

Global Food for Thought



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August 25-September 7, 2017

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KEY ARTICLES

[Administrator Green Announces next Phase of Feed the Future on First International Trip](#), *USAID, August 31*

USAID has announced its selection of 12 target countries for the next phase in America's global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future: Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, Kenya, Mali, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Uganda. With the selection of these 12 countries, the second phase of Feed the Future will be focusing its efforts on promoting long-term, sustainable development that brings partners together to help people harness the power of smart agriculture to jumpstart their local economies and lift themselves out of poverty.

[Three Things to Watch at the African Green Revolution Forum](#), *Devex, September 6*

This year's African Green Revolution Forum's focus is on how to improve and boost jobs in the agriculture sector, drawing particular attention to the needs and challenges facing small-scale farmers, who bear the brunt of climate change shifts, security threats, and lacking rural infrastructure. Smallholder farmers manage up to 80 percent of the farmland in sub-Saharan Africa. Though they feed roughly 2 billion people, these farmers themselves represent an overwhelming percentage of the continent's malnourished and impoverished population.

Roots of Stability and Prosperity Are Sowed in Opportunity, *Opinion, Heather Kulp, AgriPulse, August 28*

Nigeria is Africa's largest economy and a huge market for American products. Economic development efforts in Nigeria are not charitable; they are strategic. Moving away from a development model focused directly on giving, which can create dependency on donor funding, and instead building market systems that are responsive to local needs, create opportunities and address barriers to growth. In 2015, Nigeria purchased over \$700 million of exports from the US, a figure that can rise along with Nigeria's economic standing.

Agriculture Could Be Key to Easing US-North Korea Tensions, *Opinion, Kenneth Quinn, Des Moines Register, September 1*

In 1959, at what was the most dangerous moment of human history as Soviet and US nuclear weapons were poised to be fired at each other, an event on a farm in Iowa contributed indirectly, but crucially, in keeping those missiles from ever being launched. With new North Korean missile tests and the rhetoric between Pyongyang and Washington escalating, Iowa's agricultural legacy, and specifically that of Dr. Norman Borlaug and the World Food Prize, may once again offer a means to deescalate tensions and prevent war.

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GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

African Leaders Validate AfDB's Feed Africa Strategy at African Green Revolution Forum, *AllAfrica, September 7*

African leaders and partners in the agriculture sector have validated the Feed Africa Strategy of the African Development Bank (AfDB) as a viable tool towards the transformation of agriculture on the continent. The AfDB is accelerating agricultural development through its Feed Africa Strategy with planned investment of US \$24 billion over the next 10 years.

In Bangladesh, a Flood and an Efficient Response, *Opinion*, K. Anis Ahmed, *New York Times*, September 1

After two weeks of flooding, about half of Bangladesh is under water, 140 people have been killed, tens of thousands of families have been forced from their homes and well over a million acres of crops have been destroyed. The poorest, their rural livelihoods in ruins, will most likely have no choice but to head to the cities.

Thousands have been forced to flee to Dhaka, a city already packed with an estimated 135,000 people per square mile, the densest metropolis in the world.

SEE ALSO: Epic Floods Challenge Aid Workers on opposite Sides of the World, *NPR*, August 29

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US GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES

A Quick Guide to the South Korea Free Trade Deal, *Washington Post*, September 2

The trade agreement slashed tariffs on 95 percent of goods, and strengthened intellectual-property protections. It was celebrated as an integral part of the effort to boost opportunities for US businesses and farmers. It was estimated that US exports to South Korea would grow by \$10 billion. But since the arrangement went into effect in 2012, the US trade deficit with South Korea has more than doubled. Now, President Trump is considering withdrawing from the deal all together.

US to Give Ethiopia \$91 Million in Drought Aid for Food and Medicine, *Washington Post*, August 31

The US will provide an additional \$91 million in humanitarian aid for Ethiopia to cope with a third straight year of drought. The extra funding brings US aid for food and medical care in Ethiopia to \$454 million this year, according to Mark Green, the new administrator of USAID. Green announced the additional aid after touring drought-stricken regions of Ethiopia, and meeting with the Ethiopian Prime Minister.

SEE ALSO: Sidestepping Politics, Wisconsin's Mark Green Takes over Top Foreign Aid Post under Trump, *Journal Sentinel*, August 31

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BIG IDEAS AND EMERGING INNOVATIONS

How Food Waste Could Fuel Your Car, *Food & Wine*, August 29

We know that food waste is a major problem. According to the FAO, about 1.3 billion tons of food are wasted annually. In the US, this food waste builds up in landfills and releases methane, which is roughly thirty times worse for our environment than carbon dioxide. Many creative solutions have been devised to combat the food waste issue—some clever companies are turning food waste into booze and into new foods—while a new paper has highlighted another use: Turning organic waste into a fuel source.

SEE REPORT: Evaluation of Landfill Gas Emissions from Municipal Solid Waste Landfills for the Life-Cycle Analysis of Waste-To-Energy Pathways, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, November 10

A New Kind of Packaging Cuts Food Waste, Replaces Plastic, and – If You're Still Hungry – You Can Eat It, *Grist*, August 28

It seems like all our food comes wrapped in multiple layers of plastic. Some of that packaging ends up in the ocean, where it harms the ecosystem and marine life. But newly developed packaging breaks down in water, and preserves food better than plastic. You can even eat it, if you like. A USDA team recently created this new packaging from milk proteins, and they expect some form of it to be on store shelves in three years.

SEE ALSO: Edible Food Packaging Made From Milk Proteins, *American Chemical Society* August 21

Scientists Try to Fight Crop Damage with an Invasive Moth's Own DNA, *NPR*, August 28

Cabbage has been under constant threat for decades, along with broccoli, kale, and other related leafy greens. The danger? A tiny insect called the diamondback moth, an invasive marauder that has spread across the world and mutated to become immune to new chemical pesticides designed to slay it. To curb the billions of dollars of damage caused annually by this moth's larvae, scientists in New York are trying to turn the critter's own DNA against it.

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FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

The World Could Run out of Food Two Decades Earlier Than Thought, *Quartz*, August 29

By 2027 the world could be facing a 214 trillion calorie deficit, says Sara Menker, founder and chief executive of Gro Intelligence, an agricultural data technology company. In other words, in just a decade, we won't have enough food to feed the

planet. Usually cited statistics, like the world would need to produce 70 percent more food than today to feed the world by 2050, quantify food production by weight. But when production is quantified by nutritional value, we run out sooner than expected.

Hello Spam and Tinned Peaches: Is Britain Facing a Brexit Food Crisis? *Guardian, August 29*

New Covent Garden Market has been supplying London restaurants with fruit and vegetables from its sprawling depot in south London since the UK joined the Common Market in the mid-1970s. A foodie revolution during the intervening four decades demands that ever fresher and more exotic produce is on the road before the sun starts to rise. But there's a problem: as with many sectors, the food industry is trying to work out how it will cope if it is separated from its European supply chain by Brexit.

Promoting Neglected and Underutilized Crop Species, *FAO, August 28*

Crops that have been forgotten over the last century are being rediscovered. Scientists and policymakers are now beginning to recognize the value of so-called 'orphan' crops, affirming what local communities have known for generations. Though not traded internationally, crops like the African Yam Bean and the Desert Date are uniquely adapted to their local environments and play a vital role in supporting diverse diets in sub-Saharan Africa.

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NUTRITION AND HEALTH

Hunger Crises Will Escalate Unless We Invest More in Addressing Root Causes, Say UN Food Agency Chiefs on Visit to Drought-Hit Ethiopia, *FAO, September 5*

Speaking at the conclusion of a four-day visit to Ethiopia, the heads of the UN food agencies made a joint call for greater investment in long-term activities that strengthen people's resilience to drought and the impacts of climate shocks. Back-to-back droughts have left at least 8.5 million people in Ethiopia in need of food aid. While the emergency response led by the government has begun to stabilize the situation, additional resources are still urgently needed to prevent any further deterioration.

Contaminated Eggs Found in 40 Countries as EU Ministers Meet, *Reuters, September 5*

Eggs contaminated with the insecticide fipronil have been discovered in 40 countries, including 24 of the European Union's 28 member states. Millions of eggs have been

pulled from European supermarket shelves, though have voiced concern that many contaminated eggs have already entered the food chain, mainly through processed products such as biscuits, cakes and salads. Fipronil is considered moderately toxic and can cause organ damage in humans.

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ENVIRONMENT, WATER, AND CLIMATE

Chocolate Manufacturer Mars Promises \$1 Billion to Fight Climate Change, *The Hill*, September 6

Mars, Inc., which manufactures M&Ms, Skittles, and other popular candies, announced it will spend close to \$1 billion over the next several years to reduce its environmental impact and fight climate change. The company's goal is to reduce its carbon footprint by 60 percent by 2050. The move is meant to spur other companies to take action ahead of the UN General Assembly and Climate Week taking place in New York later this month.

Climate Change Affects Every Step of the Food Value Chain, *Food Tank*, August 30

Researchers from IFPRI have published an extensive report highlighting the effects of climate change on agriculture and global nutrition. The report frames the food system as both a victim and a driver of climate change. The authors cite research projecting that at current rates of climate change, it is likely that global food production will decline by two percent every decade until at least 2050, just as the world's population is expected to reach 9.7 billion people, intensifying inequity.

SEE REPORT: Climate Change and Variability: What are the Risks for Nutrition, Diets, and Food Systems?, *IFPRI*, May 2017

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GENDER AND GENERATIONAL INCLUSION

Three Ways Extension Services Can Engage and Empower Rural Youth, *Opinion*, Paul McNamara and Andrea Bohn, *Devex*, September 6

Rural youth form a substantial share of the population within developing countries and face high unemployment rates. Engaging youth in agricultural activities is a commonly cited solution, but making this work has remained elusive. Rural youth in

many developing countries are facing significant challenges finding farming-related work. Filling the gap will require building the capacity of youth and more effectively linking them to information, technologies, improved practices, land, and finance.

The World Needs to Invest in Childhood Nutrition to Ensure a Healthy Future, *Opinion, Yvonne Chaka Chaka, Devex, September 1*

Lacking the right balance of nutrition can impact a child's growth and development, their ability to fight infections and their performance in school and later in the workforce. The reality is that 159 million children around the world are stunted physically, emotionally, and cognitively because of malnutrition early in life. Through a new initiative focused on "Investing in the Early Years," the World Bank aims to help low- and middle-income countries, particularly those burdened with high rates of stunting, prevent childhood stunting.

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MARKET ACCESS, TRADE, AND AGRIBUSINESS

Global Cereal Output Heading for a New Record, Lifting Consumption and Stocks, *FAO, September 7*

Global food prices dipped in August, mainly as the prospect of bumper cereal harvests pushed up expectations for larger grain inventories. FAO raised its forecast for global cereal production to 2,611 million tons, an all-time record. Worldwide stocks of cereals are also expected to reach an all-time high by the close of seasons in 2018.

Why John Deere Just Spent \$305 Million on a Lettuce-Farming Robot, *Wired, September 6*

Tractor giant John Deere just spent \$305 million to acquire a startup that makes robots capable of identifying unwanted plants, and shooting them with deadly, high-precision squirts of herbicide. The deal highlights the growing appetite for high tech in agriculture. Many companies are using drones to help farmers by collecting data on crops to plan spraying or other operations. This new technology can make a larger impact on productivity because it makes decisions up close, on the ground.

SEE ALSO: John Deere Spent \$300 Million on a Company That Murders Weeds with AI, *Quartz, September 6*

How Fair is our Food? Big Companies Take Reins on Sourcing Schemes, *Reuters, September 3*

From cocoa to tea, food and drink giants are setting their own standards for ethical sourcing of raw materials, moving away from third-party labels such as Fairtrade.

Companies say their targets are more comprehensive and some claim their schemes are more effective in tracking whether a product is ethically sourced. Third-party certifiers are not opposed to all self-certification, rather, they are worried standards could become meaningless if too many companies set their own criteria.

Danone Sends 5,000 Cows to Siberia in Quest for Cheaper Milk, *Bloomberg*, August 27

President Putin's ban on EU cheese imports has driven up milk prices in Russia by so much that French yogurt maker Danone is transporting almost 5,000 cows to a farm in Siberia to ensure it has an affordable supply. The cows are traveling as many as 2,800 miles in trucks from the Netherlands and Germany, boosting the herd on a farm near the city of Tyumen.

Agricultural Trade in Pacific Rim Economies Faces Challenges Due to Climate Change, with Uncertainty Greatest for Equatorial Nations, *FAO*, August 25

Global warming is expected to have a significant impact on future yields of everything from rice to fish, particularly in countries situated closer to the equator.

Geographically, the negative impact of climate change on agricultural output could result in lower yields of rice, wheat, corn, and soybeans in countries with tropical climates, compared with the impacts experienced by those in higher latitudes.

Fisheries could also be affected by changes to water temperature.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

UN General Assembly

Date: September 12-25

Location: New York, NY

Global Health and Development Symposium: Empowerment for Global Good

Date: September 22

Location: Chicago, IL

The Future of Agri-Food Trade in the Northern Region: The Voice of the Producers

Date: September 22

Location: Washington, DC

Fall 2017 Global Health Practitioner Conference

Date: September 25-29

Location: Baltimore, MD

Global Youth Economic Opportunities Summit

Date: September 27-29

Location: Washington, DC

2017 Borlaug Dialogue International Symposium

Date: October 18-20

Location: Des Moines, IA

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