

GLOBAL FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE WEEKLY NEWS BRIEF OF THE GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE



June 4th – June 10th, 2011

Quote of the Week: – *“The Obama administration has won high marks from antihunger advocates for focusing on the issue. President Obama pledged \$3.5 billion at L’Aquila, more than any other country, and the United States has begun an ambitious initiative called Feed the Future to support agricultural development in 20 of the neediest countries. So far, the administration has won \$1.9 billion from Congress. Amid the budget struggles in Washington, it remains to be seen whether the United States will fully honor its pledge. Perhaps the most hopeful sign nowadays is that poor countries themselves are starting to invest in agriculture in a serious way, as many did not do in the years when food was cheap. Yet the leading agricultural experts say that poor countries cannot solve the problems by themselves. The United Nations recently projected that global population would hit 10 billion by the end of the century, 3 billion more than today. Coupled with the demand for diets richer in protein, the projections mean that food production may need to double by later in the century. Unlike in the past, that demand must somehow be met on a planet where little new land is available for farming, where water supplies are tightening, where the temperature is rising, where the weather has become erratic and where the food system is already showing serious signs of instability.”* – In “A Warming Planet Struggles to Feed Itself”, Justin Gillis, New York Times, June 4, 2011

For more information:

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

Food Outlook: Global Market Analysis, *UN FAO, June 2011*

With many countries already struggling with elevated domestic food prices, the conclusions of this year's harvests, especially for those crops that are currently the tightest, such as maize, will be decisive in determining future prices. Given the sharp run down on inventories and only modest overall global production increases for the majority of crops, world prices are likely to remain high and volatile.

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/al978e/al978e00.pdf>

SEE ALSO: Food Prices Posing Risk to Poor Nations, *Wall Street Journal, June 8*

Agriculture ministers from the Group of 20 industrial and developing nations are scheduled to meet at the end of June, when host-country France wants to push better regulation of food markets

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304432304576371181255014642.html>

SEE ALSO: FAO Expects Food Prices to Remain High, *Financial Times, June 7*

The warning of higher prices comes as a drought in southern US and northern Europe damaged large tracts of wheat fields, pushing up prices. Moreover, sowing of spring wheat in the US and Canada, two top producers of the high quality variety, is well behind the normal rate due to excessive rain, raising the prospect of farmers leaving fields unplanted.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/70a04742-9115-11e0-acfd-00144feab49a.html>

SEE ALSO: Food Prices Chart, *Economist, June 8*

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/dailychart/2011/06/inflation>

A Warming Planet Struggles to Feed Itself, *Justin Gillis, New York Times, June 4*

Consumption of the four staples that supply most human calories — wheat, rice, corn and soybeans — has outstripped production for much of the past decade, drawing once-large stockpiles down to worrisome levels. The imbalance between supply and demand has resulted in two huge spikes in international grain prices since 2007, with some grains more than doubling in cost. Now, the latest scientific research suggests that a previously discounted factor is helping to destabilize the food system: climate change.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/05/science/earth/05harvest.html>

SEE ALSO: World Food Supply: What's To Be Done?, *June 10*

The Times has given readers a large body of reporting and analysis on the global food situation, including the risk to the food supply from climate change. I would like to end that run of coverage by pointing concerned readers toward the best thinking out there that tries to answer this question: What do we need to do?

<http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/10/world-food-supply-whats-to-be-done/>

SEE ALSO: Answering Questions About the World's Food Supply, *June 8*

I respond to a few questions that represent concerns raised by more than one reader.

<http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/08/answering-questions-about-the-worlds-food-supply/>

SEE ALSO: Can the Yield Gap Be Closed — Sustainably?, *June 7*

The situation [in Africa] is a prime example of a larger problem that concerns the world's agronomists: the yield gap.

<http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/07/can-the-yield-gap-be-closed-sustainably/>

SEE ALSO: Reverend Malthus and the Future of Food, *June 6*

Factors like population growth, improved diets in developing countries and biofuel production are raising the global demand for food and feed.

<http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/06/reverend-malthus-and-the-future-of-food/>

SEE ALSO: Damaging the Earth to Feed Its People, *June 4*

The task now for plant breeders is to preserve and enhance the yield gains of the Green Revolution, while creating varieties with deeper root systems that can survive on less water and fertilizer and are also strong enough to germinate through a dense cover of decaying vegetative material from the previous season.

<http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/04/damaging-the-earth-to-feed-its-people/>

DuPont Advisory Committee on Agricultural Innovation & Productivity for the 21st Century, *DuPont, June 7*

Challenges around food security will be exacerbated when the population surpasses 9 billion by 2050. Global food production must be 70 percent greater than today's level to close the deficit between supply and

demand, commonly referred to as the productivity gap. And, it must be done without using substantially more land. With current grain stocks at historically low levels and food demand increasing at rates higher than production, the challenge is not decades into the future, but is here today.

<http://dupontagcommittee.com/2011/06/07/feeding-9-billion-people-by-2050-requires-unprecedented-collaboration-now/>

SEE ALSO: Billions Needed to Boost Food Production, *Reuters, June 7*

High-tech seeds and innovations in chemicals and farming will not be enough to solve looming food shortages for the world. Billions of dollars in private investment, government incentives and charitable work must be funneled into collaborative projects if global food production is to match growing demand.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/06/07/us-dupont-food-idUSTRE75639320110607>

Food Security has Global Implications, *Opinion, Senator Tom Daschle, Politico, June 7*

Food security is a defining challenge facing the human race, a serious threat to stability worldwide. Today, 1 billion men, women and children are food insecure. Unless we find better ways to produce and distribute food, this number will only increase. The consequences present challenges that should matter to all — policymakers, the public and private sectors, farmers and consumers.

<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0611/56342.html>

Cool Beans, *Roger Thurow, Senior Fellow on Global Agriculture and Food Policy, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Global Food for Thought Blog, June 3*

For some farmers in western Kenya, the hunger season I wrote about last week is coming to a mercifully early end. A new variety of bean is ready for harvest. "The farmers say this bean meets the hunger," says Reuben Otsyula, the scientist who bred this little black bean. "They can see the hunger is coming and the bean meets the hunger and pushes it back." It is called KK15 in agriculture nomenclature, but farmers call it a savior. The bean is early maturing and high yielding – usually a champion combination.

<http://globalfoodforthought.typepad.com/global-food-for-thought/2011/06/roger-thurow-outrage-and-inspire-cool-beans.html>

RELEVANT U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Briefing on U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, *Marc Grossman and Rajiv Shah, U.S. State Department, June 9*

We've worked aggressively with health, education, agriculture, the rural development ministry, mining, and so many others to really help them build real capacity, help train more than 16,000 Afghan civil servants that are employed in those ministries, and have helped build out the capacity of teachers and health workers and service providers across the country in a way that's generating real results. And we see those results every day. We see that 7 million kids are now in school, nearly 35 percent of whom are girls. That's up from 900,000 kids in school, most of whom were boys, under the Taliban.

http://www.state.gov/s/special_rep_afghanistan_pakistan/rmks/165389.htm

Evaluating U.S. Foreign Assistance to Afghanistan, *Alexander Thier, Assistant to the USAID Administrator for Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs, Foreign Policy, June 9*

Afghanistan has made some dramatic development achievements. Access to basic health services has rocketed from nine percent to 64 percent. More than seven million children are enrolled in schools, 35 percent of whom are girls. Afghanistan has averaged 10 percent per year economic growth, is using a single, stable currency, and government revenues have grown to \$1.65 billion, with a 400 percent increase in customs revenues since 2006 alone.

http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/06/09/evaluating_us_foreign_assistance_to_afghanistan

Grassley Revives Bill Setting Hard Caps for Farm Payments, *Agri-Pulse, June 9*

Senators Chuck Grassley and Tim Johnson introduced legislation that they say will cap total farm payments at \$250,000, close loopholes that are being used to "game" the farm payment system, and target payments to actively engaged farmers "who need assistance getting over the bumps that come with ensuring a safe and abundant food supply."

http://www.agri-pulse.com/Grassley_farm_payment_limits_06092011.asp

Obama Administration Establishes White House Rural Council to Strengthen Rural Communities, *The White House*, June 9

While rural communities face challenges, they also present economic potential. Chaired by Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, the Council will be responsible for providing recommendations for investment in rural areas and will coordinate Federal engagement with a variety of rural stakeholders, including agricultural organizations, small businesses, and state, local, and tribal governments.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/06/09/obama-administration-establishes-white-house-rural-council-strengthen-ru>

US Announces New African Trade Capacity Building Initiative at AGOA Forum, *USAID*, June 9

The US announced an additional commitment of up to \$30 million per year for four years to boost trade capacity in Africa. By building on the success of previous trade promotion activities in the region, this investment will facilitate an increase in African exports of non-traditional, value-added products, such as those promoted under AGOA, including apparel, footwear, and processed agricultural products.

http://www.usaid.gov/press/releases/2011/pr110609_1.html

President Obama Nominates Rebecca Wodder as Interior Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife, *The White House*, June 8

Rebecca Wodder has served as President and CEO of American Rivers, a national river conservation organization, since 1995. From 1981 to 1994, Ms. Wodder served in several different capacities at The Wilderness Society.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/06/08/president-obama-announces-more-key-administration-posts>

Evaluating U.S. Foreign Assistance to Afghanistan, *Senate Committee on Foreign Relations*, June 8

This report takes a close look at how the US is spending civilian aid dollars in Afghanistan to make sure we are pursuing the most effective strategy in support of our national security objectives. We spend more on aid to Afghanistan than any other country and the environment in which the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development operate is difficult and dangerous.

<http://foreign.senate.gov/download/?id=E8637185-8E67-4F87-81D1-119AE49A7D1C>

SEE ALSO: Senate Democrats Criticize US Foreign Aid Efforts in Afghanistan, *The Hill*, June 8

Democrats on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee have released a highly critical report of U.S. efforts to prop up the Afghan government. The U.S. spends about \$320 million per month on foreign aid in Afghanistan and has spent a total of roughly \$18 billion over 10 years.

<http://thehill.com/news-by-subject/defense-homeland-security/165331-senate-dems-criticize-us-foreign-aid-efforts-in-afghanistan>

SEE ALSO: Afghanistan Faces 2014 'Cash Crisis' When Troops Leave, *BBC News*, June 8

The report says that the US must scrutinize more closely how it spends the money and how it relies so heavily on contractors.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-13692954>

SEE ALSO: Afghan Nation-Building Programs Not Sustainable, *Washington Post*, June 7

The report recommends multi-year congressional funding for the aid program that would plan ahead for the increased civilian responsibilities as the number of troops decreases and calls for "a simple rule: donors should not implement projects if Afghans cannot sustain them."

http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/national-security/afghan-nation-building-programs-not-sustainable-report-says/2011/06/07/AG5cPSLH_story.html

Stabenow Won't Support Ryan Food Stamp Program Plan, *Hagstrom Report*, June 8

Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Debbie Stabenow said that she will not support the proposal of House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan to turn the food stamp program into a capped block grant to the states, but anti-hunger advocates are still planning a campaign to make sure the federal program remains in place. Ryan said the shift to a capped block grant would save \$127 billion over 10 years.

www.hagstromreport.com

Better Life, Better Future: UNESCO Advances Educational Opportunities for Women and Girls, *Opinion, Ambassador David Killion, DipNote Blog, June 8*

When you can literally give a young girl in Pakistan the means to get of poverty, then you have not only changed her life, you have changed her village, her country and everything around her. When a girl in Kenya can go to school and study, she not only learns about the world and the skills to survive in it, but she learns to believe in herself. This is why girls' education isn't just an issue on which women should be focused, it is an issue on which we should all be focused.

<http://blogs.state.gov/index.php/site/entry/better-life-better-future-unesco-women-education>

The International Community Needs To Stay Focused on Bosnia and Herzegovina, *Opinion, Hillary Clinton, U.S. Secretary of State, and William Hague, United Kingdom Foreign Secretary, June 7*

The real victims of this paralysis are not Bosnia and Herzegovina's politicians, but its citizens – the very people these political leaders were elected to serve. Instead of living in a free, fair and prosperous society, many still live under the shadow of division and fear, suffering from poverty, unemployment and lack of opportunity.

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2011/06/165223.htm>

Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Announces New Projects Designed to Improve Natural Resources on Agricultural Operations in 11 States, *U.S. Department of Agriculture, June 7*

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that \$7 million will be available to eligible farmers, ranchers and private non-industrial forest landowners in 11 states to implement conservation practices on agricultural and nonindustrial private forest lands through the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative. USDA will fund 31 proposals in the 11 states through CCPI.

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2011/06/0235.xml>

Budget Cuts Having 'Severe' Effect on Research, *Hagstrom Report, June 6*

Catherine Woteki, Agriculture undersecretary for research, education and economics, said the cuts are causing the cancellation of construction projects, closure of programs and possible layoffs of researchers. The CR for fiscal year 2011 provides \$2.353 billion for the National Institute on Food and Agriculture and the Agricultural Research Service, the result of eliminating all earmarks, as well as other programmatic changes.

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

Department of State Planning for the Transition to a Civilian-led Mission in Iraq, *Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of State, May 2011*

The Department of State and Embassy Baghdad have put in place planning and management mechanisms to effectively transition to a civilian-led presence in Iraq. Establishing a viable diplomatic mission in Iraq without Department of Defense support and funding will require considerable resources. However, challenges to transition planning make it difficult to develop firm or detailed budget estimates.

<http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/165037.pdf>

SEE ALSO: State Department 'on deck' in Iraq, Stimson Center Blog, June 2011

Now is the time to empower the State Department and USAID to create a better coordinated, more powerful civilian capacity that can assume greater responsibility for the civilian tasks currently being carried out by the US military.

<http://thewillandthewallet.org/2011/06/03/state-department-on-deck-in-iraq/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

Cracking the Nut Conference: Overcoming Obstacles to Rural and Agricultural Finance

Date: June 20st – 21nd, 2011

Location: Washington, DC

Register now to participate in the Cracking the Nut Conference. Conference registrations will close in 10 days on May 15th. The Conference will unite the world's leading rural and agricultural finance leaders in a collaborative pursuit of learning, leverage and large scale change. This conference is aimed at practitioners,

private sector professionals, policymakers, funders, researchers, and other rural and agricultural finance professionals. To learn more about the themes we will be addressing and speakers, see our [agenda](#).

The World Food Prize Laureate Announcement Ceremony

Date: June 21, 2011

Location: Washington, DC

The World Food Prize will officially announce the names of the 2011 World Food Prize winners at a ceremony at the U.S. State Department. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton will speak at the event, which focuses on progress being made in global food security. Mark your calendar, and check www.worldfoodprize.org to learn about this year's honorees.

Agricultural Value Chain Finance Training

Date: June 22nd - 23rd, 2011

Location: The QED Group, Washington, D.C.

Right after the Cracking the Nut Conference, participate in the 2-day Agricultural Value Chain Finance Training, lead by Calvin Miller, FAO and Stephanie Charitonenko. You will learn about developing commercially attractive financial services that meet the needs of the various actors in the value chain and how a value chain focus can result in market growth and reduced credit risk. To learn more, visit [here](#).

Food Security, Health and Impact Conference

Date: June 22nd - June 24th, 2011

Location: Leeds, United Kingdom

The Africa College, a research partnership between IITA, ICIPE and University of Leeds is holding an international conference to share lessons on translating research results into impact for food security, nutrition and human health. The conference includes knowledge brokering sessions and workshops and is asking two questions: How can the results of basic science and inter-disciplinary research lead to increased impact on food security and human health?; and, How can partnerships between research and development organisations deliver innovation and impact? Sponsorship for African participants is available. For more details see: <http://www.africacollege.leeds.ac.uk/>

International Policy Summit

Date: June 27-28, 2011

Location: Brussels, Belgium

A few hundred key stakeholders will meet to explore the shared opportunities and challenges for long-term economic growth between the two continents. Issues under discussion will also include investment and the role of companies in Africa, governance and leadership, the best way to manage Africa's resource bonanza, the healthcare and education strategies needed to raise living standards, as well as the best way to tackle food security and to improve the continent agricultural prospects.

[Event Website is available here.](#)

Conservation Science and Policy

Date: July 17th - 20th, 2011

Location: Washington, DC

The theme of the meeting is, "Conservation Science and Policy: Global Perspectives and Applications." The focus for this year's meeting is exploring ways to improve the linkages among conservation science, policy, and application at local, national, and international scales. Secretary Glickman will share his thoughts and personal experiences on the long-term implications of food and agricultural policy on conversation in the United States and around the world.

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

World Food Prize 25th Anniversary

Date: October 12th - 14th, 2011

Location: Des Moines, IA

The World Food Prize will celebrate its 25th Anniversary his fall during the annual Norman E. Borlaug International Symposium and the World Food Prize Laureate Award Ceremony. The topic of the symposium

this year is "The Next Generation" and will focus on future leaders, challenges and technologies in the fight against hunger. This year, events will also include the Grand Opening of the Norman E. Borlaug Hall of Laureates, a permanent home for the World Food Prize and an event center and educational facility to honor humanitarian heroes and inspire the next generation of scientific leaders. Stay tuned and learn more at www.worldfoodprize.org.

World Biofuels Markets

Date: March 13th – 15th, 2012

Location: Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Over 250 biofuels thought leaders will share their experiences and expertise on all aspects of the biofuels value chain during three days of interactive conference sessions.

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

Jobs, Food & Farming

Date: March 19-21, 2012

Location: Accra, Ghana

The conference will critically examine, from both research and policy perspectives: 1) Dominant and alternative framings and narratives, and recent empirical data, relating to how young people engage with the agri-food sector in Africa; 2) The dynamics of change in different components of the agri-food sector and the implications of these dynamics for young people; 3) The implications for young people of alternative policy approaches to the development of the agri-food sector. The conference will be co-hosted by the Future Agricultures Consortium based at the Institute of Development Studies and the Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research.

<http://www.future-agricultures.org/index.php>

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

Media Articles:

U.K. Bemoans Lack of Rain, *Wall Street Journal*, June 10

Parts of the U.K. are now in the grip of drought and the affected zone could spread if areas of central and south-eastern England don't receive decent rainfall soon. The news comes as farmers in western Europe's largest wheat growers, France and Germany, are struggling due to drought there.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304259304576377081523584902.html>

SEE ALSO: Crisis Meeting is Called as Drought Leaves Crops Dying in the Fields, *Guardian*, June 5
Britain's second-driest spring in 100 years and the warmest since 1659 has left soil in England concrete-hard, with many rivers shrunk to trickles and crops withering at critical times in their growth.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/jun/05/drought-farming-caroline-selman-uk>

SEE ALSO: We're Parched Up Here, *Financial Times*, June 9

Hot, dusty, dry. This is shaping up to be one of the driest years on record across northern Europe. Concerns about the impact of the drought on already high food prices are justified. The danger is a repeat of the scorching Europe-wide drought of 2003. Wheat production fell 17 per cent in the European Union and 82 per cent in Ukraine. Exports fell sharply.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/3/ffa5d764-929f-11e0-96e0-00144feab49a.html>

Scientists Say 'Super' New Wheat Varieties Will Resist Virulent Fungus While Boosting Yields,

Washington Post, June 9

Scientists say they're close to producing new "super varieties" of wheat that will resist a virulent fungus while boosting yields up to 15 percent, potentially easing a deadly threat to the world's food supply. The research is part of a global drive to protect wheat crops from the Ug99 strain of stem rust. But significant obstacles must be overcome before the resistant new varieties of wheat can replace the susceptible varieties that make up as much as 90 percent of the wheat now in production.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/scientists-say-super-new-wheat-varieties-will-resist-virulent->

[fungus-while-boosting-yields/2011/06/09/AGhkGsNH_story.html](http://blogs.wsj.com/korearealtime/2011/06/09/AGhkGsNH_story.html)

Rain, Unwelcomed Guest For Farmers, *Wall Street Journal*, June 10

The Korean Metrological Administration said the long spell of rainy, sticky weather in Korean is arriving today, 10 days sooner than expected. And that's bad news for Korean farmers who are worried about whether the downpours will unearth some of the 3 million farm animals that were buried over the winter after being culled to combat an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/korearealtime/2011/06/10/rain-unwelcomed-guest-for-farmers/>

USDA Testing Climate Credits for Farmers, *Des Moines Register*, June 8

A \$2.8 million project in Iowa and Illinois that the USDA is helping fund will study methods of cutting back on the amount of nitrous oxide, a potent greenhouse gas, that escapes from farmland as a result of farmers using nitrogen fertilizer. The three-year project will involve 100 farmers in the two states will test several methods for reducing nitrous oxide.

<http://blogs.desmoinesregister.com/dmr/index.php/2011/06/08/project-aims-to-pay-for-farmers-for-cutting-greenhouse-gases/>

Constructing EPA Climate Regulations to Benefit American Agriculture, *Opinion*, Glenn Hurowitz, *Agri-Pulse*, June 8

Can EPA's court-ordered efforts to cut industrial carbon pollution boost the bottom line of American agriculture? One way to guarantee that it does is for EPA to write its climate rules in ways that allow farmers, ranchers, and timberland owners to participate in and benefit from the solutions to climate change.

http://www.agri-pulse.com/Op_ed_Hurowitz_06072011.asp

Afghanistan-bound Marines Learn Farming Practices, *Washington Post*, June 6

A group of U.S. Marines trudged through muddy fields on Monday to learn how to tend pomegranate trees, a crop popular in war-torn Afghanistan where they will soon deploy. The training is part of the U.S. war effort, and the lessons learned could help Marines engage with wary Afghan civilians, a large majority of whom rely on farming to survive.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/afghanistan-bound-marines-learn-farming-practices-at-university-in-californias-central-valley/2011/06/06/AGgVqZKH_story.html

Outbreak Puts Focus on U.S. Food-Safety Rules, *Des Moines Register*, June 6

The European E. coli outbreak has brought new attention to a proposal in the Obama administration to expand regulation of the bacteria. The regulations awaiting approval at the Office of Management and Budget would test for several strains of E. coli bacteria other than the single one that is now banned from the U.S. meat supply.

<http://blogs.desmoinesregister.com/dmr/index.php/2011/06/06/outbreak-puts-focus-on-u-s-food-safety-rules/>

Research Centers Get Cash for Drought-Resistant Wheat, *BBC News*, June 5

Two of the East of England's leading centers into agricultural research are receiving part of a £7m grant to develop a crop that is resistant to drought. The project, to develop a variety of wheat, is the first of its kind in the UK for more than 20 years.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-13660301>

Economics Without Numbers on Food Security, *Wall Street Journal*, June 2

Last year, when the Indian government's first draft of the food bill surfaced, it promised an entitlement of 25 kilograms of wheat and rice per month to "below poverty line" households, which translates into roughly 32% of the population. That was a very narrow proposal compared to the kind of gigantic subsidy programs being discussed now.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/indiarealtime/2011/06/02/economics-without-numbers-on-food-security/>

World Food Prize Newsletter, *The World Food Prize*, June 2011

The World Food Prize will announce this year's Laureate at a ceremony at the State Department in

Washington, D.C. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, along with Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack and USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah, will deliver keynote remarks at the announcement ceremony. In addition to the 2011 Laureate Announcement Ceremony on June 21, several other events are being planned to focus on international agriculture and food security. [Newsletter can be accessed here.](#)

Job Announcement, *ActionAid USA, May 2011*

ActionAid USA is looking for an experienced Senior Policy Analyst to coordinate our project in support of increased public investment in agriculture in Africa. Please email your customized cover letter and résumé to Neil Watkins, Director of Policy and Campaigns, at neil.watkins@actionaid.org.

http://actionaidusa.org/assets/pdfs/Senior_Policy_Analyst_Job_Announcement.pdf

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

Reports:

GAVI Alliance Progress Report 2010, *The GAVI Alliance, June 2011*

By the end of 2010, over 5 million future deaths had been prevented and over 288 million additional children had been immunized with support from GAVI and its partners. With sufficient funding GAVI can address the main childhood killers, pneumonia and diarrhea, as well as other diseases that place a huge burden on developing countries, and prevent another 3.9 million future deaths by 2015.

http://www.gavialliance.org/resources/GAVI_Alliance_Progress_Report_2010.pdf

Media Articles:

Some Afghans Fear Early US Departure, *VOA News, June 9*

Many Afghans watched with concern as the U.S. Congress debated the future of international assistance in the war-ravaged nation. Many Afghans, especially in the capital Kabul, are worried that the West may leave too quickly and abandon them, like the U.S. did after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989. A development that ultimately led to civil war and the rise of the Taliban.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/asia/south/Afghans-Closely-Watch-Congressional-Debate-Voice-Concern-123548894.html>

How Americans want - and don't want - to Cut the Deficit, in One table, *Washington Post, June 9*

Pew's most recent survey tested support for a long series of deficit-reduction options. The usual suspects came out on top - taxes on the rich and corporations, reducing military commitments and reducing foreign aid all had bipartisan support.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/ezra-klein/post/how-americans-want--and-dont-want--to-cut-the-deficit-in-one-table/2011/05/19/AGpeaLNH_blog.html

A Plan for Afghanistan: Declare victory and Leave, *Opinion, Eugene Robinson, Washington Post, June 9*

We should declare victory and leave. We wanted to depose the Taliban regime, and we did. We wanted to install a new government that answers to its constituents at the polls, and we did. We wanted to smash al-Qaeda's infrastructure of training camps and havens, and we did. We wanted to kill or capture Osama bin Laden, and we did. The threat from Afghanistan is gone. Bring the troops home.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/a-plan-for-afghanistan-declare-victory--and-leave/2011/06/09/AGz8LrNH_story.html

Andrew Mitchell on Results for Change, *Lawrence Haddad, Institute of Development Studies, June 9*

I read the speech Andrew Mitchell made last night on "Results for Change" at the Royal College of Pathologists. It was in part taking stock of the past year at DFID and in part taking on the critique of the results agenda that "it will encourage us to indulge in a host of evils. Results for "good change" is a difficult business, but I think the signs in this speech are encouraging. Most importantly it shows that DFID is listening to its stakeholders.

<http://www.developmenthorizons.com/2011/06/andrew-mitchell-on-results-for-change.html>

Funding for Cuba Programs Stalled in Congress, *Miami Herald*, June 8

An Obama administration effort to spend another \$20 million on Cuba democracy programs has been blocked for two months. At the root of the fight are sharply different visions of the Cuba programs, which have cost \$150 million since they were created in the 1990s to assist nongovernment groups on the island.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/06/08/2257727/funding-for-cuba-programs-stalled.html>

UN Chief Calls for End to AIDS Within 10 Years, *VOA News*, June 8

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the international community had gathered not to fight the disease, but to end it. It is an ambitious goal: zero new infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths. The U.N. chief said it is possible, but would require bold action.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/UN-Holding-Conference-on-Global-AIDS-Response-123461539.html>

Too Much Aid will Hobble Arab Spring, *Opinion*, *Saifedean Ammous*, *Financial Times*, June 7

The wisdom of heaping cash upon these countries has been taken for granted. In fact, it may do more harm than good. Generous aid programs mean leaders do not need to please their citizens, or gain their trust to secure power; they can instead use donor money to build a security state and buy off their opposition. Without aid, however, governments find it harder to build corrupt client networks, and must instead be responsive to the demands of their people.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/12174874-9147-11e0-9668-00144feab49a.html>

EU Team Visits North Korea to Assess Food Aid Needs, *VOA News*, June 7

A team of European officials is traveling in North Korea to assess the need for food aid to the impoverished but nuclear-armed country. The five-member team flew to North Korea and is expected to remain until June 17, visiting both the countryside and the capital, Pyongyang.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/asia/east-pacific/EU-Team-Visits-North-Korea-to-Assess-Food-Aid-Needs-123329908.html>

Obama in a Dream World, *Opinion*, *Pat Buchanan*, *The Richmond Register*, June 6

Across the continent, populist parties of the right are rising that seek to retrieve the sovereignty surrendered to transnational institutions by their globalist elites. Yet Sarkozy and Obama are talking about new foreign aid. Today, America is herself in need of repair and rebuilding. Yet her leaders are living in yesterday.

<http://richmondregister.com/viewpoints/x1697311719/Obama-in-a-dream-world>

All Children Deserve Vaccines, *Opinion*, *Melinda Gates*, *Huffington Post*, June 6

Now that several vaccine manufacturers are offering their vaccines at much lower costs, GAVI will be able to roll out the rotavirus vaccine, as well as other vaccines, for the first time ever in many of the poorest countries. *Getting poor children vaccines is an issue of equity, plain and simple.*

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/melinda-gates/all-children-deserve-vacc_b_871618.html

SEE ALSO: UK to Match Private Donations to Vaccine Body, *Financial Times*, June 6

The UK will match tens of millions of pounds in private sector donations to fund immunization programs in the developing world, in a drive to generate international support for 250m extra vaccinations over the next four years. Andrew Mitchell, development secretary, stressed that international development was about both morality and security

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/4033b212-8fab-11e0-954d-00144feab49a.html>

No Time to Let Up on the Fight, *Editorial*, *New York Times*, June 5

The battle to slow the global AIDS epidemic has made astonishing progress over the past decade, especially in countries whose survival as functioning societies had once seemed threatened. The upfront costs of treating everyone would be huge, but in the long run it could well save money by greatly reducing the number of people who become infected and need treatment.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/06/opinion/06mon2.html>

Private Sector Given Greater Role in UK International Aid, *Guardian*, June 3

UK aid will directly fund up to 300,000 companies in poor countries and encourage foreign investors to take

advantage of highly profitable opportunities. The strategy aims to support jobs for more than 10 million people and help more than 50 million gain access to savings, credit and insurance.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/2011/jun/03/private-sector-greater-role-uk-aid>

India's Stingy Definition of Poverty Irks Critics, *Associated Press, May 27*

India's Planning Commission told the Supreme Court that the poverty line for the nation's cities was \$12.75 per person a month. The World Bank global poverty line, at \$1.25 a day, is three times higher than India's urban level. Local activists say a better name for India's standard would be "the starvation line."

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20110527/ap_on_re_as/as_india_not_poor_enough

ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

Reports:

Climate Change, Water, and Food Security, *FAO, June 2011*

This report summarizes current knowledge of the anticipated impacts of climate change on water availability for agriculture. The implications for local and national food security are examined; and the methods and approaches to assess climate change impacts on water and agriculture are discussed. The report emphasizes the need for a closer alignment between water and agricultural policies and makes the case for immediate implementation of 'no-regrets' strategies which have both positive development outcomes and make agricultural systems resilient to future impacts.

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/i2096e/i2096e.pdf>

Flexible Insurance for Heterogeneous Farmers, *IFPRI, June 2011*

This paper documents (1) heterogeneity of rainfall risk among farmers, (2) the understanding of securities and transmission of information about weather securities among members of endogenously formed risk-sharing groups, and (3) the nature of purchasing decisions and manner in which they are made.

<http://www.ifpri.org/publication/flexible-insurance-heterogeneous-farmers>

Adoption of Weather Index Insurance, *IFPRI, June 2011*

In this paper we examine which farmers would be early entrants into weather index insurance markets in Ethiopia, were such markets to develop on a large scale. We find that educated, rich, and proactive individuals were more likely to purchase insurance.

<http://www.ifpri.org/publication/adoption-weather-index-insurance>

Global and Local Economic Impacts of Climate Change in Syrian Arab Republic and Options for Adaptation, *IFPRI, June 2011*

A global action plan for improving food security and better integration of climate change in national development strategies, agricultural and rural policies, and disaster risk management and social protection policies will be keys for improving the resilience of countries and people to climate change.

<http://www.ifpri.org/publication/global-and-local-economic-impacts-climate-change-syrian-arab-republic-and-options-adapt>

Status of Tropical Forest Management 2011, *International Tropical Timber Organization, June 2011*

This report provides a comprehensive assessment of progress being made towards SFM in each ITTO producer member country and identifies the challenges remaining. Key findings include that the area deemed to be under sustainable management has grown by 50% over the past 5 years but that several countries continue to struggle to make the transition to sustainability in their tropical forests.

http://www.itto.int/news_releases/id=2663

SEE ALSO: Large Swaths of Tropical Forests have been Set Aside, but Little Managed Sustainably, *Washington Post, June 7*

The report warned that only 10 percent of that land was being managed sustainably — a term which means that timber, fruit, and nut harvesting are being kept to within healthy levels and that the forests' borders are secure.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/report-much-of-worlds-tropical-forests-has-been-set-aside-but-little-is-managed-sustainably/2011/06/07/AGOOQLH_story.html

Media Articles:

Scientists Race to avoid Climate Change Harvest, *Reuters, June 10*

To feed 2 billion more mouths by 2050, food production will have to increase by 70 percent. Climate change is perhaps the greatest threat to meeting the target as rising temperatures and droughts dry out farmlands or more intense floods and storms inundate them. Global yield growth of wheat and rice has stagnated at 0.6 percent to 0.7 percent annually over the past 10 years -- about half the production growth rate of 1.2 to 1.4 percent annually needed from now to 2050. Scientists say they are running out of time to boost yields.

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2011/06/10/us-climate-crops-idUKTRE7590I320110610>

The Quiet Crisis, *Opinion, Brian Fagan, Huffington Post, June 10*

This is a quiet crisis of rising temperatures, persistent droughts, and rising food prices in the face of rapid population increases. The crisis is upon us because the world's supply of fresh water is finite and always has been. Now there are billions more people than even half a century ago drawing on a fixed "bank account" of fresh water that is shrinking daily, with no relief in sight.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/brian-fagan/the-quiet-crisis-water-antropology_b_874602.html

Food Sustainability: Crunch Time for Farms when Problems Crop Up, *Financial Times, June 7*

Its farmers' water management and carbon reduction efforts are a key focus for PepsiCo. In 2007, PepsiCo was surprised to discover that growing the potatoes and sunflowers accounted for 34 per cent of the carbon footprint of a packet of crisps. Achieving this goal on the land has hinged in the first instance on i-crop, a web-based crop management system developed by Cambridge university, mainly with funding from PepsiCo.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/d86db182-9095-11e0-9531-00144feab49a.html>

Poor Must have the Burden of Global Warming Lifted, *Editorial, Guardian, June 5*

Averting climate change is no longer a possibility, but its effects can be far better managed and predicted and its costs more equitably borne. The best protection against global warming remains the spread of the most sustainable technologies – in irrigation and agriculture and flood defense – and the more equal distribution of the kinds of resources that will allow those most vulnerable to its effects to survive.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/jun/05/observer-leader-extreme-weather-poor>

SEE ALSO: Big Summit Seeks Big Idea, *BBC News, June 9*

Twenty years after the Rio Earth Summit, next year's UN Summit on Sustainable Development is more commonly seen under the name Rio+20... and maybe that's part of the problem. Among the people it's so far failed to attract are the heads of state and government whose involvement is crucial if the event is to produce more than pieces of paper. And it's failed to attract a big idea.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-13682012>

SEE ALSO: Developing Nations Question Funding Commitment, *Guardian, June 6*

The world's 48 least developed countries and the group of 43 small island states jointly appealed to the rich countries to act.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/jun/06/bonn-climate-funding-commitment>

How Will China's Food Supply Weather the Year of Drought?, *Time, June 3*

In China food supplies and food prices are deeply sensitive topics. Parts of central China, including the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River, are experiencing the lowest levels of rainfall in 50 years. So for the second time in a year, a major grain crop in China is now at risk due to a shortage of water.

<http://globalspin.blogs.time.com/2011/06/03/how-will-chinas-food-supply-weather-the-year-of-drought/>

WOMEN & GIRLS

Reports:

Gendered Impacts of the 2007–08 Food Price Crisis, IFPRI, June 2011

This paper provides empirical evidence on the gendered impact of the 2007–08 food price crisis. Our findings suggest that female-headed households are more vulnerable to food price changes and are more likely to have experienced a food price shock in 2007–08.

<http://www.ifpri.org/publication/gendered-impacts-2007-08-food-price-crisis>

Media Articles:

Ethiopian Girls Fight Child Marriages, BBC News, June 7

Beside a small eucalyptus plantation Archbishop Tutu was sharing a low wooden bench with two Elders who have broken the mould; the first woman to be president of Ireland, Mary Robinson, and the former prime minister of Norway, and ex-head of the World Health Organization, Gro Brundtland. They listened to young unmarried girls with big dreams, as well as women who had no chance of getting an education after being married off at a young age.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13681053>

MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

Reports:

Report Urges end to G20 biofuel Subsidies, Financial Times, June 9

Government subsidies to promote the use of biofuels should be eliminated, a group of leading multinational organizations has concluded in a report outlining ways to reduce volatility in global food prices. G20 governments, it states, should “remove provisions of current national policies that subsidize (or mandate) biofuels production or consumption”.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/04bf4788-92b6-11e0-bd88-00144feab49a.html>

SEE ALSO: Price Volatility in Food and Agricultural Markets: Policy Responses, May 2011

G20 leaders requested FAO, IFAD, IMF, OECD, UNCTAD, WFP, the World Bank and the WTO (to) work with key stakeholders “to develop options for G20 consideration on how to better mitigate and manage the risks associated with the price volatility of food and other agriculture commodities, without distorting market behavior, ultimately to protect the most vulnerable.”

<http://ictsd.org/downloads/2011/05/finalg20report.pdf>

Fostering Growth and Integration, The African Development Bank Group, June 5

Southern Africa is a region of strategic importance, with five Middle Income Countries, a population of 160.5 million and a combined GDP of US\$ 429.2 million. A key focus of the strategy is regional economic cooperation and integration, and in particular, regional infrastructure. Our approach is to prioritize projects according to their stage of preparation and commitment of participating countries.

<http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/RAP%20ORSA%202010%20ANG.pdf>

Media Articles:

Wet Spring, Lousy Harvest Mean Higher Food Prices, MSNBC, June 9

U.S. food prices are expected to stay high through 2012 because a wet spring will likely cut the size of this fall's corn harvest. More expensive grain has led to food price increases this year. Manufacturers and grocery stores have passed higher costs on to consumers. For all of 2011, the USDA predicts food prices will rise 3 percent to 4 percent.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/43338963/>

Agriculture will be a Big Winner if Washington OKs Trade Pacts, Opinion, Sam Carney, Des Moines Register, June 9

The agreements, which have been languishing for four years or more, must still be approved by Congress, where critics of trade and trade agreements will try hard to prevent their adoption. The result will be nothing

short of staggering: According to analyses by Iowa State University economists, the three agreements will boost U.S. pork, beef and poultry exports alone by nearly \$2.3 billion. These new exports will create, in turn, almost 30,000 new jobs in the U.S. pork, beef and poultry industries - including more than 3,700 here in Iowa. <http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2011106100330>

Sugar Futures Surge on Brazil Concerns, *Wall Street Journal*, June 9

Brazil is the top grower of sugarcane, producing about 557 million metric tons of the crop last year. But aging plants and dry weather while the sugarcane was developing are expected to reduce yields from the main growing region.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304259304576373872096576158.html>

US 'concerned' about China Business Practices in Africa, *AFP*, June 9

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton urged African countries to lift trade barriers with the United States here Friday and voiced concern about China's aid and investment practices in Africa. The secretary also sought to promote closer US-African business links so each side knows what the other wants, called for more African women entrepreneurs and stressed US help for Africans wanting to launch or build businesses.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iIXCy6H0dC37Xzxiptu-7qcRUmA>

Debate: Trade or Not to Trade, *Dr. Mark Edelman and Dr. Barry Flinchbaugh*, *Agri-Pulse*, June 9

Dr. Mark Edelman, an Iowa State University economist and Dr. Barry Flinchbaugh, an emeritus professor at Kansas State University discuss the World Trade Organization and trade related issues.

http://www.agri-pulse.com/Trade_or_not_to_trade_farm_exports_06062011.asp

More Trade and More Aid, *Opinion*, *Matthew J. Slaughter and Robert Z. Lawrence*, *New York Times*, June 8

Our proposal to resolve the trade impasse: more trade and more aid. More trade means that President Obama should immediately submit, and Congress should immediately ratify, the pending free-trade agreements. Colombia and Panama already enjoy unfettered access to our market, and South Korea has negotiated free-trade deals with the European Union and India; we cannot afford to fall behind.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/09/opinion/09slaught.html>

Can Free Markets Solve the Food Crisis?, *Time*, June 8

The food crisis rages on. If you talk to agriculture experts and commodity analysts, most of them will tell you that the role of speculation in high food prices is overstated. The problem isn't the free trading of food, but, in fact, that free markets aren't working efficiently enough.

<http://curiouscapitalist.blogs.time.com/2011/06/08/can-free-markets-solve-the-food-crisis/>

Rising Food and Oil Prices are Biggest Threat to Recovery, *says World Bank*, *Guardian*, June 8

The Bank said tougher economic policies and the jump in commodity prices would slow the pace of world growth this year before a pick-up in activity in 2012. The Bank said high oil prices and production shortfalls caused by bad weather had led to higher food prices. Poor people, who spend a high proportion of their income on food, had been particularly hard hit.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2011/jun/08/food-oil-prices-biggest-threat-recovery>

U.S. Companies Race to Catch Up in Africa, *Wall Street Journal*, June 6

U.S. companies' game of catch-up shows the perils of waking up late to the next big frontier market, Africa. The continent's economy is forecast to grow to \$2.6 trillion in 2020 from \$1.6 trillion in 2008, fueled by booms in mining, agriculture and development of ports, roads and other infrastructure. Getting in early to a developing market allows companies to build up strong brands and sales channels that can reap big profits in the long run. That's what China has done in Africa over the past two decades.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703841904576257233342891732.html>

IMF Agrees to a \$3 billion Loan for Egypt, *Washington Post*, June 5

The World Bank has promised about \$4.5 billion over two years in grants, loans and loan guarantees.

President Obama has pledged to swap \$1 billion in Egyptian debt for development projects in the country, but that may take months to get congressional approval. He has also offered another \$1 billion in loan guarantees.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/imf-agrees-to-a-3-billion-loan-for-egypt/2011/06/05/AGP3BiJH_story.html

Russia: Wheat Ban Worked, *Financial Times*, May 31

For believers in unfettered global trade, there is an unfortunate outcome to Russia's 10-month ban on grain exports. At least as far as Russia was concerned, it worked. Not only did the restriction cause domestic prices to collapse, helping to restrain one of the highest rates of inflation in the developing world, but it also averted a mass cull of livestock.

http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/3/f8ca6144-8b8d-11e0-8c09-00144feab49a.dwp_uuid=a955630e-3603-11dc-ad42-0000779fd2ac.html

AGRIBUSINESS

Media Articles:

Land O' Lakes, DeCoster in Negotiations, *Des Moines Register*, June 10

New England's largest egg producer is in negotiations to sell its operations to Minnesota-based Land O' Lakes, a Maine lawmaker said during a legislative debate.

<http://blogs.desmoinesregister.com/dmr/index.php/2011/06/10/lawmaker-land-o-lakes-decoster-in-negotiations/>

Aabar Eyes Farm Deals with Glencore, *Financial Times*, June 7

The focus of Aabar on farming investments comes as Gulf nations, including Abu Dhabi, plan billions of dollars of investments in global food supply and infrastructure as they guard against price shocks and supply shortages in core resources. Food security has risen to the top of the agenda in the Middle East and north Africa – the world's biggest importer of cereals – following the food crisis of 2007-2008.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/e38dff0e-909f-11e0-9531-00144feab49a.html>

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