

GLOBAL FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE WEEKLY NEWS BRIEF OF THE GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



October 23rd – 30th, 2009

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KEY ARTICLES

Food, Humanity, Habitat and How We Get to 2050, Verlyn Klinkenborg (*Member, Editorial Board*), *New York Times*, October 27

We need to find a way to make food and energy production sustainable in the broadest possible sense — looking out for ourselves as well as other species.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/28/opinion/28wed3.html>

Competitive research in agriculture is key, William Leshner (*Executive Director, Global Harvest Initiative*), *Op-Ed, Des Moines Register*, October 27

Recently, the Obama administration announced an initiative that went relatively unnoticed amid the coverage of Afghanistan, health-care reform and the Nobel Peace Prize. Yet, the groundbreaking effort has the potential to fundamentally transform a field of science to improve human health and protect our environment, while greatly improving the foundation for global food security. I'm talking about the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2009910270342>

More Food On Less Carbon: How do we get there?, Daniel Martino (*lead author, Agriculture Chapter, Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*) and Franz Fischler (*former E.U. commissioner for agriculture*), *Forbes*, October 28

The problem of global warming is genuine. To achieve a true success, however, world leaders will need to balance their bold plans against another global threat: food insecurity. A warming planet is a less productive planet, especially for agriculture. If farmland turns dry and crops wither in a global hothouse, we will experience the very worst of what global warming has to offer.

<http://www.forbes.com/2009/10/27/food-security-climate-change-opinions-contributors-daniel-martino-franz-fischler.html>

UN food agency says 200 million more people hungry, *Associated Press*, October 26

Most of the developing world is paying more for food despite drops in commodity market prices during the global economic slowdown, with 200 million people joining the ranks of the hungry in the past two years.

See Also: World Food Program: 1 Billion People Hungry, *TIME*, October 26

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1932196,00.html>

See Also: Financial crisis hitting neediest in their bellies, *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 27

Food prices have soared in developing countries and - combined with a drop in income levels - caused a surge in the number of people facing starvation.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/financial-crisis-hitting-neediest-in-their-bellies-20091026-hgps.html>

Can Biotech Food Cure World Hunger?, *New York Times*, October 26

What will drive the next Green Revolution? Is genetically modified food an answer to world hunger? Are there other factors that will make a difference in food production? Experts weighing in include: Paul Collier, economist, Oxford University; Vandana Shiva, activist and author; **Per Pinstrup-Andersen, professor of nutrition and public policy, Cornell**; Raj Patel, Institute for Food and Development Policy; Jonathan Foley, University of Minnesota; and Michael J. Roberts, economist, North Carolina State University.

<http://roomfordebate.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/10/26/can-biotech-food-cure-world-hunger/>

Obama administration's foreign aid job left open, *Associated Press*, October 24

President Barack Obama faces increasing pressure to fill his administration's vacant top foreign assistance post, but there's no candidate in sight nine months into his term. Leaving the top job at USAID open for so long has some worried about the fate of Obama's goals, from reshaping Afghanistan strategy to parceling out a foreign aid budget twice as large as the previous administration's budget. And at a time the president has said he wants to restore America's reputation abroad, there's concern the leadership vacancy is weakening an agency best positioned to win goodwill for the U.S. by improving living conditions for people around the world.

http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5iPasCvXHN9oiHDX4Fi_PBhFV2gPQD9BH5BP80

What we can achieve in Afghanistan, *Robert Zoellick (President, World Bank), Op-Ed, The Washington Post*, October 30

Stability in Afghanistan also depends on good leadership -- especially in critical areas that have lagged behind, such as agriculture, energy, mining and private-sector development.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/29/AR2009102903917.html>

Dan Glickman To Receive 2010 Gene White Lifetime Achievement Award For Child Nutrition, *Medical News Today*, October 29

The 2010 Gene White Lifetime Achievement Award for Child Nutrition will be awarded to Dan Glickman, former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, former Congressman and long-time champion of child nutrition causes worldwide. Mr. Glickman has led the fight to end hunger both domestically and internationally throughout his career. **Most recently, he joined the Honorable Catherine Bertini, former Executive Director of the UN World Food Programme, in co-chairing the Chicago Council on Global Affairs' Global Agricultural Development Leaders Group. The group's findings, *Renewing American Leadership in the Fight Against Global Hunger and Poverty*, were issued early this year.**

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/169064.php>

Long after politics, George McGovern now fighting world hunger, *Daily Herald*, October 23

McGovern's passion was sparked in 1961, when he was appointed by President Kennedy as the worldwide director of the Food for Peace program. In 2001, McGovern was appointed United Nations ambassador on world hunger, and he and Dole were named the 2008 World Food Prize Laureates for their work.

<http://www.dailyherald.com/story/?id=331672>

Ban names senior official to lead efforts to combat growing number of hungry, *United Nations, October 29*

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon named David Nabarro a Special Representative on Food Security and Nutrition to stem and reverse the mounting number of children, women and men worldwide suffering from chronic hunger.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=32776&Cr=food+security&Cr1=>

Interview with "Enough" Author Roger Thurow, *ONE Blog, October 23*

Andreas Huebers from the Berlin ONE office recently got a chance to interview Roger Thurow, *Wall Street Journal* reporter and author of *Enough: Why the World's Poorest Starve in an Age of Plenty*.

<http://www.one.org/blog/2009/10/23/interview-with-enough-author-roger-thurow/>

RELEVANT U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES - USAID Foreign Service Agricultural Officers

<http://www.usaid.gov/careers/nepanno2.html>

A Call to Action on Food Security: The Administration's Global Strategy, *Hearing before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, October 29*

Thomas Melito, Director, International Affairs and Trade Team, United States Government Accountability Office: <http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/111/mel102909.pdf>

Helene Gayle, President and Chief Executive Officer, CARE:

<http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/111/gay102909.pdf>

Julie Howard, Executive Director, Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa:

<http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/111/how102909.pdf>

Reverend David Beckmann, President, Bread for the World:

<http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/111/bec102909.pdf>

Richard Leach, Senior Advisor, Public Policy, Friends of the World Food Program:

<http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/111/lea102909.pdf>

To review the future of next generation biofuels, *Hearing before the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation, Credit, Energy, and Research, October 29*

Dallas Tonsager, Under Secretary, Rural Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture:

<http://agriculture.house.gov/testimony/111/h102909/Tonsager.pdf>

Rajiv Shah, Under Secretary for Research, Education, Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture:

<http://agriculture.house.gov/testimony/111/h102909/DrShah.doc>

Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Announces U.S. Members of Three Working Groups Under The U.S.-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral, *USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, October 26*

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today the U.S. members of three working groups under the U.S.-Afghanistan-Pakistan trilateral consultations launched in May as part of President Obama's comprehensive, new strategy to enhance global food security.

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/.s.7.0.A/7.0.10B?contentidonly=true&contentid=2009/10/0529.xml>

Agriculture nomination steams greens, *Politico, October 26*

When the Obama administration announced that it was nominating a former pesticide lobbyist to be the chief agricultural negotiator in the Office of the United States Trade Representative, it sparked more than the usual Internet chatter.

<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1009/28722.html>

Obama faces new push from Dems on WTO, *The Hill*, October 21

President Barack Obama is under increasing pressure from House Democrats to chart a new course for international trade talks.

<http://thehill.com/homenews/administration/64005-obama-faces-new-pressure-on-wto-from-own-party>

Higher Education for Development Awards 13 More USAID-Funded Grants in Africa-U.S. Higher Education Initiative Grant Competition, *USAID*, October 26

Higher Education for Development (HED) and the U.S. Agency for International Development announced today that an additional 13 partnerships will be funded through the Africa-U.S. Higher Education Initiative Planning Grant Competition. Each will receive \$50,000 grants from USAID to develop plans to address regional and national economic development priorities including such as health, agriculture, environment and natural resources, science and technology, education and teacher training/preparation, and economics.

<http://www.usaid.gov/press/releases/2009/pr091026.html>

Climate Change Adaptation: Strategic Federal Planning Could Help Government Officials Make More Informed Decisions, *U.S. Government Accountability Office*, October 2009

Changes in the climate attributable to increased concentrations of greenhouse gases may have significant impacts in the United States and the world. For example, climate change could threaten coastal areas with rising sea levels. Greenhouse gases already in the atmosphere will continue altering the climate system into the future, regardless of emissions control efforts. Therefore, adaptation--defined as adjustments to natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climate change--is an important part of the response to climate change.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10113.pdf>

NEW REPORTS/POLICY BRIEFS/BOOKS

The poorest and hungry, *International Food Policy Research Institute*, October 2009

Although many millions of people have exited poverty in recent decades, much of the reduction in poverty has benefited people living close to the poverty line rather than those at the very bottom of the income distribution. Relatively little is known about people living in extreme deprivation. Who are the poorest of the poor and those most afflicted by hunger? Who are those who are left behind or out of poverty and hunger reduction processes? Why is poverty so persistent in some places and among some people? What are the key pathways out of ultra poverty and hunger? Which strategies, policies, and interventions have been successful in eradicating ultra poverty and hunger so far?

<http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/oc63.pdf>

Commitment to Development Index 2009, *Center for Global Development*, October 2009

The 2009 Commitment to Development Index ranks 22 of the world's richest countries on their dedication to policies that benefit the five billion people living in poorer nations. Moving beyond simple comparisons of foreign aid, the CDI ranks countries on seven themes: quantity and quality of foreign aid, openness to developing-country exports, policies that influence investment, migration policies, stewardship of the global environment, security policies and support for creation and dissemination of new technologies.

http://www.cgdev.org/files/1423075_file_CDI2009_FINAL_web.pdf

The Science of Climate Change in Africa: Impacts and Adaptation, *Sir Gordon Conway, Imperial College London*, October 2009

Agricultural production and food security in many parts of Africa are affected by natural climate variability and are likely to be severely compromised by climate change, in particular by damaging high temperatures and the greater incidence of drought. We can expect a decrease in the area suitable for agriculture and in the length of growing seasons and yield potential, particularly along the margins of semi-arid and arid areas. This is likely to further adversely affect food security and exacerbate malnutrition in Africa.

[https://www8.imperial.ac.uk/content/dav/ad/workspaces/climatechange/pdfs/discussion_papers/Grantha_m_Institute - The science of climate change in Africa.pdf](https://www8.imperial.ac.uk/content/dav/ad/workspaces/climatechange/pdfs/discussion_papers/Grantha_m_Institute_-_The_science_of_climate_change_in_Africa.pdf)

See Also: Climate change will devastate Africa, top UK scientist warns, The Guardian (U.K.), October 29

Professor Sir Gordon Conway warns continent will face intense droughts, famine, disease and floods.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/oct/28/africa-climate-change-sir-gordon-conway>

See Also: Unity doomed apartheid. Next up: climate change, Desmond Tutu, Op-Ed, USA Today, October 22

As the countdown begins to the decisive Copenhagen climate talks in December, new voices are making themselves heard. These victims have become more demanding as the realities of climate change have become more apparent. Maplecroft, a global risks security group, lists 28 countries as most vulnerable to climate change, and 22 of them are in Africa.

http://www.usatoday.com/printedition/news/20091022/column22_st1.art.htm

Accelerating Growth and Job Creation in South Asia, World Bank, October 2009

The key link between growth and inclusiveness is creation of good jobs. South Asia is already undergoing a major structural transformation based on rapid growth of services and manufacturing. The GDP share of agriculture is shrinking fast. South Asia has so far has seen a rapid increase in the contribution of the services sector in employment. However, there is a concern that job creation has been mostly in the informal sector characterized by low skills and low earnings. At the same time, the reduction in the GDP share of agriculture is not matched by a commensurate reduction in the employment share.

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/223546-1192413140459/4281804-1192413178157/4281806-1255623211158/fulltextjobcreation.pdf>

Mendel versus Malthus: Research, Productivity and Food Prices in the Long Run, University of Minnesota, Department of Applied Economics, September 2009

Over the past 50 years and longer, the supply of food commodities has grown faster than the effective market demand, in spite of increasing population and per capita incomes. Consequently, the real prices of food commodities have steadily trended down. The past increases in agricultural productivity and production, and the resulting real price trends, are attributable in large part to technological changes enabled by investments in agricultural R&D. Evidence is beginning to emerge of a slowdown in the long-term path of agricultural productivity growth. These productivity patterns mirror a progressive slowing down in the growth rate of total spending on agricultural R&D and a redirection of the funds away from farm productivity that began 20-30 years ago.

<http://www.instepp.umn.edu/documents/SP-IP-09-01.pdf>

Land Reform 2009: Land Settlement and Cooperatives, FAO, October 2009

Despite the growing recognition of the importance of state lands and their proper management, public land and property assets are generally weakly managed. Considered as “free” and available, state lands are commonly encroached upon, over utilized and inappropriately acquired. Undefined tenure arrangements and poor recording of land rights contribute to the ineffective management of public lands, providing fertile ground for corrupt practices.

<ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/012/i0899t/i0899t.pdf>

Do Philanthropic Citizens Behave Like Governments? Internet-Based Platforms and the Diffusion of International Private Aid, Brookings Institution, October 2009

Rapid growth in private development aid raises a host of questions regarding the allocation of aid and its selectivity across recipient countries. The authors analyze giving patterns from two large, internet-based non-profit organizations and discuss the need for private and official aid partnerships.

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2009/10_kiva_global_giving_kharas/10_kiva_global_giving_kharas.pdf

See Also: U.S. Private Philanthropy, Homi Kharas, Brookings Institution, October 2009

A striking gap has emerged in the United States between official government aid and private aid.

Private aid to developing countries actually dwarfs what Washington hands out—in 2007, private aid from the U.S. was around \$37 billion, while official aid was only \$22 billion. Private aid comes from

literally millions of individual donors, as well as from mega-foundations like Gates, Rockefeller and Hewlett. These philanthropists have very different approaches to how they give out their money.
http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2009/1020_private_philanthropy_kharas.aspx

The Ecosystem Services Benchmark: A guidance document, *Fauna & Flora International, United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative, and Fundação Getulio Vargas, October 2009*

This report intends to be a tool for investors to assess the management of biodiversity and ecosystem services risks and opportunities in companies with an agricultural supply chain. Over 60% of the ecosystem services on which we and much of the agricultural system rely are being degraded or overexploited. Unpredictable weather, competition for land between biofuels and traditional crops and declines in soil fertility are severely impacting our agricultural system. The degradation of ecosystem services such as freshwater provision, climate regulation and soil fertility clearly has implications for the long-term viability of the businesses dependent on them, in particular those with agricultural supply chains.

<http://www.naturalvalueinitiative.org/download/documents/Publications/EcoSysBenchmark.pdf>

Fixing a Critical Climate Accounting Error, *Timothy D. Searchinger et. al, Science, October 2009*

The accounting now used for assessing compliance with carbon limits in the Kyoto Protocol and in climate legislation contains a far-reaching but fixable flaw that will severely undermine greenhouse gas reduction goals. It does not count CO₂ emitted from tailpipes and smokestacks when bioenergy is being used, but it also does not count changes in emissions from land use when biomass for energy is harvested or grown. This accounting erroneously treats all bioenergy as carbon neutral regardless of the source of the biomass, which may cause large differences in net emissions.

<http://www.princeton.edu/~tsearchi/writings/Fixing%20a%20Critical%20Climate%20Accounting%20ErrorEDITED-tim.pdf>

See Also: Sins of Emission, Wall Street Journal, October 29

Though you won't hear it from the biofuels lobby, ethanol actually generates the same amount of greenhouse gas as fossil fuels, or more, per unit of energy.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703574604574500013927534676.html>

The United States and India 3.0, *Ashley J. Tellis, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, October 2009*

The current Strategic Dialogue, which encompasses numerous bilateral activities between the United States and India, consists of five principal pillars, under which a variety of working groups bring together different components of the two governments, including economics, trade, and agriculture, with a focus on expanding business and market access, sustaining trade liberalization, and food security.

http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/us_india_3.0.pdf

Rethinking School Feeding: Social Safety Nets, Child Development, and the Education Sector, *World Bank, 2009*

This review highlights three main findings. First, school feeding programs in low-income countries exhibit large variation in cost, with concomitant opportunities for cost containment. Second, as countries get richer, school feeding costs become a much smaller proportion of the investment in education. Third, the main preconditions for the transition to sustainable national programs are mainstreaming school feeding in national policies and plans, especially education sector plans; identifying national sources of financing; and expanding national implementation capacity.

Executive Summary:

<http://docustore.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/newsroom/wfp204667.pdf>

Full Report: [http://www-](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/06/04/000334955_20090604061014/Rendered/PDF/487420PUB0Scho1010Official0Use0Only1.pdf)

[wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/06/04/000334955_20090604061014/Rendered/PDF/487420PUB0Scho1010Official0Use0Only1.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/06/04/000334955_20090604061014/Rendered/PDF/487420PUB0Scho1010Official0Use0Only1.pdf)

Food Security 2009: Achieving Long-Term Solutions

Date: November 2-3, 2009

Location: Chatham House, London, UK

Following our successful food security conference in 2008, this year's event will tackle the politics and science surrounding global food security. While forecasts for harvest and stocks are broadly positive, the experience of the last two years combined with the current economic downturn suggests that volatility is likely to be a feature of food markets for some time yet. The FAO estimates that the number of undernourished people worldwide has risen by 115 million recently, noting that one billion people - 15% of the global population - now do not get enough food to eat.

<http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/foodsecurity09/>

Registration: <https://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/foodsecurity09/-/section/register/id/148/form/1/>

Millions Fed: Proven Successes in Agricultural Development

Date: November 12, 2009

Location: International Food Policy Research Institute, Washington, DC

Learning from successes in agricultural development is now more urgent than ever. Progress in feeding the world's billions has slowed, while the challenge of feeding its future millions remains enormous and is subject to new uncertainties in the global food and agricultural systems.

<http://www.ifpri.org/event/millions-fed-proven-successes-agricultural-development>

FAO Summit on Food Security

Date: November 16-18, 2009

Location: Rome, Italy

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/29219/icode/>

CABI Global Summit: Food security in a climate of change

Date: October 19-21, 2009

Location: London, UK

The CABI Global Summit will bring together environment and agriculture ministers and other senior government officials from around the world. Also attending will be major funding organizations and representatives from international development and corporate organizations. Together, they will consider policies, practices and technologies that can help improve food security against this background of change.

https://www.cabiglobalsummit.com/delegate_landing.aspx (registration available)

London Business Conferences hosts 3rd Sustainable Agriculture Summit

Date: November 30-December 1, 2009

Location: London, UK

<http://www.carbonoffsetsdaily.com/uk-carbonmarketnews/farmers-groups-join-london-sustainable-agriculture-summit-november-2009-12122.htm> (registration available)

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

Asia's food security hinges on rice grower India, *Associated Press, October 29*

Rising rice prices and possible shortages in the world's poorest countries will hinge on what major growers India, China and Thailand do to make up for millions of tons of the staple lost to floods and droughts, officials said. All eyes are on India, traditionally one of the world's top rice exporters, which may import 1.1 million tons (1 million metric tons) to 3.8 million tons (3.5 million metric tons) next year to replace production losses after a drought ravaged the country's rice bowl.

<http://finance.yahoo.com/news/Asias-food-security-hinges-on-apf-2043136368.html?x=0&v=2>

Food summit should plant a seed for change, *Editorial, Globe & Mail (Canada), October 29*

November's conference need not be a talking shop -- it can break from the politically correct agenda of trying to please all the UN donor countries and suggest some out-of-the-box strategies.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/commentary/food-summit-should-plant-a-seed-for-change/article1343076/>

Our future food security depends on using GM crops, *The Guardian (U.K.), October 29*

Scaremongers must come to recognise the value of agricultural technology.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/oct/29/gm-food-security-farming>

OAS secretary general calls for urgent investment in agriculture and rural communities, *Caribbean Net News, October 29*

The Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), José Miguel Insulza, said that "with the global economy still struggling to emerge from recession and the countries of the Americas feeling the negative effects of the economic downturn, the issue of food security and the need for increased attention and investment in the agricultural sector and rural communities is now more urgent than ever."

http://www.caribbeannetnews.com/oas/oas.php?news_id=19553&start=0&category_id=38

Drought, typhoons hurt Asia's rice production, *BusinessWeek, October 28*

A drought in India and typhoons in the Philippines have damaged large tracts of rice paddies, threatening to upset the fragile food market amid fears of shortages and riots.

<http://www.businessweek.com/ap/financialnews/D9BK3F680.htm>

Economist: Fall in research hits farm productivity, *Associated Press, October 27*

A global fall in agricultural research spending - other than in China - is slowing growth in farm output and will lead to higher world food prices for the first time in five decades, economist Philip Pardey, professor of science and technology policy at the University of Minnesota, said.

<http://asia.news.yahoo.com/ap/20091027/tap-as-australia-world-food-security-510daa6.html>

Weather Damps Crop Harvests, *Wall Street Journal, October 27*

Bad weather is leaving corn and soybeans, as well as other crops, molding in the fields. Planting delays for some crops, such as corn and soybeans, caused problems earlier in the season. Now rain, and freezing temperatures in some more northerly areas, are playing havoc with harvest season, pushing up prices.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125656490009708113.html>

See Also: Rains, Grains and Gains, *Wall Street Journal, October 26*

Deutsche Bank calls this the worst harvest season in the U.S. since the 1980s.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125651018436706915.html>

Poor leadership sows the seeds of African agricultural failure, *Editorial, Business Day (South Africa), October 26*

Fertile land is one of Africa's greatest resources. And yet 35 African countries are net food importers. The reasons for this are as complex as they are simple. The approach by many foreign governments (and several African states such as Libya, Egypt and Mauritius) to rent land on the continent to grow food for their own people suggests it is possible to turn this around, and to do it quickly with the right elements in place.

<http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/Content.aspx?id=84958>

GM crops no panacea for food security: US scientist, *The News International (Pakistan), October 24*

Senior US scientist Dr Michael Hansen has said genetically modified crops are not the panacea for food security. Rather, the answer to food security lies with small-scale, ecologically rational, sustainable agriculture that focuses on local food systems.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=204745

Farmers and climate change: Seeds of discontent, *Economist, October 22*

In early November farmers' organisations across America's states will receive packages of materials, such as cards and stickers, to wage an assault against climate-change legislation. Their goal is not to amend a bill, but

kill it. As the Senate considers carbon reducing laws, farm lobbyists have grown increasingly demanding. Tom Vilsack, Barack Obama's agriculture secretary, insists that the benefits of a climate-change bill will outweigh the costs of expensive fuel and fertiliser. Farmers are not so sure.

http://www.economist.com/world/unitedstates/displayStory.cfm?story_id=14700744

*See Also: **Farmers and Congress Shouldn't Fall for this Hat Trick**, Center for American Progress, October 26*

Just as they did in the weeks leading up to House passage of the American Clean Energy and Security Act, H.R. 2454, in June, big agricultural lobbyists are again trying to derail passing legislation to cut global warming pollution. This time their focus is the Clean Energy Jobs and American Power Act of 2009, S. 1733.

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/10/kenworthy_hat_trick.html

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

U.S. Food Aid Contributing to Africa's Hunger?, *ABC News, October 29*

Drought-stricken Ethiopia is pleading for food aid again to stave off starvation, but some critics are complaining that the policies of the country's most generous donor, the United States, is exacerbating the cycle of starvation. U.S. law requires that food aid money be spent on food grown in the U.S., at least half of it must be packed in the U.S. and most of it must be transported in U.S. ships. American aid policies also undermine long-term development strategies that could break the cycle of drought and starvation in Ethiopia.

<http://abcnews.go.com/WN/Health/us-food-aid-contributing-africas-hunger/story?id=8939151>

More Schools, Not Troops, *Nicholas Kristof, Op-Ed, New York Times, October 28*

In short, there is still vast scope for greater investment in education, health and agriculture in Afghanistan. These are extraordinarily cheap and have a better record at stabilizing societies than military solutions, which, in fact, have a pretty dismal record.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/29/opinion/29kristof.html>

Refugees protest food disruption in Uganda, *CNN, October 28*

Refugees at a settlement in southwestern Uganda have barricaded all roads into the camp to protest a food-aid disruption they say has caused the deaths of several children, refugee leaders said. "We have spent three months without any food supplies from government nor from any food relief or humanitarian agency," Congolese refugee leader Serugendo Sekalinda said by telephone.

<http://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/africa/10/27/uganda.refugee.strike/>

Bill Gates: Foreign aid works, *Politico, October 27*

Bill and Melinda Gates came to Washington for an elaborate production with a simple but seldom-proclaimed message: Foreign aid works.

<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1009/28794.html>

*See Also: **U.S. aid saves lives but few know, Bill Gates says**, Reuters, October 27*

<http://www.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUSN2769221.CH.2400>

*See Also: **Gateses to lobby U.S. for global health funds**, The Washington Post, October 27*

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/26/AR2009102603481.html>

UN to send Iraqi refugees food aid by text message, *Reuters, October 27*

Iraqi refugees in Syria will this week start receive U.N. text messages they can redeem for fresh food in local shops. The "virtual vouchers" worth \$22 per family every two months will supplement traditional aid which rarely includes perishable goods.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/featuredCrisis/idUSLR420268>

*See Also: **U.N. touts food vouchers sent by text**, CNN, October 29*

<http://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/meast/10/29/un.food/>

South Korea Offers Food Aid to North, *New York Times, October 26*

South Korea offered to ship 10,000 tons of corn to North Korea in what would be the first such government-financed aid in nearly two years.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/27/world/asia/27korea.html>

Want to help? Then make life harder for the aid agencies, *Editorial, Financial Times, October 24*

Could aid agencies be made to compete? It might be more promising to apply competitive pressure from the donor end. Donors should start to ask whether their pet agency is actually well qualified to deliver a particular type of aid to a particular country – or whether the job could be contracted out to a charity, a rival aid agency, or indeed a private company.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/3149ef56-bd1a-11de-a7ec-00144feab49a.html>

See Also: Beyond Planning: Markets and Networks for Better Aid, Center for Global Development, October 2009

http://www.cgdev.org/files/1422971_file_Beyond_Planning_FINAL.pdf

Do starving Africans a favour. Don't feed them, *Editorial, The Times (U.K.), October 23*

There is a drought. Just as there is every ten years. This is the worst in a generation. But even if 23 million people do face starvation, please don't reach for your cheque book. Foreign aid is the principal reason for Africa's accumulated agony.

http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/guest_contributors/article6886167.ece

UK signs first partnership with China for global food security, *Department for International Development (DFID), October 19*

The UK is the first country to sign an agreement with China to address global food needs, which will see the UK facilitating Chinese agricultural expertise to help countries in Africa, backed by £3.4 million.

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Media-Room/Press-releases/2009/UK-signs-first-partnership-with-China-for-global-food-security/>

Revitalizing U.S. Democracy Assistance: The Challenge of USAID, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, October 2009*

President Obama and his foreign policy team are only just starting to confront the challenge of reformulating U.S. democracy promotion policy. Crucial to any such effort will be revitalizing democracy assistance, a domain that has expanded greatly over the past 25 years but risks not adapting adequately to meet the challenges of the new landscape of democratic stagnation in the world. As the largest source of U.S. democracy assistance, USAID is a natural starting point for such a process of revitalization.

http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/revitalizing_democracy_assistance.pdf

ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

EU countries fail to agree on fund to help developing nations go green, *The Times (U.K.), October 30*

Nine Eastern European countries have refused to commit to an international fund to pay developing countries to go green, despite a plea from Lars Lokke Rasmussen, the Danish Prime Minister and host of the Copenhagen climate change talks next month.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/politics/article6896153.ece>

See Also: Europe puts figure on green aid to push climate change deal, The Guardian (U.K.), October 27

Europe is to breathe life into the faltering search for a new global deal on climate change by pledging billions of pounds in financial support for poor countries. European heads of state will formally recommend this week that rich countries should hand over around €100bn (£90bn) a year to nations such as India and Vietnam by 2020 to help them cope with the impact of global warming.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/oct/27/europe-climate-change-deal-pledge>

See Also: U.N. Climate Chief Says Money for Poorer Nations Is Key to Copenhagen, New York Times (Green Inc. Blog), October 29

<http://greeninc.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/10/29/un-climate-chief-says-money-for-poorer-nations-is-key-to-copenhagen/>

Drought: Battered by climate extremes, *Financial Times*, October 28

They are one of the communities most affected by the three-year drought, but it has taken its toll across Kenya, pushing the country into crisis as wheat and maize crops fail and food prices rise so high many families cannot afford to feed themselves. The worst previous drought was in 2000 but the current one has been exacerbated by man-made factors that are raising tough questions for Kenya: why does one of the most developed countries in Africa remain so dependent on foreign food aid?

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/635a5ae0-c28c-11de-be3a-00144feab49a.html>

East Africa Rains Arrive, Too Little, Too Late?, *VOA News*, October 27

Rains brought on by the El Nino weather pattern are falling over parts of East Africa. But while they are a welcome sight after a long, harsh drought, they probably won't be enough to ease long-term emergency food needs.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/Africa/2009-10-27-voa28.cfm>

Fleeing drought in the Horn of Africa, *Los Angeles Times*, October 25

Africa would be heaviest hit because so many people's livelihoods are dependent on farming and livestock. Many Africans use less water in a day than the average American uses to flush the toilet, so any further declines that might occur because of climate change could be life-threatening.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-climate-refugees25-2009oct25,0,4396751.story>

We Can Do It, *Ban Ki-moon (secretary general, United Nations), Op-Ed, New York Times*, October 25

Developed countries must strengthen their mid-term mitigation targets, which are currently nowhere close to the cuts that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says are needed. Developing countries need funding and technology so they can move more quickly toward green growth as part of their strategies to reduce poverty.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/26/opinion/26iht-edban.html>

See Also: A conversation with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, *Seattle Times*, October 26

"The world is now going through multiple crises. Have you ever seen when whole international community has been hit all at once by all these crises: climate change, economic crisis, food security, energy crisis, pandemic? Only one of these would come once every 80 years."

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/thebusinessofgiving/2010141457_on_saturday_they_tried_somethi.html

Ravaged by drought, Madagascar feels the full effect of climate change, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, October 23

Southern Madagascar has had three years of crop failure in five years, resulting in chronic hunger for tens of thousands of families and soaring rates of malnutrition, stunted growth and death among children. Climate change is widely blamed for playing havoc with the seasons and destroying agricultural harvests. This is exacerbated by local deforestation, which has altered the microclimate and reduced rainfall.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/oct/23/madagascar-drought>

To Cut Global Warming, Swedes Study Their Plates, *New York Times*, October 23

New labels listing the carbon dioxide emissions associated with the production of foods are appearing on some grocery items and restaurant menus around the country.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/23/world/europe/23degrees.html>

Four-year drought pushes 23 million Africans to brink of starvation, *The Times (U.K.)*, October 22

A four-year drought has pushed as many as 23 million people to the brink of starvation across East Africa, making it the worst in a decade or more. Close to four million of those at risk are in Kenya, where one person in ten survives on emergency rations. Last week clouds gathered over much of the country, but the rains have come too late to bring much relief.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/environment/article6884579.ece>

See Also: Carcasses litter a parched and barren wilderness, *The Times (U.K.)*, October 22

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/africa/article6884656.ece>

WOMEN

Agriculture Group Finds Targeting Women Improves Food Security, Family Incomes, *AllAfrica.com*, October 29

Gender inequalities are a key impediment to achieving food security in many households in sub-Saharan Africa. Although women do most of the farming on the continent, growing an estimated 70 percent of its food, they often have little control over the money that their crops generate. A number of programs are addressing these gender issues and helping change cultural practices that undermine food security.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200910290832.html>

Girls' School Breaks Cycle of Poverty, 10 Rupees at a Time, *America.gov*, October 28

Immediately following his retirement in 2000 as vice president of chemicals firm DuPont South Asia Limited, Singh, 70, cashed in all his savings, sold his home in Virginia and returned to Anupshahar, 113 kilometers miles west of New Delhi, to break ground on the Pardada Pardadi Educational Society (PPES). The new school, which caters strictly to girls, provides an unusual incentive that pays girls to attend. By graduation, a student will have earned 30,000 rupees (\$630). The institute also provides books, uniforms, transportation to and from school, and three meals a day in a country where child malnutrition is rampant.

<http://www.america.gov/st/develop-english/2009/October/20091023184424berehellek0.8626062.html>

Uganda food crisis undermining efforts to fight HIV/Aids, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, October 21

Erratic weather, which has brought floods and drought, and rising food prices are taking a devastating toll on east Africa. Last month, the FAO said nearly 20 million people were now dependent on food aid in the region. Uganda is experiencing famine and acute food shortages and the most vulnerable households are those headed by women.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/katine/2009/oct/21/food-crisis-hiv-aids>

MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

African nations appeal for quick Doha trade pact, *Reuters*, October 29

African nations will ask developed states to speed up work to conclude the Doha round trade talks and to make early concessions on reducing cotton subsidies that hurt poor farmers, a South African minister said.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAF10E59S00H20091029>

India scraps rice import tax, *Financial Times*, October 28

India scrapped its rice import duty as the government took emergency measures to increase food stocks after the worst drought in more than 30 years cut agricultural output. India is the world's second-largest producer and consumer of rice after China and has seldom made big purchases of rice on international markets. This year, however, it has been forced to turn to greater imports after one of the worst monsoons since 1972 and flooding damaged the domestic crop in northern India.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/a5257882-c3aa-11de-a290-00144feab49a.html>

Tanzanian farmers to be nudged towards the market, *FAO*, October 28

FAO is to provide the United Republic of Tanzania with advisory support for farmers that will help them better respond to market opportunities and thus heighten food security. Tanzania's farmers - for the most part traditional smallholders - will get technical assistance in farm management and marketing and will be encouraged to join producers' groups.

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/36774/icode/>

Fraud Plagues Sugar Subsidy System in Europe, *New York Times*, October 26

Sugar producers have reaped millions in payments, through schemes aimed at cashing in on generous subsidy programs.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/27/business/global/27sugariht.html>

World trade talks should focus on poor: Gaddafi, *Reuters, October 23*

Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi called for the removal of 'unjust' rich-country farm subsidies and more emphasis on helping the poor in world trade talks.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSTRE59M38220091023>

Italian agriculture chief blasts food speculation, *Associated Press, October 23*

Italian Agriculture Minister Luca Zaia has called for a ban on speculation in the financial markets on the price of food.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5j5tARzUluDkzC5-ynRoQ9IFejOgD9BGF1580>

AGRIBUSINESS

Unlocking India's Rural Sector: U.S. Industry Contributions, *U.S.-India Business Council, October 2009*

The case studies presented in this publication exemplify how Indian collaboration with American private sector companies has risen to the challenge of meeting India's growing appetite, while achieving remarkable strides toward food security. U.S. company interventions, together with Indian partners, have added value to food and agriculture. A positive result has been the nurturing of a whole new industry, which brings out the potential in agricultural production and food processing, transfers best practices, and, importantly, enables social outreach to a large swath of the Indian economy, the rural sector.

<http://www.usibc.com/NR/rdonlyres/euutbynxcxbjuqpnpdg7y2zytjvhngcivhbekh255lxndnaxsz2uqqcnbywd3sg3n74eldqta5qswb5zgkd3tlh2sc/14984USIBCRuralLR.pdf>

Nestlé: The unrepentant chocolatier, *Economist, October 29*

Although the company is best known for chocolate, ice-cream and sugary snacks, Peter Brabeck-Letmathe, the firm's chairman, and Paul Bulcke, its chief executive, hope to transform the food company into the world's leading health, nutrition and "wellness" firm. It is tempting to dismiss this as a mere marketing stunt—an effort to make people feel better about eating things they really shouldn't. Yet there is a sound commercial logic behind Nestlé's shift towards health and nutrition.

http://www.economist.com/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14744982

Public-Private Partnerships Key to Achieving Global Food Security, Says DuPont Leader, *Press Release, October 29*

Global food security, which is increasingly being recognized as a key to national security, will only be fully achieved through well-designed and executed public and private partnerships, William S. Niebur, vice president - DuPont Crop Genetics Research and Development, told attendees at the Crawford Fund Annual Development Conference.

http://www2.dupont.com/Media_Center/en_US/daily_news/october/article20091029.html

Global Harvest Initiative aims to close productivity gap, *Press Release, October 27*

Chief executive officers of four leading agricultural companies launched the Global Harvest Initiative in September to work collectively with public and private entities in an effort to close the imminent productivity gap to meet the needs of a growing and more affluent world population. Founding members Archer Daniels Midland Co. (ADM), DuPont, John Deere and Monsanto Co. share the vision that global agricultural output must be doubled by 2050 and must be done in a sustainable manner.

<http://theland.farmonline.com.au/news/nationalrural/agribusiness-and-general/general/global-harvest-initiative-aims-to-close-productivity-gap/1658534.aspx>

Renewable Energy Returns to Spotlight, *Wall Street Journal, October 27*

The Obama administration announced \$151 million in grants for next-generation energy research projects that Energy Secretary Steven Chu said could be vital to U.S. efforts to combat climate change. The second biggest grant, at \$9 million, went to DuPont Co. for the production of a biofuel derived from seaweed.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125657972873108537.html>

Syngenta Ventures Invests in U.S. Biotech Company Metabolon, *Reuters, October 27*

Syngenta Ventures announced that it has made an equity investment in Metabolon, a privately-held U.S. biotechnology company focused on the use of metabolomics in research and diagnostics. "We need access to the best available new technologies in order to achieve the increase in agricultural output which will be vital over the coming years," said Robert Berendes, Head of Business Development at Syngenta.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/pressRelease/idUS54026+27-Oct-2009+PRN20091027>

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