



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Broadcasters Letter

Office of Communications

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Letter No. 3684.2012
Friday, September 21, 2012
Creative Media & Broadcast Center
202-720-7079

BROADCASTERS LETTER

#3684.2012

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(September 21)

AG SECRETARY VILSACK REACTS TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REFUSAL TO MOVE THE FARM BILL

House lawmakers are leaving Washington without voting on a farm bill. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, said that if no farm bill is passed before the new Congress convenes in January, the bill the Senate passed would be wiped off the books and the whole process would begin again with the risk of far bigger cuts in programs.

Radio Story: [House Refusal To Move Farm Bill Prompts Reaction From Vilsack](#)
[ACTUALITY: Farm Bill Delay Could Mean Big Cuts In USDA Programs](#)

A USDA REPORT SHOWS HISTORY OF MAJOR NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS PROVIDING AMERICANS WITH CRITICAL SAFETY NET IN ECONOMICALLY CHALLENGING TIMES

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Economic Research Service released a new research report which investigates the relationship between economic conditions and participation in USDA's five largest nutrition assistance programs. Most notably, the increase in SNAP participation during 2008-10 was consistent with the increase during the previous three economic downturns (1980-81, 1990-92, 2001-03), after adjusting for the increase in the unemployment rate.

"Recessions clearly impact enrollment in SNAP and other USDA nutrition programs, and this report provides further evidence that they are working as designed, providing a vital safety net for low income households to help as people work their way to greater self-sufficiency," said Kevin Concannon, USDA's Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services, which administers the federal nutrition programs. "In addition, the report indicates program enrollment has been relatively consistent for the past five decades across periods of higher unemployment."

The report also shows that, to varying degrees, economic conditions affect participation in the other four major USDA nutrition assistance programs. In other words, all of the major food and nutrition assistance programs respond to increased demand for their services by needy families during economic downturns.

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-3088

Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

CHIMNEY ROCK IS DESIGNATED A NATIONAL MONUMENT

The national monument will honor Native American culture, generate tourism and economic benefits for local economy. Located in the San Juan National Forest in southwestern Colorado, Chimney Rock was designated under the Antiquities Act with bi-partisan support from Colorado officials, the Native American community, local businesses and other stakeholders.

"Thousands of people come every year to experience the cultural, and spiritual significance of Chimney Rock," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "With President Obama's action and the strong support of the Native American community and others throughout the region, this new monument will bring new economic opportunity to Archuleta County and the Four Corners region as more visitors from around the world come to see this national treasure."

The 4,726 acre Chimney Rock National Monument will be managed by the USDA Forest Service - the seventh National Monument managed by the agency - in close collaboration with tribal, community, state, and Federal partners.

Chimney Rock is one of the best recognized and most unique archaeological resources in North America, home to hundreds of ruins built by the Ancestral Pueblo People about 1,000 years ago, including the highest elevation ceremonial "great house" in the Southwest. Notably, every 18.6 years, during the northern lunar standstill, the moonrise is aligned with the sites two rock pinnacles, as well as during the summer and winter solstices, and the fall and spring equinoxes. Descendants of the Ancestral Pueblo People return to Chimney Rock to visit their ancestors and for other spiritual and traditional purposes.

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-4623

Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

(September 20)

IT IS UNLIKELY CONGRESSIONAL HOUSE MEMBERS WILL TAKE UP THE FARM BILL BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

Legislative work on a food, farm and jobs bill may have to wait until after the November elections.

Radio Story: [House Not Likely To Take Up Farm Bill Before Elections](#)

MORE HELP TO CONSERVATION PROGRAMS TO FIGHT DROUGHT IMPACTS

Two NRCS programs in twenty two states affected by this year's drought now have more financial and technical assistance available. Mark Rose of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service gave examples of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program in the context of curbing impacts of drought. Rose explained how two conservation programs benefited natural resources and wildlife.

Radio Story: [More Help To Conservation Programs To Fight Drought Impacts](#)
[ACTUALITY: On Examples Of NRCS Programs In Drought Mitigation](#)
[ACTUALITY: On Specifics Of EQIP And WHIP](#)

USDA AND PARTNER AGENCIES PARTICIPATE IN SERIES OF REGIONAL MEETINGS TO COORDINATE LONG TERM DROUGHT RESPONSE

Recognizing that recovery from the drought that affected much of the farm belt will be a lengthy process, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the scheduling of four regional meetings which will outline available resources to assist with local, regional and state recovery efforts. USDA will coordinate with State and local partners, working closely with the Department of Commerce, the Small Business Administration and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to facilitate these meetings.

"The impact of drought can be felt in rural communities throughout the country and the Obama Administration is committed to doing everything it can to help farmers, ranchers, businesses, and local and county governments meet drought-related challenges," said Vilsack. "President Obama has instructed federal agencies to assist drought impacted regions, and these meetings will provide an opportunity for federal representatives to work cooperatively with local and regional leaders to learn about drought related impacts and determine how to best use existing programs to help speed recovery efforts."

The meetings will be coordinated through area partners, such as universities or business groups and state agencies, and will be invitational and regional in scope. Specific details will be announced later, but the meetings will be kicked off in Omaha, Nebraska October 9, with meetings to follow in Ohio, Colorado and Arkansas. Assessing current and emerging drought recovery issues is the focus. USDA, in partnership with other federal agencies, will work with local government, community, and business leaders, regional planning organizations, and economic and state development and agriculture organizations to explore issues ranging from infrastructure challenges to development and financing needs, attempting to look at the total recovery picture for the region

The Secretary also announced the implementation of the National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF). The framework links local, State, Tribal and Federal governments, the private sector and nongovernmental and community organizations that play vital roles in recovery. It is a scalable, adaptable coordinating structure that helps align key roles and responsibilities in response to disaster recovery. The full text of the framework can be found at <http://www.fema.gov/recoveryframework/>.

Contact: Office of Communication (202)720-4623
Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

(September 19)

**COME JANUARY 2013 THERE WILL BE A NEW RELEASE TIME
FOR KEY STATISTICAL REPORTS**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and World Agricultural Outlook Board (WAOB) will begin issuing several major USDA statistical reports at 12:00 p.m. EDT beginning in January 2013. The current USDA release time of 8:30 a.m. EDT will remain in effect until January 1, 2013. USDA statistical reports affected are: *World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates, Acreage, Crop Production, Grain Stocks, Prospective Plantings, and Small Grains Summary*. The time for livestock reports currently released at 3:00 p.m. will not change.

Between June 8 and July 9, 2012, USDA sought public comment on the release times for several major statistical reports in response to changes in market hours by major commodity exchanges. Stakeholders submitted 147 comments through the NASS online response site and via letter and e-mail. The comments received may be viewed on the NASS website at http://www.nass.usda.gov/Newsroom/2012/Public_Comments_Release_Times.pdf.

"USDA considered all comments and thanks everyone for their thoughtful suggestions," said USDA Chief Economist Joseph W. Glauber. "The shift to a noon release allows for the greatest liquidity in the markets, provides the greatest access to the reports during working hours in the United States, and continues equal access to data among all parties."

Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Statistical Policy Directives 3 and 4, rules are in place to regulate the public's access to federally generated statistics. The 2012 official published schedule for all NASS reports is available online at www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/index.asp. The World Agricultural Outlook Board (WAOB) report schedule is available at www.usda.gov/oce/commodity/wasde.

Contact: Office of Communication (202)720-4623

Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

Radio Story: [USDA Announces New Release Times For Some Crop Reports](#)

[ACTUALITY: Crop Report Release Times And Ongoing Markets](#)

**USDA EXPANDS DROUGHT ASSISTANCE
TO 22 STATES**

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced \$11.8 million in additional financial and technical assistance to help crop and livestock producers in 22 states apply conservation practices that reduce the impacts of drought and improve soil health and productivity. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides this assistance through its Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Since early summer, USDA has announced a variety of assistance to producers impacted by the drought, including opening conservation acres to emergency haying and grazing, lowering the interest rate for emergency loans, and working with crop insurance companies to provide flexibility to farmers. Just a few weeks ago, USDA announced \$16 million in financial and technical assistance to immediately help crop and livestock producers in 19 states cope with the adverse impacts of the historic drought. In July, the Secretary announced USDA would allow

producers to modify current EQIP contracts to allow for grazing, livestock watering, and other conservation activities to address drought conditions, and also authorized haying and grazing of WRP easement areas in drought-affected areas where haying and grazing is consistent with conservation of wildlife habitat and wetlands. The announcement expands upon these efforts and brings the total assistance to nearly \$28 million.

"As this drought continues to impact American farming and ranching families, USDA will be there to help our agriculture sector recover," said Vilsack. "This additional assistance builds on a number of steps USDA and other federal agencies have taken over the past few months to provide resources and flexibility in our existing programs to help producers endure these hardships. But Congress also needs to act, and the urgency to pass a comprehensive, multi-year food, farm and jobs bill is greater than ever."

See the additional NRCS drought assistance received by each state at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/?cid=STELPRDB1048818>. Funding from NRCS targets states that are experiencing either exceptional or extreme drought conditions. Exceptional drought continues to dominate sections of Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and Wyoming, causing widespread losses of crops and pastures and water shortages in reservoirs, streams and wells.

Alabama, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Nevada, South Carolina and Utah are under extreme drought, with accompanying major losses of crops and pasture, widespread water shortages and restrictions on water use. Learn more about drought categories at <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-4623
Story Info: [USDA Newsroom](#)

EFFORTS CONTINUE TO ENSURE NEW SCHOOL MEALS MEET THE NEEDS OF STUDENT

USDA is working vigorously to ensure improved schools meals meet nutritional needs of children, and are being implemented in a practical manner. Deputy Under Secretary for the USDA's Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services, Janey Thornton talked about concerns expressed by some that the new school meals policy is not giving some students enough food and enough calories. Deputy Under Secretary for USDA's Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services, Janey Thornton explained how taste tests can get students to try new and different food.

Radio Story: [Ensuring New School Meals Meet The Needs Of Students](#)
[ACTUALITY: Making Sure Students Get Enough To Eat](#)
[ACTUALITY: The Success Of Implementing School Meal Taste Tests](#)

(September 18)

**BEEF PRODUCTION IS INCREASED FOR
THE SEPTEMBER LIVESTOCK FORECAST;
MILK PRODUCTION IS REDUCED**

Experts expect less production of red meat, poultry and pork, but anticipate more beef production. The outlook forecast for cows reflects less milk production per cow.

Radio Story: [Increased Beef Production For The September Livestock Forecast
Slower Rate Of Growth In Milk Per Cow](#)

**A SIGN THAT FALL IS APPROACHING
IS WHEN A FREEZE REMINDER IS GIVEN**

A hard freeze in Minnesota and the Red River Valley served notice that cooler conditions may be on the way for parts of the nation.

Radio Story: [A Freeze Reminder Reflecting That Fall Is Approaching](#)

**EASTERN PASTURES AND RANGELANDS
GETTING A RAIN BOOST**

Precipitation in recent days has helped improve the condition of pastures and rangelands in the eastern one-third of the country. USDA Meteorologist Brad Rippey pointed out the rapid decline of pasture and rangeland conditions in the Plains and West due to growing dry conditions.

Radio Story: [Eastern Pastures And Rangelands Getting A Rain Boost](#)
[ACTUALITY: Deteriorating Western Pasture And Rangeland Conditions](#)

(September 17)

**MORE CALLS FOR PASSAGE
OF A FARM BILL SOON**

With the current farm law expiring soon, there are more calls for passage of a new bill as soon as possible. Minnesota Representative Collin Peterson said that a House vote on a farm bill this week would make it possible to complete the whole farm bill process before the end of the year.

Radio Story: [More Calls For Passage Of A Farm Bill Soon](#)
[ACTUALITY: New Farm Bill Possible By Year's End If House Votes Soon](#)

SOYBEAN RUST BECOMING A PROBLEM IN SOME AREAS

For the first time in years soybean rust may become a significant problem for some growers in some areas. Dr. Marty Draper, USDA plant pathologist, said soybean producers, especially in the South, should keep a close eye out for signs of soybean rust.

Radio Story: [Soybean Rust Becoming A Problem In Some Areas](#)
[ACTUALITY: Soybean Producers Urged To Scout For Rust](#)

FIRST AID KITS ESSENTIAL PIECE OF FARM SAFETY

Having a first aid kit on the farm or ranch is one of the most important aspects of practicing farm safety. J.W. Schoeder of North Dakota State University Extension discussed where a first aid kit should be kept within a farm or ranch operation.

Radio Story: [First Aid Kits Essential Piece Of Farm Safety](#)
[ACTUALITY: On Where To Keep A Farm First Aid Kit](#)

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Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack's Weekly Radio Address
[TV #37 Ag Sec Weekly Address – USDA Conservation Accomplishments](#)



Learn more about President Lincoln's agricultural legacy [here](#).

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FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

(Feature Line-Up Subject To Change Prior to Update On September 25, 2012)

AGRICULTURE USA CD # 39.12 – A decade's long partnership continues to benefit the US Forest Service, NASA, and all citizens in new and exciting ways thanks in part to a decade's long friendship. Rod Bain looks at this latest chapter of this partnership in this edition of "Agriculture USA".

CONSUMER TIME CD # 39.12 – A Warning Signal For Food Insecurity Around The Globe, It's Not Too Early To Have That Home Heating System Checked Out, Dealing With Stink Bugs In Homes, Planting Your Lawn And Yard May Be Best In Autumn, For Young People, Being "Connected" Has Both Pros And Cons.

AG UPDATE CD # 39.12 – The Decision On USDA Crop Report Release Times. Producers Cautioned About Soybean Rust. Mixed News About National Pasture And Rangeland Condition. Technologies Role In Conservation Efforts. Treatment For A Dairy Cow Ailment Under Study.

UPCOMING ON THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE – September 25- Food Price Outlook (ERS); Crop Weather Report (WAOB). September 27 – Agricultural Prices Report (NASS). September 28 – Grain Stocks and Small Grains Summary Reports (NASS); Quarterly Hogs And Pigs Report (NASS). October 2 – Crop Progress Report (NASS).

These are USDA reports we know about in advance. The USDA Radio Newslines carries many stories every day that are not listed in this lineup.

USDA Radio Newslines, 202-720-6776, 5:00pm ET

or

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Then click on Daily Radio News Service or Weekly Radio Feature Service.

For questions about USDA Radio's Features, fax name, station, and address to 202-690-2165.

OFF MIKE

GEORGE AND CHRISTINE GATLEY REMINISCE THEIR TV DAYS – The Gatleys (Western Agr-Radio Networks – Yuma, Arizona www.farmnewswest.com) worked as a team for 11 years doing television farm & ranch reporting. George would interview while Christine ran the camera. Gatley reflected, "At our office, we had a complete video workplace, with three s/VHS cameras, editing equipment and more, to make up the reports made in the field for daily television programs." In 2001 the Gatleys left television and turned strictly to their radio networks. "We are today, running some of those video reports on our website."

Here's a field shot of George and Christine in the field



Broadcasters if you have any humanitarian or community service events you'd like to share please forward to susan.carter@oc.usda.gov.

We love to hear about what you're doing and share it with others in the farm broadcaster family.

From all of us to all of you ... thank you for what you do

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