America and Europe (NAE) Report:

http://www.agassessment.org/docs/IAASTD_NAE_SDM_JAN_2008.pdf

RELEVANT U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Foreign Policy Address at the Council on Foreign Relations, *Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton*, July 15

"As we seek more agile, effective, and creative partnerships for development, we will focus on country-driven solutions, such as those we are launching with Haiti on recovery and sustainable development, and with African states on global hunger. These initiatives must not be designed to help countries scrape by – they are a tool to help countries stand on their own. Our development agenda will also focus on women as drivers of economic growth and social stability. Women have long comprised the majority of the world's unhealthy, unschooled, and underfed. They are also the bulk of the world's poor. The global recession has had a disproportionate effect on women and girls, which in turn has repercussions for families, communities, and even regions."

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/july/126071.htm>

Video: <http://www.state.gov/video/?videoid=29636586001>

Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Names Mary McNeil as Deputy Assistant Secretary For Civil Rights, *U.S. Department of Agriculture*, July 15

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced the appointment of Mary McNeil as USDA Deputy Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights. In this position, McNeil will have responsibility for the leadership, coordination, and direction for USDA's civil rights programs, including matters related to program delivery, compliance and equal employment opportunity.

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/.s.7.0.A/7.0.10B?contentidonly=true&contentid=2009/07/0308.xml>

Lugar Encourages Obama to Focus on Food, Energy, Corruption, *American Chronicle*, July 15

U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar said that President Obama's trip to Ghana offers the opportunity to highlight important issues of food security, energy security and the importance of fighting corruption. Lugar also welcomed news from the G8 Summit that it will work to improve global food security. With U.S. leadership, the initiative will assist the one billion people who suffer from chronic hunger and will return the international donor community to a commitment to support sustainable agricultural productivity and rural development as an engine of economic growth.

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/110314>

Obama nominates new Peace Corps director, *Associated Press*, July 14

President Barack Obama says he will nominate Aaron Williams, a career international development specialist, to be director of the Peace Corps.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hd8aBJ5LryJWPb7aAlhx-zJSUuhQD99ECNC00>

Full Committee hearing entitled, "Economic Opportunities for Agriculture, Forestry Communities, and Others in Reducing Global Warming Pollution," *U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works*, July 14

Jeffrey W. Hopkins, Principal Adviser, Energy and Climate Policy, Rio Tinto:

http://epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore_id=3b5dafba-1b6b-4d55-b202-7e906c509dca

Bill Hohenstein, Director, Global Climate Change Program, United States Department of Agriculture:

http://epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore_id=e803268c-d7f8-4cb5-ab67-03329e1bc8b2

Fred Krupp, President, Environmental Defense Fund:

http://epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore_id=c1aff9fd-47a2-4642-a829-9dcea286543e

Bob Stallman, President, American Farm Bureau Federation:

http://epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore_id=20fd972a-1850-4ded-85e1-8de02eb056ee

Remarks by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, *USAID Town Hall Meeting- Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR)*, July 13

"And at last week's G-8 meeting in Italy, the President announced our food security program that will come with a major increase in funding for food and sustainable agriculture. And again, when he was in Ghana, he focused on the importance of smart development. We need experts in development, like all of you, to steer crucial investments and the material conditions of people's lives, from strengthening health and education to improving agriculture and access to food and water."

<http://www.usaid.gov/press/speeches/2009/sp090713.html>

Climate bill takes hit in Senate from China, *The Hill*, July 11

The refusal of China and other emerging economic powers to agree to emissions limits this week will make it tougher for key Senate Democrats to support a global warming bill. Brown, Lincoln and other Democrats say the reluctance of China and India to agree to emission restrictions clearly complicates the party's effort to pass the bill, given the likelihood that Republicans will lock down against it. Brown said it will naturally be difficult to persuade the public to support a bill that could increase costs for businesses if there's a fear competition in China will gain an advantage.

<http://thehill.com/leading-the-news/climate-bill-takes-hit-in-senate-from-china-2009-07-11.html>

See Also: Climate bill faces steep Senate climb, Politico, July 13

<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0709/24848.html>

The Roadmap to End Global Hunger, *Examiner.com*, July 11

With over one billion people suffering from hunger worldwide, it is clear that the United States and the international community need to act. The U.S. Congress can show leadership by supporting new legislation put forth by Reps. Jim McGovern (MA) and Jo Ann Emerson (MO). The bill, H.R. 2817, is known as the Roadmap to End Global Hunger. The legislation would establish a global hunger advisor for President Obama. This is very important as hunger is a critical aspect of almost every foreign policy issue we face.

<http://www.examiner.com/x-16819-Global-Hunger-Examiner~y2009m7d11-The-Roadmap-To-End-Global-Hunger>

Costs and Benefits to Agriculture from Climate Change Policy, *Iowa Ag Review, Center for Agriculture and Rural Development, Summer 2009*

Consideration and subsequent passage of the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 by the U.S. House of Representatives focused attention on whether agriculture would be helped or hurt by the policy's objective of reducing U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. Even though Collin Peterson, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, sought and obtained changes to the legislation that were favorable to agriculture, many farm groups came out in opposition to the bill. One example is the American Farm Bureau Federation, which estimated that U.S. net farm income would decrease by at least \$5 billion per year by 2020.

http://www.card.iastate.edu/iowa_ag_review/summer_09/IAR.pdf

Text of President Obama's Speech to Ghana's Parliament, *VOA News*, July 11

By cutting costs that go to Western consultants and administration, we will put more resources in the hands of those who need it, while training people to do more for themselves. That is why our \$3.5 billion food security initiative is focused on new methods and technologies for farmers – not simply sending American producers or goods to Africa. Aid is not an end in itself. The purpose of foreign assistance must be creating the conditions where it is no longer needed.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/2009-07-11-voa6.cfm>

SEE ALSO: Obama Delivers Call for Change to a Rapt Africa, *The New York Times*, July 11

President Obama traveled in his father's often-troubled home continent on Saturday, where he symbolized a new political era but brought a message of tough love: American aid must be matched by Africa's responsibility for its own problems. To build a prosperous future, he said. Africa needs to shed corruption and tyranny and take on poverty and disease.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/12/world/africa/12prexy.html>

U.S. House backs \$48.8 billion foreign aid funding bill, *Reuters*, July 9

The U.S. House of Representatives on Thursday approved a \$48.8 billion spending bill to bolster U.S. foreign policy and aid efforts, including to allies like Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The legislation includes \$2.7 billion in foreign aid for Afghanistan and \$1.5 billion for Pakistan as they fight [Taliban](#) militants. It also provides \$2.2 billion for Israel, another close U.S. ally, for the fiscal year 2010 that starts October 1.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/politicsNews/idUSTRE56901T20090710>

NEW REPORTS/POLICY BRIEFS/BOOKS

Food security in Africa: learning lessons from the food crisis, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)*, June 2009

In recent months, the food crisis in Africa and much of the developing world has been overshadowed by the financial crisis. Unfortunately, this does not mean that food security in African countries has been successfully addressed. Prices of basic foodstuffs remain high in much of the region, and the structural factors that underpinned last year's crisis have not been resolved. Now is not the time to forget about this crisis. UNCTAD called last year's crisis a wake-up call for developing countries. Now is the time to heed that call, and for African countries and their development partners to acknowledge the urgency of addressing food security.

http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/tdbex47d3_en.pdf

Shifts in African crop climates by 2050, and the implications for crop improvement and genetic resources conservation, Marshall B. Burke, David B. Lobell, Luigi Guarino, *Global Environmental Change*, July 2009

Increased understanding of the substantial threat climate change poses to agriculture has not been met with a similarly improved understanding of how best to respond. Here we examine likely shifts in crop climates in Sub-Saharan Africa under climate change to 2050, and explore the implications for agricultural adaptation, with particular focus on identifying priorities in crop breeding and the conservation of crop genetic resources. We find that for three of Africa's primary cereal crops – maize, millet, and sorghum – expected changes in growing season temperature are considerable and dwarf changes projected for precipitation, with the warmest recent temperatures on average cooler than almost 9 out of 10 expected observations by 2050.
http://www.stanford.edu/~mburke/papers/Burke_et_al_2008.pdf

Agricultural Policies in OECD Countries: Monitoring and Evaluation 2009, *OECD*, July 2009

Overall support to farmers in OECD countries has been declining. In 2008, it was 21% of farmers' gross receipts, the lowest level since the mid-1980s. The decline has largely been due to a narrowing of the gap between domestic and world agricultural commodity prices. Agriculture is expected to fare better than many other sectors in the current economic crisis. It has a relatively smaller financial exposure, demand is less sensitive to income falls, and the existing set of support policies in many countries can dampen the impact of the crisis. Governments are facing tighter fiscal conditions, which is likely to prompt further review of support policies, including for agriculture.

Highlights: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/37/16/43239979.pdf>

Crop Prospects and Food Situation Report, *Food and Agriculture Organization*, July 2009

Domestic food prices in developing countries mostly remain much higher than before the soaring food price crisis despite a sharp decline in international prices since their peaks in 2008.

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/ai484e/ai484e00.htm>

SEE Also: Developing countries still hurting from high food prices, *UN News*, July 16

Despite a drop in international food prices and good cereal harvests overall, prices in developing countries remain high, hurting millions of poor people in both rural and urban areas, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) warned in a [report](#) released today.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31486&Cr=food+crisis&Cr1>

The Transmission of Exchange Rate Changes to Agricultural Prices, *USDA/Economic Research Service*, July 2009

Movements in countries' exchange rates can substantially change the prices of goods faced by producers and consumers and thereby affect incentives to produce, consume, and trade goods. Exchange rate changes, however, might not be completely transmitted (passed through) to domestic prices. Empirical evidence shows that price and exchange rate transmission for agricultural products is low in most developing economies, partly because of trade policies but also because of inadequate infrastructure and other market deficiencies.

Summary: http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/ERR76/ERR76_ReportSummary.pdf

Entire Report: http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/ERR76/ERR76_ReportSummary.pdf

The Changing Face of Rural Space: Agriculture and Rural Development in the Western Balkans, *World Bank*, July 2009

Although at different stages of development, the countries of the Western Balkans—Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia—face similar challenges in transforming and modernizing their agricultural food production (agri-food) sectors. Their rural sectors have lagged behind the rest of the economy in growth and poverty reduction, their agri-food sectors are undercapitalized and highly fragmented, and their agro-processing capacities limited. Agricultural trade deficits are widening, climate change is posing increasing risks to farm incomes, and low-cost imports and changing consumer preferences are further eroding competitiveness. Added to this scenario are the challenges and opportunities of adopting the EU *acquis communautaire* relating to agriculture.

http://publications.worldbank.org/ecommerce/catalog/product?item_id=9037267

See Also: **Rural makeover in the Balkans**, *FAO*, July 2

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/21804/icode/>

Empty Promises: What happened to ‘development’ in the WTO’s Doha Round? *Oxfam International*, July 16

The World Trade Organization’s Doha Development Round was meant to rebalance decades of unfair rules in agriculture and address the needs of developing countries. Instead, the negotiations have betrayed this promise. The WTO’s trade Round has become a ‘market access’ negotiation, in which developing countries are expected to give disproportionately more and will receive little but stale promises of the general benefits of liberalization.

Full Report: <http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/bp131-empty-promises.pdf>

Summary: <http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/bp131-empty-promises-summary.pdf>

Aid for Trade: Matching Potential Demand and Supply, *World Bank*, July 2009

This paper is designed to help both the beneficiary governments and donors of aid-for-trade identify countries that are under-performing in trade and which are receiving less aid for trade than their global performance might otherwise suggest is necessary. The authors develop ten measures of trade performance and capacity (including trade-related infrastructure, institutions, and incentives) to assess potential demand, and then look at country allocations of aid for trade to see which are receiving below-average amounts in the supply of aid for trade - relative to their potential demand.

<http://www->

wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/07/13/000158349_20090713112808/Rendered/PDF/WPS4991.pdf

The impact of US and UK legislatures on aid delivery, *Overseas Development Institute*, July 2009

This study seeks to examine aid through the lens of the relationship between the legislature and the aid agency in two leading donors: the United States (U.S.) and the United Kingdom (U.K.). The objective of this report is to deepen understanding on how this relationship potentially impacts a donor’s ability to pursue its development objectives and internationally recognized best practice in aid. While there are important differences between the U.K. Parliamentary system and the U.S. Presidential system, there are important transatlantic lessons to be learned from how their legislatures impact the effectiveness of bilateral aid.

<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/3547.pdf>

The Least Developed Countries Report, *UNCTAD*, July 16

A rebalancing between the State and the market is necessary to create resilience to external shocks through greater diversification and structural change, and to promote a more inclusive and employment-intensive growth path. LDCs need to find new forms of development governance that are appropriate for the twenty-first century.

Full report: http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/ldc2009_en.pdf

Overview: http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/ldc2009overview_en.pdf

SEE ALSO: Poor countries ‘need to change’, *BBC.com*, July 16

The impact of the global crisis on the poorest countries is likely to be so severe that a radical change in policy is needed, a UN report says. The 41 poorest countries will be particularly dependent on aid, it says.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8154121.stm>

White Paper: Our energy future – creating a low carbon economy, *UK BIS*, July 16

This white paper sets out a strategy for the long term, to give industry the confidence to invest to help us deliver our goals - a truly sustainable energy policy.

<http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file10719.pdf>

SEE ALSO: Government unveils sweeping plans to transform UK into low-carbon economy, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, July 15

The government has unveiled detailed plans for transforming the UK to a low-carbon economy and meeting its targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Under the plans, which are projected to create 1.2m "green jobs", every government department will be required to meet a carbon budget alongside its financial budget

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/jul/15/government-low-carbon-plans>

Transnational Trafficking and the Rule of Law in West Africa: A Threat Assessment, *U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, July 2009*

Economic monoculture can also feed bad governance, a problem often described as "the resource curse". Typically, mineral resources and even agricultural exports are controlled by agencies of the national government. In extreme cases, controlling these agencies can become the only path to wealth in otherwise small and weak economies, and so politics can become a vehicle for personal enrichment.

<http://viewer.zmags.com/publication/d86db66e#/d86db66e/1>

World Agricultural Production: China Rice – Bumper Crop Forecast for 2009/10, *USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service, July 2009*

China is likely to produce a bumper rice crop this season, the sixth straight increase in production. Farmers were encouraged to increase rice area for 2009/10 by generous government input subsidies and higher procurement prices, and the yield trend over the last six years is rising.

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/wap/circular/2009/09-07/productionfull07-09.pdf>

Climate Change Trade Measures: Considerations for U.S. Policy Makers, *U.S. Government Accountability Office, July 2009*

Global climate change is one of the most significant long-term policy challenges facing the United States, and policies to mitigate climate change will have important economic, social, and environmental implications. Members of Congress have introduced several bills to address the problem of climate change, many of which establish domestic emissions pricing by requiring firms that emit greenhouse gases either to pay a tax or to hold emission allowances. GAO was asked to examine the potential effects of greenhouse gas emissions pricing on U.S. industries' international competitiveness and trade measures being considered as part of U.S. legislative proposals to address climate change.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09724r.pdf>

Southern Africa Food Security Update, *U.N. World Food Program, July 2009*

<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp204813.pdf>

See Also: **Southern Africa Food Security Update**, *U.N. World Food Program, June 2009*

<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp204814.pdf>

Rebuilding after Emergency: Revamping Agricultural Research in Sierra Leone after Civil War, *International Food Policy Research Institute, June 2009*

The civil war in Sierra Leone, caused by a mix of political, social, and economic factors, had a huge impact on the overall economy in general and on the performance of the agricultural sector in particular. The agricultural research system of Sierra Leone was severely affected by the civil war. Research infrastructure was destroyed, laboratories were damaged and abandoned, and welltrained researchers and scientists fled from the country.

<http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/dp/IFPRIDP00869.pdf>

Rural South Kordofan Food Security Assessment, *U.N. World Food Program, June 2009*

A food security assessment was carried out in rural parts of South Kordofan in response reports of widespread crop failure due to insufficient rains during the 2008/2009 agricultural season and the continued influx of returnees to South Kordofan. The assessment had the following specific objectives: (1) Assess the food security status of rural populations in South Kordofan State; (2) Recommend short and medium term interventions to support food security and livelihood of the assessed population; and (3) Identify issues that require further follow up or monitoring.

<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp205015.pdf>

Ethiopia Market Watch, *U.N. World Food Program, June 2009*

<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp203924.pdf>

UPCOMING EVENTS

U.S. Senate Agricultural Committee Hearing on the Role of Agriculture in Climate Change Legislation

Date: July 22, 2009

Location: Washington, DC

As the Senate begins to take up the issues of energy and global warming, this hearing will further explore the interests and concerns of farmers, ranchers, forest land owners and rural communities.

<http://agriculture.senate.gov/>

International ISHS/ProMusa Symposium Global Perspectives on Asian Challenges

Date: September 14-18, 2009

Location: Guang Dong, China,

ProMusa, in collaboration with the Guang Dong Academy for Agricultural Sciences (GDAAS), the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS) and Bioversity's Banana and Plantain Regional Network for Asia and the Pacific (BAPNET), has announced the "International Banana Symposium: Global Perspectives on Asian Challenges."

http://www.promusa.org/symposium_2009/home.html

http://www.farmpolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/fischerboel-hill-event_may-06-09-invite-final-3.pdf

2009 World Food Prize and "Borlaug Dialogue" symposium: Food, Agriculture, and National Security

Date: October 14-16, 2009

Location: Des Moines, IA

The formal awarding of the \$250,000 World Food Prize will be the cornerstone of a week-long series of events that will attract several hundred government officials and policymakers, private-sector and agribusiness executives, academics and scientists, and NGO and development-agency leaders from over 65 countries. The "conversations" of the annual Norman E. Borlaug International Symposium will this year focus on the connection between food and agriculture and national and international security and cooperation, with speakers including renowned global CEOs, agricultural ministers and diplomats, noted intelligence and security experts, and other eminent leaders in agricultural and rural development.

<https://www.worldfoodprize.org/symposium/2009.htm> (registration available beginning in June)

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

SKorea leases Philippine farms in food security bid, *Agence France Presse (AFP), July 16*

A South Korean provincial government has leased a major plot of farmland in the central Philippines to grow corn as part of Seoul's bid for food security. They said Jeonnam Feedstock, a company set up by South Jeolla province, signed a contract in April to lease 95,000 hectares (231,400 acres) of land for 25 years in Oriental Mindoro province. Jeonnam Feedstock plans to plant 1,000 hectares of corn for experimental purposes as early as September to produce 10,000 tonnes of feed in the first year.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jp3hJrsISsGh2ueqRYJNSRRgZawg>

Benin: rice offers new hope, *FAO, July 15*

Will Benin be self-sufficient in rice one day? Experts at FAO are forecasting just that, and going so far as to say that in time - probably as soon as 2011 - this West African country will even export its surplus rice output. A two-pronged strategy based on intensifying production and marketing of high quality seeds is behind the predicted miracle.

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/28612/icode/>

See Also: UN experts predict better seeds can help Benin become self-sufficient in rice, UN News, July 15
<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31476>

Africa: Funds Hitch Hits Fertilizer Project, *AllAfrica.com*, July 15

A \$2.3 million funding shortfall has delayed the roll out of an ambitious fertilizer procurement scheme designed to ensure cheap fertilizer supplies for farmers in Africa. The African Fertilizer Financing Mechanism (AFFM) was set up in 2006 at the request of several African heads of State and Agriculture ministers during a summit in Abuja. In their bid to boost agricultural productivity, they noted that one of the key constraints on food production was inadequate supply of fertilizer.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200907140998.html>

Mideast: Malnutrition Begins To Bite, *Inter Press Service (IPS)*, July 15

"No one is buying meat these days," says Yousef Al-Jerjowi, sitting next to his butcher shop devoid of customers. With unemployment rates at 50 percent in Gaza, and 80 percent of Gazan Palestinians dependent on food aid hand-outs, it's no wonder that Jerjowi's business isn't booming. But the problem lies not only with Gaza's siege-shattered economy and the great poverty this has created; it is also the scarcity of beef.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=47667>

Urban Poor And Hungry Burgeoning Unnoticed, *IRIN*, July 14

The number of poor and food-insecure people in developing countries is increasing more quickly in urban areas than in rural areas, and could be dropping off the policy radar, says new research by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). "Poverty is still viewed by many as a rural problem, as both governments and donors continue to allocate resources to rural development in order to reverse the bias of urban policies of the 1970s and 1980s," Shahla Shapouri and Stacey Rosen, researchers in the department's Economic Research Services, write in the USDA's Food Security Assessment 2008-09.

<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=85265>

See Also: Food Security Assessment, 2008-09, US Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service, July 2009

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/GFA20/GFA20.pdf>

Ghana: Salvaging the Agricultural Industry Through a National Fund, *AllAfrica.com*, July 14

Currently, stakeholders in the agricultural sector have indicated that in spite of the critical role agriculture plays in the economy of the country, the sector is lacking a great deal in many aspects, especially in the areas of government budgetary allocation, credit allocation among others. The draft National Agricultural Fund Bill when passed would be an Act to provide for financial resources for the development and promotion of agricultural activities, establishment of a Corporate body to manage the Fund and to provide for related matters.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200907140982.html>

India Imposes Ban on Wheat Exports, after Lifting It Briefly, *VOA News*, July 14

India has imposed a ban on wheat exports, after lifting it briefly earlier this month. The step was taken in the wake of worries that poor monsoon rains may adversely impact food production in the country this year.

Worries are not confined to wheat and rice alone. There are fears that production of crops such as cotton and sugar may also be affected because of the deficiency in rains.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/2009-07-14-voa11.cfm>

Purchase For Progress Begins In Kenya, *New Agriculturist*, July 14

WFP has bought food from small-scale farmers in Kenya for the first time, under its Purchase for Progress (P4P) scheme. The purchase of 45 tons of rice from farmers in Ahero, Western Kenya, is part of the initiative launched in September 2008, which seeks to offer guaranteed markets to smallholder farmers, in addition to helping them access seeds, fertilisers and tools.

<http://www.new-ag.info/news/newsitem.php?a=806>

Zimbabwe: Government Pledges to Support Small Farms As Land Attacks Continue, *All Africa*, July 13
Finance Minister Tendai Biti on Friday pledged more than US\$140 million for small farmers, in an effort to reverse the effects of Robert Mugabe's land resettlement scheme and ultimately promote food production. Millions of Zimbabweans are set to face critical food shortages this year, and reports by the United Nations World Food Programme and Food and Agriculture Organisation indicate that Zimbabwe is in for its lowest ever winter-wheat harvest.
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200907131688.html>

Fields of Battle, *Bangkok Post (Thailand)*, July 13
Mounting insecurity over the world's food supply, especially of staples such as wheat, maize, barley and rice, has sent many food importing nations and food-based companies in search of farmland abroad to plant their own food crops. Large tracts of farmland in Russia and in poor developing countries in South America, Africa, as well as places such as Cambodia and Vietnam, have either been purchased or leased to cultivate crops and the produce shipped to the investors' country of origin.
<http://www.bangkokpost.com/business/economics/20169/fields-of-battle>

Extra money for Katine farmers to lessen impact of drought, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, July 13
Katine farmers are being encouraged to apply for funds to support income generating ideas to improve [livelihoods](#) in the sub-county. The African Medical and Research Foundation (Amref), which is implementing a three-year development project in the sub-county, with assistance from Farm-Africa, has put up US\$18m (around US\$8,700) to fund proposals submitted by the 18 farmers groups.
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/katine/2009/jul/13/money-farmers-drought>

School lunches can help end world hunger, *Examiner.com*, July 12
Annual funding for the McGovern-Dole initiative that funds school lunch programs overseas is roughly \$100 million. Just as a comparison, the Carnegie Endowment estimates the U.S. spent \$52 billion last year on nuclear weapons programs. In Iraq the UN World Food Programme recently announced a school lunch program in eight districts. Will the international community provide the funding, not to mention expand it to reach more children? In Afghanistan how can we expect a stable and peaceful democracy to survive if children are malnourished and cannot attend school?
<http://www.examiner.com/x-16819-Global-Hunger-Examiner~y2009m7d12-School-lunches-can-help-end-world-hunger>

Malawi's green revolution, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, July 10
Africa's elusive green revolution may be several steps nearer after a pioneering experiment in seed and fertilizer subsidies to smallholders in Malawi. Four years ago, Malawi was in the grip of a terrible, drought-induced famine that left nearly 40% of the population in need of food aid. Yet within two years, it had become a net maize exporter. Having enough rain has helped, but twice as important, according to independent assessment, has been government subsidy for seed and fertilizer.
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/katine/2009/jul/10/malawi-farming-subsidies-programme>

Kuwait investor seeks taste of Asia, *Financial Times*, July 10
A state-affiliated Kuwaiti company is set to join a growing list of entities from the oil-rich Gulf looking at investments in Asian agricultural land, as G8 leaders discuss global food security. Ahmad al-Hamad, managing director of the Kuwait China Investment Company (KCIC), said it was considering investing in agribusinesses and in farms producing crops such as rice, wheat, corn and sorghum. The purchase of overseas farmland – especially in Africa – by wealthy countries has become controversial over the past 18 months as food security has moved up the political agenda.
http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/a341d0da-6d31-11de-8b19-00144feabdc0,dwp_uuid=1491273a-66fd-11de-925f-00144feabdc0.html

Where rich countries are buying farmland, *Christian Science Monitor*, July 8
According to data compiled by the US-based International Food Policy Research Institute, Saudi Arabia has concluded a string of agreements in recent months, most recently approaching Tanzania in April to lease a

500,000-hectare (1.2 million acres) tract of farmland for rice and wheat production. In the same month, South African farmers were offered 10 million hectares of farmland in the Republic of Congo. Indian government-backed farming companies have pursued land in a half-dozen African countries. Chinese corporations have sought a succession of arrangements to make use of land in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, and Zambia. Meanwhile, South Korea snapped up 690,000 hectares in Sudan.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2009/0708/p06s16-wogn.html>

Partnership Launched to Tackle Acidic Soils and Food Insecurity in Western Kenya, *Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa*, July 8

The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), along with the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) and other community partners launched a critical effort to counteract soil acidity which cuts maize yields by at least 30 percent. In Kenya's western and central provinces, 7.5 million hectares of land are highly acidic, a problem shared by large parts of Ethiopia, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia, according to Dr Francis Kiriro, Assistant Director of Adaptive Research, KARI.

<http://www.agra-alliance.org/content/news/detail/963>

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

Sun energy empowers Ethiopian village, *BBC News*, July 16

Two years after the installation of a solar power project funded by international aid groups, villagers in northern Ethiopia say the sun's energy has turned their lives around. This is unique in Ethiopia - 80% of the population live in rural areas where only 1% of the population have access to electricity. Lighting up the countryside has long been a challenge for African governments. Unlike houses in urban areas, villages in rural areas are often difficult to connect to the national electricity grid.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8150391.stm>

American aid to Africa, *Los Angeles Times*, July 15

During his speech to Ghana's parliament on Saturday, President Obama sounded a familiar refrain: Africa must be made and remade by Africans, and the United States will continue to support nations on the path to progress. To critics, that meant he had nothing new to say -- it was the same message about good governance they'd heard from presidents Clinton and George W. Bush. No new programs or initiatives for Africa.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/editorials/la-ed-ghana15-2009jul15,0,5635058.story>

Transport delays for food aid continue in Ethiopia, *Ethiopian Review*, July 15

Transport delays from Djibouti have led the World Food Programme (WFP) to begin diverting vessels carrying food assistance to the Port of Sudan and the Port of Berbera in Somaliland, where trucks will transport the aid to Ethiopia. This decision by the WFP was a result of the Ethiopian Government ostensibly prioritising the transportation of fertilisers from the Port of Djibouti to crop producing areas of the country with the intention of trying to increase production at the next harvest. Many international NGOs are currently criticising the Government for its decision to prioritise fertiliser delivery, while 4.9 million citizens are badly in need of emergency food assistance.

<http://www.ethiopianreview.com/articles/13818>

Japan to provide food assistance worth \$9.1m for ultra-poor, *The Financial Express (Bangladesh)*, July 15

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) received US\$9.1 million from the government of Japan to provide food assistance to the ultra-poor living in areas affected by floods, riverbank erosion, coastal cyclones and tidal surges in Bangladesh.

<http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/2009/07/15/73102.html>

Mission possible: fixing foreign aid, *The State*, July 14

Today, poverty reduction is not the primary goal of U.S. foreign assistance. There are 33 different goals, 75 priority areas and 247 directives, executed by at least 12 departments; 25 different agencies administer foreign assistance programs. That translates to 48 years of agencies multiplying, duplicating and sometimes

failing to make serious progress toward a better, safer world. When targeted and given the proper resources, foreign aid can work. However, it will take more than money to fight extreme poverty and hunger: It will take better policies.

<http://www.thestate.com/editorial-columns/story/863135.html>

Top Democrat Berman Says U.S. Development Aid Has Become 'Mess', *Bloomberg News*, July 13

The U.S.'s capacity to effectively help poor nations is in disarray, a top House Democrat says. "If our national security strategy is a defense, diplomacy and development strategy, the development area has really become a mess," Howard Berman, the California Democrat who chairs the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said today in an interview.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601087&sid=a.aH4zbjXxiA>

Aid, And Perhaps More, Spreading In Myanmar, *The New York Times*, July 13

The paint is drying on a sturdy-looking health clinic here, a new primary school is already overflowing with students, and farmers say they are expecting a normal harvest after being given rice seed, plowing equipment and loans. That the private groups have been allowed such access in the delta is an insight into a political system that by most measures is a police state. Diplomats and aid workers here hope that small slivers of democratic sunshine are filtering into an otherwise dark, repressive corner of Southeast Asia.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/14/world/asia/14myanmar.html>

It's worth the risk, Ottawa: Set up an agriculture innovation fund for Africa, *Globe and Mail (Canada)*, July 10

Farming is hard. It's hard in Saskatchewan. And even harder in Malawi, where two-thirds of the population spend the rainy season out in their small fields, with a hoe in their hand, fighting erosion, decreasing soil quality and erratic rains as they try to grow enough corn to feed their families for the coming year. That's why Canada's recent announcement of \$600-million to African agriculture is a smart investment. That money can help transform agriculture for a few million African farmers. The continent is suffering from a decades-long stagnation of food production. Between 1960 and 2005, Asia increased its yields by 250 per cent; Africa's barely budged. Something needs to change, and smart investment will help.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/its-worth-the-risk-ottawa-set-up-an-agriculture-innovation-fund-for-africa/article1214423/>

ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

Are the deserts getting greener?, *BBC News*, July 16

It has been assumed that global warming would cause an expansion of the world's deserts, but now some scientists are predicting a contrary scenario in which water and life slowly reclaim these arid places. They think vast, dry regions like the Sahara might soon begin shrinking. The evidence is limited and definitive conclusions are impossible to reach but recent satellite pictures of North Africa seem to show areas of the Sahara in retreat. It could be that an increase in rainfall has caused this effect.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8150415.stm>

U.S., China try to reach accord on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, *L.A. Times*, July 15

U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu and Commerce Secretary Gary Locke are in Beijing this week to talk about climate change with Chinese leaders. The hope is to open the nation's market to American clean technology products while nudging China toward committing to hard targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. They have their work cut out for them.

<http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-china-climate15-2009jul15,0,5639620.story>

Low carbon way 'to reshape live', *BBC.com*, July 15

Ambitious plans to generate one third of UK electricity from renewable by 2020 form the centerpiece of government plans for a low carbon future. Financial packages for wind and wave energy and changes to planning procedures are among key components of the Low Carbon Transition Plan.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/8150919.stm>

See Also: **UK Low Carbon Transition Plan: Carbon Budget Factsheet**

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/15_07_09_lowcarbon.pdf

Five top UN officials appeal to world leaders to ‘seal the deal’ on new climate pact, *UN News*, July 14

Five top United Nations officials have added their names to a petition urging world leaders to ‘seal the deal’ in Copenhagen, Denmark, this December on an ambitious new climate change pact aimed at curbing greenhouse gas emissions. The campaign calls for binding targets to be set on cutting emissions by 2020 and help for vulnerable countries so they can adapt to the effects of climate change.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31466&Cr=climate+change&Cr1>

Climate change could redraw national borders, *Christian Science Monitor*, July 14

The UN climate panel predicts that up to one-fifth of Bangladesh – one of the world’s most densely populated countries – could be submerged by the end of the century. As the Economist article notes, India has already built a 2,560-mile fence along the border to keep Bangladeshis out. Other countries could disappear entirely. Last November, Mohamed Nasheed, the first democratically elected president of the Maldives, announced plans to establish a fund to buy land elsewhere in the event that the Indian Ocean island nation were to become inundated.

<http://features.csmonitor.com/environment/2009/07/14/climate-change-could-redraw-national-borders/>

Iraq Suffers as the Euphrates River Dwindles, *The New York Times*, July 13

The Euphrates is drying up. Strangled by the water policies of Iraq’s neighbors, Turkey and Syria; a two-year drought; and years of misuse by Iraq and its farmers, the river is significantly smaller than it was just a few years ago. Some officials worry that it could soon be half of what it is now. “We have a real thirst in Iraq,” said Ali Baban, the minister of planning. “Our agriculture is going to die, our cities are going to wilt, and no state can keep quiet in such a situation.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/14/world/middleeast/14euphrates.html>

See Also: **Iraq lashed by sandstorms and battling drought**, *Associated Press*, July 13

http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5grUETX7OmwS9m_vDFYyotLL666gD99D2E3G1

Wild weather in the year ahead, scientists predict, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, July 12

Climate scientists have warned of wild weather in the year ahead as the start of the global “El Niño” phenomenon exacerbates the impact of global warming. As well as droughts, floods and other extreme events, the next few years are also likely to be the hottest on record, scientists say.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jul/12/weather-el-nino-climate-change-environment>

How Wildlife Can Boost the Appeal of Tropical Forest Protection, *CGIAR*, July 2009

A new study carried out by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and its partners provides compelling evidence that paying to conserve billions of tons of carbon stored in tropical forests could also protect orangutans, pygmy elephants and other wildlife at risk of extinction. The study, published in the peer-reviewed journal *Conservation Letters*, is one of the first to offer quantitative evidence linking the drive to reduce carbon emissions from forests with the push to preserve threatened mammal biodiversity.

<http://www.cgiar.org/monthlystory/july2009.html>

See Also: **Carbon payments as a safeguard for threatened tropical mammals**, *Conservation Letters*, May 2009

<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122371345/PDFSTART>

GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

Non-aligned leaders urge financial system reform, *Financial Times*, July 15

The world needs a financial system that is fairer to developing states which have suffered most in a crisis caused by rich countries, leaders from a group of developing states said. The presidents of Cuba, Egypt and

others were addressing a summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, which groups 118 countries meeting in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/83b93266-7133-11de-877c-00144feabdc0.html>

Economic crisis rolling back Asia's development gains, *UN News*, July 15

The economic crisis is rolling back the significant progress made to date in Asia and the Pacific in meeting the Millennium Development Goals – which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015 – according to a senior United Nations official.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31474&Cr=escap&Cr1=economic>

Tanzania: Local Banks Hit By Global Recession, *AllAfrica.com*, July 15

Tanzanian local banks have started feeling the pinch of the global recession with at least one major bank reporting possible loan defaults running into TSh168 billion. Dr Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank, said recently that the drying up of trade financing lines is already having a major impact on the African continent. He said the shortcoming needs to be addressed urgently because the dramatic drop in trade flows, combined with the credit crunch, severely impacts the poorest countries.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200907150760.html>

Walk, don't run, *The Economist*, July 9

Fixing finance is easier if you have a clear idea what it is for. What matters most is setting up a financial sector that can serve the competitive sectors of an economy. In many poorer countries, that means focusing on activities dominated by small-scale manufacturing, farming and services firms. Small local banks are the best entities for providing financial services to the enterprises and households that are most important in terms of comparative advantage—be they asparagus farmers in Peru, cut-flower companies in Kenya or garment factories in Bangladesh.

http://www.economist.com/businessfinance/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13986299

WOMEN

Moving Beyond Gender as Usual, *Center for Global Development*, July 2009

Gender inequalities drive the HIV epidemic, increase the burdens of the disease on women and girls, and hinder the effectiveness of the fight against HIV and AIDS. In this analysis, CGD's HIV/AIDS Monitor argues that despite well-meaning global strategies and policies, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and the World Bank's Africa Multi-Country AIDS Program have not yet been able to turn them into systematic programming that addresses the needs of women and girls. The authors urge the programs to make a systematic response to gender inequality in HIV/AIDS programs

http://cgdev.org/files/1422358_file_Moving_Beyond_Gender.pdf

Fauzia Gilani urges women's direct engagement in crisis management, *Associated Press of Pakistan*, July 15

First Lady Begum Fauzia Gilani said the world needs a significant shift towards an improved globalization based on sustainability, human dignity and broader social protection, and called for direct engagement of women in crisis management. Dr Jaques Diouf, Director-General of Food and Agriculture Organization and Josette Sheeran, Executive Director of the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) also gave presentation on expanding prospects for women in the context of global economic and food crises.

http://www.app.com.pk/en/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=81593

Universal Girls' School Embraces Farming, *AllAfrica.com*, July 14

A Senior Four student of Universal Girls' School, Kisaasi, bends low as she ties the legs of a huge heifer. Moments later, she starts milking the cow. Tumwesigye has learnt to milk and look after cows at her school,

where agriculture is emphasized. "I am proud that I can look after a heifer well, including milking it," Tumwesigye says.
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200907150029.html>

Investing in women and girls smart choice in troubled economic times, *UN News*, July 11

Top United Nations officials have called for investing in women and girls during the global financial crisis to help promote economic recovery and tackle poverty and inequality. "There is no smarter investment in troubled times," said Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, Executive Director of the UN Population Fund (UNFPA).
<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31444>

An Afghan Feminism, *The Washington Post*, July 10

Afghanistan is a country where women have made significant progress -- but only compared with a comprehensively oppressive past. There are now about 2 million girls in school, when six years ago only a million children were in school. The women I met now play public roles in education, public works and agriculture -- unimaginable under the Taliban.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/09/AR2009070902502.html>

See Also: Women's Health at Center of Development, Security Goals in Afghanistan, *VOA News*, July 14

<http://www.voanews.com/english/2009-07-14-voa61.cfm>

MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

U.S. in Tight Spot on Trade, *The Wall Street Journal*, July 16

In a bid to revive support for free trade within the U.S., the Obama administration plans to press foreign nations to increase imports of U.S. agriculture and manufacturing -- but not to push so hard as to ignite a protectionist backlash. The U.S. effort would rely largely on trying to embarrass countries into changing policies, rather than directly threatening tariffs or other commercial penalties. The U.S. could decide to refer some of the disputes to the World Trade Organization, but getting cases decided there can take years.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124771359831849441.html>

Trade flows' collapse continues in first quarter 2009, *OECD*, July 15

The unprecedented and largely synchronized drop in merchandise trade volumes of the Group of Seven (G7) countries of the last quarter 2008 continued in the first quarter 2009. When compared year-on-year, the steep rate of decline already observed for Q4 2008 reached two-digit levels in Q1 2009 for almost all countries.

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/15/2/43319682.pdf>

Obama: Africa needs more openness, trade help, *Associated Press*, July 14

[Obama] said he wants an environment in which Africa's economic development is not based on "dribbles of foreign aid but rather is going to be based on how do we build capacity within Africa." Africans must improve "respect for rule of law and property rights," he said, which would spur investments.

http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5i_H6s8clyw3i1kfi47pEA15WHW5AD99DQ0001

Erratic Rainfall and Lack of Markets Hit Wheat Production, *AllAfrica.com*, July 14

Wheat production in most parts of the North Rift is set to decline due to erratic rainfall that has disrupted planting and lack of markets. The acreage under cultivation of the crop is set to reduce after some farmers chose not to plant fearing losses while others could not prepare their farms due to financial difficulties.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200907140999.html>

Farmers, traders in southern Sudan soon to get their market info online, *CGIAR*, July 13

The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), through its FoodNet program, has won the bid to set up a Web-based Crop and Livestock Market Information System (CLiMIS) in southern Sudan. According to Dr Victor Manyong, acting R4D Director who will lead the team, the Institute will help the FAO and relevant government entities of that country to design and implement the system as well as build the capacity of intended users. CLiMIS will provide an online system that will enable local experts in southern Sudan to generate, store, analyze, and disseminate market information on selected crops and livestock.
<http://www.cgiar.org/newsroom/releases/news.asp?idnews=897>

Madagascar: Food Access Becomes Critical, *Reuters, July 8*

In partnership with other humanitarian aid agencies active in Madagascar, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is continuing to provide critical aid for food insecure families living in communities in central and southeastern coastal areas who have grown increasingly vulnerable in the face of the nation's precarious political climate, persistent drought, and crippling disasters.

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/fromthefield/219487/124706337076.htm>

Argentina's Role Shrinks in the World Wheat Export Market, *USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service, July 2009*

In the past decade, world wheat consumption has grown by nearly 60 million tons (10 percent) due to growing populations, rising incomes, and changing tastes and preferences in the countries of the former Soviet Union, South Asia, and North Africa. Additionally, short crops in the Middle East and North Africa boosted import demand, particularly last year. Yet, despite the need for more global supplies to meet the growing demand, Argentina's exports have plunged 80 percent in only 4 years due to falling production and declining exportable surpluses.

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/grain/circular/2009/07-09/grainfull07-09.pdf>

A Weakening Global Economy Interrupts Agricultural Trade, *USDA/Economic Research Service, Amber Waves, July 2009*

The United States and most foreign economies are now entrenched in what could be the worst economic downturn of the post-World War II era. U.S. agricultural trade has not been immune to its effects—import growth is slowing, and exports are on course to decline in 2009 after several years of exceptional growth.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/June09/Features/WeakEconomy.htm>

How Tightly Has China Embraced Market Reforms in Agriculture?, *USDA/Economic Research Service, Amber Waves, July 2009*

Market-based reforms during the past three decades placed China's agricultural sector on an upward trajectory after centuries of poverty, stagnation, and cycles of floods, famine, and peasant uprisings. The results of the reforms provide some of the most compelling evidence of the power of market incentives. The Chinese agricultural sector increased production of nearly every commodity, while releasing millions of laborers that fueled growth in nonfarm sectors. China also became a major supplier of food to neighboring Asian countries, North America, and Europe. By the late 1990s, China was a net exporter of food, and officials were devising plans to dispose of a large grain surplus.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/June09/Features/ChinaMarket.htm>

World Markets and Trade: Fresh Tomatoes, *USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service, July 2009*

World fresh tomato trade is expanding but key suppliers are primarily shipping to neighboring countries due to freight and tariff advantages, as well as long-term relations.

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/http/2009%20Tomato%20Article.pdf>

Cotton: U.S. Expands Share of China's Shrinking Market, *USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service, July 2009*

The U.S. share of the Chinese import market gained dramatically during the first ten months of the 2008/09 marketing year, as compared the same period last season, although export volume is nearly unchanged. Nearly all of the gain came at the expense of India, which raised its domestic support price by more than 40 percent just when world prices dropped. This effectively priced their cotton out of the international market. India's loss is even more dramatic in light of the fact that China's cotton import volume is down 40 percent from last year, from 9.6 to 5.6 million bales.

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/cotton/circular/2009/July/cottonfull0709.pdf>

Oilseeds: Soybean Stocks in China Surge, but Plunge in Exporting Countries, *USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service, July 2009*

Stocks in China rapidly expanded this year, prompted by its policy to build strategic reserves by removing domestic beans from the market which necessitated additional imports. The combination of strong commercial import demand to ensure adequate market supplies and government stockbuilding has added an estimated 5 million tons in stocks over the past two years. The impact on global market has been acute particularly with Argentina's much smaller crop and sharply reduced exportable supplies. Consequently, U.S. and Brazil's exports have expanded to new highs to satisfy China's rising demand, but at the expense of plummeting stocks to historic lows.

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/oilseeds/circular/2009/July/oilseedsfull0709.pdf>

AGRIBUSINESS

Christina Aguilera Lends Voice To Fight Hunger, *Welt Online, July 16*

Yum! Brands announced today that five-time Grammy Award winner Christina Aguilera is giving hunger a powerful voice by becoming the global spokesperson for World Hunger Relief. Yum! Brands annual World Hunger Relief campaign is the world's largest private sector hunger relief effort to raise awareness, volunteerism and funds to benefit the United Nation's World Food Programme (WFP) and other hunger relief agencies.

http://boerse.welt.de/news_detail.asp?pkNewsNr=915625

Exxon to Invest \$600 Million in Biofuels Development, *Bloomberg, July 14*

Exxon Mobil Corp., the biggest U.S. oil company, plans to invest more than \$600 million to develop biofuels with J. Craig Venter's Synthetic Genomics Inc. The venture will focus on making fuels from algae. Oil companies are investing in biofuels research as governments ramp up mandates for use of petroleum alternatives. Algae, an aquatic crop that absorbs carbon dioxide as it grows, can be converted into oil for processing into jet and motor fuels.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601207&sid=athVs6qlqC.s>

See Also: **Exxon to try to develop biofuel from algae, *Reuters, July 14***

<http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-GreenBusiness/idUSTRE56D00120090714>

Food Security Project Offers New Self-Sufficiency Model for Orphans in Conflict-Torn Regions, *Press Release, July 14*

Chido Govero, a dynamic 23-year old woman from rural Zimbabwe, is training her fellow orphan girls to grow critically-needed food - using little more than coffee pulp and grass clippings - and receiving vital support from California-based artisan coffee company, Equator Coffees, and the ZERI Foundation, which specializes in international sustainable development. This week, Equator introduced Chido's Blend™, a blend of three African coffee beans, with 100% of profits supporting Govero's remarkable work. Govero, who is featured on the label, will use proceeds to build housing, as well as to support training programs in many coffee-growing countries.

<http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs049/1101616314459/archive/1102639009765.html>

Ethanol Futures: Thin but Effective?, *The Wall Street Journal, July 13*

More than four years in, the Chicago Board of Trade's ethanol contract still is thinly traded, and questions remain about whether it is an effective hedging tool.

But one economics professor said in recent research that the contract has had relative success as a hedge because of the robust over-the-counter market for ethanol.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124744353891130241.html>

A Truce in the Crop Wars, *Newsweek.com, July 13*

A funny thing happened on the way to the next green revolution. The world's biggest biotech corporations have deployed the latest in genetic science to pump up yield, ward off crop disease, make food more nutritious and fundamentally reengineer what we plant and eat, and no one is complaining. Not quite. Europe, much of Asia and parts of Africa fiercely resist filling the larder with genetically modified groceries, and many in agribusiness despair that they always will. So instead, they're trying to woo them with distinctly non-GM varieties.

<http://www.newsweek.com/id/204234>

Chinese agribusiness in Congo to offer thousands of jobs to locals, *Xinhua (China)*, July 13

China's ZTE Agribusiness Company Ltd is aiming at a 1 million hectare palm tree plantation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) for biofuel production, and the project can offer thousands of jobs for the local people, the company's regional manager Zhang Peng told Xinhua in an interview on Friday.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-07/10/content_11686244.htm

India's ban on non-basmati rice exports boon to competitors, *The Hindu (India)*, July 13

India's ban on non-basmati rice exports has been a boon to competitors like Thailand whose shipments have risen by 1.7 million tonnes in 2008, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) said. "Thailand, Vietnam, Pakistan, Burma and Brazil collectively expanded exports by 1.7 million tonnes in 2008, much of which went to historically Indian markets in Africa," the USDA said in a latest report.

<http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/015200907131421.htm>

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