

Global Food for Thought



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October 20-26, 2017

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KEY ARTICLES

Food and Security Symposium 2018: Mark Your Calendars and Engage the Next Generation

Mark your calendars for the 2018 Global Food Security Symposium March 21 and 22, 2018 in Washington, DC! Do you know of a student who is interested in shaping new ideas for food security and agricultural development? Encourage them to apply now to join the 2018 Next Generation Student Delegation. Applications are due on or before Sunday, November 5.

To Get More Out of Aid and Investment, Developing Countries Need to Focus on Data Collection, *Quartz Africa, October 22*

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development issued a report pushing for wealthier nations to target more of their aid to improving statistical

systems in developing countries. The agency believes that the lack of reliable data makes it difficult to measure the impact of development cooperation and where to focus future investments.

SEE REPORT: [Development Co-operation Report 2017](#)

[Supersized Family Farms Are Gobbling Up American Agriculture](#), *Wall Street Journal*, October 23

Food production is being increasingly handled by larger farms, which can be more financially secure. It also fuels a cycle in which size begets size, further transforming the rural economy as smaller-scale farmers struggle to expand their operations to become profitable. Farm-supply retailers and grain companies are feeling pressured, as larger farms use their size to wrangle better deals.

[Iraq Takes Steps to Save Mosul Livestock after Islamic State's Rule](#), *Reuters*, October 23

Iraq and the United Nations launched a campaign to vaccinate nearly one million livestock in the Mosul area over fears the animals may be carrying diseases. The animals include sheep, goats, cattle, and buffalo. They have not been vaccinated since the Islamic State seized the city in 2014. The diseases that could spread include brucellosis and foot and mouth disease.

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GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

[Invasion of Maize-Eating Caterpillars Worsens Hunger Crisis in Africa](#), *Guardian*, October 25

The crops that 200 million people rely on in Africa are under threat from a caterpillar that is spreading throughout Africa. Three winners of the World Food Prize made the warnings that caterpillars could cost 12 African countries \$6 billion a year in lost crops unless they are contained

[Food Ruined by Drought Could Feed More than 80 million a Day, Says World Bank](#), *Guardian*, October 24

The food produce destroyed by droughts would be enough to feed a country with a population the size of Germany's every day for a year, the World Bank has reported. They said women that were born in droughts bore the marks for their entire lives, growing up mentally and physically stunted, and undernourished.

[With 2 New Initiatives, AfDB's 'Feed Africa' Strategy Takes Shape](#), *Devex*, October 24

The African Development Bank is doubling down on agriculture, one of its five key priorities, with a strategy guided by business-minded agricultural development. Greater cooperation, local investment in research, and getting new technologies in the hands of farmers is key to the continent's agriculture and food security needs.

Cities and Local Policies, Key to Eradicate Hunger and Eliminate Food Waste, *FAO, October 20*

Cities can and should play a crucial role in the radical change needed to address the problem of hunger, malnutrition, and food waste. Local actions are critical to achieving the goal of eradicating malnutrition, guaranteeing more sustainable food systems which are also more resilient to the effects of climate change, and ensuring a healthy and nutritious diet for all.

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US GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES

“Army” of Lobbyists Hits Capitol Hill to Defend NAFTA, *New York Times, October 24*

Dozens of business and industry leaders descended on Capitol Hill on in a coordinated push to preserve NAFTA. Participants from the agricultural industry plan to meet with all 100 Senate offices to pressure them to keep the deal intact.

USAID Chief Outlines Vision for Agriculture, Food Security, *Devex, October 20*

USAID will work with the Syngenta Foundation to get “state of the art” seed varieties to smallholder farmers in Africa. The partnership will help local African agribusinesses secure access to high quality seeds, so they can sell them at affordable prices in an effort to bridge the gap between the labs that develop cutting edge seed varieties and remote farmers and communities so desperate for a high-yielding harvest.

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BIG IDEAS AND EMERGING INNOVATIONS

The Blockchain of Food, *Forbes, October 23*

Ripe.io, a start-up at the forefront of creating a blockchain solution for our food system was a recent participant at The Mixing Bowl's FOOD IT: Fork to Farm.

According to Raja, their CEO, the blockchain of food simplifies the challenging task of aggregating information from a multitude of actors by providing for one-to-many data integration and process orchestration among participants.

CRISPR Bacon: Chinese Scientists Create Genetically Modified Low-Fat Pigs,
NPR, October 23

Scientists have used a new gene-editing technique to create pigs that can keep their bodies warmer, burning more fat to produce leaner meat. These pigs would be less expensive to raise and would suffer less in cold weather. This could save farmers millions of dollars in heating and feeding costs, as well as prevent millions of piglets from suffering and dying in cold weather.

Food Scientists Try to Pin Down Exactly What Influences the Taste of Beef,
Globe and Mail, October 24

Scientists attempt to isolate which chemical compounds contribute to specific flavors, and connect those to how the cattle were raised. Knowing why these distinct flavours exist should eventually have practical benefits for both producers and consumers. Many consumers already express a preference for mild, ultratender Canadian beef or tougher, stronger-flavoured European-style beef.

Science Could Save Coffee from Climate Change, *Times, October 22*

Centroamericano, a new variety of coffee plant, may be the coolest thing in brewing: a tree that can withstand the effects of climate change. Shifting climates could spell disaster for coffee so scientists are racing to develop more tenacious strains of one of the world's most beloved beverages. To cope with the effects of climate change, farmers may need to also adopt other agricultural practices.

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FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

UK is 30-40 Years Away from Eradication of Soil Fertility, Warns Gove,
Guardian, October 24

Arguing that farmers needed to be incentivized to tackle both the loss of soil fertility and the decline in biodiversity, UK environment secretary Michael Gove said he hoped the Sustainable Soils Alliance, a new body formed with the mission of bringing UK soils back to health within one generation, would hold the government to account.

“Steady Decline” in Honey Crop Raises Concern for Honeybees' Future,
Guardian, October 23

The survey revealed the factors worrying beekeepers about the future of their honeybees, with almost two-thirds of keepers stating they are concerned about pesticides which have been linked to declines in bees. Britain differs from the rest of Europe, in that beekeeping is mostly carried out by amateur beekeepers rather than bee farmers.

Egypt Says Bahrain, Kuwait, and UAE to Lift Ban on Its Agriculture Exports,
Reuters, October 22

Bahrain, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates have agreed to lift a ban on imports of Egyptian agricultural products. The agreement came after a series of meetings and negotiations between the countries. The original bans were said to be over the use of pesticides.

Insectageddon: Farming is More Catastrophic than Climate Breakdown,
Guardian, October 20

According to the United Nations report published in March, the notion that pesticide use is essential for feeding a growing population is a myth. A study in the journal *Arthropod-Plant Interactions* shows that the more neonicotinoid pesticides were used to treat rapeseed crops, the more their yield declines

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NUTRITION AND HEALTH

EU Delays Decision on Herbicide Glyphosate, *Reuters, October 25*

EU countries failed on Wednesday to vote on a license extension for weed killer glyphosate, a key ingredient in Monsanto Co's top-selling weed killer Roundup, delaying again a decision on the widely used herbicide that critics say could cause cancer. Europe has been stuck over what to do with the chemical after the WHO's cancer agency concluded in March 2015 it was a substance that probably causes cancer.

Deaths of Syrian Children Signal Worsening Aid Crisis, *Wall Street Journal, October 23*

Residents say stockpiles of food and medicine have begun to run out as regime forces have tightened the siege in recent months and commercial shipments and aid convoys have become rare. The United Nations has previously said requests for access to certain besieged areas have been denied or blocked.

Feeding Babies in China Is a Booming Business Again, *Wall Street Journal, October 23*

Following a succession of health scandals, China announced that formula products would need to be registered with the nation's food and drug regulator as of 2018. Hence, big global players should flourish in a more concentrated and disciplined market.

Health Benefits of Chocolate, *Guardian*, October 20

While chocolate is more often associated with indulgence than nutrition, chocolate, a derivative of cocoa beans, contains plant nutrients called flavonoids that provide many health benefits. Flavonoids are naturally found in fruits, vegetables, tea, and red wine, and have been identified with having anti-viral, anti-allergic, anti-inflammatory, anti-tumor, and antioxidant benefits.

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ENVIRONMENT, WATER, AND CLIMATE

How Climate Change Is Playing Havoc with Olive Oil (And Farmers), *New York Times*, October 24

During this summer's recent drought, olive farmers had to purchase water just to keep their crops alive. Scientists say that the heat wave that swept across Europe was likely aided by human caused climate change. As the changing climate makes growing in the Mediterranean more unpredictable, places like California, Australia, and New Zealand are going to show more strength in the olive market.

Why Secure Land Rights Matter for Climate Change and Inequality, *Devex*, October 23

Created by the Rights and Resources Initiative, the International Land and Tenure Facility aims to resolve land-based conflicts by providing grants and legal support to communities seeking to protect their lands from exploitation by mining, energy, and agricultural companies.

Expanding Brazilian Sugarcane Could Dent Global CO2 Emissions, *Science Daily*, October 23

Vastly expanding sugarcane production in Brazil for conversion to ethanol could reduce current global carbon dioxide emissions by as much as 5.6 percent, researchers report.

SEE REPORT: Brazilian Sugarcane Ethanol as an Expandable Green Alternative to Crude Oil Use, *Nature*, October 23

Do You Care If Your Fish Dinner Was Raised Humanely? Animal Advocates Say You Should, *NPR*, October 20

Mercy for Animals is beginning a campaign that will target the aquaculture industry and shine a light on the conditions in which farmed fish are raised. Their goal is to educate consumers on the way these animals are being treated, and to push for more humane practices. The main concerns are too many fish routinely crammed into pens and tanks, fish being raised in dirty water, and high disease and mortality rates.

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GENDER AND GENERATIONAL INCLUSION

Nigeria: AfDB Supports '50 Million Women Speak' Initiative, *AllAfrica*, October 25

The African Development Bank (AfDB) is spearheading the development of an innovative networking platform called "50 Million Women Speak". The move is aimed at ensuring access to information on financial and non-financial services for women. Twenty-five African countries have already indicated interest and readiness to participate in initiative, and help transform their agriculture.

Creating the Next Generation of Hunger-Fighters—Adesina Caps World Food Prize Week with Speech to Youth, *All Africa*, October 23

African Development Bank President Akinwumi Adesina spoke directly to students about the need to change the perception of agriculture. Agriculture is not a development activity or a social sector of people needing handouts, agriculture is a business for wealth creation, he said. There is a wealth of opportunities arising including an increasing global population, rapid urbanization, and rapidly rising global demand for processed foods.

UNICEF, Nutrition International Work to Protect Pregnant Women, Newborns from Life-Threatening Diseases, *Business Mirror*, October 23

UNICEF Philippines and the global movement Nutrition International recently began a nationwide three-year initiative to reduce risks of maternal deaths for pregnant women. Globally, the initiative aims to reach 100 million women and girls with improved nutrition by accelerated interventions.

Rep. Pingree Wins Food Leadership Award, *Portland Press Herald*, October 23

The James Beard Foundation awarded US Representative Chellie Pingree one of its Leadership Awards during the organization's annual food summit in New York City. Pingree, a Democrat who represents Maine's 1st Congressional District, owns her own farm and has supported legislation that promotes healthy food, the organic food industry, and local and regional food systems.

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MARKET ACCESS, TRADE, AND AGRIBUSINESS

Wine Organization Forecasts Historically Bad Year Due to Weather Events, *NPR, October 24*

World wine production is having a historically bad year. The intergovernmental wine organization says this year's output is projected to be the lowest in more than 50 years. Extreme weather events like frost, droughts, and wildfires have all contributed to the historic lows in production.

Another Obstacle to a US-UK Trade Deal, *Financial Times, October 23*

International Trade Secretary Liam Fox has long argued that one of the biggest prizes from Britain leaving the European Union is the prospect of the United Kingdom signing a lucrative trade deal with the United States. But those hopes are taking a battering. The biggest complication of all to a trade deal is the risk that it might compromise UK food standards and the British agriculture sector more generally.

China Lifts Import Ban on Moldy Cheese After EU Lobbying, *Financial Times, October 22*

The lifting of the ban caused jubilation among the country's mostly expatriate consumers of Brie, Camembert, and Roquefort. The European Union's China delegation described China's cheese standards as "outdated," adding that the European Union delegation and the French embassy in China would organize a seminar with Chinese cheese experts thus limiting the risk of such events re-occurring in the future.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Date: October 26-27

Location: Houston, TX

Bending the Arc Towards Global Health Equity

Date: November 8

Location: Chicago, IL

CIAT 50th Anniversary Celebration

Date: November 8-9

Location: Cali, Colombia

BCFN 8th International Forum on Food and Nutrition

Date: December 4-5

Milano, Italy

Women in Agriculture Conference

Date: December 9

Location: Abingdon, VA

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