

GLOBAL FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE WEEKLY NEWS BRIEF OF THE GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



September 3rd – 11th 2009

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KEY ARTICLES

Lush Land Dries Up, Withering Kenya's Hopes, *New York Times*, Sept. 7

A devastating drought is sweeping across Kenya, killing livestock, crops and children. It is stirring up tensions in the ramshackle slums where the water taps have run dry, and spawning ethnic conflict in the hinterland as communities fight over the last remaining pieces of fertile grazing land.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/08/world/africa/08kenya.html>

Drought Puts Focus on a Side of India Left Out of Progress, *New York Times*, Sept. 4

India's new economy may be based on software, services and high technology, but hundreds of millions of Indians still look to the sky for their livelihoods; more than half the country's 1.1 billion people depend on agriculture for a living even though agriculture represents only about 17 percent of the total economy. No one thinks India is facing the type of famines that struck it decades ago; government grain stocks can replenish any shortfalls. But the drought has focused attention, again, on the problems facing Indian agriculture as the population continues to expand at the same time that water resources come under greater pressure.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/05/world/asia/05drought.html>

Trade Talks to Resume, but Divides Remain, *New York Times*, Sept. 4

After two days of meetings in the Indian capital about how to restart the trade talks known as the Doha Development Round next year, trade ministers said they were committed to reaching a deal in 2010. But the tenor and substance of their comments suggested that few are willing to soften their stances. A deal would involve rich countries opening their markets for farm produce and cutting subsidies for agriculture. In return, the wealthier developing countries, like India and Brazil, would lower industrial tariffs. Advocates say this would help lift poorer countries out of poverty by increasing global trade.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/05/business/global/05trade.html>

See Also: Farmers take to streets as Doha trade talks start in India, Christian Science Monitor, Sept. 3

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2009/0903/p06s16-wosc.html>

India's water crisis: When the rains fall, Economist, Sept. 10

Around 450m Indians live off rain-fed agriculture, and this year's monsoon rains, which between June and September provide 80% of India's precipitation, have been the scantiest in decades. Almost half India's 604 districts are affected by drought, especially in the poorest and most populous states—such as Bihar, which has declared drought in 26 of its 38 districts.

http://www.economist.com/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14401149&fsrc=rss

See Also: About half of Indian districts face drought, Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN, Sept. 8

<http://www.fao.org/giews/english/shortnews/india080909.htm>

The Afghanistan Abyss, Nicholas Kristof, New York Times, Sept. 6

We must invest more in education and agriculture development, for that is a way over time to peel Pashtuns away from the Taliban.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/06/opinion/06kristof.html>

A green deal for rich and poor nations, Helen Clark (head of UN Development Programme), The Guardian, Sept. 8

The UN climate change summit must not only seek to protect the planet but fight poverty as well.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cif-green/2009/sep/08/climate-change-developing-world-copenhagen>

RELEVANT U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Global Warming Legislation: Carbon Markets and Producer Groups, Hearing before the United States Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, Sept. 9

Hon. Gary Gensler, Chairman, U.S. Commodities Futures Trading Commission:

http://216.40.253.202/~usscanf/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=132

Timothy Profeta, Director, Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions, Duke University:

http://216.40.253.202/~usscanf/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=120

Joseph R. Glace, Vice President for Risk Management and Chief Risk Officer, Exelon Corporation:

http://216.40.253.202/~usscanf/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=118

Dr. Dave Miller, Chief Science Officer AgraGate; Research & Commodity Services Director, Iowa Farm Bureau:

http://216.40.253.202/~usscanf/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=119

Julie Winkler, Managing Director, Research and Product Development, CME Group, & Member of the Board of Directors, Green Exchange LLC:

http://216.40.253.202/~usscanf/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=122

Fred Yoder, past President of National Corn Growers Association:

http://216.40.253.202/~usscanf/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=123

Luke Brubaker, Brubaker Farms:

http://216.40.253.202/~usscanf/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=117

Frank Rehmann, Chairman, USA Rice Producers' Group:

http://216.40.253.202/~usscanf/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=121

Andy Beckstoffer, Chairman and CEO, Beckstoffer Vineyards:

http://216.40.253.202/~usscanf/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=116

Waiting for the other shoe to drop, *The Economist*, Sept. 10

The Waxman-Markey bill, a proposal to create a cap-and-trade mechanism for carbon dioxide that cleared the House of Representatives in June still faces an uphill climb in the Senate, which resumed work on September 8th.

http://www.economist.com/world/unitedstates/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14419395

NEW REPORTS/POLICY BRIEFS/BOOKS

Trade and Development Report 2009, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*, September 2009

In the current dramatic crisis situation, low-income countries require more support in the form of an internationally coordinated effort to increase official development assistance (ODA). In addition, a temporary moratorium on these countries' debt owed to official creditors would help them better to maintain needed levels of public expenditure and imports. This would not only help beneficiary countries and their populations overcome the crisis, but would provide a countercyclical stimulus that could help spur global demand.

http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/tdr2009_en.pdf

Impact of Water User Associations on Agricultural Productivity in Chile, *International Food Policy Research Institute*, August 2009

This article uses combined household- and community-level data collected from the Maule Region (VII) of Chile to evaluate factors affecting the decision to participate in yearly irrigation maintenance activities, and the influence of current behavior on farm revenues.

<http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ifpridp00892.pdf>

India's Sanitation for All: How to Make It Happen, *Asian Development Bank*, September 2009

Providing environmentally safe sanitation to millions of people is a significant challenge. The task is doubly difficult in a country where the introduction of new technologies can challenge people's traditions and beliefs. This report examines the current state of sanitation services in India and offers six recommendations that can help key stakeholders work toward universal sanitation coverage in India: scaling up pro-poor sanitation programs, customizing investments, exploring cost-effective options, applying proper planning and sequencing, adopting community-based solutions, and forging innovative partnerships.

http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Water_for_All_Series/Indian-Sanitation/Indian-Sanitation.pdf

A clash of principles? Humanitarian action and the search for stability in Pakistan, *Overseas Development Institute*, September 2009

The brief asks whether aid agencies should restrict themselves to a relatively limited role in an effort to ensure principled humanitarian action, or whether they should compromise their principles in an effort to achieve greater humanitarian outcomes within broader political and security agendas.

<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/3765.pdf>

Three ways the G20 could deliver up to \$280 billion for poor countries, *Oxfam GB*, September 2009

This weekend the finance ministers of the G20 nations will meet in London. Whilst the rich world feels that the worst of the economic crisis may be behind it, the poorest countries are being hit hardest, with those living on the margins of the global economy paying the most.

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/debt_aid/downloads/money-for-nothing-g20.pdf

Revising the roads investment strategy in rural areas: an application for Uganda, *The World Bank*, September 2009

Taking into account the fact that plot size is limited on average to less than 1 hectare, a farmer's transport requirement is usually minimal and does not necessarily involve massive investments in infrastructure. This is because most farmers cannot fully load a truck or pay for this service and, even if productivity were to increase significantly, the production threshold would not be reached by most individual farmers. Therefore, in terms of public policy, maintenance of the existing rural roads rather than opening new roads should be given priority.

<http://www->

[wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/09/01/000158349_20090901135551/Rendered/PDF/WPS5036.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/09/01/000158349_20090901135551/Rendered/PDF/WPS5036.pdf)

The Impacts of Increased Minimum Support Prices in India on World and U.S. Cotton Markets, *Texas Tech University, Department of Agriculture and Applied Economics, August 2009*

Domestic subsidies for cotton and other commodities have been a major topic of interest, especially during the Doha Round of the World Trade Organization trade negotiations. Many developing countries have insisted that domestic subsidies in countries like the United States represent significant trade barriers because they lower world price below their cost of production. India, Brazil, and other developing countries intimate that unless these domestic subsidies are lowered, they are unwilling to provide any more market access concessions in trade negotiations. However, these countries utilize domestic subsidy programs as well. India, for example, uses a minimum support price (MSP) program, which is similar to the U.S. Commodity Credit Corporation non-recourse loan program.

http://www.aaec.ttu.edu/ceri/Published%20Papers/Br.Papers/india_msp.pdf

See Also: India Cotton Exports May Double Next Year, Group Says, Bloomberg, Sept. 7

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601091&sid=a1Bk0udtMVJU>

UPCOMING EVENTS

International ISHS/ProMusa Symposium Global Perspectives on Asian Challenges

Date: September 14-18, 2009

Location: Guang Dong, China,

ProMusa, in collaboration with the Guang Dong Academy for Agricultural Sciences (GDAAS), the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS) and Bioversity's Banana and Plantain Regional Network for Asia and the Pacific (BAPNET), has announced the "International Banana Symposium: Global Perspectives on Asian Challenges."

http://www.promusa.org/symposium_2009/home.html

http://www.farmpolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/fischerboel-hill-event_may-06-09-invite-final-3.pdf

Fifth Annual Meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI)

Date: September 22-25, 2009

Location: Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers, New York, NY

The following are among those who have confirmed their attendance at the 2009 CGI Annual Meeting: 35 current and former heads of state, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Larry Summers, Valerie Jarrett, Lloyd Blankfein of Goldman Sachs, Angela Braley of WellPoint, John Chambers of Cisco, James Dimon of JP Morgan Chase & Co., Mike Duke of Wal-Mart, Carlos Ghosn of Nissan Motor, Muhtar Kent of The Coca-Cola Company, Jack Ma of Alibaba Group, Indra Nooyi of PepsiCo, Inc., and Carlos Slim Helú of Grupo Carso S.A. de C.V. For the Fifth Annual Meeting, CGI is introducing four new Action Areas – points of collaboration and intervention – that will guide CGI's program. The 2009 Action Areas are: Harnessing Innovation for Development; Strengthening Infrastructure; Developing Human Capital; Financing a Sustainable Future.

Agenda: <http://www.clintonglobalinitiative.org/Document.Doc?id=460>

UN General Assembly Meeting

Date: September 23-30, 2009

Location: New York, NY

President Obama scheduled to address the assembly on September 23.

For a preliminary outline of agenda items, see

http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/64/50.

For the Assembly's "Resolution on Agriculture and Food Security," developed March 17, 2009, see

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/484/89/PDF/N0848489.pdf?OpenElement>

G-20 Summit

Date: September 24-25, 2009

Location: Pittsburgh, PA

<http://www.pittsburghsummit.gov/>

7th Biennial U.S.-Africa Business Summit: Realizing the Investment Power of Africa

Date: September 29 – October 1, 2009

Location: Washington, D.C.

In addition to an agribusiness plenary, participants will have the opportunity to attend more than 50 industry-specific sessions and workshops on other promising sectors in Africa, including infrastructure, natural resources, health, financing, power, social responsibility and tourism.

Agriculture for Development and Food Security in the Americas

Date: October 1, 2009

Location: Washington, DC

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the Organization of American States (OAS) are organizing a high level Food Security Conference on food security in the Americas. The conference will be an opportunity to follow up on the agreements reached at the Fifth Summit of the Americas, in advance of the Week of Agriculture and Rural Life, to be held in Jamaica (October 25-31).

Annual Meeting of the World Bank and IMF

Date: October 6-7, 2009

Location: Istanbul, Turkey

<http://www.imf.org/external/am/2009/schedule.htm>

How to Feed the World in 2050 High-Level Expert Forum

Date: October 12-13, 2009

Location: Rome, Italy

<http://www.fao.org/wsfs/forum2050/about-the-forum/en/>

2009 World Food Prize and "Borlaug Dialogue" Symposium: Food, Agriculture, and National Security

***Date:* October 14-16, 2009**

***Location:* Des Moines, IA**

The formal awarding of the \$250,000 World Food Prize will be the cornerstone of a week-long series of events that will attract several hundred government officials and policymakers, private-sector and agribusiness executives, academics and scientists, and NGO and development-agency leaders from over 65 countries. The "conversations" of the annual Norman E. Borlaug International Symposium will this year focus on the connection between food and agriculture and national and international security and cooperation, with speakers including renowned global CEOs, agricultural ministers and diplomats, noted intelligence and security experts, and other eminent leaders in agricultural and rural development.

SPEAKERS INCLUDE: [Bill Gates](#) (Co-Chair, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation); [Tom Vilsack](#) (Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture); [Alonzo Fulgham](#) (Acting Administrator, United States Agency for International Development); [Indra Nooyi](#) (Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, PepsiCo); [Patricia Woertz](#) (Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer, Archer Daniels Midland Company); [Jeffrey Sachs](#) (Director, The Earth Institute at Columbia University); [Namanga Ngongi](#) (President, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa); [Joachim von Braun](#) (Director General, The International Food Policy Research Institute); [Catherine Bertini](#) (Professor, The Maxwell School, Syracuse University; 2003 World Food Prize Laureate); [Per Pinstrup-Andersen](#) (H.E. Babcock Professor of Food, Nutrition and Public Policy, Cornell University; 2001 World Food Prize Laureate); [Richard Williamson](#) (Partner, Winston & Strawn LLP; Former U.S. Special Envoy for Sudan)

Agenda: <http://www.worldfoodprize.org/symposium/2009/agenda.htm>
Register Now: <http://www.worldfoodprize.org/Registration/2009/09Registration.htm>
Speaker's Biographies: <http://www.worldfoodprize.org/symposium/2009/speakers.htm>

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

Guatemala declares calamity as food crisis grows, CNN, Sept. 9

The United Nations' World Food Programme says Guatemala has the fourth highest rate of chronic malnutrition in the world and the highest in Latin America and the Caribbean. Chronic undernutrition affects about half of the nation's children under the age of 5, the U.N. agency said. Colom said the nation's food problems are the result of a drought this year, global warming and the effects of the international economic crisis.

http://www.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/americas/09/09/guatemala.calamity/index.html?eref=rss_world

Africa: Soybean, the Golden Seed for Wealth and Health, AllAfrica.com, Sept. 9

Scientists are urging farmers to cultivate and incorporate soybean into their local diets for improved nutrition and to generate income. <http://allafrica.com/stories/200909090660.html>

Qatar claims to have a new approach in its quest for food security, The Economist, Sept. 8

The Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) has launched a venture aiming to invest in food production worldwide. The Qatari initiative claims to be distinct from similar moves by other Gulf Arab states in that it is focused on the acquisition and development of existing agribusiness companies rather than involving the lease of large tracts of farmland.

http://www.economist.com/daily/news/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14349499

Feeding the world: which countries are most at risk?, Agence France-Presse, Sept. 7

Most of sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia are facing extreme or high risk of food shortages, according to a ranking of 148 nations.

http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jTATVs8p4_NMlsJf-gD424K2YNbA

Farmers face animal feed shortage, Financial Times, Sept. 7

Farmers face an imminent shortage of animal feed because a handful of countries are blocking the approval of genetically modified crops, the European Union's farm chief warned.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/6983a01a-9bd7-11de-b214-00144feabdc0.html>

Africa: 'Africa Records 18 Percent Increase in Rice Production', *AllAfrica.com, Sept. 4*

Africa recorded 18 per cent increase in rice production in 2008 due to the adoption of key policy measures recommended by the Africa Rice Centre (WARDA) in 2007 to support the sector.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200909040397.html>

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

Donors grant Burundi \$31.6 million for farm projects, *Reuters, Sept. 10*

The European Union and International Fund for Agricultural Development have donated \$31.6 million to Burundi to support farmers in poor rural areas.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSLA384358>

US Clears Way for More Humanitarian Aid to Parts of Sudan, *Voice of America, Sept. 10*

The United States has amended the regulations for its sanctions against Sudan, allowing for more humanitarian assistance.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/Africa/2009-09-10-voa28.cfm>

Bill Clinton chides nations over help for Haiti, *Associated Press, Sept. 9*

Former U.S. President Bill Clinton reprimanded wealthy nations Wednesday for coughing up just 3 percent so far of the hundreds of millions of dollars in aid they had promised for Haiti.

<http://www.realclearworld.com/news/ap/international/2009/Sep/09/bill-clinton-chides-nations-over-help-for-haiti.html>

25 Years After Band Aid, Diminished Foreign Aid and Drought Threaten Ethiopia's Food Security, *Chloe Malle, Huffington Post, Sept. 8*

International aid agencies predict this winter may bring the worst food crisis to Ethiopia since the infamous famine of 1984-85. Famine forecasts are predicated upon the combination of erratic climate behavior -- an effect of global warming -- and this year's decrease in aid from donor countries.

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/chloe-malle/25-years-after-band-aid-d b 279249.html>

Senegal wins \$540 million U.S. aid over 5 years, *Reuters, Sept. 7*

The Board of Directors of the U.S. Government's Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) has approved a five-year, \$540 million compact with the Republic of Senegal aimed at reducing poverty and investing in economic growth.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSL718119>

See Also: Senegal and MCC: Unlocking Economic Growth and Agriculture Productivity through Poverty Reduction, Millennium Challenge Corporation, September 2009

<http://www.mcc.gov/mcc/bm.doc/factsheet-090709-senegal.pdf>

ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

U.S. must lead at G20 on climate, says group, *Reuters, Sept. 11*

The G20 should call on the World Bank and other development institutions to develop innovative risk management tools for poor countries, including insurance against natural disasters and bonds indexed to terms of trade, said Nancy Birdsall, president of the Washington-based Center for Global Development.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-GreenBusiness/idUSTRE58A0DE20090911>

See Also: Still No Money for Developing Nations, New G-20 Documents Show, The New York Times, Sept. 11

<http://www.nytimes.com/cwire/2009/09/11/11climawire-still-no-money-for-developing-nations-new-g-20933.html>

Europe Tamps Down Expectations on Climate Funds, *New York Times*, Sept. 10

The European Union's commissioner for the environment sought Thursday to tamp down expectations that wealthy nations would immediately hand over vast sums of money demanded by developing countries to manage global warming.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/11/world/europe/11iht-climate.html>

See Also: **EU sets out €15bn climate aid plan**, *Financial Times*, Sept. 8

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/bfe71868-9ca6-11de-ab58-00144feabdc0.html>

Poor Indian monsoon triggers rice price fears, *Financial Times*, Sept. 9

Rice importers in countries from the Philippines to Iran and South Africa are watching the market for fear that a poor monsoon in India, the world's second largest producer, could push prices higher.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/630dd7c0-9d51-11de-9f4a-00144feabdc0.html>

Developing World's Energy Needs Set Stage for Fight, *Washington Post*, Sept. 8

Developing nations' urgent need for more energy has become a central issue this year as developed countries -- including the United States -- push for a global reduction in carbon emissions ahead of a climate change conference scheduled for December in Copenhagen. Many African, Latin American and Asian countries want to avoid legally binding limits on greenhouse gas emissions, blamed for global warming.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/08/AR2009090804019.html?hpid=topnews)

[dyn/content/article/2009/09/08/AR2009090804019.html?hpid=topnews](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/08/AR2009090804019.html?hpid=topnews)

Climate change experts must remember Africa and agriculture, *The Guardian*, Sept. 7

When Africans arrive in Copenhagen later this year, they will have one important message to deliver to their peers: a climate change deal without agriculture is no deal for Africa.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/katineblog/2009/sep/07/livelihoods-international-aid-and-development>

Israel, Jordan Find Accord in Finding New Water Supplies, *Washington Post*, Sept. 5

Controversial Projects Include Network Linking the Dead Sea and the Red Sea - AMMAN, Jordan -- An acute water shortage has prompted Jordan and Israel to embark on audacious water-supply projects that supporters say will prevent an impending regional crisis but environmentalists have criticized as ill-advised attempts to rewire nature.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/04/AR2009090403775.html>

Widen global warming fight beyond CO2: U.N., *Reuters*, Sept. 4

The world should widen a fight against global warming by curbing a string of pollutants other than carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas, according to the U.N. Environment Programme.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-GreenBusiness/idUSL449824520090904>

Can Dirt Really Save Us From Global Warming?, *NPR*, September 3

This month the Senate is set to take up the climate and energy bill that Congress began work on last spring. One provision will likely set up a system to pay farmers for something called "no-till farming." The concept: When crops are planted without tilling, the soil holds more carbon, which means less goes up into the atmosphere. But scientists aren't sure no-till really sequesters carbon any better than conventional farming.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=112496096>

Lamy fears spillover between climate and trade talks, *Financial Times*, Sept. 3

Failure to find agreement at United Nations climate change talks in Copenhagen in December would threaten a much needed overhaul of the international trading system, Pascal Lamy, head of the World Trade Organization, warned on Thursday.

http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/8e32f0ba-98a7-11de-aa1b-00144feabdc0.s01=1.html?nclick_check=1

Warmest Arctic temperatures for 2,000 years, says new study, CNN, Sept. 3

Arctic temperatures in the 1990s reached their warmest level of any decade in at least 2,000 years, new research indicates. Arctic warming will exceed temperature increases in the rest of the Northern Hemisphere.
<http://www.cnn.com/2009/TECH/science/09/03/arctic.warmest.temperatures/index.html>

GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

Outstripped, Economist, Sept. 9

Sub-Saharan Africa is tending to fall behind other regions in terms of competitiveness. Human capital deficiencies—whether in terms of education or health—infrastructure and high crime levels tend to be deterrents as far as investors are concerned. Sub-Saharan economies have become more competitive in the past year, according to the World Economic Forum (WEF)'s Global Competitiveness Report.

http://www.economist.com/daily/news/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14349502

African Entrepreneurs, New York Times, Sept. 8

The problems facing developing countries, in Africa and elsewhere, are overwhelming in their magnitude and complexity. From HIV/AIDS to widespread corruption and poverty, obstacles to economic development are occupying some of the world's brightest minds. The three individuals profiled below are tackling Africa's most trenchant problems in vastly different ways but with a common goal: to create a new development paradigm for the continent.

<http://freakonomics.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/09/08/african-entrepreneurs/>

WOMEN

Rural Women Farmers Trained in Mechanized Production, Daily Observer (Liberia), Sept. 10

The Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in collaboration with several major donors as well as support partners, have begun the training for more than 74 women farmer groups in three of Liberia's leading agriculture-oriented counties.

<http://www.liberianobserver.com/node/1413>

MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

The Beginning of the Endgame of the Doha Round, Speech by World Trade Organization Director-General Pascal Lamy to the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), September 2009

Director-General Pascal Lamy said the most efficient means for countries to deal with the economic crisis "remains the multilateral Doha Development Round". He said the meeting of a group of WTO Ministers "will have the opportunity to map out how they intend to bring the Doha Round to a closure in 2010".

http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/sppl_e/sppl133_e.htm

See Also: Lamy fears spillover between climate and trade talks, Financial Times, September 3

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/8e32f0ba-98a7-11de-aa1b-00144feabdc0.s01=1.html>

Ghana: Africa to Become Net Exporter of Rice as Ghana, Other Double Output, Accra Mail (Ghana), Sept. 5

Ghana and other rice-producing countries such as Mali, Benin, Ivory Coast, Uganda and Nigeria recorded double-digit growths within the last year.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200909050009.html>

Leasing out land and food security, Editorial, The News (Pakistan), September 4

It is common knowledge that growing populations, sprawling urban areas that eat up valuable agricultural land, water shortages and climate change mean that the availability of food is becoming a political reality. Rich but arid Arab states are, for obvious reasons, looking outside their borders for opportunities to secure their future food requirements.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/print1.asp?id=196478>

AGRIBUSINESS

Africa: US Aid to Sponsor U.S.-Africa Business Summit, *AllAfrica.com*, Sept. 11

According to the president and CEO of Corporate Council on Africa, Stephen Hayes, "USAID has continued to be a valued partner for CCA, having supported the past three U.S-Africa Business Summits, particularly in agribusiness, adding that USAID spearheaded initiatives crucially needed to grow Africa's agricultural sector. He said the agribusiness track would give insight into investment opportunities in Africa's agricultural industry, including the plenary session titled 'Improving African Agricultural Value-Chains'.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200909110281.html>

Rs24bn agriculture development plan, *Dawn.com (Pakistan)*, Sept. 11

An amount of Rs24 billion would be invested in rural Sindh on agriculture, agri-business and food supply chain.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/business/13+rs24bn+agriculture+development+plan-za-03>

See Also: Ghana: Africa to Become Net Exporter of Rice as Ghana, Other Double Output, *Accra Mail (Ghana)*, Sept. 5 Ghana and other rice-producing countries such as Mali, Benin, Ivory Coast, Uganda and Nigeria recorded double-digit growths within the last year.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200909050009.html>

Biotech Foods Are Safe, *Letter to the Editor*, *New York Times*, Sept. 3

Plants derived from agricultural biotechnology undergo stringent reviews by three federal agencies — the Food and Drug Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Agriculture — and all commercialized agricultural biotechnology products are safe.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/04/opinion/04biotech.html>

Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture launches Syngenta and CIMMYT wheat Ug99 stem rust resistance research partnership, *Press Release*, August 2009

Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture (SFSA) today announced a two-year public-private partnership between Syngenta, the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) and SFSA to rapidly identify and map genetic markers for use in wheat resistance breeding against Ug99 stem rust, a fungal disease which can cause devastating crop losses.

<http://www.cimmyt.org/english/wps/media/syngcimUG99.pdf>

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