

# Global Food for Thought



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October 6-12, 2017

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## KEY ARTICLES

### **Ask Ertharin Cousin: From the Front Lines of Food Security**, *a Facebook Live Conversation*

Log on to Facebook on Monday, October 16 at 11:30 a.m. CST for a Facebook Live chat with Ambassador Ertharin Cousin, as she discusses modern day famine, the role of the private sector in the development of sustainable food systems, and peacebuilding through food security with Alesha Black, director of the Global Food and Agriculture Program at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. Submit your own questions during the live chat.

### **You Should Know: The World's Largest Humanitarian Crisis since WWII**, *Chicago Council on Global Affairs, October 12*

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Twenty million people are on the brink of famine across four countries in the Middle East and Africa—northeastern Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen. Here's what you should know about the world's largest humanitarian crisis since WWII from Marcus Glassman, research associate for the Global Food and Agriculture Program at the Council.

**Outrage and Inspire with Roger Thurow—What Have I Done to My Child,**

*Chicago Council on Global Affairs, October 12*

Author and Council senior fellow Roger Thurow brings storytelling from the Real Hunger Games Trilogy to a new podcast series. The central outrage of these stories is that we have brought famine, hunger, malnutrition, and stunting with us into the 21st Century. In this episode, we open with the story of Tesfaye and Hagirso, an Ethiopian father and son we have followed since the famine of 2003.

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## GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

**Africa Tops Global Hunger Index, Driven by War and Climate Shocks,** *Reuters, October 11*

Global hunger has fallen more than a quarter since 2000, but conflict and climate shocks are beginning to reverse these gains. About half of the 119 surveyed countries had levels of serious, alarming, or extremely alarming levels. Women, girls, and ethnic minorities are most at risk of hunger, which causes nearly half of their deaths.

**Latin America and Caribbean Are Falling off Path to Zero Hunger by 2030,** *FAO, October 10*

The total number of people that suffer from hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean has increased, reversing decades of progress. There are signs that the situation is getting worse, especially in South America. Undernourishment grew from 5 percent in 2015 to 5.6 percent in 2016. In Mesoamerica, hunger affected 6.5 percent of the population in 2016.

**FAO Highlights Rural-Urban Connections to Reduce Hunger,** *Food Tank, October 10*

The 2017 State of Food and Agriculture report by the FAO calls for an “agroterritorial” approach focused on connecting cities and towns with their surrounding rural areas. Strengthening this connection, along with agro-industrial development, will allow food systems to drive more sustainable and inclusive rural development.

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**SEE ALSO: [The State of Food and Agriculture: Leveraging Food Systems for Inclusive Rural Transformation](#), *FAO, October 10***

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## US GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES

**US Demands Raise Fears That Leaving NAFTA Could Hurt Economy**, *Washington Post, October 11*

The North American Free Trade Agreement is in its 23rd year but there are growing doubts that it will survive through its 24th. Mexican tariffs on many American farm products could soar—to as high as 37 percent on corn. For that reason, many agricultural lobbies and lawmakers from farm states have urged the administration to “do no harm” in the NAFTA talks.

**USAID, LEAD Africa Commence Massive Women Empowerment in Agribusiness**, *Guardian, October 8*

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in partnership with Lead Africa have commenced massive empowerment of women farmers and youth across the country in agribusiness. Funds will not be provided to the women to start their agribusinesses; instead, the program will equip them with relevant information that would help them access finance.

**USAID Announces Global Alliance to Promote Legal and Sustainable Seafood**, *USAID, October 6*

USAID announced the new Seafood Alliance for Legality and Traceability (SALT) at the Our Ocean Conference. SALT brings together the seafood industry, governments, and non-governmental organizations to collaborate on innovative solutions for legal and sustainable seafood, with the goal of increased transparency in seafood supply chains and strengthened management of fisheries.

**SEE ALSO: [Ocean Meeting Raises Over \\$7 Billion for Marine Protection](#), *New York Times, October 6***

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## BIG IDEAS AND EMERGING INNOVATIONS

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**The Grain That Tastes Like Wheat, but Grows Like a Prairie Grass**, *The Nation*, October 11

For 12,000 years, human agriculture has cultivated grains that are replanted every year, at enormous environmental cost. Kernza represents a new way forward. While wheat must be planted year after year, kernza can survive from season to season. This helps rebuild topsoil year after year instead of tearing it apart every season. This leads to more nutrients in the soil and better carbon sequestration.

**Only Modernized Commercial Farms Will Fill Africa's Plate, Economists Warn**, *Guardian*, October 10

A transformation from small-scale subsistence to mechanized farms is essential, said experts. If Africa were to increase productivity on farms, there would immediately be increases for incomes and livelihoods of about 60-70 percent of people. Recommendations include increasing the rights of female farmers, embracing modern technology, and changing land tenure systems.

**SEE ALSO: The Future of Farming in Africa Is Not Agriculture but Agribusiness**, *Quartz*, October 10

**Create Rural Jobs for Youths to Stem Flight to Cities, Says UN**, *Reuters*, October 9

According to the FAO, young people growing up in rural Africa need jobs so they are not forced to join the growing ranks of poor seeking work in cities. By 2030, there will be about 1.3 billion people 15 to 24 years old on the planet, some 100 million more than in 2015. Industrial and service sectors have not grown enough to meet the demand of new job seekers.

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## FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

**Pest Resistance to Biotech Crops Surging**, *Kearney Hub*, October 11

In 2016, farmers worldwide planted more than 240 million acres of GM corn, cotton, and soybeans that produce insect-killing proteins from the bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis*, or Bt. While organic farmers have used Bt proteins in sprays successfully for more than half a century, some scientists feared that widespread use of Bt proteins in genetically engineered crops would spur rapid evolution of resistance in pests.

**Securing Land Tenure Rights Vital for the Eradication of Global Hunger**, *FAO*, October 10

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While considerable gains have been made in land tenure governance recently, more must be done to improve the lives of billions of people. In the last five years policy and legal reforms have been implemented around the world. They have been based on the Responsible Governance of Tenure guidelines released five years ago by FAO.

**Hidden Cost of Feeding Grain to Farm Animals to Hit \$1.32 Trillion a Year**, *Guardian*, October 7

There's a worrying disconnect between the retail price of food and the true cost of production. As a result, food produced at great environmental cost can appear to be cheaper than more sustainably produced alternatives. Cheap food is something we pay for three times, once at the checkout, again in tax subsidies, and again in the enormous clean-up cost to our health and environment.

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## NUTRITION AND HEALTH

**TB Partners Launch First Roadmap to Stop Transmission of Bovine and Zoonotic Tuberculosis**, *FAO*, October 12

The first-ever roadmap to combat animal tuberculosis (bovine TB) and its transmission to humans, most often through consumption of contaminated untreated meat or dairy products from diseased animals, calls for close collaboration between those working to improve health. New data released by the World Health Organization estimates that over 140,000 people fall ill and more than 12,000 people die each year due to bovine TB.

**UNICEF Warns of Nutrition Crisis Affecting 165,000 Children in Mali**, *UN News Centre*, October 9

A nutrition crisis, exacerbated by continuing violence, instability, and displacement, is threatening the lives and futures of thousands of children in Mali, warns the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). A report shows that an estimated 165,000 children are expected to suffer from severe acute malnutrition across the country in 2018.

**SEE ALSO: Mali: Nutrition Crisis Deepening in Conflict-Affected Areas, Says UNICEF**, *Relief Web*, October 7

**New Maps Show Big Divide between the World's Overweight and Underweight Children**, *Washington Post*, October 6

Despite the big increases in obesity, there are still more children who remain moderately or severely underweight, especially in the poorest corners of the world.

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The solution lies in not only targeting individual behavior—including the quantity and quality of meals and physical exercise—but in looking more broadly at agricultural policies as well as the marketing, packaging, pricing, and availability of food.

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## ENVIRONMENT, WATER, AND CLIMATE

**Frost, Drought Hit Wine Production Hard in Europe**, *New York Times*, October 10

Hail, frost, and droughts have hit Europe's grape harvest hard, making it the smallest in 36 years. The quality of the wines, though, is expected to be excellent. The European Union's farm union said that the extreme weather means the harvest is expected to be down 14 percent.

**New €45 Million Initiative Seeks to Curb Unsustainable Wildlife Hunting, Conserve Biodiversity, and Improve Food Security**, *FAO*, October 10

A multi-million dollar program launched at FAO seeks to help African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries halt unsustainable wildlife hunting and strengthen people's livelihoods and food security. The program will contribute to the sustainable use of wildlife by regulating hunting, strengthening in the management capacities of communities, and increasing the supply of sustainably produced meat and fish.

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## GENDER AND GENERATIONAL INCLUSION

**Opinion: How Women Can Transform African Agriculture—and the Economy**,

*Devex*, *Dede Amanor-Wilks*, October 10

Over half of Africa's farmers are women. They could be the next generation of entrepreneurs Africa needs to feed its growing population and boost its economies. But this will not happen without radical changes to our land ownership and financial systems. Women do the most work on our farms, but have the fewest rights. Empowering women as commercial farmers will mean they can access more land, grow more crops, and put more money into the economy.

**Kristalina Georgieva: Educating Adolescent Girls is Vital**, *Financial Times*, October 10

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Educating adolescent girls is vital. Kristalina Georgieva, World Bank chief executive, draws a connection between widespread institutional failures in educating young girls and what she sees as a demographic crisis unfolding around us that is the underlying cause of so much of what ails the developing world, from drought to revolutions to terrorism.

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## MARKET ACCESS, TRADE, AND AGRIBUSINESS

**EU Pesticide Debate Needs More “Independent Expertise”:** [Macron](#), *Reuters*, October 11

France and the European Union need independent scientific experts to guide them on divisive environmental issues such as pesticides, French President Macron said. The European Union has struggled to find a consensus on farming questions such as pesticides and genetically modified crops, and is still debating whether to extend the license of popular weedkiller glyphosate.

**With NAFTA Talks at Crucial Point, Ag Is on the Table**, *Agriculture*, October 10

The United States will present their agricultural trade proposals to Mexico and Canada during the fourth of seven scheduled talks. Canada and Mexico account for one third of US agricultural trade. Under NAFTA, most US farm exports cross the border duty-free into Canada and Mexico. US food and agriculture exports quadrupled since the trilateral free trade agreement took effect in 1994.

**Consumers and Farmers Disadvantaged if Agriculture Exempted from Competition Rules**, *EU Business*, October 10

The EuroCommerce director-general warned of the potential unforeseen consequences of pressure from the European Parliament in current negotiations on the draft Omnibus Regulation that would effectively exempt from EU competition rules possible concerted practices by producer organizations in charging identical prices or controlling quantities of produce.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Esca Bona 2017**

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Date: October 16-18  
Location: Austin, TX

**2017 Borlaug Dialogue International Symposium**

Date: October 18-20  
Location: Des Moines, IA

**World Leadership Conference: Global Citizens: Interconnected, Inquisitive, Engaged**

Date: October 26-27  
Location: Houston, TX

**CIAT 50th Anniversary Celebration**

Date: November 8-9  
Location: Cali, Colombia

**BCFN 8<sup>th</sup> International Forum on Food and Nutrition**

Date: December 4-5  
Milano, Italy

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