

## GLOBAL FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE WEEKLY NEWS BRIEF OF THE GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE



May 7<sup>th</sup> – May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2011

**Quote of the Week:** *“There have been multiple significant effects [of development and foreign aid]: agricultural assistance, opportunities for improved access to schools and education, assistance to women and children, improved health care, infrastructure development, and the delivery of electricity. While this is a short list, and certainly is not exhaustive, the projects behind these broad categories are myriad, and the benefits to the people and the governments of the CENTCOM region have been, and continue to be, enormous. In that vein, there are few symbols of America more poignant and with greater “brand recognition” than the “handclasp” logo of USAID emblazoned on bags of flour or containers of nutritional biscuits or on boxes of educational supplies. All of these measures combine to improve quality of life, reduce tension, extend governance, create opportunities and enable us to successfully accomplish our missions.”* - Lt. Gen. John R. Allen, Interview with USAID Frontlines Publication, May 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](http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/globalagdevelopment).
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### KEY ARTICLES AND REPORTS

**Global Food Losses and Food Waste, UN FAO, May 2011**

Roughly one third of the food produced in the world for human consumption every year gets lost or wasted. The report offered a number of practical suggestions on how to reduce losses and waste. In developing countries the problem is chiefly one of inadequate harvest techniques, poor post-harvest management and logistics, lack of suitable infrastructure, processing and packaging, and lack of marketing information which

would allow production to better match demand.

[http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/ags/publications/GFL\\_web.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ags/publications/GFL_web.pdf)

**SEE ALSO: World Waste 1 Billion tons of Food a Year**, *CNN MONEY*, May 11

The UN said that about 1.3 billion tons of food is lost or wasted every year, which amounts to roughly one third of all the food produced for human consumption. Food losses occur as a result of inefficiencies in food production and processing operations that diminish supplies.

[http://money.cnn.com/2011/05/11/news/economy/world\\_squanders\\_food/](http://money.cnn.com/2011/05/11/news/economy/world_squanders_food/)

**Interview with CENTCOM's Lt. Gen. John R. Allen**, *USAID Frontline Blog*, April/May 2011

Lt. Gen. John R. Allen became deputy commander, United States Central Command on July 15, 2008. On April 28, 2011, President Barack Obama nominated him to take Gen. David Petraeus' place as commander of the NATO International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. Following is Lt. Gen. Allen's exclusive interview with FrontLines regarding his time in Iraq and the relationship between USAID and the military.

[http://www.usaid.gov/press/frontlines/fl\\_apr11/FL\\_apr11\\_ALLEN.html](http://www.usaid.gov/press/frontlines/fl_apr11/FL_apr11_ALLEN.html)

**Good and Bad News From the UN's Population Projections**, *Economist*, May 12

Sub-Saharan Africa is by far the fastest-growing part of the world. Little larger than Europe or Latin America today, it will be bigger than either by the end of the century, and much more than half the size of Asia (it is now only a fifth). The consequences could be severe. The Sahel would be turned into a desert by the soaring population of West Africa.

[http://www.economist.com/node/18681806?story\\_id=18681806](http://www.economist.com/node/18681806?story_id=18681806)

**Linking School Feeding to Agriculture**, *Opinion*, Marshall Matz, *Agri-Pulse*, May 8

In order to have sustainable school feeding programs, the focus must shift to agriculture development and boosting production. Yields must increase. One ton a hectare is not enough to feed Africa. It is starting to happen, but there is a long way to go. The Africa Union has adopted a policy called CAADP asking all countries to devote at least ten percent of their budgets to agriculture and countries are responding.

[http://www.agri-pulse.com/School\\_Feeding\\_Accord\\_call\\_to\\_action\\_05082011.asp](http://www.agri-pulse.com/School_Feeding_Accord_call_to_action_05082011.asp)

**Proving Malthus Wrong: Sustainable Agriculture in 2050**, *Dr. Robert L. Thompson, Tomorrow's Table*, May 13

Over the past few months, we've watched as governments have been overthrown in Tunisia and Egypt, as governments across North Africa and the Middle East promised reforms, some even handing out cash to pacify angry citizens, and as demonstrations in Libya intensified into outright civil war. Although a number of issues have come to a head, one constant across countries is the rocketing prices of basic commodities, and the increasing need for more, and more efficient, food production.

<http://scienceblogs.com/tomorrowstable/>

**Something to Cut**, *Roger Thurow, Senior Fellow on Global Agriculture and Food Policy, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Global Food for Thought Blog*, May 13

With many words in this column, we have discussed what not to cut from the federal budget. Namely, administration requests to fund agriculture development, especially in Africa, under the Feed the Future initiative and the Global Agriculture Food Security Program. Now, a word – just a single word -- on what to cut. Subsidies. Not all the agriculture subsidies, especially those that help keep smaller farmers afloat or help maintain our food security.

<http://globalfoodforthought.typepad.com/global-food-for-thought/2011/05/roger-thurow-outrage-and-inspire-something-to-cut-.html>

**The Chicago Council's Global Agricultural Development Initiative will hold its Annual Symposium on Global Agriculture and Food Security: Progress to Date and Strategies for Success on May 24.** For more information, please visit the Symposium website.

[http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/GLOBALAGDEVELOPMENT/gad/Events/2011/May\\_2011.aspx](http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/GLOBALAGDEVELOPMENT/gad/Events/2011/May_2011.aspx)

**Invitation to the 2011 Creating Shared Value Forum**, *May 2011*

To combat this challenge, business and government need to engage each other in more productive ways so

that we can: Double food production by 2050; Head off a looming global water crisis; and Stem unacceptable levels of both hunger and obesity around the world. To register: please contact [csvforum@acus.org](mailto:csvforum@acus.org)

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## RELEVANT U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

### **Leveling the Playing Field for American Businesses**, *U.S. Department of Treasury Blog, May 13*

The third annual U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue concluded with the United States and China committing to a set of concrete and tangible outcomes to: promote strong, sustainable and more balanced growth; strengthen financial systems and improve financial supervision; enhance trade and investment cooperation; and create more opportunities for U.S. businesses, exporters and workers.

<http://www.treasury.gov/connect/blog/Pages/Leveling-the-Playing-Field-for-American-Businesses.aspx>

### **SEE ALSO: China offers Concession on Key U.S. Trade Irritant**, *Reuters, May 10*

China pledged to make it easier for U.S. companies to win Chinese government contracts, addressing a long-standing complaint of foreign corporations seeking a piece of the fast-growing market.

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20110510/pl\\_nm/us\\_usa\\_china\\_17](http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20110510/pl_nm/us_usa_china_17)

### **Sen. Lugar Raises Afghan Mission Questions**, *NPR, May 13*

The truth of the matter is out of the 1.5 billion in the first year, only 179 million has actually been allocated to four projects. And even that is under some scrutiny as to how it is being spent, how efficient the funds may be. Now, that's too bad, but it illustrates how tough this job is, even if you offer a very generous thought in terms of foreign assistance. Getting it done in Pakistan is no easy trick.

<http://www.npr.org/2011/05/13/136266523/sen-lugar-raises-afghan-mission-questions>

### **Stabenow Cites Weather Woes as Need for Farmer Safety Net**, *Hagstrom Report, May 12*

Recent natural disasters around the country show the need for continuing strong support for farmers in the 2012 farm bill, Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Debbie Stabenow said. Budget constraints, however, will make writing the 2012 farm bill "very challenging," she said, adding that her committee "will make sure we are stretching every dollar." Stabenow said she is planning to hold her first farm bill hearing in Washington within the next two weeks and that it will "look broadly at agriculture."

[www.hagstromreport.com](http://www.hagstromreport.com)

### **Rogers Announces Schedule for House to Complete Appropriations Bills "On Time and On Budget"**, *House Committee on Appropriations, May 11*

House Appropriations Chairman Hal Rogers announced the schedule for the completion of work on the 12 fiscal year 2012 Appropriations bills by the end of the fiscal year on September 30<sup>th</sup>. Reflecting the critical need for significant budget reductions to help cut back the nation's looming debt, Rogers announced lean funding limits for each of the 12 Appropriations subcommittees.

[http://www.appropriations.house.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=PressReleases.Detail&PressRelease\\_id=298](http://www.appropriations.house.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=PressReleases.Detail&PressRelease_id=298)

### **USDA Looks to Approve Monsanto's Drought-Tolerant Corn**, *New York Times, May 11*

The Obama administration will seek to allow the unlimited sale of a corn variety genetically engineered by Monsanto Co. to resist drought. The corn, if approved, would be the first commercial biotech crop designed to resist stressful environmental conditions like drought, rather than pests or herbicides.

<http://www.nytimes.com/gwire/2011/05/11/11greenwire-usda-looks-to-approve-monsantos-drought-tolera-84634.html>

### **Obama Nominates Senate Aide Wetjen as CFTC Commissioner**, *Bloomberg, May 11*

President Barack Obama said he will nominate Mark P. Wetjen, senior policy adviser to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, to become a member of the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission. If confirmed, he will join an agency that is writing rules for the \$583 trillion global over-the-counter swaps market along with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-05-11/obama-nominates-senate-aide-wetjen-as-cftc-commissioner-1.html>

## U.S. Government Statement at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed

**Countries**, Don Steinberg, Deputy Administrator of the USAID, USAID, May 10

The LDCs have had their success stories in the past decade. Many LDCs, especially in Africa, Latin America and Asia, weathered the economic, financial and food crises and enhanced their economic growth and addressed socio-economic conditions. The United States has refocused our assistance in this area. We have increased our ODA financing for LDCs from \$988 million in 2001 to more than \$9.4 billion in 2010, nearly a ten-fold increase. LDCs now benefit from 31% of our assistance, compared to less than 9% a decade ago.

<http://www.usaid.gov/press/releases/2011/ps110510.html>

**USDA Secretary Vilsack says Agency will Adopt Recommendations on Diversity**, Washington Post, May 10

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said that his agency would quickly adopt most of the recommendations contained in a two year study that looked at USDA's history of discrimination and its ongoing civil rights failings. The recommendations range from making the department's rural development programs more accessible to women to appointing a "chief diversity officer" in each of the agency's state offices.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2011/05/10/AFN5trlG\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2011/05/10/AFN5trlG_story.html)

**SEE FULL REPORT:** [http://www.usda.gov/documents/Civil\\_Rights\\_Assessment-Final\\_Report.pdf](http://www.usda.gov/documents/Civil_Rights_Assessment-Final_Report.pdf)

**USAID Launches Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid**, USAID, May 4

Dr. Rajiv Shah announced the members of the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid. ACVFA promotes a vibrant exchange of ideas between USAID and the non-governmental sector, and offers substantive input into the Agency's work. Members include Catherine Bertini, Professor, Syracuse University.

<http://www.usaid.gov/press/releases/2011/pr110504.html>

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **CropLife America National Policy Conference: Lost in Translation? Deciphering the Discourse on Modern Agriculture**

*Date:* May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011

*Location:* Washington, DC

The CropLife America National Policy Conference will bring together leading experts in the fields of agriculture, food safety and security, agricultural technology and policy to offer highly diverse perspectives and engage in frank discussions on all issues facing modern agriculture. Our Master of Ceremonies will again be Marc Gunther, contributing editor at FORTUNE magazine and a senior writer at Greenbiz.com who has appeared on NBC, ABC, CNN and NPR.

<http://www.croplifeamerica.org/nationalpolicyconference>

### **International Conference and Exhibition on Agricultural Biotechnology in Africa**

*Date:* May 13th – May 15th, 2011

*Location:* Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The aim of the conference is to: 1) provide sound scientific knowledge on issues related to technology transfer and capacity building; 2) identify more efficient ways and means of building capacity and developing sustainable and useful institutions; 3) present lessons learned and identify success factors regarding biotechnology knowledge transfer and capacity building; and 4) serve as a forum for cross-sectoral and multidisciplinary dialogue between scientists and policy makers on issues related to the development, use, and application of biotechnology.

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

### **Creating Shared Value Forum 2011: Nutrition, Water, and Rural Development 2030**

This Forum aims to provide a platform for global business leaders and top government officials to offer fresh thinking on how businesses and governments can work in concert to close the gap between development goals and commercial needs. Panel discussions will focus on challenges and opportunities to nutrition, water, and rural development in Latin America and Africa. The entire event will be webcast [live](#). To register: please contact [csvforum@acus.org](mailto:csvforum@acus.org)

*Date:* May 19, 2011

*Location:* Washington, D.C.

<http://www.nestle.com/CSV/CSVFORUM/Pages/2011.aspx>

### **Symposium on Global Agriculture and Food Security**

*Date:* May 24, 2011

*Location:* Washington, D.C.

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs will convene a symposium to review progress on the U.S. government's global food security strategy and provide critical thinking on how best to overcome potential obstacles to success.

[http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/GLOBALAGDEVELOPMENT/gad/Events/2011/May\\_2011.aspx](http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/GLOBALAGDEVELOPMENT/gad/Events/2011/May_2011.aspx)

### **Second World Conference of Humanitarian Studies**

*Date:* June 2<sup>nd</sup> – June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011

*Location:* Tufts University, Medford, MA

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

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

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

*Date:* June 20<sup>st</sup> – 21<sup>nd</sup>, 2011

*Location:* Washington, DC

Register now to participate in the Cracking the Nut Conference. Conference registrations will close in 10 days on May 15<sup>th</sup>. 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](http://www.worldfoodprize.org) to learn about this year's honorees.

### **Agricultural Value Chain Finance Training**

*Date:* June 22<sup>nd</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup>, 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 22<sup>nd</sup> - June 24<sup>th</sup>, 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/>

### **World Food Prize 25th Anniversary**

*Date:* October 12th – 14th, 2011

*Location:* Des Moines, IA

The World Food Prize will celebrate its 25th Anniversary this 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](http://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/>

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## **AGRICULTURAL ISSUES**

### Reports:

#### **Leveraging Agriculture for Improving Nutrition and Health, IFPRI, May 2011**

Agriculture faces a number of challenges in the coming decades, including growing population, climate change, water scarcity, land degradation, urbanization and changing diets, rising energy costs, and natural disasters. Looking ahead, agriculture faces the task of contributing to food security, nutrition, and good health for a rising number of people. Can it meet the challenge?

<http://www.ifpri.org/publication/leveraging-agriculture-improving-nutrition-and-health>

#### **Assessing the Livelihood Impacts of Livestock Disease Outbreak, IFPRI, May 2011**

Because of the substantive role played by livestock in the income and asset portfolios of the poor, livestock diseases can be an important threat to livelihoods. Yet for a variety of reasons, there are few applicable methods and consequently scant literature to assess the impacts of livestock diseases on livelihood outcomes. We propose an alternative approach for estimating the impacts of livestock diseases on livelihoods.

<http://www.ifpri.org/publication/assessing-livelihood-impacts-livestock-disease-outbreak>

### Media Articles:

#### **Innovations That Can Ensure Food Security, Opinion, Danielle Nierenberg, China Daily, May 13**

While all crops are vulnerable to risks, researchers have found that vegetables tend to be more dependable than staple crops, because they have shorter cycles, grow faster and require less space. Indigenous vegetables are especially hardy because they are more resistant to pests and diseases than other plants. And they need less irrigation and expensive chemicals, helping small-scale farmers save money.

[http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2011-05/13/content\\_12502242.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2011-05/13/content_12502242.htm)

#### **Farm Bill 2012: Time for an Overhaul with Innovative Farming Systems, Huffington Post, May 12**

It's time to overhaul the Farm Bill. The authors of the paper, entitled "Transforming U.S. Agriculture," argue that although U.S. farms have significantly increased their production yields in recent years, the environment and public health has been sacrificed. The most pressing change must be achieved on the policy level. That change can be found in the 2012 Farm Bill, the government's primary agricultural and food policy tool.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/12/farm-bill-2012-innovative-farming\\_n\\_860069.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/12/farm-bill-2012-innovative-farming_n_860069.html)

**Farm Subsidies: A Useful Sacrifice in the Budget Debate**, *Opinion, Patrick Sharma, May 12*

Amid continuing debates over how to reduce the federal deficit, recent proposals to cut farm subsidies present an important opportunity to bridge partisan divides. By reforming our antiquated farm support system, Congress can exercise some much-needed fiscal discipline and give the country an agricultural policy for the 21st century. Doing so, however, will require putting the national good over the interests of a powerful few, as well as confronting some enduring myths about American farming.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/patrick-sharma/farm-subsidies-a-useful-s\\_b\\_861225.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/patrick-sharma/farm-subsidies-a-useful-s_b_861225.html)

**Egypt Tries to Turn Corner After Long Road of Crop Neglect**, *New York Times, May 11*

Egypt has released a plan to sharply increase production of important crops, with the goal of becoming self-sufficient in wheat and to “restore the glory” of Egyptian cotton after years of neglect under the regime of President Hosni Mubarak. The goal of ending reliance on imports of wheat, a basic food for the 86 million people in the country, has long eluded Egypt.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/12/world/middleeast/12iht-M12B-EGYPT-FARMING.html>

**The Future of Food is Now**, *Washington Post, May 10*

A recurring theme of the challenging Future of Food conference was the notion that the time for day-long discussions is over. It is now time for action, noted numerous thinkers, including the keynote speaker, the Prince of Wales, who between various Socratic questions issued this warning: “Essentially, we have to do more today to avert the catastrophes of tomorrow.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/food/the-future-of-food-is-now/2011/05/05/AFIBZziG\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/food/the-future-of-food-is-now/2011/05/05/AFIBZziG_story.html)

**Child Nutritionists Push Accord for School Meals in Africa**, *Hagstrom Report, May 9*

Gene White, a former director of child nutrition for California, and Namanga Ngongi, president of a Gates Foundation agriculture development effort here, come from very different worlds, but they have a dream in common: that every child in Africa will be offered a school lunch and that as much of the food as possible will be produced by local farmers.

[www.hagstromreport.com](http://www.hagstromreport.com)

**Small Farmers are the Answer**, *Opinion, Bill Gates, Huffington Post, May 9*

On May 24, I'll be giving a speech in Washington, D.C., to draw attention to farming families in the developing world and the important role they play in cutting hunger and poverty. I need your help in making the case about why small farmers are so important -- in fact, I want you to share your best ideas and help spread the word.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/bill-gates/small-farmers-are-the-ans\\_b\\_859482.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/bill-gates/small-farmers-are-the-ans_b_859482.html)

**SEE ALSO: Join the Challenge from The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**

Show the world how small farmers are growing more, earning more, using better seeds, having success with livestock, and gaining access to new market opportunities. Show the challenges they overcome every day to provide for their families. And most importantly, show how supporting them makes their lives—and the world—better. Have a question for us? E-mail

[submissions@gatesfoundation.org](mailto:submissions@gatesfoundation.org)

**Feeding World Stirs Hot Debate**, *St. Louis Today, May 7*

The numbers have become a familiar refrain: 9 billion people by 2050. For aid organizations and policymakers, the figures raise an alarming question: How to feed them all? For agricultural corporations including Monsanto, they offer a huge market opportunity.

[http://www.stltoday.com/business/local/article\\_005d48af-1f7d-5e18-9a98-061894bc25f6.html](http://www.stltoday.com/business/local/article_005d48af-1f7d-5e18-9a98-061894bc25f6.html)

**Diverse Group Seeks to Boost Food Production**, *Des Moines Register, May 7*

A new effort is under way to get agreement on the best ways to increase food production in ways that are good for the environment, health and rural economies. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and seven other major foundations have launched an initiative called AGree.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2011105080327>

**Farm Subsidies Become Target Amid Spending Cuts, *New York Times, May 6***

When it comes to spending cuts, members of Congress like to say that “everything is on the table.” Except, generally, food. But now federal farm subsidies, long decried by policy makers as wasteful and antiquated but protected by powerful political interests, appear to be in serious danger. His [Representative Paul D Ryan’s] budget proposal would take \$30 billion out of the farm program over the next decade.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/07/us/politics/07farm.html>

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**FOREIGN ASSISTANCE**

Media Articles:

**Let Them Eat Maize Husks, *Economist, May 12***

It is the time of year when the previous harvest has been nearly eaten and the next one has just been planted. Time, in other words, to worry about North Korea’s perennially hungry masses. North Korea had long grown dependent on food handouts from its estranged brother, South Korea, and from the United States. But the South’s current president, Lee Myung-bak, has taken a tougher line.

<http://www.economist.com/node/18682803>

**The U.S. Should Maintain Aid to Pakistan, Especially in Education, *Brookings, May 12***

Against a background of tight budgets and a broader debate on U.S. foreign aid, members of Congress on both sides of the aisle have voiced varying views. Some have been adamant about freezing and even eliminating aid to Pakistan, while others are staunch in their belief in maintaining support to the country at this critical point in time.

[http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0512\\_pakistan\\_aid\\_winthrop.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0512_pakistan_aid_winthrop.aspx)

**Deep and Disproportionate Cuts to the International Affairs Budget: Dangerous to Our National Security, *Opinion, Liz Schroyer, Stimson Center Blog, May 11***

In these tough economic times, leaders in Congress have some difficult choices ahead of them to get our deficit under control and our fiscal house in order. In recent weeks, however, we haven’t been able to open a newspaper without seeing evidence of the dangerous, complex and every-changing world in which we live. These are every day reminders that we cannot allow deep and disproportionate cuts to risk our national security and leadership in the world.

<http://thewillandthewallet.org/2011/05/11/deep-and-disproportionate-cuts-to-the-international-affairs-budget-dangerous-to-our-national-security/>

**Foreign Aid, Like All Government Spending, Must Pay Its Part, *Opinion, Joseph C. Whitehill, Stimson Center Blog, May 10***

The time has come to apply serious fiscal discipline to ourselves. Reducing international affairs spending would be a miniscule part of that discipline, but there is no reason to exempt it from fiscal discipline. Foreign aid enthusiasts claim that they are unfairly, even disproportionately targeted for cuts during times of fiscal restraint. Historically, the budget has told a different story.

<http://thewillandthewallet.org/2011/05/10/foreign-aid-like-all-government-spending-must-pay-its-part/>

**U.S. Aid Efforts in Libya, *VOA News, May 10***

To date, the U.S. has committed \$53.5 million in humanitarian assistance. There have been some optimistic changes in Libya recently, in terms of humanitarian access, but conditions continue to be difficult to assess in many areas due to security concerns.

<http://www.voanews.com/policy/editorials/US-Aid-Efforts-in-Libya--121603409.html>

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**ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)**

## Reports:

### **America's Climate Choices**, *National Academy of Sciences, May 2011*

Climate change is occurring, is very likely caused primarily by human activities, and poses significant risks to humans and the environment. These risks indicate a pressing need for substantial action to limit the magnitude of climate change and to prepare for adapting to its impacts.

<http://dels.nas.edu/Report/America-Climate-Choices/12781>

**SEE ALSO: Scientists' Report Stresses Urgency of Limiting Greenhouse Gas Emissions**, *New York Times, May 12*

The nation's scientific establishment issued a stark warning to the American public: Not only is global warming real, but the effects are already becoming serious and the need has become "pressing" for a strong national policy to limit emissions of heat-trapping gases.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/13/science/earth/13climate.html>

### **Fate of Mountain Glaciers in the Anthropocene**, *Pontifical Academy of Sciences, May 2011*

We appeal to all nations to develop and implement effective and fair policies to reduce the causes and impacts of climate change on communities and ecosystems, including mountain glaciers and their watersheds, aware that we all live in the same home. By acting now, in the spirit of common but differentiated responsibility, we accept our duty to one another and to the stewardship of a planet blessed with the gift of life.

[http://www.environment.ucla.edu/media\\_IOE/files/PAS\\_Glacier\\_050511\\_final-sr-klw.pdf](http://www.environment.ucla.edu/media_IOE/files/PAS_Glacier_050511_final-sr-klw.pdf)

**SEE ALSO: Vatican Report Shines Light on Climate Change Divisions Within the U.S. Faith Community**, *New York Times, May 10*

When the Vatican released a report calling man-made climate change "serious and potentially irreversible" and advocating aggressive action to curb emissions, it stirred up old divisions within the U.S. faith community over whether human activity can affect creation and what should be done about it.

<http://www.nytimes.com/gwire/2011/05/10/10greenwire-vatican-report-shines-light-on-climate-change-98836.html>

**SEE ALSO: Vatican-Appointed Panel Warns Of Climate Change**, *Huffington Post, May 10*

The Earth is getting warmer, glaciers are melting, and urgent measures are necessary to stem the damage.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/10/vaticanappointed-panel-wa\\_n\\_860072.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/10/vaticanappointed-panel-wa_n_860072.html)

## Media Articles:

### **Climate Change Bringing Infection, Hunger, Illness**, *Reuters, March 13*

Climate change threatens far more than our environment. It's already led to the spread of infectious diseases and respiratory ailments across the globe and contributed to thousands of deaths through heat waves and other extreme weather events. It's even fueled recent revolts in the Middle East and North Africa.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/05/13/us-climate-change-illness-idUSTRE74C6WF20110513>

### **As Clinton Works Against Global Warming in Greenland, Some There Don't Mind It**, *Washington Post, May 12*

Few places on Earth have seen starker changes in weather than this icebound island straddling the Arctic Circle. With that in mind, America's top diplomat arrived here intent on calling attention to the perils of climate change. The problem was that Greenlanders aren't exactly complaining.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/as-clinton-works-against-global-warming-in-greenland-some-there-dont-mind-it/2011/05/12/AF5d401G\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/as-clinton-works-against-global-warming-in-greenland-some-there-dont-mind-it/2011/05/12/AF5d401G_story.html)

### **U.S. Inaction on Climate Change a 'Very Serious Hand Brake' on World Efforts**, *Huffington Post, May 12*

Washington's inaction on climate legislation is a "very serious hand brake" on world efforts to combat global warming, the U.N. climate chief. But Christiana Figueres said she believes the U.S. will eventually join the rest of the industrialized world in mandatory reductions of greenhouse gases.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/13/christiana-figueres-us-climate-change\\_n\\_861583.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/13/christiana-figueres-us-climate-change_n_861583.html)

**Brazil Debates Easing Curbs on Developing Amazon Forest**, *New York Times*, May 11

Brazil's Congress fiercely debated changing a cornerstone environmental law, a move conservationists warned could roll back one of the most effective pieces of legislation protecting forests and biodiversity in Brazil and undermine the country's efforts to slow greenhouse gas emissions. After announcing an agreement late Wednesday, the government's leader could not raise a quorum and the vote was pushed to next week.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/12/world/americas/12brazil.html>

**Weather Hasn't Been a Friend to Farmers**, *USA Today*, May 11

Spring has been rough for corn farmers, with the USDA projecting that yield per acre will be down about three bushels because of the late start to planting. For many corn farmers, it's been too wet and cold to plant. It's also simply been too wet to get tractors out into the fields.

[http://www.usatoday.com/money/economy/2011-05-11-cold-likely-to-hit-crops\\_n.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/money/economy/2011-05-11-cold-likely-to-hit-crops_n.htm)

**Researchers Try to Help Prevent Climate Change Conflict**, *Voice of America*, May 11

Experts say climate change is contributing to more and more conflicts around the world, especially in Africa. Researchers and aid agencies say they are doing their best to help reduce this trend.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/environment/Researchers-Try-to-Help-Prevent-Climate-Change-Conflict-121622609.html>

**House Seeks Accounting of Aid Money to Haiti**, *Associated Press*, May 11

The House on Tuesday asked the Obama administration to come up with an accounting of how humanitarian and reconstruction aid is being spent in Haiti, which has been slow to recover from the devastating earthquake of more than a year ago despite an outpouring of U.S. and international assistance.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gYOLNC2QPm-U6I2ycvg5j4b-ASng>

**Scientists, Farmers to Study Climate Change**, *Seattle Times*, May 10

Farmers and scientists are launching a \$20 million study on how climate change will impact agricultural practices. Nearly 100 researchers and farmers from across the region met at the University of Idaho, where the five-year research program is starting. Funding for the study comes from the USDA.

[http://seattletimes.nwsour.com/html/localnews/2015013385\\_apwafarmersclimate1stldwritethru.html](http://seattletimes.nwsour.com/html/localnews/2015013385_apwafarmersclimate1stldwritethru.html)

**Doing More Than Praying for Rain**, *Opinion*, Tina Rosenberg, *New York Times*, May 9

The vast majority of African peasant farmers have no opportunity to insure their crops. Virtually all small farmers in Africa depend on rain for irrigation. Most have no safety net. Weather insurance for small farmers has always faced numerous barriers. But throughout east Africa today there are projects finding creative and innovative ways to overcome them.

<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/05/09/doing-more-than-praying-for-rain/>

**Physicist Group's Study Raises Doubts on Capturing Carbon Dioxide From Air**, *New York Times*, May 9

Over the last few years, some of world's brightest minds have become fascinated with a seemingly simple idea: easing the threat of climate change by pulling carbon dioxide out of the air. But the study, released by the American Physical Society finds that while removing carbon dioxide from ambient air is technically feasible, the cost is likely to remain prohibitively high.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/10/science/earth/10carbon.html>

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## WOMEN & GIRLS

### Media Articles:

**Women's Influence in Politics is Growing, but It is still Small**, *Economist*, May 12

This week 13 European countries signed a Council of Europe convention on combating violence against women. All 47 members were urged to comply. Turkey pushed hard for the convention, which calls for hotlines, shelters and legal aid for abused women. So it should. Turkey ranks with Russia as one of the worst countries in Europe for abuse of women.

<http://www.economist.com/node/18682644>

**Interview with Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala: 'Trouble Woman' at the World Bank**, *Financial Times*, May 10  
Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is a managing director at the World Bank. As a former foreign minister and finance minister of Nigeria, she attempted to improve the transparency of government finances and root out corruption. A Harvard graduate, she completed her PhD in regional economics and development at MIT.  
<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/3bde2d32-7a2a-11e0-bc74-00144feabdc0.html>

**Family Structure Oppresses Women**, *AllAfrica.com*, May 10  
Important as it is to secure greater representation of women in our august house and improve access to education for the girl child; it is prudent not to forget the underlying causes of our (women's) debasement. The all-to-common circumstances of career women, urban housewives and rural farmers juggling to fulfill their 'family' duties are only too real.  
<http://allafrica.com/stories/201105110103.html>

**Women's Access to Finance and Markets and Call to Action**, *Michelle Bachelet, UN Women*, May 9  
Women agricultural producers, particularly in low-income countries, provide up to 70 percent of agricultural labour and produce more than 90 percent of domestic food consumption, but generally do so on land that is less productive, and yields are small. They lack access to agricultural inputs and extension services, and few opportunities to market their products.  
<http://www.unwomen.org/2011/05/womens-access-to-finance-and-markets-and-call-to-action/>

**'Clean Stoves' Would Save Lives, Cut Pollution**, *Opinion, Hillary Clinton and Julia Roberts, USA Today*, May 7  
On average, women and girls in developing countries spend up to 20 hours a week searching for fuel — time they could spend going to school, running a business, or raising their families. And if they live in areas of conflict, leaving home to search for fuel puts them at great risk of assault or rape.  
[http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/2011-05-06-Hillary-Clinton-Julia-Roberts-clean-stoves\\_n.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/2011-05-06-Hillary-Clinton-Julia-Roberts-clean-stoves_n.htm)

**Women and Farming: A Nurturing Nature**, *Des Moines Register*, May 7  
Is there a maternal instinct that makes women, long the caregivers in most cultures, better suited than men to care for Iowa's 24 million acres of rich farmland? The question and possible answers are gender-issue tripwires. But the fact that about half of Iowa's farmland now is owned by women makes the query far from idle.  
<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2011105080324>

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## MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

### Reports:

**Institutions, Geography, Trade and Income per Capita**, *IFPRI*, May 2011  
This paper tests a series of prominent hypotheses regarding how institutions, geography, and trade interact to influence income per capita using a novel spatial econometric approach to control for both spillovers among neighboring countries and spatially correlated omitted variables.  
<http://www.ifpri.org/publication/institutions-geography-trade-and-income-capita>

### Media Articles:

**With Gas Prices Coming Down and Food Prices Perhaps to Follow, Inflation May Be Peaking**, *Washington Post*, May 13  
Lower prices — or at least a break in their steady rise — will come as a big relief. Consumer prices rose 3.2 percent for the year ending in April, the most since October 2008. Higher food and gas prices drove the gains. Food prices had risen in March at the fastest rate in three years.  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/with-gas-prices-coming-down-and-food-prices-perhaps-to->

[follow-inflation-is-less-of-a-worry/2011/05/13/AF5ehw2G\\_story.html](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/05/13/AF5ehw2G_story.html)

**The Great Asian Land Grab**, *Foreign Policy*, May 13

Land prices have soared in Cambodia over the past decade. For the well-connected, and even for some members of the fledgling middle class, the boom has been sweet, yielding new capital and income. But it has also fueled what advocacy organizations describe as an epidemic of land-grabbing, with as many as 500,000 people arbitrarily kicked off their lands nationwide in recent years, squeezed into deeper poverty.

[http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/05/13/the\\_great\\_asian\\_land\\_grab](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/05/13/the_great_asian_land_grab)

**Farmers Exporting via Black Sea to Return to Wheat Market**, *Financial Times*, May 11

The US government said farmers exporting via the Black Sea would return to global wheat markets this year after the most severe drought in a century in a grain supply assessment that some analysts called overly optimistic. The US Department of Agriculture projected that wheat exports from Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine would more than double to 26m tonnes in the year beginning in July.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/5d36edc8-7bf3-11e0-9b16-00144feabdc0.html>

**SEE ALSO: Repeat of 2010 Drought Unlikely for Russia Crops**, *Wall Street Journal*, May 10

Russia is unlikely to suffer from another severe drought this year and current conditions point to a sizable harvest, traders and forecasters said.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703730804576315144071498786.html>

**UN Conference Warns Rising Prices are Hurting World's Poorest Countries**, *Washington Post*, May 9

A United Nations conference aimed at helping the world's poorest people opened with dire warnings about the threat of rising food and fuel prices to the vulnerable. There were also calls to seize investment opportunities in developing countries. Conflict is also an obstacle to advancement.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/un-conference-warns-rising-prices-are-hurting-worlds-poorest-countries/2011/05/09/AFzMtpWG\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/un-conference-warns-rising-prices-are-hurting-worlds-poorest-countries/2011/05/09/AFzMtpWG_story.html)

**SEE ALSO: Food Prices Deepening Global Poverty**, *Voice of America*, May 10

Since the first meeting of this every 10-year event in 1971, the number of least-developed countries has increased, and U.N. officials say the population of the world's 48 poorest nations is expected to double to 1.7 billion by 2050. U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon says more strain is being placed on essential services, such as food availability.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/europe/UN-Food-Prices-Deepening-Global-Poverty-121591139.html>

**Beef and Pork Groups Push FTAs**, *Hoosier Ag Today*, May 9

The National Pork Producers Council and 39 state pork associations are pushing for a vote on FTAs with Colombia, Panama and South Korea – as soon as possible - after receiving enabling legislation from the White House. An Iowa State University economist estimates, once implemented, U.S. pork producers could be exporting an extra 770-million dollars worth of pork.

[http://www.hoosieragtoday.com/wire/news/00356\\_porkbeefftas\\_211937.php](http://www.hoosieragtoday.com/wire/news/00356_porkbeefftas_211937.php)

**Africa's Growing Attractiveness**, *CNN*, May 9

What will cheer many within the continent is the huge optimism Africans feel towards business opportunities in their own backyard. Africans themselves are leading the growth in investment. This is key. There is a growing self-confidence amongst Africans, as well as a growing awareness that regional barriers need to be broken down so that intra-African trade can be increased.

<http://business.blogs.cnn.com/2011/05/09/africa%E2%80%99s-growing-attractiveness/>

**Companies Hedge Bets at a Cost to Consumers**, *New York Times*, May 6

The extreme volatility of commodities prices and the unpredictability that comes with it is increasing the cost of doing business for everyone. But when prices move erratically, it increases the cost of buying the futures and options that protect companies against such changes. Those added costs find their way to the grocery store and the shopping mall.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/06/business/economy/06commodities.html>

**Food Inflation, Land Grabs Spur Latin America to Restrict Foreign Ownership**, *Christian Science Monitor*, May 6

One of the first things passengers see when disembarking at Cuiaba airport in central Brazil is a real estate advertisement promoting arable land to foreigners. South America has some of the most productive land on the planet, and buyers have long been drawn to pastureland for cattle; fields for grains, soybeans, and sugar cane; and forests where they can plant eucalyptus for timber and paper.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Americas/2011/0506/Food-inflation-land-grabs-spur-Latin-America-to-restrict-foreign-ownership>

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**AGRIBUSINESS**

Media Articles:

**Agribusiness Interests Push Congress to Release Idled Acreage**, *Des Moines Register*, May 10

Agribusiness interests are being warned they'd face a "ferocious" battle getting Congress to put some environmentally sensitive former farmland back into production, but they pressuring lawmakers to use the next farm bill to do it anyway. About 31 million acres nationally is enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program. About 1.7 million acres are in Iowa.

<http://blogs.desmoinesregister.com/dmr/index.php/2011/05/10/agribusiness-interests-push-congress-to-release-idled-acreage/>

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