

GLOBAL FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE WEEKLY NEWS BRIEF OF THE GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE



November 25th - December 4th, 2009

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KEY ARTICLES

Testimony of Rajiv J. Shah to be Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), *Senate Foreign Relations Committee, December 1*

"In announcing the Food Security Initiative, President Obama proposed an approach to development that begins with the view that the purpose of our aid must be to create the conditions where it is no longer needed. To guide this approach, the President articulated five principles of effective development partnership. These principles will require significant changes in the way the Agency does business."

<http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2009/ShahTestimony091201a.pdf>

Senator Kerry's Opening Statement: <http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2009/KerryStatement091201a.pdf>

Senator Lugar's Opening Statement: <http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2009/LugarStatement091201a.pdf>

Answers to Questions Submitted in Advance of Dr. Shah's Senate Foreign Relations Committee Testimony:

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/images/091201_KerryShah_Pre-hearing.doc

See Also: New Aid Chief Lays Out Plans to Fix USAID, *Foreign Policy (The Cable Blog), December 1*

http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/12/01/new_aid_chief_lays_out_plans_to_fix_usaid

Food-Security Risks Must Be Comprehensively Addressed, *Joachim von Braun, International Food Policy Research Institute, November 2009*

Recent food-price and economic shocks have further jeopardized the food security of developing countries and poor people, pushing the estimated number of undernourished people over one billion. Known and unknown food-security risks appear to be on the rise. Increasing uncertainties raise critical questions about how to quickly, viably, and sustainably manage familiar risks and emerging new ones. The poor, particularly those who depend on food purchases, both in rural and urban areas, are highly vulnerable to market risks such as high and volatile agricultural prices, which peaked in 2007–08.

<http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ar08e.pdf>

See Also: 2008-2009 Annual Report, *International Food Policy Research Institute. 2009*

http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/ar08_0.pdf

Time to Meet Challenge of Ending Hunger, *George McGovern (former senator, South Dakota) and Marshall Matz (founding chairman, Friends of the World Food Program), Op-Ed, Sacramento Bee, November 26*

Most Americans give little thought to agriculture policy or food production, even in California, our leading agricultural state. We are spoiled. America's capacity to produce food is so advanced that we can purchase virtually any food we want, anywhere, at any time. Such productivity is unprecedented. By comparison, in Africa, life expectancy is now less than 40 years of age in many countries. The combined effect of hunger and AIDS has eliminated an entire generation. One-third of the African population suffers from hunger.

<http://www.sacbee.com/opinion/story/2350851.html>

Can We Feed and Save the Planet? Challenges of Population Control and Food Production Need to Be Tackled in Tandem, *Jeffrey Sachs, Scientific American, December 2009*

The green revolution that made grain production soar gave humanity some breathing space, but the continuing rise in population and demand for meat production is exhausting that buffer. It is not enough to produce more food; we must also simultaneously stabilize the global population and reduce the ecological consequences of food production—a triple challenge.

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=transgressing-planetary-boundaries>

Africa's Stake in the Climate-Change Debate, *Graça Machel (President, AWEPA Partnership Council), Wangari Maathai (President, Green Belt Movement, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004), and Mary Robinson (former President of Ireland), Project Syndicate, December 2*

Perhaps the world needs reminding that Africa is the continent that contributes least to climate change, but must now live with its most serious consequences. Africa's geographical position, sensitive water resources, unsustainable agricultural methods, and exploitation by foreign and other private companies increased its vulnerability.

<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/machel1>

See Also: Africa At Risk, *Meles Zenawi (Prime Minister, Ethiopia; and head, African delegation, Climate Change Conference), AllAfrica.com, November 29*

Climate change will hit Africa hardest, because it will cripple the continent's vulnerable agricultural sector, on which 70% of the population depends. All estimates of the possible impact of global warming suggest that a large part of the continent will become drier, and that the continent as a whole will experience greater climatic variability. We know what the impact of periodic droughts have been on the lives of tens of millions of Africans. We can therefore imagine what the impact of a drier climate on agriculture is likely to be.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200911290004.html>

Farming and Fishing in Crisis as Food Demand Doubles, *Financial Times, November 25*

Feeding the world is now recognised as one of the key problems for the next few decades. An international food summit held in November showed the extent of the difficulties we face: in order to feed a world population that is likely to exceed 9bn before 2050, the world will have to almost double food production. Many staple crops, such as wheat, are not tolerant of large temperature rises, and climate change is expected to worsen water shortages, which will also cause serious problems for farmers.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/b58f7cf2-d9e6-11de-b2d5-00144feabdc0.html>

Battling the Elements: How Can India's Farmers Cope with Drought?, *Wall Street Journal, November 23*

Agriculture and water experts say grassroots initiatives such as the one in Rajasthan that combine public agencies and private organizations hold the key to survival for India's 235 million farmers. As this year's lack of rainfall during the kharif -- the first of the country's main annual sowing seasons -- showed, many of these farmers teeter on the brink of losing their livelihoods due to severe droughts and the vagaries of climate change. Experts, meanwhile, warn that the situation will get worse before it gets better if the country doesn't improve how it mitigates and manages rainfall shortages.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125895915579060227.html>

Sharing the Privilege of Abundance, Arianna Huffington and Josette Sheeran, *Huffington Post*, November 26

While we concentrate our efforts on addressing hunger at home, we must remember another face of hunger in our world -- one that's largely invisible until we glimpse it on our TVs from some distant country, when a typhoon, earthquake, flood, drought or conflict makes the evening news. It's easy to forget the silent tsunami of hunger that rips an ever-greater swath through the places where there are no streets, where mothers wonder if their malnourished babies will survive and fathers despair that they cannot provide even a single meal for their desperate families.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arianna-huffington/sharing-the-privilege-of_b_371235.html

RELEVANT U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Remarks by President in Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan,

White Office, December 1

"And going forward, we will be clear about what we expect from those who receive our assistance. We'll support Afghan ministries, governors, and local leaders that combat corruption and deliver for the people. We expect those who are ineffective or corrupt to be held accountable. And we will also focus our assistance in areas -- such as agriculture -- that can make an immediate impact in the lives of the Afghan people."

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-address-nation-way-forward-afghanistan-and-pakistan>

See Also: Fact Sheet: The Way Forward in Afghanistan, *White House, December 1*

Growth is critical to undermine extremists' appeal in the short term and for sustainable economic development in the long term. Our top reconstruction priority is implementing a civilian-military agriculture redevelopment strategy to restore Afghanistan's once vibrant agriculture sector.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/way-forward-afghanistan>

See Also: US Sends 30,000 Troops to 'End This War', *Financial Times, December 2*

The US will also focus its development effort in Afghanistan on agriculture, which it says can reduce relatively rapid growth -- a further sign of its emphasis on speed.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/8d47b920-debf-11de-adff-00144feab49a.html>

See Also: Obama's Afghan Plan Vague on Politics, Development, *Reuters, December 2*

There were concrete steps too, like a dramatic acceleration in the training of Afghan security forces and focused assistance for agriculture, which accounts for a third of the economy. But is it enough?

<http://www.reuters.com/article/asiaCrisis/idUSN01518180>

Testimony by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Hearing:*

"Afghanistan: Assessing the Road Ahead," December 3

"Not only do we have the right people to achieve our objectives, we also have a sound strategy. We will be delivering high-impact economic assistance and bolstering Afghanistan's agricultural sector -- the traditional core of the Afghan economy. This will create jobs, reduce the funding that the Taliban receives from poppy cultivation, and draw insurgents off of the battlefield."

<http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2009/ClintonTestimony091203a.pdf>

Small Steps Ahead in Food Security, *AgWeek, November 30*

U.S. officials say that the recent World Food Summit in Rome will help advance President Obama's global food security initiative even though country delegates did not guarantee their parts of the \$22 billion they promised Obama at international meetings earlier in the year. Oxfam and other development groups criticized the summit for not firming up commitments to goals established at the G8 and G20 meetings earlier

this year, but U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Ertharin Cousin told Agweek, "From our position, the summit was a success."

http://www.agweek.com/articles/?id=7505&article_id=15679&property_id=41

Outlook for U.S. Agricultural Trade, *U.S. Department of Agriculture, November 30*

Fiscal 2010 agricultural exports are forecast at \$98 billion, up \$1 billion from the August forecast and \$1.4 billion above final FY 2009. Though the forecast is below the record 2008 level, exports are expected to be the second highest ever.

<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/current/AES/AES-11-30-2009.pdf>

Johanns Urges White House to Fill Key Agricultural Position, *Office of Senator Mike Johanns, December 3*

Senator Mike Johanns sent a letter to President Obama asking him to fill a key agricultural position at the White House. The President is legally required to appoint a Special Assistant to the President for Agriculture, Trade, and Food Assistance.

http://johanns.senate.gov/public/?p=PressReleases&ContentRecord_id=15e31122-2710-446e-8e3d-6dab8ba7d04b

See Also: Letter to President Obama, *Office of Senator Mike Johanns, December 3*

http://johanns.senate.gov/public/?a=Files.Serve&File_id=7be434a0-3350-45bb-a47e-0c4a75a725ca

US EPA Delays Decision on More Ethanol in Gasoline, *Reuters, December 1*

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said it needs more time to decide whether to approve an industry request to boost the amount of ethanol blended into gasoline, but signaled that it believes newer American cars could safely handle the higher fuel mix.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/CARMFG/idUSN0149521120091201>

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

NEW REPORTS/POLICY BRIEFS/BOOKS

Harvesting Agriculture's Multiple Benefits: Mitigation, Adaptation, Development and Food Security, *Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations, December 2009*

Farming practices, which capture carbon and store it in agricultural soils, offer some of the most promising options for cost effective, early action on climate change in developing countries. These practices are already available and can have multiple benefits for climate change mitigation, adaptation, sustainable development and food security. To accelerate mitigation and adaptation action, climate financing mechanisms need to target agriculture, reward synergistic action and leverage investment for up-scaling. Opportunities exist to build confidence, capacity, and commitment for early action on agricultural mitigation and adaptation in developing countries, while meeting development and food security requirements.

<ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/012/ak914e/ak914e00.pdf>

See Also: Food Security and Agricultural Mitigation in Developing Countries: Options for Capturing Synergies, *Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations, November 2009*

The paper explores potential synergies between food security, adaptation and climate change mitigation from land-based agricultural practices in developing countries, which could help to generate the multiple benefits needed to address the multiple demands placed on agriculture.

<ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/012/ak596e/ak596e00.pdf>

Hunger 2010: A Just and Sustainable Recovery, *Bread for the World, November 2009*

Climate change puts additional stress on already vulnerable developing countries. Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, by virtue of their size, population, and poverty, will likely be "ground zero" in a warming world, forced to deal with sea level rise, desertification, and the resulting displacement of populations. *A Just and Sustainable Recovery* addresses the responsibility of rich countries, including the United States, to help poor countries adapt to the effects of climate change that are already inevitable.

<http://www.hungerreport.org/reports/hunger2010.pdf>

Climate Change and Food Security in the Pacific, *Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations, November 2009*

This brief has been prepared for the UN Convention on Climate Change meeting in Copenhagen, December 2009, to raise awareness of the imminent impacts of climate change on food security in Pacific island countries and territories and to urge participants to consider the importance of mainstreaming food security in climate-related policies, strategies and programmes.

<ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/012/i1262e/i1262e00.pdf>

See Also: Climate Change to Hit Pacific Islands Food Security, *Reuters, December*

Rising sea levels, ocean warming, cyclones and droughts caused by climate change is set to hit hard food security in the Pacific islands, the United Nations' food agency said, urging governments to take immediate actions. Climate change is expected to act as a "threat multiplier" in the Pacific region, home to 14 Pacific island countries and five territories (PICT), the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization said.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/environmentNews/idUSTRE5AP2VD20091126>

Turning the Tables: Global Trends in Public Agricultural Investments, *Oxfam America, December 2009*

This paper reviews the state of expert knowledge on the relationship of agricultural growth and poverty, details why public investments in agriculture are fundamental, and summarizes trends in these investments by national governments, national and international agricultural research organizations, and bilateral and multilateral donors.

<http://www.oxfamamerica.org/files/turning-the-tables.pdf>

From Bread Basket to Dust Bowl?, *McKinsey & Co., November 2009*

Improvements in irrigation, soil preservation, water storage, and seed engineering could cut agricultural losses due to drought by up to 50 percent in North and Northeast China. Twenty-five billion renminbi will be needed annually over the next 20 years to fight the effects of climate change on agricultural output in China.

<http://www.mckinsey.com/locations/greaterchina/From Bread Basket Dust Bowl EN.pdf>

See Also: China Drought Risks Food, Stability, McKinsey Says, *Bloomberg, November 25*

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601091&sid=aEkFntzmyQU0>

The Doha Round and Alternative Options for Creating a Fair and Market-Oriented Agricultural Trade System, *International Food & Agricultural Trade Policy Council, November 2009*

The slow pace of the Doha Development Round Negotiations has led to calls for alternative options to pursue trade liberalization. This paper examines the likely effectiveness of a number of options for agricultural trade liberalization in particular.

http://www.agritrade.org/documents/IPC_TradeNegPaper_FINAL.pdf

See Also: Options for Agricultural Trade Negotiations, *International Food & Agricultural Trade Policy Council, November 2009*

The slow pace of the Doha Development Round Negotiations has led to calls for alternative options to pursue trade liberalization. This summary examines the likely effectiveness of a number of options for agricultural trade liberalization in particular.

http://www.agritrade.org/documents/PolicyFocus_000.pdf

Making Investments in Poor Farmers Pay: A Review of Evidence and Sample of Options for Marginal Areas, *Oxfam America, December 2009*

The paper is motivated by the concern that despite growth in agricultural productivity over the past century, many of the developing world's farmers continue to live in poverty, particularly in areas that are marginal in terms of either agricultural potential, access to markets, or both.

<http://www.oxfamamerica.org/files/making-investments.pdf-1>

Eight Years of Doha Trade Talks: Where Do We Stand?, *International Food Policy Research Institute, November 2009*

Since the end of the food crisis, the role that international trade can play in food security has generated a great deal of debate. Food security implies availability of food products on domestic markets at an affordable price for local consumers. This concept is quite different from the notion of national self sufficiency. Trade has always been used to compensate for a mismatch between supply and demand among countries. It helps increase supply and reduce the domestic price for importing countries, and reduce volatility, especially in the most common case where price volatility is due to supply shocks.

<http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ib61.pdf>

See Also: Conclude Doha: It Matters!, *World Bank, November 2009*

The Doha Round must be concluded not because it will produce dramatic liberalization but because it will create greater security of market access. What is on the table would constrain the scope for tariff protection in all goods, ban agricultural export subsidies in the industrial countries and sharply reduce the scope for distorting domestic support - by 70 per cent in the EU and 60 per cent in the US. Average farm tariffs that exporters face would fall to 12 per cent (from 14.5 per cent) and the tariffs on exports of manufactures to less than 2.5 per cent (from about 3 per cent).

<http://www->

[wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/11/18/000158349_20091118112934/Rendered/PDF/WPS5135.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/11/18/000158349_20091118112934/Rendered/PDF/WPS5135.pdf)

A Comparative Perspective on Poverty Reduction in Brazil, China and India, *Martin Ravallion, World Bank Development Research Group, October 2009*

India's trend rate of growth has been higher in the modern industrial and services sectors—both of which tend to be urban-based—than the agricultural sector. However, the importance of agricultural growth to China's success against poverty stands in marked contrast to India, where the services sector has been the more powerful force. In this respect India has more in common with Brazil. The most likely explanation for this difference lies in the initial distribution of assets, with access to agricultural land being much more equitably distributed in China than India.

http://www.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/poverty_0.pdf

See Also: Fighting Poverty in Emerging Markets: The Gloves Go On, *Economist, November 26*

http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14979330

Trade Liberalization, Poverty, and Food Security in India, *International Food Policy Research Institute, November 2009*

This paper attempts to assess the impact of trade liberalization on growth, poverty, and food security in India with the help of a national-level computable general equilibrium (CGE) model. The results show that the gross domestic product (GDP) growth and income-poverty reduction projected to occur following trade liberalization do not necessarily improve the food security and/or nutritional status of the poor.

<http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ifpridp00930.pdf>

Climate Volatility and Poverty Vulnerability in Tanzania, *World Bank, November 2009*

Climate models generally indicate that climate volatility may rise in the future, severely affecting agricultural productivity through greater frequency of yield-diminishing climate extremes, such as droughts. For Tanzania, where agricultural production is sensitive to climate, changes in climate volatility could have significant implications for poverty. This study assesses the vulnerability of Tanzania's population to poverty to changes in climate variability between the late 20th century and early this century.

<http://www->

[wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/11/09/000158349_20091109085100/Rendered/PDF/WPS5117.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/11/09/000158349_20091109085100/Rendered/PDF/WPS5117.pdf)

Assessing Household Vulnerability to Climate Change: The Case of Farmers in the Nile Basin of Ethiopia, *International Food Policy Research Institute, November 2009*

This study measures the vulnerability of farmers to climatic extremes such as droughts, floods and hailstorms, by employing the "vulnerability as expected poverty" approach. This approach is based on estimating the probability that a given shock or set of shocks will move household consumption below a given minimum level (such as the consumption poverty line) or force the consumption level to stay below the given

minimum if it is already below this level. The results show that the farmers' vulnerability is highly sensitive to their minimum daily requirement (poverty line).

<http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ifpridp00935.pdf>

The Pattern of Growth and Poverty Reduction in China, World Bank, October 2009

China has seen a huge reduction in the incidence of extreme poverty since the economic reforms that started in the late 1970s. Yet, the growth process has been highly uneven across sectors and regions. The paper tests whether the pattern of China's growth mattered to poverty reduction using a new provincial panel data set constructed for this purpose. The econometric tests support the view that the primary sector (mainly agriculture) has been the main driving force in poverty reduction over the period since 1980.

<http://www->

[wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2009/10/06/000158349_20091006163931/Rendered/PDF/WPS5069.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2009/10/06/000158349_20091006163931/Rendered/PDF/WPS5069.pdf)

Can a Market-Assisted Land Redistribution Program Improve the Lives of the Poor? Evidence from Malawi, World Bank, October 2009

This paper uses a rural household survey dataset collected in 2006 and 2008 to investigate the impact of a market-based land resettlement project in southern Malawi. The program provided a conditional cash and land transfer to poor families to relocate to larger plots of farm land. As expected, the results show a significant effect on landholdings and agricultural production, with land size increasing and maize production increasing by more than 100 kilograms relative to the control. However, the impacts on food security and asset holdings were mixed.

<http://www->

[wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/10/26/000158349_20091026085932/Rendered/PDF/WPS5093.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/10/26/000158349_20091026085932/Rendered/PDF/WPS5093.pdf)

Improving Food Security in Arab Countries, World Bank, October 2009

In 2007 and the first half of 2008, a sharp rise in agricultural commodity and food prices triggered grave concerns about food security, malnutrition and increased poverty throughout the world. While the threat of a prolonged food-price shock receded with falling energy and commodity prices and a weakening global economy in the second half of 2008, many factors underlying the volatility in food prices appear here to stay and will require careful management if the world is to avoid future food-price shocks. This paper suggests three critical strategies that, together, can serve as pillars to help offset future vulnerability to price shocks.

<http://www->

[wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/10/23/000334955_20091023042927/Rendered/PDF/512170WP0food110Box342021B01PUBLIC1.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/10/23/000334955_20091023042927/Rendered/PDF/512170WP0food110Box342021B01PUBLIC1.pdf)

Looking East: China's Engagements with Africa: Benefits and Key Challenges, African Center for Economic Transformation, October 2009

Over the last decade, China's engagements in African countries have shifted toward trade, foreign direct investment (FDI) and economic and technical cooperation in seven major sectors in key countries. While Chinese state actors predominate in oil and gas, mining, and infrastructure, private firms, traders and farmers are increasingly having an impact in the manufacturing, retail and agriculture sectors. African policymakers are clearly enthusiastic about the economic opportunities arising from engaging with China and must actively engage Chinese partners to ensure that relationships support Africa's economic transformation.

<http://acetforafrica.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/lookingeastynopsis.pdf>

UPCOMING EVENTS

United Nations Climate Change Conference

Date: December 7th – December 18th, 2009

Location: Bella Center, Copenhagen, Denmark

<http://en.cop15.dk/frontpage>

CAADP Post-Compact: High-Level Stakeholders Meeting

Date: December 7-8

Location: Kigali, Rwanda

[Agenda](#)

[Concept Paper](#)

See Also: Rwanda to Host Continental Agro Meet, *AllAfrica.com*, November 24

Rwanda will play host to the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) stake holders' meeting slated for December 7-8, 2009. Addressing the media yesterday, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Ernest Ruzindaza, said the high level meeting will bring together all CAADP partners and stakeholders. The meeting is expected to attract representatives from the continent's regional economic blocs and the donor community.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200911240077.html>

The Economics of Structural Change and Competition in the Food System

Date: December 7

Location: Waugh Auditorium, USDA Economic Research Service, 1800 M Street NW, Washington, D.C

"In today's business environment, a variety of forces are influencing the economics of every sector of the food system," says Farm Foundation President Neil Conklin. "The economics, in turn, are a significant driver of structural changes in every sector of the food system. This conference examines current research on the economics of structural change and competition, with the intent of helping industry leaders and policy makers better understand the factors at work." Targeted to agribusiness leaders, policy makers and researchers, the conference program will feature current research being done by academics from across the United States.

<http://www.farmfoundation.org/webcontent/The-Economics-of-Structural-Change-and-Competition-in-the-Food-System-1721.aspx?a=1721&z=90&>

A Discussion with Barbara Noseworthy

Date: December 10

Location: Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, Washington, D.C.

Barbara Noseworthy, Senior Resource Mobilization Officer for the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and the Partnership to Cut Hunger and poverty in Africa will lead a discussion on current AGRA programs and the strategy of working in breadbasket areas of Ghana, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Mali; early AGRA progress and partnerships already developed; and to explore opportunities for partnership with other organizations already working in these areas.

<http://partnership-africa.org/>

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

Dwindling Phosphate Supply Affects Food Crisis, *Newsweek (Wealth of Nations Blog)*, December 2

None of the factors that drove the global food crisis in 2008 have gone away. Agricultural production is still tapped out, trade barriers are high, and demand, especially from emerging markets, is growing. Now there's an increasing worry over the availability of key inputs like fertilizer. You probably didn't know it, but the world is running out of phosphate fertilizer.

<http://blog.newsweek.com/blogs/wealthofnations/archive/2009/12/02/dwindling-phosphate-supply-affects-food-crisis.aspx>

Land reform in South Africa: Hurry up, *Economist*, December 3

With the fine aim of redressing the racially skewed pattern of land ownership that has existed since whites conquered South Africa hundreds of years ago, the government's land-reform programme is a shambles. Launched in 1994, the plan was to redistribute 30% of white-owned farmland to poor blacks. So far, barely 5% has been handed over.

http://www.economist.com/world/middleeast-africa/displaystory.cfm?story_id=15022632

Crop Scientists Treble Yield of Anti-Malaria Drug, *Reuters*, December 2

British crop scientists say they have trebled the yield of a key malaria drug ingredient and want to talk to drug companies about how their work could help in the fight against the killer disease. Steven Bentley, a researcher at Britain's National Institute of Agricultural Botany (NIAB), says four years of experiments in cross breeding wormwood plants has greatly increased the yield of artemisinin, a natural anti-malaria drug.
<http://www.reuters.com/article/africaCrisis/idUSGEE5B01SB>

Amid Droughts and Failed Crops, A Cycle of Poverty Worsens, *Los Angeles Times*, December 1

India has long been plagued by unscrupulous moneylenders who exploit impoverished farmers. But with crops failing more frequently, farmers are left even more desperate and vulnerable.
<http://www.latimes.com/news/nation-and-world/la-fg-climate-loanshark1-2009dec01.0.6707832.story>

China's GMO Rice, Corn Approval May Boost Food Supply, *Bloomberg*, December 1

China, the world's biggest grain producer, has approved strains of genetically modified rice and corn that may help ensure food supplies in a country facing shortages of water and farmland. The move "has huge implications because this is the first time a major grain producer is endorsing the use of GMO technology in a food staple," said Zhu Zhen, biotechnology professor at the Chinese Academy of Sciences.
<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601080&sid=acs2R9UAWFe0>

See Also: China's OK on GMO Rice, Corn Seen Boosting Yields, *Agence France Presse*, December 2

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iyHcb570my0KENY2GMZs37QTWFdA>

See Also: Beijing Gives Nod to Modified Rice, *Wall Street Journal*, December 1

China's government declared two strains of genetically modified rice safe to produce and consume, taking a major step toward endorsing the use of biotechnology in the staple food crop of billions of people in Asia.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125959909959569901.html>

Engineered Edible Cottonseed Could Feed Millions, *Washington Post*, November 30

"The Fabric of Our Lives" may soon feed millions. A Texas researcher has found a way to reduce toxin in cottonseed that until now could only be eaten by cattle. The bovines' multiple stomachs gradually digested the poisonous substance called gossypol. The new seeds can be eaten by pigs, chickens, fish and humans and could show up in protein bars, shakes, breads, cookies and other foods within about 10 years. The amount of cotton already grown worldwide contains enough protein to feed 500 million people per year, researchers said.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/30/AR2009113000324_pf.html

Deadly Cattle Plague, Once the Bane of Farmers, on Its Deathbed, *Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations*, November 30

In animal health circles, it's the equivalent of the Apollo 11 moon landing: some time in the next 18 months, FAO jointly with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and other partners will officially declare one of the most devastating animal diseases known to man, rinderpest, as eradicated.

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/35548/icode/>

See Also: Eradication of Rinderpest Near, *VOA News*, November 30

Within the next 18 months, one of the most devastating animal diseases ever is expected to be declared eradicated.

<http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/africa/east/rinderpest-decapua-30nov09-78146657.html>

Kenya: Testing Ground for GMOs, *Des Moines Register*, November 29

What happens here in Kenya could change the way the world views genetically modified food. Whether it really makes a positive difference in the lives of Africans remains to be seen. Why is Kenya key? The first reason is obvious enough. The first transgenic, drought-tolerant maize crop intended for east Africa will be grown in field trials next year. But there are other reasons why Kenya has to be watched: Kenya is on track to implement the first policy for regulating agricultural biotechnology in east Africa, and U.S. officials see the country as a gateway to opening the way for biotech crops in other countries in the region.

<http://blogs.desmoinesregister.com/dmr/index.php/2009/11/29/kenya-testing-ground-for-gmos/>

Cassava: Finding a Trigger for a Golden Bullet, *Yale Globalist*, November 29

Cassava is a potato-like tuberous root native to South America but abundant in most tropical and subtropical regions of Africa. Because of its high carbohydrate content and ability to thrive without the use of expensive pesticides and fertilizers, cassava has been lauded by many as a potential "golden bullet" in the world's fight against hunger. Indeed, the plant provides food security to poor farmers all across East Africa who have seen other crops dwindle in recent years due to desertification and rising fertilizer prices. Cassava weathers these challenges better than most. Unfortunately, it has yet to realize its full potential in a region that has for decades suffered from poverty and starvation.

<http://tyglobalist.org/index.php/20091129236/Focus/Cassava-Finding-a-Trigger-for-a-Golden-Bullet.html>

Poor Rains in Africa's Sahel Mean Below Average Harvest, *VOA News*, November 27

The United Nations says poor rains in Africa's Sahelian region mean harvests for staple food crops will likely be one-third lower than normal. The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that aggregate cereal production in Niger will be just over 3.5 million tons this year. That is 26 percent below last year's harvest. Millet prices in Niger's capital, Niamey, are 42 percent higher than 2007. Severe pest infestation and poor rains this year have led to a 34 percent decline in cowpeas, which are the main source of income for small-scale farmers.

<http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/africa/Poor-Rains-in-Africas-Sahel-Mean-Below-Average-Harvest-76131657.html>

Groundbreaking Treaty on Illegal Fishing Approved, *Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations*, November 25

A new treaty that aims to close fishing ports to ships involved in illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing has been approved by FAO's governing Conference. Once it enters into force, it will be the first ever legally binding international treaty focused specifically on this problem. It will also be the only one to enlist so-called "non-flag states" in the fight against IUU fishing, alongside flag states that are primarily responsible for the conduct of vessels flying their flags on the high seas.

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/37627/icode/>

See Also: Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, *Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations*, November 2009

<ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/meeting/018/k6339e.pdf>

Food Crisis May Repeat, Warn Leaders in Global Hunger Fight, *World Bank*, November 25

Three leaders in the global fight against hunger warned the world needs to be prepared for another food crisis and take steps now to build food security in developing countries. Low food stocks, rising cereal prices, and the possibility some rice-producing countries will have to import rice next year suggest food prices may rise in 2010. The Brookings panel included World Bank President Robert B. Zoellick, Josette Sheeran, executive director of the United Nations World Food Programme, and Samuel Worthington, president of Interaction, the largest alliance of relief and development nongovernmental organizations in the United States.

<http://go.worldbank.org/HWM0JM6OM0>

Extending Supply Chains to Create Wealth for the Poor, *Wall Street Journal*, November 24

Operation Flood was the world's largest successful development project. It pulled millions of people out of poverty using milk cooperatives as a vehicle. Viewed purely in business terms, it also created one of the world's largest supply chains, with millions of farmers in thousands of villages all over India. However, that thinking was not carried over to agriculture beyond the dairy sector in any significant way.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125904610418162011.html>

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

Rich Nations Under Pressure on Climate Aid, *Financial Times*, December 3

Rich countries are unlikely to come up with specific offers of financial assistance to the developing world at next week's Copenhagen climate change conference, the United Nations has admitted.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/4bbb9600-e03d-11de-8494-00144feab49a.html>

See Also: Big Costs Are Hurdle to Climate Pact, *Wall Street Journal*, December 4

Many countries agree to the idea of cutting greenhouse-gas emissions, but they are sharply divided over how to fund it.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125988268007875549.html>

Give Afghan Farmers an Option to Opium: Cotton Would Be a Perfect Fit, But Our Own Domestic Politics Would Stand in the Way, *Kelly G. Ramer, Op-Ed, Minneapolis Star Tribune, December 3*

Historically fruit, both fresh and dry, have been Afghanistan's main agricultural exports. Unfortunately, many of the orchards have been devastated by war, and it takes time to replant these. Even for those that are still producing, the transport infrastructure is currently so weak and battered that shipping the produce abroad, especially fresh, is very problematic. This leaves cotton as a practical choice to lure Afghan growers away from poppy cultivation. Just one problem -- the United States subsidizes domestic cotton production so heavily that it actually depresses the world price, making cotton production in Afghanistan an unprofitable option for farmers.

<http://www.startribune.com/opinion/commentary/78374937.html?elr=KArksLckD8EQDUoaEyqyP40:DW3ckUjD3aPc:Yyc:aUUsZ>

Food, Agriculture, Development and the Role of International Institutions, *Institute of Development Studies, December 3*

The actions of international organisations concerned with food and agriculture directly affect the lives of two-billion poor people earning less than \$2 a day. Poverty and hunger is growing - despite the tremendous contributions that these organisations made to global growth in food and agriculture in developing countries in the 1970s and 80s. How should these organisations be responding to the challenges of poverty and hunger in the developing world?

<http://www.ids.ac.uk/go/news/food-agriculture-development-and-the-role-of-international-institutions>

National Guard Executes President's Afghan Agricultural Initiative, *U.S. National Guard, December 2*

The National Guard continues to make a significant contribution to one of the Afghanistan initiatives that President Obama discussed in his Tuesday speech to the nation. Eight National Guard Agribusiness Development Teams are currently on the ground in Afghanistan, and more teams are preparing to deploy, Guard officials said.

<http://www.ng.mil/news/archives/2009/12/120209-Execute.aspx>

See Also: AR Guard prepares Agricultural Development Team for Afghanistan, *Arkansas Matters, November 30*

<http://arkansasmatters.com/content/news/fulltext?cid=274792>

Bob Geldof: 'Who Says Aid Doesn't Work?', *The Independent, December 2*

Twenty-five years after Band Aid, Bob Geldof went back to Africa to see how millions of lives have been transformed.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/bob-geldof-who-says-aid-doesnt-work-1832028.html>

Banditry Impedes Assistance Programs in Eastern Chad, *VOA News, December 2*

The United Nations warns persistent insecurity in Eastern Chad is preventing aid agencies from carrying out their humanitarian work. The U.N. says increased acts of banditry are putting assistance programs for tens of thousands of needy people at risk.

<http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/africa/Banditry-Impedes-Assistance-Programs-In-Eastern-Chad-78336462.html>

Money Can't Buy America Love, *Foreign Policy, December 1*

Millions of dollars are being pumped into hearts and minds projects from Kabul to Kandahar. Trouble is, it's not working. And it might even be making things worse.

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/12/01/money_cant_buy_america_love?page=full

The Obama Manifesto, *Matthew Bergman, Huffington Post, December 1*

Economic development results from fostering entrepreneurial verve, working within the existing networks of trade and agriculture to enable Africa to feed itself. Progress is attained not by dictating a particular political or economic model for Africans to follow, but by nurturing the nascent political, social and economic organizations that already strive for bread and freedom. Foreign aid should not simply be a mechanism for delivering sacks of grain from subsidized American farmers.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/matthew-bergman/the-obama-manifesto_b_376055.html

The Downside of 'Smart Power,' *The New Republic, November 30*

After ten months of waiting, USAID finally has a new chief: Rajiv Shah, currently the agriculture department's top scientist. Directing the country's principal agency for administering foreign aid is a heady position for someone who is all of 36. And it's going to be a difficult one. Shah is stepping into the middle of a struggle that has been quietly simmering for years in Washington. On the surface, it's a classic bureaucratic turf battle over who gets to control foreign aid--USAID staffers or the State Department, which assumed control of the once-autonomous organization in 2006. But underlying this bureaucratic struggle is another, deeper question: What, exactly, is the purpose of foreign aid?

<http://www.tnr.com/article/politics/the-downside-smart-power>

EU Accused of Risking Copenhagen Climate Talks with Stance on Aid Funding, *Guardian (U.K), November 29*

The EU was accused of threatening the global climate talks last night after confidential papers showed it wants existing overseas aid funding to be used to help poor countries adapt to global warming, not new and additional funds.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/nov/29/eu-copenhagen-climate-aid-funding>

United Nations Food Leader on Defeating Hunger, *Joseph B. Treaster, Huffington Post, November 28*

This year the number of poor people around the world struggling to get enough food for survival for themselves and their families has risen to a little more than a billion -- the highest level in 30 years. Food supplies have been reduced by floods and droughts. But more importantly, they have been hit by financial pressures. The economic stress has eased somewhat and aid agencies, the United States and a few other countries have upped their efforts to feed the poor and under-nourished -- especially in Africa and south Asia where the situation has chronically been the worst.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joseph-b-treaster/united-nations-food-leade_b_372885.html

U.S. Tries to Ease 'State of Calamity,' *Miami Herald, November 27*

The U.S. has begun delivering food to Guatemalans suffering through a long drought.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/americas/story/1353472.html>

Somali Insurgents Order Halt to Imported Food Aid, *VOA News, November 25*

Islamist insurgents in Somalia have told the United Nations' World Food Program to stop importing food aid into the country. The group al-Shabab said in a statement that the massive importing of food is ruining Somalia's agriculture sector.

<http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/africa/Somali-Insurgents-Halt-Imported-Food-Aid-25NOV09-73611692.html>

The Shame of Growing Hunger, *Editorial, Japan Times, November 25*

Aid is important. It is a moral imperative in a world in which the number of overweight people equals the number of the malnourished; the fact that in some countries as much as one-third of the food purchased is thrown out uneaten is an abomination. But all too often, aid merely compounds problems. Rather than building domestic capacity and the infrastructure that will yield sustainable agricultural production, food aid is designed more to support developed world producers — reducing food surpluses — and merely increases the culture of dependence by reducing the priority recipient governments give to agricultural development. Instead, self-reliance must be the goal.

<http://www.truthabouttrade.org/news/latest-news/15219-the-shame-of-growing-hunger>

World Bank to Start Agriculture Fund with \$1.5 Bln, Reuters, November 24

The World Bank will start a trust fund to boost agriculture in poor countries with an initial \$1.5 billion, its president Robert Zoellick said, warning of the risk of another food price crisis. Crop shortages in India and the Philippines combined with increased speculation in commodity markets by investment funds have increased the risk that food prices could spike, as happened in 2008, Zoellick said.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUSN24326650.CH.2400?sp=true>

ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

Boiling Point: What to Do About Looming Water Shortages?, Wall Street Journal (Environmental Capital Blog), December 3

When world leaders meet next week in Copenhagen to talk about climate change and the fate of the planet, there will be one big, liquid elephant in the room: water shortage. Drought is already ravaging places such as east Africa, with dying crops and cattle and hungry people.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/environmentalcapital/2009/12/03/boiling-point-what-to-do-about-looming-water-shortages/>

Getting warmer, Special Report on Copenhagen Summit, Economist, December 3

At the current rate of increase they could more than treble by the end of the century, which would mean a 50% risk of a global temperature increase of 5°C. To put that in context, the current average global temperature is only 5°C warmer than the last ice age. Such a rise would probably lead to fast-melting ice sheets, rising sea levels, drought, disease and collapsing agriculture in poor countries, and mass migration.

http://www.economist.com/specialreports/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14994872

U.S. Proposes Climate Fund for Poor Nations, New York Times, December 2

The United States has proposed a new global fund that would direct billions of dollars to help poor countries prepare for climate disasters and adjust to low-carbon economies. The fund would likely operate under the World Bank, U.S. Treasury officials said. The world's poorest countries are among the most vulnerable to climate change and will be disproportionately affected by harsher droughts, rising sea levels and fiercer storms, scientists say.

<http://www.nytimes.com/cwire/2009/12/02/02climatewire-us-proposes-climate-adaptation-fund-for-poor-53618.html>

See Also: Kerry Seeks More U.S. Climate Funds for Poor Nations, Reuters, December 1

<http://www.reuters.com/article/politicsNews/idUSTRE5B040T20091201>

Why Copenhagen Must Be the Ends of the Beginning, Martin Wolf, Financial Times, December 1

Next week's summit will fall short, but at least there is now broad agreement that action is needed to tackle climate change. Solving the problem needs a stable price for carbon, needs wealthy countries to pay up and needs big subsidies for new technology.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/1f6c42fc-dead-11de-adff-00144feab49a.html>

Climate Change: Looking South, Editorial, Guardian (U.K.), November 30

The impact of climate change on the developing world is already so far advanced it can no longer be prevented, only mitigated. It can be seen in the increased frequency of flooding in Bangladesh, or the desertification of sub-Saharan Africa. But it is also being experienced by millions of families and individuals, the smallholder farmers, the people who grow four-fifths of the world's food. From every part of Africa there are reports of erratic rains, lower yields and higher incidence of disease. For some of them, insecurity is not only about a shortage of food and water but about a life-threatening recurrence of insurrection and lawlessness as the poorest people on the planet rob the very slightly less poor to survive.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/nov/30/climate-change-africa-aid-development>

American Farmers Must Step Up on Climate Change, Neil D. Hamilton, Op-Ed, Des Moines Register, November 29

My special interest is what the talks may mean for farmers in the United States and abroad. U.S. policy discussions show much of America's agricultural sector doesn't take climate change seriously. The reality is the impacts of climate change are being felt around the globe - whether or not U.S. farm groups and politicians believe it. Fortunately, most other nations recognize the obligation and opportunity to engage in deciding how best to respond. The adverse impacts climate change has on food production and the critical role agriculture may play in addressing it means farmers have a major stake in the debate.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/article/20091129/OPINION01/911290317/-1/BUSINESS04/Guest-column-American-farmers-must-step-up-on-climate-change>

Kenyans Draw Weapons Over Shrinking Resources, *Los Angeles Times*, November 27

Experts fear the conflicts involving cattle, water and land may be just the beginning of climate-driven violence in Africa. At least 400 people have died in northern Kenya this year, the U.N. says.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nation-and-world/la-fg-climate-conflict27-2009nov27,0,303698.story>

WOMEN

Why Women Should Be Empowered, *Katie Boudreaux (senior research fellow, Mercatus Center, George Mason University)*, *Op-Ed, Business Daily (Africa)*, December 4

Developing countries are supposed to meet the MDGs by 2015. They involve halving levels of hunger and poverty, reducing infant and maternal mortality, improving environmental sustainability, empowering women and increasing gender equality, reducing HIV/AIDS infection rates and providing universal education. Progress has been slow and, in sub-Saharan Africa in particular, many goals will not be met. So here's an idea. What if, instead of eight MDGs, each with multiple targets, countries focused on Goal No.3, Empowering Women--particularly poor women?

<http://www.businessdailyafrica.com/Opinion%20&%20Analysis/-/539548/817204/-/sxhh43z/-/>

World AIDS Day: Women's Rights and AIDS, *Susan Blumenthal, M.D., Huffington Post*, December 1

HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death worldwide among women of reproductive age -- a fact that resonates strongly with the theme of World AIDS Day this year: "Universal Access and Human Rights." It highlights not only the changing demographics of the HIV/AIDS epidemic globally but also the underlying challenges posed by the interactions between this disease and human rights issues like gender inequality, poverty, and stigma.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/susan-blumenthal/world-aids-day-womens-rig_b_375450.html

Women's Effort to Fight Hunger Bearing Fruit in Daadab, *Daily Nation (Kenya)*, November 25

As Kenya contemplates a policy shift from rain-fed agriculture to irrigation, some women in North Eastern Province are ahead of the game: they have turned to rain water harvesting for food production and their efforts are bearing fruit.

<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/-/1056/806040/-/vmwn4m/-/index.html>

MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

Developing States Team Up in Absence of Doha Deal, *Reuters*, December 3

Twenty-two developing nations agreed on Wednesday to cut tariffs on manufactured products in a bid to boost South-South trade in the absence of progress in the WTO's Doha round of global talks.

<http://in.reuters.com/article/businessNews/idINIndia-44415520091203>

Trade Could Hold the Key to a Climate Deal, *Bård Harstad (associate professor, Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University)*, *Financial Times*, December 3

Our leaders' recent confession that a legally binding climate agreement is not feasible this year may be no bad thing. The hope is that the new goal for December -- to reach a broader "political agreement" -- will establish a better foundation for a future climate deal than we currently have. This is important, since a climate agreement currently faces three significant obstacles. To overcome these, there might be no solution other than to link any deal to new and existing trade agreements.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/fb5f5518-e044-11de-8494-00144feab49a.html>

Blames Goes Global at WTO, *Wall Street Journal, December 3*

The European Union, Brazil and other economic powers have blamed the U.S. for gridlock in global-trade talks, but officials at a World Trade Organization summit this week said political fears all over the world are also responsible. In exchange for opening its agricultural markets, the U.S. had demanded that countries such as Brazil and India open their markets for industrial goods like heavy machinery, factory parts and subway cars. They have agreed to some tariff cuts, but not enough to satisfy U.S. officials.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125979173263473539.html>

See Also: US Takes Flak for Doha Failure, *Agence France Presse, December 2*

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gOgsp7zOpFtN2IbNSme8dcAJsE0A>

End to 16-Yr WTO Banana Wars Seen Friday-Diplomats, *Reuters, December 2*

A deal to end the world's longest running trade dispute over import tariffs on bananas is expected to be signed on Friday between the European Union and Latin American countries, diplomats involved in the talks said.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/euRegulatoryNews/idUSGEE5B11Z620091203>

African Cotton Producers Threaten to Haul US to WTO Court, *Agence France Presse, December 2*

Africa cotton producers warned that they may file a complaint at the World Trade Organization against the United States if the issue over subsidies paid to US cotton growers is unresolved.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iHip5UUwUcOmVidVXLNemAg0c6w>

Freer Trade Viewed as Economic Remedy at WTO Talks, *Reuters, November 30*

Freer trade can help create jobs and support economic growth, and tariff-cutting accords should not be scaled back on account of the global downturn, senior U.S. and other officials said. U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk told the conference the United States was ready to move into the final stages of negotiations -- provided agreement led to real new market opportunities in manufacturing and services as well as farming, the main focus of poor countries. He repeated America's call for big emerging countries like China and India to open their markets further to secure a deal.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-Economy/idUSTRE5AT2V320091130?sp=true>

Developing Nations Call for WTO Deal to Help Poor, *Reuters, November 30*

Developing countries called for a quick deal in the World Trade Organisation's Doha round of talks to help poor nations by removing unfair distortions in the global trading system.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFIOE5AT04C20091130>

See Also: Concern Voiced Over WTO Talks on Agriculture, *Business World, November 30*

<http://www.bworldonline.com/main/content.php?id=2384>

In Pakistan, Much Bitterness Over Sugar Crisis, *Washington Post, November 28*

From the busy and bucolic scene in this Punjab province village, it is hard to tell that Pakistan is in the throes of a national sugar crisis. Fields of tall green cane line the roads, and flatbed trucks piled with ripe stalks head for a modern mill that steadily crushes tons of cane into refined white crystals. But 200 miles north, in the crowded and chaotic city of Rawalpindi, the frustration of people waiting in long lines for emergency sugar rations often erupts into tirades against the government, the hoarders, the black marketeers and especially the wealthy families that dominate Pakistan's lucrative sugar industry.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/27/AR2009112703392.html>

Speculators Smell Chance with China Garlic, *Financial Times, November 25*

China is now grappling with surging prices for a dinner table staple closer to home – garlic. The world's largest producer of the pungent bulbs, China has seen wholesale prices rocket as much as 15-fold since March in large cities such as Beijing, forced up in part by a combination of reduced acreage being planted by local farmers because of the recession.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/6b45279e-d9f2-11de-b2d5-00144feabdc0.html>

See Also: China's Latest Commodity Boom: The Price Also Stinks, *Economist, November 26*

http://www.economist.com/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14973037

AGRIBUSINESS

Brazil's sugar mergers: Calorific value, *Economist*, December 3

SINCE the start of the year the price of sugar futures has almost doubled. This is welcome news for Brazil, the world's largest producer of the stuff. The price spike is mainly explained by unfavourable weather—too little rain in India and too much in Brazil. India's sugar production fell by almost half last year, turning the country from the second-biggest producer to the biggest importer. For Brazil's big sugar companies the timing is perfect: the credit crunch set off a wave of consolidation in an industry that had been resistant to it. The firms that have survived now have more scale and lots of cash.

http://www.economist.com/businessfinance/displaystory.cfm?story_id=15036405

Jatropha Takes Root in Brazil, *New York Times (Green Inc. blog)*, December 2

A Brazilian start-up is testing the possibility of implementing a large-scale biofuels project using jatropha, a family of hardy, succulent plants. The company, BioVentures Brasil, is getting \$1 million from the InterAmerican Development Bank for a pilot project on about seven hectares (17 acres) in Bahia, in northeastern Brazil, where it hopes to eventually develop a plantation on 20,000 hectares (49,400 acres) of mostly abandoned cattle-grazing land. The pilot will determine whether the species can adapt to the area's soil and climate, as well as other factors like how best to work with local communities.

<http://greeninc.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/12/02/jatropha-takes-root-in-brazil/>

Monsanto's Dominance Draws Antitrust Inquiry, *Washington Post*, November 29

For plants designed in a lab a little more than a decade ago, they've come a long way: Today, the vast majority of the nation's two primary crops grow from seeds genetically altered according to Monsanto company patents. Ninety-three percent of soybeans. Eighty percent of corn.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/28/AR2009112802471.html>

U.S. Is Unlikely to Use the Ethanol Congress Ordered, *New York Times*, November 26

To please the farm lobby and to help wean the nation off oil, Congress mandated that refiners blend a rising volume of ethanol and other biofuels into gasoline. They are supposed to use at least 15 billion gallons of biofuels by 2012, up from less than seven billion gallons in 2007. But nobody at the time counted on fuel demand falling in the United States, which is what has happened during the recession. And that decline could well continue, as cars become more efficient under other recent government mandates.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/27/business/energy-environment/27ethanol.html>

Cargill CEO Reiterates Commitment to Rural Development in China, *The Financial*, November 26

Greg Page, Cargill's Global CEO recently visited China. "Cargill has been cooperating with China since the 1970s. As a reliable and experienced agriculture, food and risk management provider, we are proud of the contribution Cargill has made to China's economy and society over the past years," said Mr. Page. Commenting upon agriculture development in China, Page said the production and modernization model has progressed steadily and continuously. Competent agriculture companies are emerging. Since its establishment in China, Cargill has introduced advanced food and agriculture technologies, operations and management experience to China through its 37 facilities throughout the country.

http://finchannel.com/Main_News/Business/52710_Cargill_CEO_reiterates_commitment_to_rural_development_in_China/

Hershey Moves Closer to Cadbury Bid, *Financial Times*, November 25

The charitable trust that controls Hershey, the US chocolate maker, has taken the first steps towards winning the local political approval it may need to outbid Kraft with a \$17bn offer for Cadbury.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/c59bd41e-da0a-11de-b2d5-00144feabdc0.html>

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