

# Global Food for Thought



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November 3-9, 2017

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## KEY ARTICLES

### [Outrage and Inspire, With Roger Thurow: A Poem Not Written, A Cure Not Discovered](#), *Chicago Council on Global Affairs, November 7*

Chicago Council Senior Fellow Roger Thurow brings the latest chapter of the Outrage and Inspire podcast series. In this episode, we hear about how the costs of a malnourished, stunted child ripple around the world. For a stunted child anywhere becomes a stunted child everywhere, and a lost chance at greatness for one child becomes a lost chance for us all.

### [Facebook Live Conversation with Council Distinguished Fellow Ertharin Cousin](#)

Join the Council's newest distinguished fellow, Ertharin Cousin, former director of the World Food Prize, on Monday, November 20 for a conversation and Q&A on food waste and the triple burden of malnutrition: undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, and obesity. Tune in to the Global Food and Agriculture Program's Facebook page for the event, bring your questions, and follow the program on Twitter for event updates at @GlobalAgDev.

[Stop Using Antibiotics in Healthy Animals, WHO Urges Farmers](#), *Reuters, November 7*

The WHO urged farmers to stop using antibiotics in healthy animals because the practice fuels dangerous drug-resistant superbug infections in people. Any non-therapeutic use of antibiotics promotes the development and spread of so-called superbugs. In some countries, around eighty percent of total consumption of medically important antibiotics is in the animal sector.

**READ MORE: [WHO to Farmers: Stop Giving Your Animals so Many Antibiotics](#), NPR, November 7**

**[Here's How Far the World is from Meeting Its Climate Goals](#), New York Times, November 6**

Under the Paris deal, each country put forward a proposal to curtail its greenhouse-gas emissions between now and 2030. Yet, no major industrialized country is currently on track to fulfill its pledge. Worse, even if governments do take further steps to meet their individual pledges, the world will still be on pace to warm well in excess of two degrees Celsius over pre-industrial levels.

**[Africa Pushes for Gains on Genetic Materials](#), AllAfrica, November 5**

African nations are pushing for a review of an access and benefit sharing framework for exploration of genetic materials obtained from farmers in developing countries. FAO is banking on a stronger pact to provide diversity in crops and livestock genetic resources, which is vital in efforts to eradicate hunger and all forms of malnutrition as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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## GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

**[UN Calls for Saudi-Led Coalition to Re-Open Aid Lifeline to Yemen](#), Reuters, November 7**

The United Nations urged the Saudi-led coalition to reopen an aid lifeline to bring imported food and medicine into Yemen, whose seven million people are facing famine. Humanitarian operations, including UN aid flights, are currently blocked because air and sea ports in Yemen are closed. The WHO also called for medical aid to be allowed to enter Yemen to combat a cholera epidemic that began in April.

**[1.25 Million Face Starvation in War-Torn South Sudan](#), Washington Post, November 6**

In war-torn South Sudan 1.25 million people are facing starvation, double the number from the same time last year. This country could once again plunge into famine in 2018, warn humanitarian groups and the government. Humanitarian organizations blame the worsening situation on South Sudan's continuing conflict, which is nearing its fifth year and has killed more than 50,000 people.

**[FAO to G7: Urgent Action Needed to Curb Malnutrition Globally](#), FAO, November 5**

Addressing health ministers from the G7 nations, FAO director-general Graziano da Silva stressed the critical need to transform food systems to ensure healthy diets and good nutrition for all. The FAO director-general cited the ongoing transition towards diets consisting of more processed foods. Consumers should

be encouraged to buy more fresh food, relying less on packaged and frozen products.

**African Leaders Part of Global Response to Malnutrition Crisis as Over \$3.4 Billion is Committed at Global Nutrition Summit 2017**, *AllAfrica*, November 5

African leaders gathered at the Global Nutrition Summit 2017 in Italy to address the global crisis of malnutrition helped to galvanize \$3.4 billion in new commitments. The Global Nutrition Report 2017 showed that 155 million children globally are still stunted, and the world is off track on meeting internationally agreed nutrition targets

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## US GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES

**China to Pledge More US Soy Imports during Trump Visit**, *Reuters*, November 7

China will commit to buy more US soybeans during President Trump's visit to Beijing. China is the world's biggest soybean importer and the United States is its second largest supplier. China will also promise to continue buying more US soybeans, along with beef, barley, and dairy products in the future.

**The Latest: US Will Continue Participation in Climate Talks**, *Washington Post*, November 6

Trump announced in June that the United States will withdraw from the 2015 Paris Agreement unless he can get a better deal for the United States. However, a senior US diplomat says Washington will continue to take part in talks about implementing the Paris climate accord, despite President Trump's threat to pull out of the pact.

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## BIG IDEAS AND EMERGING INNOVATIONS

**Technology is Great—But It Alone Won't Solve All of India's Development Problems**, *Quartz, Opinion, Ajit Kanitkar*, November 8

The proponents of digital technology think that problems of agriculture, health, nutrition, gender injustice, education, and governance can all be solved if India embraces the digital revolution. Unfortunately, in the zeal to promote digital interventions, we are forgetting that technology cannot substitute the functions that are so necessary to operate on the ground.

**Forget Rice, Dish up Aztec Pigweed to Help Feed the World**, *Reuters*, November 6

Several ancient foods are making their way to the dinner table in an effort to diversify the diet of a growing global population. As rising temperatures wreak havoc on farmers worldwide, scientists are seeking new ways to feed 9.8 billion

people by 2050. Ancient foods like Aztec pig weed, which can be eaten raw or ground into flour, and dragon beans could add valuable nutrients to a limited modern diet.

### **High-Tech Tracker to Battle Ancient Wheat Plague**, *Reuters, November 3*

The tracking technology used to halt the deadly Ebola and Zika viruses could now be turned against wheat rust as scientists try new ways to stop the fungus devastating world grain crops. Wheat rusts are nothing new, but they are adapting to outwit man and pose an ever-growing global risk. Now technology is stepping in with the hope that early detection can limit the damage of any outbreak.

### **Turning Food Waste into Nutritious Animal Feed**, *Food Tank, November 3*

Kamine Development Corporation's agriculture division has developed a technology with California Safe Soil that converts more than 30 tons of fresh food waste into fertilizer and animal feed in just three hours. The technology is designed to mimic the human digestive system and can process all types of fresh food waste, including meat, fruits, and vegetables.

### **Innovating the Future of Food Systems**, *Global Knowledge Initiative*

The future of global food systems hinges on how we respond to the challenges of today and prepare for the challenges of tomorrow. The Global Knowledge Initiative and the Rockefeller Foundation have endeavored to identify the top immediately investible and emerging innovations that will be catalytic in reducing post-harvest food loss and transforming food systems in emerging markets within the next 20 years.

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## FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

### **The Evidence Points in One Direction—We Must Ban Neonicotinoids**, *The Guardian, November 9*

Insects are absolutely critical to the health of the natural world. Without a healthy pollinator population, we put the whole ecological balance of our world in danger. Among the potential threats to pollinators are neonicotinoids, a type of pesticide. The most recent studies point to a discernible effect on food sources and the productivity of bee colonies, which could have a worrying long-term impact on their populations.

### **California Bans Use of Some Farming Pesticides near Schools**, *Washington Post, November 7*

California has banned farmers from using certain pesticides near schools and day care centers. Under the new rule, California farmers will be prohibited from spraying pesticides within a quarter mile (0.4 kilometers) of public K-12 schools and licensed daycare centers from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. during the school week.

### **The First Non-Browning, Genetically Modified Apple is Shipping to US Groceries**, *Quartz, November 7*

Unlike regular apples, this new variation on the fruit, commonly called the "Arctic apple," does not brown when cut and exposed to oxygen. Scientists have been

tinkering with it for more than two decades, leading up to the 2015 deregulation of the product by the USDA.

**Tiny Bug Posing Threat to New Mexico's \$180M Pecan Industry**, *New York Times*, November 6

A tiny bug is posing a threat to one of New Mexico's biggest cash crops. In late 2016, and January 2017, the weevil was found in pecan orchards in multiple counties in southeast New Mexico. Quarantines were enacted to prevent its spread in the following months, and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture is looking to make them permanent.

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## NUTRITION AND HEALTH

**You Can't Hide From Calorie Counts: FDA Will Implement Obama-Era Rule**, *NPR*, November 8

The FDA has released its guidance on implementing an Obama-era rule that requires chain restaurants and other food establishments to post calories on menus or menu boards. The mandate was written into the Affordable Care Act back in 2010. The restaurant industry also signaled its support of the guidance put forth by the FDA.

**Too Much Sodium is Unhealthy, and Some Favorite Foods are a Problem**, *Washington Post*, November 4

A recent report from the CDC found that those 51 and older average about 3,000 milligrams of sodium per day, twice what the American Heart Association recommends and about 30 percent more than the Department of Agriculture dietary guidelines of fewer than 2,300 mg per day.

**Is 'Natural Flavor' Healthier Than 'Artificial Flavor'?**, *NPR*, November 3

Even though natural flavor must come from natural sources, it does not need to come from the food whose flavor is being mimicked. Consumers may believe products with natural flavors are healthier, though they're nutritionally no different from those with artificial flavors. In some cases, natural flavors may even have more detrimental environmental consequences than artificial flavors.

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## ENVIRONMENT, WATER, AND CLIMATE

**Is It Time to Catch the Wave of Rebounding Atlantic Bluefin Tuna?**, *NPR*, November 9, 2017

Once severely depleted, populations of the prized sushi fish appear to be rebounding. Now the industry, and some scientists, say that the international commission that regulates the fish can allow a much bigger catch. But some environmental groups disagree. What fishermen and fishery managers today consider abundance is still just a fraction of the species' historic numbers.

### **Africa: Why Water, Soap, and Toilets are Keys in Ending Malnutrition,**

*AllAfrica, Opinion, Tim Wainwright, November 6*

The frustrating truth is that despite all best efforts, we are losing the war against malnutrition. And the reason is very simple—we're fighting the wrong enemy. That's because up to half of the malnutrition faced by the world's under-nourished people isn't so just because they lack food. It's because they suffer from chronic infection and illness, from dirty water, poor sanitation, and poor hygiene.

### **Water Shortages Parch Moroccan Towns, Prompt Protests,**

*Washington Post, November 5*

Taps are running dry in southern Morocco, and the government is searching for solutions after people took to parched streets in anger. Experts blame poor crop choices, growing populations, and climate change for the water shortages in towns like Zagora, which saw repeated protests for access to clean water last month.

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## GENDER AND GENERATIONAL INCLUSION

### **UNICEF Outlines Groundwork to Harness Africa's Demographic Dividend,**

*Devex, November 8*

To harness the benefits of Africa's demographic shift, the continent will need to train 11 million new social service workers by 2030. Half of the world's population will reside in Africa by 2050, a large share of whom will be under age 18. Twenty-six percent of women have unmet family planning needs and 39 percent of girls are child brides, serving as a bleak reminder of areas that need improvement.

### **Pesticides Tied to Problems in Assisted Pregnancies,**

*New York Times, November 8*

Eating fruits and vegetables high in pesticides may lower the chance of successful birth with assisted reproductive technology. Women in the highest one-quarter for high-pesticide residue produce consumption had an 18 percent lower probability of pregnancy and a 26 percent lower probability of live birth than those in the lowest one-quarter.

**SEE REPORT: Association Between Pesticide Residue Intake from Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables and Pregnancy Outcomes Among Women Undergoing Infertility Treatment with Assisted Reproductive Technology,** *JAMA Internal Medicine, October 30*

### **Short Takes: 2017 Census of Agriculture Adds New Questions About Veterans, Women, Beginning Farmers,**

*Reading Eagle, November 8*  
The census, conducted by the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), is a complete count of all US farms, ranches, and those who operate them. The 2017 survey form will include new questions. The NASS says this will help better capture the roles and contributions of beginning farmers, women farmers, and others involved in running the business.

**Steinberg: Students Learn to Be More Than Farmers at Chicago Ag,**  
*Chicago Sun Times, November 7*

The Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences, or Chicago Ag as the students call it, sits on 72 acres in the Mount Greenwood neighborhood, half of which is planted with crops. If you think a curriculum that can involve shoveling manure and identifying off flavors in milk is a hard sell to Chicago teens, guess again. A magnet school, every year Chicago Ag gets around 3,000 applications for 180 spots in its freshman class.

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## MARKET ACCESS, TRADE, AND AGRIBUSINESS

**Special Report: The Decisions behind Monsanto's Weed-Killer Crisis,**  
*Reuters, November 9*

In early 2016, agribusiness giant Monsanto faced a decision that would prove pivotal in what since has become a sprawling herbicide crisis, with millions of acres of crops damaged. Monsanto had readied new genetically modified soybeans seeds. They were engineered for use with a powerful new weed killer that contained a chemical called dicamba that had a tendency to drift and kill neighboring farmers' crops.

**Chinese Lovers of French Wine are Snapping Up Bordeaux Vineyards,**  
*NPR, November 8*

Today, many of the tourists visiting this French wine making region are Chinese. Chinese consumption of wine has increased dramatically over the last 10 years. This is having a profound effect on the world's wine making regions like Bordeaux. The Chinese are Bordeaux's biggest investors, owning 140 chateaux.

**Shark Fin Trade Faces Troubled Waters as Global Pressure Mounts,** *NPR,*  
*November 7*

Between 63 and 273 million sharks are killed each year, including those killed for their fins but not all scientists agree that banning shark fins would be the way to protect sharks. David Shiffman, a marine biologist, says that if the US just withdraws from the shark trade altogether, it'll be harder to encourage other countries to follow the US lead in adopting the same kinds of policies.

**Beyond Thanksgiving: The Humble Cranberry Takes Root in China,** *Wall*  
*Street Journal, November 4*

A loyal sidekick to turkey and stuffing on the Thanksgiving table, the humble cranberry has a new fan base, in China. The US cranberry industry has been looking to boost domestic and international demand to help manage recent large supplies. Though EU countries still buy the most berries, the younger Asian market, led by China, is the fastest-growing

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

## **CIAT 50th Anniversary Celebration**

Date: November 8-9  
Location: Cali, Colombia

## **Beyond the Plough: The New Faces of Food**

Date : November 28  
Location : Chicago, IL

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

Date: December 4-5  
Location: Milano, Italy

## **Young Farmers Conference**

Date: December 8  
Location: Pocantico Hills, NY

## **Women in Agriculture Conference**

Date: December 9  
Location: Abingdon, VA

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