

GLOBAL FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE WEEKLY NEWS BRIEF OF THE GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE



October 8th – October 16th, 2011

Quote of the Week: – *“We will take the success from each system and merge them to achieve the best results. I believe that combining biological farming techniques and new technology will provide the most dynamic and successful systems. This may mean using hybrid seeds with organic fertilizer or blending cover crops and rotations to reduce soil erosion and increase soil organic matter. We have to think outside of the box when we look at Africa’s weathered and degraded soils and limited infrastructure.”* – Howard G. Buffett, 2011 World Food Prize Keynote Address, October 12, 2011

For more information:

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

2011 Global Hunger Index, IFPRI, October 2011

Twenty-six countries still have levels of hunger that are extremely alarming or alarming. The countries with extremely alarming 2011 GHI scores – Burundi, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Eritrea – are in Sub-Saharan Africa. Most of the countries with alarming GHI scores are in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. <http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ghi11.pdf>

SEE ALSO: Food Security: India Ranks Lower than Rwanda, *Economic Times*, October 12

India's food security situation continues to rank as "alarming." It ranks 67 of the 81 countries of the world with the worst food security status. This means that there are only 14 countries in the world whose people have a worse nutritional status.

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics/nation/food-security-india-ranks-lower-than-rwanda/articleshow/10322694.cms>

Assessing Progress in Africa toward the MDGs, *African Development Bank*, October 11

The report underscores that the MDGs are closely interlinked, hence the need for an integrated approach to accelerate their achievement. To this end, it is imperative that policymakers prioritize those interventions that will have the greatest leverage or cascading effects on a wider range of indicators.

http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/ADFB-MDG-EN_WEB_2.pdf

SEE ALSO: Africa's Middle Class to Boom, *Wall Street Journal*, October 13

Africa's middle class will triple to more than one billion people in the next half-century, but that still won't suffice to close the gap between the continent and Asia's new economic powers. The report predicts GDP growth in the period of more than 5% a year for Africa.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204002304576627162908367154.html>

SEE ALSO: Video: Africa's Middle Class to Triple by 2060, *Wall Street Journal*, October 13

<http://online.wsj.com/video/africas-middle-class-to-triple-by-2060/10FAED32-508E-4915-9D3D-4C5CD0038D3F.html>

Making Progress in the Fight Against Hunger: World Food Day 2011, *Opinion*, Jonathan Shrier and Ertharin Cousin, *State Department Blog*, October 16

Sustained food security will only be achieved when countries have well-developed agricultural value chains; when agricultural producers are using the most appropriate techniques, technologies, and improved seeds; when farmers and traders can get to developed markets to sell their goods and purchase nutritious food for their families; and when everyone in agriculture has access to the resources they need. These are some of the focal points of Feed the Future, the U.S. global hunger and food security initiative.

http://blogs.state.gov/index.php/site/entry/world_food_day_2011

Small Farmers Have a Critical Roles, *Sarah Murray*, *Financial Times*, October 13

As another World Food Day nears, the task of feeding every one on the planet looks daunting – and many have yet to grasp the scale of the challenge. Feeding the world could become one of the biggest concerns for the 21st century. But while all agree that stepping up productivity is essential, this must be achieved through "sustainable intensification."

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/f98fbb7c-f00c-11e0-bc9d-00144feab49a.html>

Some Lessons in the Value of Helping world's Poorest Farmers, *Opinion*, Catherine Bertini and Dan Glickman, *Des Moines Register*, October 13

The global economy reels and volatile food prices wreak havoc on poor people. Drought and conflict have put 13 million people in danger of starvation in the Horn of Africa, but Brazil and Ghana continue to make impressive gains in food and economic security. So what is going right with these countries? The lesson here is pretty simple — investing in agricultural and rural development works.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2011310140012>

Catherine Bertini Trust Fund For Girl's Education Announces New Grants For Groups in South Sudan And Senegal, *WFP USA*, October 12

The Catherine Bertini Trust Fund for Girls' Education announced today new grants to help increase the number of girls in primary or secondary schools. The Hope for Ariang Foundation in South Sudan - whose mission is to increase female enrollment at Ariang Primary School — will receive a \$20,000 grant. ELEVEate in Senegal will receive a nearly \$16,000 grant to create girls' clubs at the schools ELEVEate serves.

<http://usa.wfp.org/news-release/catherine-bertini-trust-fund-girls-education-announces-new-grants-groups-south-sudan-an>

Girls Grow: A Vital Force in Rural Economies, *The Chicago Council on Global Affairs*, October 13

The report calls on national governments and bilateral donors to provide services and opportunities that both improve girls' lives and equip them to be successful economic contributors.

http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/UserFiles/File/GlobalAgDevelopment/Report/GirlsGrowReportFinal_v9.pdf

SEE ALSO: BBC Interview with Catherine Bertini, *October 7*

http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/UserFiles/Media/FY12_Media/10_October/111007_Bertini_BBC.mp3

SEE ALSO: Unleashing the Power of Rural Girls, *UN Dispatch, October 7*

<http://www.undispatch.com/unleashing-the-power-of-rural-girls>

SEE ALSO: Standing up for Teenage Girls, *IRIN News, October 10*

<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=93924>

SEE ALSO: Girls are Key to Food Security in Poor Countries, *Guardian, October 7*

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/2011/oct/07/girls-key-food-security-report?>

SEE ALSO: Teaching Girls in the Developing World, *Telegraph, October 7*

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/8813454/Teaching-girls-in-the-developing-world.html>

Hungry Farmers: A Conversation with Roger Thurow, *Senior Fellow on Global Agriculture and Food Policy, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, October 14*

Roger Thurow was interviewed by endinghunger.org on his experiences in the fight against global hunger. In two videos on what he calls "The overriding issue of our time," Thurow explains why he joined the fight, and what can be done about this chronic condition.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftCkmZVaeZQ&feature=player_embedded

SEE ALSO: Hunger: A Disease of the Soul, *Roger Thurow, October 14*

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltd8-nnsW64&feature=player_embedded

Feed the Future: Navigating Through the U.S. Budget Tsunami, *Larry Nowels, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, October 2011*

The House and Senate have already set down markers, drawing sharp differences in the future of Feed the Future as a key development initiative. At the Senate level, Feed the Future remains on track; the House allocation brings into question whether Feed the Future could continue as a major initiative.

http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/UserFiles/File/GlobalAgDevelopment/Issue_Briefs/GADI%20Issue%20Brief%20FtF%20Budget%20-%20FINAL.pdf

SPECIAL COVERAGE: THE WORLD FOOD PRIZE WEEK

2011 GAP Report, *Global Harvest Initiative, October 2011*

The 2011 GAP Report features the latest comparison of the current rate of global agricultural productivity with the rate required to sustainably meet the needs of the more than nine billion people expected to inhabit the Earth by 2050, and four national-level case studies which highlight the impact of key policies on agricultural productivity.

<http://www.globalharvestinitiative.org/index.php/2011-gap-report/>

SEE ALSO: Can We Close the Global Agricultural Productivity Gap?, *Sara Wyant, Agri-Pulse, October 12*

The short-term answer is a resounding "yes," but the long-term solutions to global hunger and food security remain a challenge, according to a new Global Agricultural Productivity Report™. The 2011 GAP Report includes an updated GAP Index™, which measures the difference between the current rate of global agricultural productivity growth and the rate required to meet future needs.

http://www.agri-pulse.com/global_agricultural_productivity_growth_10122011.asp

Women Seen Key to Solving Hunger Issues in Africa, *Christine Stebbins, Reuters, October 17*

Sub-Saharan Africa faces daunting problems staving off famine in coming decades but food and development experts also say one solution to the problem is obvious: empower women. Experts at the meeting said innovation must include new thinking about small farmers, especially African women. Africa, unlike Asia, has massive amounts of arable land. But crop yields lag far behind the world's top farmers.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/commoditiesNews/idAFN1E79F07B20111017?sp=true>

Former Heads of Brazil, Ghana Awarded Anti-Hunger Prize, *Steve Baragona, VOA News, October 14*

Brazil's Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and John Agyekum Kufuor of Ghana were honored for instituting policies which cut their nation's hunger rates. Kufuor backed a school meal program which reaches about one in nine of Ghana's primary school children. These programs helped cut the African nation's hunger rate from 34 percent in 1990 to nine percent in 2004. Brazil's popular former president also made reducing hunger one of his government's highest priorities.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/usa/Former-Heads-of-Brazil-Ghana-Awarded-Anti-Hunger-Prize-131855258.html>

SEE ALSO: Government Aid Key to Prosperity for All, Laureate says, *Philip Brasher, Des Moines Register, October 14*

The joint prize was intended to spotlight leaders who have made significant headway against entrenched problems of hunger and poverty. Both leaders managed to nurture agribusiness sectors and foreign investment while also seeking to help small-scale farmers to prosper.

<http://blogs.desmoinesregister.com/dmr/index.php/2011/10/14/brazil-created-prosperty-and-social-mobility-with-government-aid-laureate-says/>

SEE ALSO: World Food Prize Recognizes Leadership in Agriculture, but More Policy Support Is Needed to Feed the World's Hungry, *Danielle Nierenberg, Huffington Post, October 7*

Not just in Ghana and Brazil, but around the world, policymakers, farmers, activists, and other leaders are investing in agricultural innovations to reduce hunger and alleviate poverty.

Unfortunately, agriculture is not often a top priority for policymakers -- in Africa, only seven nations invest 10 percent or more of their national budgets in the sector.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/danielle-nierenberg/world-food-prize-recogniz_b_998676.html

Our World Role in Ag needs to Expand, *Editorial, Des Moines Register, October 14*

This year's symposium was a reminder that the global food shortage has not gone away: Hunger still exists today, and two reports released in conjunction with this week's event predict that the world's population likely will grow to 9 billion people in the next 40 years, and the world's farmers will have to double the current output to feed them all. The World Food Prize could be the catalyst for developing a stronger link between ISU and Des Moines, which has ties to global agribusinesses.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2011310150009>

SEE ALSO: World Food Prize: A Timeline of Events, *Des Moines Register, October 12*

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/section/world-food-prize>

Urgent Action Needed to Address World Hunger, says Syngenta CEO, *Agri-Pulse, October 14*

Syngenta CEO, Mike Mack, joined the 2011 World Food Prize in Des Moines, Iowa to discuss the critical questions around agriculture, hunger and food prices in his speech, "Living on the Edge: The New Norm?" Mack stressed that raising the productivity of smallholder farms is a critical part of the solution, and that means enabling them to become sustainable, profit-making businesses.

http://www.agri-pulse.com/Syngenta_WFP_Hunger_10142011.asp

DuPont CEO says Agriculture a "Tremendous" Opportunity, *Christine Stebbins, Reuters, October 13*

U.S. chemicals giant DuPont sees big growth opportunities ahead in its agricultural sector as the world's population expands 30 percent and food needs double by 2050. DuPont subsidiary Pioneer Hi-Bred, acquired in 1999 and headquartered in Des Moines, is the world's largest producer of seed for corn and many other crops.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/10/14/agriculture-dupont-idUSN1E79C22D20111014>

SEE ALSO: DuPont CEO: Local Focus Key to Farming Solutions, *Des Moines Register, October 13*

DuPont's top executive says it will take "world-class science" to produce the food the world will need in coming years. Pioneer's genetically engineered corn varieties are widely used in South Africa but are not yet permitted on much of the continent, although several countries are moving toward permitting the use of biotech food crops.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2011310140026>

Buffett: New Approach Needed on Hunger in Africa, *Josh Funk, Washington Post, October 12*

The world needs to focus on the needs of African farmers and not impose on them what works on American farms if a solution to hunger in Sub-Saharan Africa is to be realized, Howard Buffett said. While fertilizer and better seeds might help in some places, most small farmers in Africa can't afford that, so aid groups also need to offer other solutions, such as teaching farmers to use cover crops and no-till techniques, he said.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/buffett-hopes-to-inspire-new-soil-focused-approach-to-helping-african-farmers-end-hunger/2011/10/12/gIQAADBUEL_story.html

SEE ALSO: Biotech Seeds are No Fix for African Hunger, Philanthropist Buffett tells Food Prize Audience, *Philip Brasher, Des Moines Register, October 12*

Buffett warned that encouraging poor African farmers to adopt U.S. farming methods could push them to abandon the crop diversity their families have long depended on and switch to growing just one crop, such as corn. That would leave the farmers' families vulnerable if their crops failed or prices for the crop collapsed.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2011310130054>

SEE ALSO: World Food Prize Keynote Address: Howard G. Buffett, *Howard Buffett Foundation, October 12*

[http://www.thehowardgbuffettfoundation.org/wp-](http://www.thehowardgbuffettfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/World_Food_Prize_Howard_G_Buffett_October_12_2011_SPEECH.pdf)

[content/uploads/2011/10/World_Food_Prize_Howard_G_Buffett_October_12_2011_SPEECH.pdf](http://www.thehowardgbuffettfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/World_Food_Prize_Howard_G_Buffett_October_12_2011_SPEECH.pdf)

Let's Make Iowa the Hunger-Fighting Capital of the World, *Opinion, Kenneth Quinn, Des Moines Register, October 9*

Still today, there are far too many people living without enough food. Occasionally, a crisis like those in Cambodia or Ethiopia, or currently the horrific famine in the Horn of Africa, captures our attention. But the work to innovate, to secure food for all people, is an ongoing effort that deserves far more of our regular attention. That is exactly why the World Food Prize was created. The prize was the brainchild of Iowa's greatest hero: Norman E. Borlaug.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2011310090007>

RELEVANT U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Senate and House Agriculture Committees Offer Bipartisan, Bicameral Recommendations for Deficit Reduction to the Joint Committee, *Senate Agriculture Committee, October 17*

Today the leaders of the Senate and House Agriculture Committees sent a letter to the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction recommending a \$23 billion cut to mandatory spending within the committees' jurisdiction.

<http://ag.senate.gov/site/news.html>

SEE ALSO: Ag Committees Pick Number for Budget Cuts, *Agriculture.com, October 17*

Commodity program spending represents less than one quarter of one percent of the Federal Budget, and actual Commodity Title spending has been almost \$25 billion below CBO projections at the time the 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills were passed.

<http://www.agriculture.com/news/policy/ag-committees-pick-number-f-budget-cuts-4-ar19983?print>

Secretary Clinton's Statement on World Food Day, *U.S. Department of State, October 16*

The US will continue to provide food aid during these crisis situations, but long-term solutions to food security must be treated with the same sense of urgency. That's why the Obama Administration started our Feed the Future Initiative. Through it, the US government is working with partner countries, civil society, the private sector, and other stakeholders to improve access and availability to nutritious food. And we are teaching families how to ensure their own food security, so that someday help from donors will no longer be needed.

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2011/10/175567.htm>

Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act of 2012 (H.R. 3159), *U.S. Congress, October 13*

This bill would require the President to establish—and the heads of federal agencies to implement—measurable goals, performance metrics, and monitoring and evaluation plans for all foreign assistance programs. It would bring transparency and accountability to the foreign aid process by requiring agencies to keep the American people informed about where their money is spent and how effective the aid is.
http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=112_cong_bills&docid=f:h3159ih.txt.pdf

Secretary Clinton's Remarks: American Global Leadership at the Center for American Progress, U.S. State Department, October 12

We must resist the temptation to turn inward and undercut our leadership by slashing investments in diplomacy and development, which account, after all, for only 1 percent of the federal budget – a small investment that yields - that yields outsized benefits to the American people. It's important to remember that there are serious international consequences to the decisions we make here in Washington.
<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2011/10/175340.htm>

Opinion / Commentaries:

Commemorating World Food Day 2011, Opinion, Rajiv Shah, USAID Impact Blog, October 16

World Food Day represents our year-round efforts to end hunger, alleviate suffering and expand opportunity across the world. Though the American people will always provide aid in times of urgent need, emergency assistance cannot solve the root causes of hunger, poverty, and undernutrition. The reality is we must do more to prevent these crises in the first place.
<http://blog.usaid.gov/2011/10/commemorating-world-food-day-2011/>

Highlighting the Devastating Crisis in the Horn of Africa, Courtney O'Donnell, White House Blog, October 16

Through the Obama-Biden Administration's Feed the Future program, we have been investing in country-led strategies designed to address the root causes of hunger and food insecurity around the world, so that we can help prevent the kind of suffering we see in Somalia today.
www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2011/10/16/blog-action-day-highlighting-devastating-crisis-horn-africa

Fighting Global Hunger: The Possibilities of Biotechnology, Jose W. Fernandez, State Department Blog, October 14

Government commitment can help leverage private sector investment for the latest scientific innovations and technologies. With the knowledge gained over the past 15 years, it is possible to design appropriate regulatory systems that are responsible and rigorous, but not onerous, therefore requiring modest resources within the means of most developing countries.
http://blogs.state.gov/index.php/site/entry/fighting_hunger_biotechnology

America's Investment in Global Leadership Advances U.S. National Security and Economic Prosperity, Opinion, Thomas Nides, State Department Blog, October 14

Serious cuts to development and diplomacy -- to America's investment in global leadership -- would seriously undermine our long-term national security and economic prosperity. USAID has always been critical to our national security and our economic future. Innovative farming and market techniques and life-saving vaccinations have saved millions of lives, stabilizing the world and helping America's national security.
http://blogs.state.gov/index.php/site/entry/investment_in_global_leadership

New Trade Agreement a Boon for American Agriculture, Opinion, Secretary Tom Vilsack, USDA Blog, October 13

With the President's signature on the ratified South Korea, Colombia and Panama trade agreements, American agriculture will see an additional \$2.3 billion in trade activity, supporting nearly 20,000 American jobs. In fact, economic output is estimated to grow more under the Korea agreement than from our country's last nine trade agreements combined.
<http://blogs.usda.gov/2011/10/13/new-trade-agreements-a-boon-for-american-agriculture/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

2011 Africa Prize for Leadership

Date: October 22, 2011

Location: New York, NY

The Africa Prize honors a distinguished African man or woman who has exhibited exceptional leadership in bringing about the sustainable end of hunger at the national, regional or continent-wide level. The 2011 Annual Fall Event will include the awarding of The Hunger Project's Africa Prize for Leadership for the Sustainable End of Hunger. The laureates for the 2011 Africa Prize for Leadership for the Sustainable End of Hunger: President of Malawi, Bingu wa Mutharika and Liberian Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Florence Chenoweth.

http://www.thp.org/what_we_do/key_initiatives/honoring_africa_leadership/2011

McGovern Leadership Award Ceremony

Date: October 24, 2011

Location: Washington, D.C.

World Food Program USA and the Department of State's Global Partnership Initiative invite you to join WFP USA's Board of Directors and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton for a global hunger conference and presentation of the George McGovern Leadership Award to Howard G. Buffet and Bill Gates for their leadership in addressing global hunger.

www.wfpusa.org

Future-Proof Farming

Date: November 9, 2011

Place: Bibliothèque Solvay, Brussels

Europe's Common Agricultural Policy needs to meet growing challenges that range from food security and safety to ecological sustainability and climate change. Meanwhile, Europe's farmers face a variety of ecological challenges, yet agriculture can contribute much to the creation of an environment-friendly and resource-efficient economy. Representatives from the farming sector will go into discussion with EU policymakers and experts from academic circles and civil society to debate the challenges facing European agriculture, European farmers and the role a reformed CAP should play in solving the world's food challenges.

<http://www.friendsofeurope.org/Contentnavigation/Events/Eventsoverview/tabid/1187/EventType/EventView/EventId/1066/Futureprooffarming.aspx>

Agricultural R&D: Investing in Africa's Future

Date: December 5-7, 2011

Location: Accra, Ghana

ASTI, together with the International Food Policy Report Institute, and the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa, is convening a conference on agricultural R&D in Africa focused on the following themes: 1. Levels and Stability of Agricultural R&D Investments; 2. Human Resource Development of Agricultural R&D; 3. Aligning and Rationalizing Institutional Structures; and 4. Measuring and Improving the Effectiveness of R&D Systems.

<http://www.ifpri.org/event/agricultural-rd-investing-africa-s-future>

World Biofuels Markets

Date: March 13th – 15th, 2012

Location: Rotterdam, The Netherlands

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

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

Jobs, Food & Farming

Date: March 19-21, 2012

Location: Accra, Ghana

The conference will critically examine, from both research and policy perspectives: 1) Dominant and alternative framings and narratives, and recent empirical data, relating to how young people engage with the

agri-food sector in Africa; 2) The dynamics of change in different components of the agri-food sector and the implications of these dynamics for young people; 3) The implications for young people of alternative policy approaches to the development of the agri-food sector. The conference will be co-hosted by the Future Agricultures Consortium based at the Institute of Development Studies and the Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research.

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

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

Media Articles:

The Miracle Food, *Opinion, Mark Moore, Huffington Post, October 16*

The bodies of small children, especially those under the age of six, grow at a rapid rate and require a full complement of basic nutrients to fuel the process. Deny small children the minimum nutrition they need, and they soon fall into a perilous condition known as Severe Acute Malnutrition. For many children, SAM is a death sentence. For others, it's something almost as bad. It's a brain killer.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mark-moore/the-miracle-food_b_1011769.html

All for One Aim: Multi-Pronged Approach to Fight Hunger, *Opinion, Danielle Nierenberg, Huffington Post, October 16*

World Food Day is a global event designed to increase awareness and understanding and to create year-round action to alleviate hunger. Throughout the world, organizations and governments are developing and implementing various plans to stabilize food prices and ensure that there is food on every table.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/danielle-nierenberg/all-for-one-aim-multipron_b_1008858.html

World Food Day: An Opportunity to Pause for Thought, *Opinion, Esther Williams, Huffington Post, October 14*

World Food Day is an opportunity to remind ourselves that no one should have to sit and wait for weeks at a time for food or water. Donor governments must invest in small-scale, sustainable agriculture and diversified livelihoods, aimed at marginal groups, to build their resilience to recurring droughts, volatile food prices and conflict.

http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/esther-williams/world-food-day-an-opportu_b_1010827.html

U.S. Farm Subsidy Reform May be Tied to Budget Cuts, *Reuters, October 13*

U.S. farm subsidy cuts of \$23 billion would be tied to the creation of a new crop subsidy system under a plan being discussed by Agriculture Committee leaders in Congress. The proposal would end the \$5 billion-a-year direct payment subsidy. It would endorse a revenue-assistance program to shield growers from "shallow losses" from poor yields or low market prices as the new basis for the U.S. farm program.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/10/13/usa-agriculture-idUSN1E79C1HW20111013>

Productivity: Investment Focuses on Growing More with Less, *Sarah Murray, Financial Times, October 13*

Achieving faster and cheaper research results in agriculture will be essential in the years to come – the world is playing catch-up when it comes to agricultural research and development. Recent advances in genome sequencing and bioinformatics will make this easier. Genetic engineering is playing an increasingly important role. Globally, 148m hectares, or about 10 percent of crop land, is now planted with GM varieties.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/fb5ea7b8-ef37-11e0-918b-00144feab49a.html>

United States, Canada and Africa; Feed the Future Makes Progress On Food Security, *AllAfrica, October 13*

A key feature of the \$3.5 billion Feed the Future program is working with all sectors of society in its targeted 20 countries to draw up multiyear strategies for achieving sustainable agricultural growth and increased nutritional levels, especially for mothers and their young children said Shrier, who is acting special representative for global food security. Donors also work in partnership with private sector investors.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201110131436.html>

Afghanistan Sees Increase in Poppy Cultivation, *Jack Healy, New York Times, October 11*

Despite increased efforts to destroy fields of opium poppies and wean Afghan farmers off the country's biggest cash crop, poppy cultivation in Afghanistan rose in 2011 and spread into areas once declared "poppy free." The UN drug control agency said that insecurity and soaring opium prices in Afghanistan — the world's largest opium producer — were the driving factors in a 7 percent increase in the amount of land sown with poppies. It was the second year in a row of rising poppy cultivation.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/12/world/asia/un-reports-sharp-rise-in-opium-production-in-afghanistan.html>

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

Media Articles:

How to Save the Innovative Millennium Challenge Corp. Aid Agency, *Opinion, Yaj Kumar and John Hewko, Washington Post, October 16*

Although the MCC model of delivering U.S. aid abroad has been a success in a field sometimes marked by roads to nowhere, the agency is now a takeover target. Some analysts have predicted it will eventually become part of a restructured USAID. So here's a way to give the MCC concept a long-term lease on life: Take the agency out of the U.S. government and transform it into a multilateral agency, an international organization with multiple countries as shareholders.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/how-to-save-the-innovative-millennium-challenge-corp-aid-agency/2011/10/14/gIQA8gzlpL_story.html

The Struggle for Daily Bread, *Opinion, David Rieff, New York Times, October 15*

Although everyone agrees there is a food emergency, there is little agreement on what should be done. The dominant approach championed and to a considerable extent financed by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation holds that the global food crisis is fundamentally the result of both inefficient and insufficient food production. Therefore the solution is what Gordon Conway, the former president of another major philanthropic supporter of this effort, has called "the doubly green revolution."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/15/opinion/15iht-edrieff15.html>

The Self-Inflicted Wound of US Foreign Aid Cuts, *Kevin Gallagher and Katherine Koleski, Guardian, October 14*

Given that China and other emerging markets are ramping up their overseas development assistance, the US should be revamping and increasing aid, not cutting. Obama's new vision for aid started the right conversation; but the budget cutters have muted it. Foreign aid is seldom charity; it is an investment. The US needs to invest in growth and development abroad for our own sake, as well.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2011/oct/14/aid-us-politics>

WHO to Revise Guidance on Food Aid, *Associated Press, October 13*

The new guidelines are likely to make food aid more expensive in the short term, but the improved formulas will be more effective at reducing moderate malnutrition in children under the age of 5. The new guidance will recommend increasing the amount of vitamins and minerals contained in food aid, changing some of the blending techniques, and improving the length of time such products can be stored.

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2011/10/13/world/europe/AP-EU-WHO-Child-Malnutrition.html>

Foreign Aid Advocates Fight Cuts to Programs That 'Save Lives', *Talea Miller, PBS, October 12*

ONE argues that aid cuts on the scale the House is proposing would have a direct negative impact: 1 million more children would be at risk of severe malnourishment, 500,000 people wouldn't be able to start treatment for HIV and more than 200,000 won't get needed malaria nets.

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/2011/10/advocates-for-us-foreign-aid-fight-proposed-cutbacks.html>

New Poll Shows Americans Support U.S. Involvement in United Nations, *National Journal, October 12*

Eighty-six percent of voters believe the U.S. should take an active role within the international body, according to a poll. The poll found that more than two-thirds of voters believe the U.N. still plays an important role in the world today, and that 64 percent support the United States paying its U.N. dues on time and in full. <http://nationaljournal.com/nationalsecurity/new-poll-shows-americans-support-u-s-involvement-in-united-nations-20111012>

SEE ALSO: Complete Survey Result, *Public Opinion Strategies and Hard Research Associates*
http://globalproblems-globalsolutions-files.org/gpgs_files/pdf/bwc/Fall_2011_UNF_Press_Memo.pdf

Benefits of Foreign Aid, *Letter, Ashley Judd, New York Times, October 10*

At less than 1 percent of the federal budget, investments in foreign aid strengthen the United States economy. Nearly 50 percent of American exports go to the developing world. One in three domestic manufacturing jobs depends on these exports.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/11/opinion/from-ashley-judd-the-benefits-of-foreign-aid.html>

No Time to Get Stingy, *Editorial, Carol Giacomo, New York Times, October 8*

At least four critical areas would suffer disproportionately from cuts proposed by the House. The Obama administration opposes those cuts and is seeking limited increases. Food aid, which was \$1.7 billion in 2011, would fall 28 percent to \$1.2 billion in the House plan. Savings squeezed from the State Department and foreign aid — which together are less than a tenth of the basic Pentagon budget — would be a tiny share of the \$3.8 trillion federal budget. Yet the effects would be hugely damaging to American foreign policy.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/09/opinion/sunday/no-time-to-get-stingy-about-foreign-aid.html>

ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

Reports:

Scoring Climate Change Risk, *HSBC Climate Change Global Research, August 2011*

We believe that the climate factor is best seen as a threat multiplier for these underlying stresses. This is not a distant threat but a present reality. Food yields are down because of slow, chronic effects of rising temperatures.

http://www.hsbc.com/1/content/assets/about_hsbc/2011_in_the_future/111013_scoring_climate_change_ri sk.pdf

SEE ALSO: Climate Change: Countries Plan for Unpredictable Weather, *Charis Gresser, Financial Times, October 13*

Taking a view up to 2050, they suggest falls in maize, rice and wheat yields could be 12-13 per cent, increasing pressure on food prices. Understanding the scale of the problem is a first step, even if precise outcomes are uncertain. The next step is planning which projects will have the best shot at mitigating some of the effects of climate change.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/561c5308-ef38-11e0-918b-00144feab49a.html>

Solutions for a Cultivated Planet, *Nature, October 12*

Increasing population and consumption are placing unprecedented demands on agriculture and natural resources. To meet the world's future food security and sustainability needs, food production must grow substantially while, at the same time, agriculture's environmental footprint must shrink dramatically.

<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/nature10452.html>

SEE ALSO: The World Can Feed Itself Without Ruining the Planet, *Christian Science Monitor, October 14*

Recent global population growth estimates plus slowing annual increases in agricultural yields have a lot of analysts worried that many of those new people will suffer from chronic hunger – and that much of the land that hasn't been converted to agriculture will be plowed under to grow crops.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Making-a-difference/Change-Agent/2011/1014/The-world-can-feed-itself-without-ruining-the-planet-study-says>

Media Articles:

Gore Links Climate Change to World's Weather Woes, *USA Today*, October 13

Former Vice President Al Gore linked climate change to a rash of environmental catastrophes Thursday, from floods in Pakistan to drought in Texas and rampant algae blooms sucking oxygen from Lake Erie. Things will get worse unless people reject a campaign of denial orchestrated by the fossil fuel industry and make significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, he said.

<http://www.usatoday.com/weather/climate/globalwarming/story/2011-10-14/gore-climate-change-global-warming-weather-catastrophes/50774114/1>

Climate Change Changes Weather, *Neil Wagner*, *Huffington Post*, October 12

While scientists have traditionally been quick to point out that no single weather event can be attributed to climate change, a growing number have been declaring that climate change is priming the pump, sewing the seeds, greasing the wheels, and laying the groundwork for more extreme weather.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/neil-wagner/climate-change-changes-weather_b_1006530.html

If Kyoto Dies in Durban, It Will be a Death Knell for the Climate Fight, *Kelly Rigg*, *Huffington Post*, October 12

Kyoto's first commitment period finishes at the end of 2012, and the question of whether governments will sign up to a second commitment period is seen by many as the linchpin of the negotiations. If Kyoto's future dies in Durban, it may well be the death knell for an effective, comprehensive, internationally co-ordinated legal response to global climate change in this decade.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/oct/12/kyoto-durban-climate-change>

Water4 Foundation Makes Water Available to Those in Need, *Brad Balfour*, *Huffington Post*, October 10

Richard and Terri Greenly sent teams there to teach villagers how to build wells and gave them kits to build 100 more for their use and as employment. The income from having available water has brought more food and employment. The young girls now go to school instead of walking to the river all day. Not only is Water4 providing clean water to impoverished areas, but by teaching the skills of how to drill, set the pipe, make and install the water pump, the organization is unique in offering self-reliance.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/brad-balfour/water4-foundation_b_1004365.html

Texas Driving its Cattle North Amid Drought, *Molly Hennessy-Fiske*, *Los Angeles Times*, October 8

Managers at Swenson and the state's other large ranches have been scrambling to ship cattle to verdant northern land. The number of breeding cows shipped out of state increased 140% in September compared with the same month last year, with 145,000 cattle exported.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-texas-cattle-20111009,0,1766138.story>

WOMEN & GIRLS

Media Articles:

Newly Trained Midwives Are Saving Lives in Afghanistan, *Guardian*, October 14

It's not surprising Afghanistan has the highest rate of maternal deaths in the world. When World Vision arrived in Ghor province in 2007, there wasn't a single skilled midwife in a province of 800,000 people. Most deaths are preventable. It's down to lack of awareness about basic care, bad diets and women working physically too hard in the fields right up to giving birth.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/poverty-matters/2011/oct/14/midwives-saving-lives-afghanistan>

Ban: More Needed to Sustain Health Effort, *UPI*, October 14

The program, which received more than \$40 billion for its implementation, outlines ways for countries to work together to improve women and children's health and to develop a framework to ensure accountability.

The campaign seeks to save the lives of 16 million women and children and improve the lives of millions more.

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2011/10/14/Ban-More-needed-to-sustain-health-effort/UPI-55341318584584/

Women and Men in Partnership: Eradicating Gender Violence, *Huffington Post, October 13*

Girls are being punished simply for being girls. They are sexually violated, forced into marriages as young children, trafficked as sex slaves, denied access to education, denied access to health services, and denied access to economic opportunity. If we can work together on these things as human beings on the same team, we have a lot to look forward to.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tabby-biddle/sexual-violence-b_1006378.html

The Rape of Somalia's Women is Being Ignored, *Opinion, Lisa Shannon, Guardian, October 11*

The crisis in the Horn of Africa is a women's famine. Women face the daily battle for survival without husbands or male providers, who have died, left with the herds or simply abandoned their families. Women travel hundreds of kilometres with their children. They make do in al-Shabaab controlled camps, facing alone what aid workers describe as "the extreme vulnerability of displacement and loss of livelihoods".

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/oct/11/rape-somalia-women-famine>

Fighting Women's Cancer, *Editorial, VOA News, October 11*

As Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said, "If we want to make progress on some of the toughest challenges we face in global health - fighting HIV, preventing childhood deaths, improving nutrition, stopping malaria, and more - then investing in women must be at the top of the agenda." In the developing world, women's cancers are often neglected and associated with stigma that discourages women from seeing a doctor.

<http://www.voanews.com/policy/editorials/Fighting-Womens-Cancer-131539868.html>

Nuts and Bits, *Economist, October 7*

A red-and-white steel tower, the ubiquitous sign of Africa's leap into the mobile-phone age, rises above the homes of mud and thatch, breeze-block and corrugated metal. Its women have been gathering shea nuts from the bush for generations. It is dangerous work. But they are an essential source of income. A combination of smartphones, business software and microfinance may make the women's lot a little less hard.

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/baobab/2011/10/smartphones-africa>

MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

Reports:

Agrochemicals, *Agranova, October 2011*

The Executive Review presents a comprehensive overview of the industry worldwide, profiling companies, products and markets.

<http://www.agranova.co.uk/pdf/AWA.pdf>

SEE ALSO: Agrochemicals: Innovation has Slowed Since Golden Age of the 1990s, *Clive Cookson, Financial Times, October 13*

Chemistry – and in particular the pesticides and fertilizers it has produced – is one of the three pillars on which the past century's fantastic increase in agricultural productivity has been built. The other two are biology.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/257a8ae0-e9d3-11e0-bb3e-00144feab49a.html>

The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2011, *FAO, October 2011*

This year's report focuses on the costs of food price volatility, as well as the dangers and opportunities presented by high food prices. Climate change and an increased frequency of weather shocks, increased linkages between energy and agricultural markets due to growing demand for biofuels, and increased financialization of food and agricultural commodities all suggest that price volatility is here to stay.

<http://www.fao.org/publications/sofi/en/>

SEE ALSO: UN says Food Prices to Remain High, *Financial Times*, October 10

The jump in prices for grain and other staples led to riots during the 2007-08 food crisis and more recently central banks in Asia have tightened monetary policy to combat food inflation.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/d1ad660c-f329-11e0-8383-00144feab49a.html>

Media Articles:

India Minister: Raising Output Only Solution to Ease Prices, *Wall Street Journal*, October 17

Boosting India's farm output on a sustainable basis is the only long-term solution to address supply constraints and cool high commodity prices that have often hurt economic growth, Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee said. Costly food prices, despite good rainfall in the past two years, and rapidly intensifying price pressures in non-food commodities have led to a persistent inflationary crisis in Asia's third-largest economy.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204346104576636181348075362.html>

That Crooked Carrot is also Food, *Asit K. Biswas and Leong Ching*, *New York Times*, October 14

Last year, more than 925 million people — or nearly 1 in 7 people in the world — were undernourished. The fact is that the world could feed itself, both now and in 2050. The problem is not that the world grows too little food; there is plenty of food overall. The problem is that while there is too much food in some places and not enough in others, everywhere food is wasted. Each year, 1.3 billion tons of food is lost worldwide.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/15/opinion/15iht-edbiswas15.html?ref=agriculture>

Anchoring Land Rights in China, *Opinion*, *Tim Hanstad*, *Wall Street Journal*, October 14

Property rights for China's farmers are still lacking for three key reasons. Only about half of China's farmers have received the key legal documents formalizing their 30-year rights. Farmers' land rights are not adequately protected against local government takings. And women's land rights are rarely formalized or documented at all.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203914304576628531046951922.html>

Oil and Gas: Link between Fuel and Crop Prices Grows Stronger, *Javier Blas*, *Financial Times*, October 13

In short, high oil prices translate into high food prices. The development of the biofuel industry has further strengthened the link between energy prices and agricultural commodity costs: consumption of maize — which is used to produce ethanol — also rises as oil prices rise.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/6efc4118-f333-11e0-8383-00144feab49a.html>

EU Proposes New Limits on Farm Subsidies, *Wall Street Journal*, October 13

The EC released its proposals to limit subsidies for big farms and oblige them to set aside more land for preservation, as part of an effort to rein in spending. Figuring prominently is a proposal to cap payments at €300,000 (\$409,170) a year for each farm, which would save €2.5 billion a year on direct subsidies. The commission also wants to make a third of direct payments contingent on farmers following new rules on protecting the environment.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204002304576626681429217962.html>

SEE ALSO: CAP Reform – An Explanation of the Main Elements, *Europa*, October 12

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/11/685&format=HTML>

SEE ALSO: Executive Summary of the Impact Assessment, *Europa*, October 12

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/analysis/perspec/cap-2020/impact-assessment/summary_en.pdf

SEE ALSO: E.U. Proposes Major Changes to Farm Supports, *David Jolly*, *New York Times*, October 12

European Union officials proposed major changes to its expensive and contentious system of farm supports, calling for a cap on the amount that individual farms can receive and toughening environmental standards, but leaving the overall budget of the program unchanged.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/13/business/global/eu-proposes-major-changes-to-farm-supports.html>

Global Policy: G20 has not Delivered on Promises to Help Poorest, *Javier Blas*, *Financial Times*, October 13

NGOs and experts say the group has so far side-stepped the most contentious issues — including biofuel subsidies and export bans on agricultural commodities — as a deep split hampers efforts to reach a broad

agreement. Moreover, G20 countries are not delivering on their promises of billions of dollars in grants and credits to boost agriculture, particularly in poor African countries, as the economic crisis bites. Yet, despite the lack of recent progress, food security is now at the top of the global agenda.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/4f3700de-f00e-11e0-bc9d-00144feab49a.html>

Prices: Market Forces May Have the Effect of Stifling Supply, *Opinion, Gregory Meyer, Financial Times, October 13*

The FAO's food price index peaked in February and is 15 percent higher than a year ago. Food inflation has become a serious concern for central bankers, pushing up interest rates in emerging economies from India to Brazil. With the world population and incomes rising, food commodity markets may remain vulnerable to big swings in the months ahead. Despite slowing maize demand in the US, the Department of Agriculture still predicts domestic stocks falling to uncomfortably low levels by the middle of next year.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/2d4ca1fa-eedc-11e0-959a-00144feab49a.html>

Congress Passes 3 Free Trade Agreements, *Jim Abrams, Associated Press, October 12*

Congress approved free trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia and Panama. In rapid succession, the House and Senate voted on the three trade pacts, which the administration says could boost exports by \$13 billion and support tens of thousands of American jobs.

<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,2096792,00.html#ixzz1ah8zm7u8>

SEE ALSO: Congress OKs 3 Trade Deals, *Politico, October 12*

White House estimates show that the deals could bolster Americans exports to those countries by at least \$13 billion and the International Trade Commission says they could create 250,000 in the US.

<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1011/65816.html>

SEE ALSO: Trade Deals: Three Big Winners from America's New Free-Trade Agreements, *Ron Scherer, Christian Science Monitor, October 13*

With US imports vastly outweighing exports in recent years, free trade with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama is seen as one modest attempt to redress the imbalance, with farmers and the auto industry perhaps the biggest winners.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/Business/2011/1013/Trade-deals-three-big-winners-from-America-s-new-free-trade-agreements>

'Endless Appetites' Explores Market Connection to Global Food Production, *Hagstrom Report, October 12*

Alan Bjerga, who grew up on a sheep farm in Minnesota, wrote the book after five years of reporting on agriculture developments in Washington and traveling throughout the US and developing countries. His theme is that while weather problems, rising prices and speculation in the last few years have turned the distribution of food around the world into a gambling proposition, there is enough food grown today to feed the world, and there will continue to be if markets work for farmers to encourage production.

www.hagstromreport.com

SEE ALSO: Endless Appetites: How the Commodities Casino Creates Hunger and Unrest

http://www.amazon.com/Endless-Appetites-Commodities-Creates-Bloomberg/dp/1118043235/ref=ntt_at_ep_dpt_1/180-6883163-9849302

Five-Point Action Plan on Food Prices, *WFP, October 11*

WFP has drawn up a 5-point action plan to help countries to cope with rising food prices and to address the challenges of providing a stable food supply for the most vulnerable populations. Here are five actions that could help countries to cope with rising food prices and to address the challenges of providing a stable food supply for the most vulnerable populations.

<http://usa.wfp.org/news-story/five-point-action-plan-food-prices>

The Political Economy of Corn, *Economist, October 10*

The "Planet Money" presenters, Robert Smith and Dan Charles, cite three "global economic forces" that have pushed up land prices here in Iowa. Since there's not yet a transcript, here's my paraphrase:

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/democracynamerica/2011/10/iowa-land-boom>

SEE ALSO: The Land Boom, *NPR*, October 4

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/money/2011/10/04/141053761/the-tuesday-podcast-the-land-boom?ft=1&f=93559255>

AGRIBUSINESS

Media Articles:

Syngenta Predicts 'Substantial' Gain in Full-Year Revenue, *Bloomberg News*, October 14

Syngenta AG forecast full-year revenue will rise “substantially” as the world’s largest maker of agricultural chemicals sees no drop-off in orders. Farmers, especially in Latin America, are benefiting from higher crop prices, helping Syngenta pass on the price increases needed to improve margins and offset raw-material costs, Ramsay said by phone. The company aims to gain market share as it reorganizes its business by integrating its crop-protection and seed units.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-10-14/syngenta-expects-substantial-increase-in-full-year-revenue.html>

DuPont and 4-H Announce Youth Development Initiative for Rural Africa, *DuPont*, October 11

DuPont’s commitment of up to \$2 million over the next two years will allow the global 4-H network to help African youth create sustainable livelihoods and improve household and national food security for people across the continent. The global 4-H network will train African-based 4-H leaders and mentors about agricultural innovation and farming practices.

http://us.vocuspr.com/Newsroom/Query.aspx?SiteName=DupontNew&Entity=PRAsset&SF_PRAsset_PRASetID_EQ=121806&XSL=PressRelease&Cache=False

Banner Photograph: © Ray Witlin / World Bank