

Iowa FFA Ag Broadcasting

Career Development Event

District Script – 2012

Optimistic tone at USDA's Outlook Forum

February 24, 2012 By Ken Anderson

Even though 2012 may be a step down for farm income and exports, the tone at the opening of **USDA's Outlook Forum** Thursday seemed to be mostly optimistic.

Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack told those in attendance it should be another strong year for all segments of agriculture.

"Strong trade opportunities bolstered by the passage of three free trade agreements last year, combined with Russia's possible inclusion in the WTO—recent China purchase announcements—and discussions of a Trans Pacific partnership—make us confident of having another strong year in trade," Vilsack said. "We project ag sales to be near the record level set last year."

Vilsack said both ag exports and ag income will be the second highest ever.

Iowa FFA leaders celebrate FFA Week

February 24, 2012 By Ken Anderson

Members of the Iowa FFA state officer team were at the State Capitol in Des Moines this week as Governor Terry Branstad officially proclaimed this to be FFA Week in Iowa.

Participation in FFA is booming right now, both in Iowa and across the U.S. Iowa FFA state president Lindsay Calvert of Guthrie Center—now a student at Iowa State University (ISU)—says Iowa's membership is nearing the 12-thousand mark.

"People need to eat and they realize they have to get their food from agriculture—so we're seeing a rise in students who live in town and in the urban areas—that's where a lot of our growing membership is coming from," Calvert says. "There are jobs outside of the farm and they are the ones who might need to fill those someday."

Strong week for soybean exports

February 24, 2012 By John Perkins

USDA reports the week ending February 16 was generally good for grain and oilseed export sales and shipments. Sales of soybeans and soybean meal were larger than expected while corn, soybean oil, and wheat were within pre-report estimates. Physical

shipments of soybeans were above what's needed weekly to meet USDA projections for the 2011/12 marketing year but corn and wheat fell short of their respective marks.

Wheat came out at 701,600 tons (25.8 million bushels), up 67% from the week ending February 9 and 25% higher than the four week average. The leading buyer was Egypt at 189,000 tons followed by China at 112,800 tons. For the 2011/12 marketing year, wheat sales are 863.3 million bushels, compared to 1.126 billion in 2010/11. Sales of 55,800 tons (2.1 million bushels) for 2012/13 delivery were mainly to Mexico (27,800 tons) and unknown destinations (25,000 tons).

Corn was reported at 840,800 tons (33.1 million bushels), with Japan picking up 314,600 tons and South Korea purchasing 305,300 tons. So far this marketing year, corn sales are 1.187 billion bushels, compared to 1.295 billion a year ago.

Soybean sales were a new marketing year high at 1,159,400 tons (42.6 million bushels). China was far and away the top buyer at 521,100 tons. At this point in the marketing year, soybean exports are 1.043 billion bushels, compared to 1.434 billion this time last year. Sales of 2,873,000 tons (105.6 million bushels) for 2012/13 delivery were primarily to China (2,805,000 tons).

Soybean meal was pegged at 216,100 tons, considerably above the week before and 96% more than the four week average. Egypt was the leading purchaser at 57,900 tons followed by Morocco at 42,000 tons. Cumulative soybean meal sales for the current marketing year are 5,018,300 tons, compared to 5,585,500 tons a year ago.

Soybean oil hit a new marketing year high at 25,200 tons, a 19% increase from the previous week and a 92% jump from the four week average. Morocco picked up 21,000 tons of the total. 2011/12 soybean oil sales are 267,800 tons, compared to 1,099,700 in 2010/11.

Net beef sales totaled 28,600 tons. The reported buyers were Vietnam (6,000 tons), Mexico (4,900 tons), Hong Kong (3,300 tons), South Korea (2,800 tons), and Canada (2,500 tons).

January red meat production up 2% on year

February 24, 2012 By [John Perkins](#)

USDA reports commercial red meat production during January was 4.123 billion pounds, up 2% from the January 2011 total.

Pork production came out at 1.987 billion pounds, up 5% on the year, including a 5% increase in slaughter to 9.538 million head with the average live weight unchanged at 278 pounds.

Beef was pegged at 2.114 billion pounds, slightly less than last year, with a 1% decline in slaughter to 2.716 million head and a 1 pound loss in the average live weight at 1,300 pounds.

Veal was reported at 10.4 million pounds, a 3% year to year decline, with the calf slaughter dropping 6% to 67,700 head and the average live weight steady at 262 pounds.

Lamb and mutton production for January was 12.1 million pounds, an 8% increase from a year ago thanks to a 2% rise in slaughter at 164,800 head and an 8 pound gain in average live weight, up to 147 pounds.

January 2012 had one more weekday, one more holiday, and one fewer Saturday than January 2011.

Excitement over growth and education

February 24, 2012 By Meghan Grebner

As we made our way through Indiana on our Indiana Agribusiness Tour we found ourselves at Fair Oaks Farms in Fair Oaks, IN. In 2004 Fair Oaks Farms decided to open their farm gates to the public. Since then, over 450,000 people make their way through the Fair Oaks experience every year.

Gary Corbett, Chief Executive Officer of Fair Oaks Farms says with 98 percent of the population not actively engaged in production agriculture Fair Oaks decided to take a proactive approach to telling the story of the 21st dairy farm instead of letting someone else do it for them. Corbett says they wanted to "experience" to be the marketing. The rest, he says is history.

The Fair Oaks experience is set to expand. Later this year they will break ground on a 2,800 sow farrowing facility. It is set to open in June of 2013.

Corbett says that is just the beginning of their vision. They hope to continue their expansion by adding beef cattle, layer and aquaculture facilities in the future.

Lower global food prices predicted

February 23, 2012 By Bob Meyer

USDA Chief Economist Joe Glauber to the agency's annual World Agricultural Outlook Forum on Thursday, U.S. food prices will increase this year while world food prices will decline.

Glauber predicts U.S. consumers will see a 2.5 to 3.5 percent increase in overall food prices in 2012. A 4.5 percent increase in the price for meat, baked goods, fats and oils will be somewhat offset by lower prices for commodities. Corn prices are predicted to be 20 percent lower this year. Retail food prices increased 3.7 percent in the U.S. last year.

Global food prices are predicted to retreat sharply as farmers expand production around the globe. The International Grains Council raised its global wheat production forecast by five million metric tons on Thursday to a record 695 million. The global corn crop forecast was increased 3 million metric tons to 864 million.

Global food prices fell 5.8 percent last year after reaching an all-time high in February.

Groups says CDC raw milk report "flawed"

February 23, 2012 By [Julie Harker](#)

A group that supports the sale of raw milk says the new report from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) on illnesses caused by raw milk is flawed. In a news release, Sally Fallon Morrell, president of the Weston A. Price Foundation says the CDC cherry-picked data to make a case against raw milk. She says consumers need to know that the incidence of food borne illnesses from ALL dairy products - pasteurized or not - is "extremely low."

The CDC says it reviewed data from 1993 through 2006 and found the rate of outbreaks from raw milk and milk products was 150-times greater than outbreaks linked to pasteurized milk.

Fallon Morrell questions the CDC choosing data only up through 2006 - saying in 2007, 135 people became sick from pasteurized cheese contaminated with E. coli and three people died from pasteurized milk contaminated with listeria. She says the CDC's decision to start the review of data in the 1990s - following significant outbreaks in the 1980s from pasteurized milk - and cutting the data short raises questions about their bias against raw milk.

Fallon Morrell says the CDC also chose to focus on "outbreaks" instead of "individuals" who become ill and accuses the agency of obscuring the study by "failing to document the actual information they are using."

USDA expects larger corn acreage

February 23, 2012 By [John Perkins](#)

Projections out of USDA's Ag Outlook Forum call for a big increase in U.S. corn acreage with soybean planted area holding steady.

According to the Ag Department's Chief Economist Joe Glauber, 2012 U.S. corn acreage could hit 94 million acres, the largest since 1944, with beans unchanged at 75 million acres. The corn area is in-line with USDA's baseline projection from earlier in the month and up 2.1 million acres from 2011, while that soybean guess is up 1 million from the baseline and steady on the year.

Wheat planted area is expected to be around 58 million acres, compared to the baseline of 56.5 million and the 2011 total of 54.4 million acres, and cotton is pegged at 13 million acres, down 10% on the year and 7.5% less than the National Cotton Council's estimate.

However, these are USDA estimates and not based on farmer surveys. USDA's prospective planting report, based on farmer surveys, is out March 30.

Corn for ethanol use is estimated at 4.95 billion bushels, compared to USDA's most recent guess of 5 billion.

Additionally, USDA sees the average price for corn next marketing year at \$5 per bushel, with soybeans at \$11.50, wheat at \$6.30, and cotton at \$.80 per pound.

Pork prices are expected to see a 1.7% year to year decline, with beef up 9%, milk down 8.9%, and chicken increasing 7%.

Fiscal 2012 ag exports are seen at \$131 billion, the second highest on record, including expectations for strong beef and pork demand, and imports are pegged at \$106.5 billion.

USDA's Ag Outlook Forum concludes this week.

Fighting food insecurity

February 22, 2012 By [Meghan Grebner](#)

Statistics can be frightening. Especially when the numbers show a constant battle against food insecurity in this country. Robert Wilson, the Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations for Gleaners Food Bank in Indianapolis, shared some of the alarming statistics: one out of every six Hoosiers is food insecure and one out of four children is food insecure.

Our stop at Gleaners Food Bank during our Indiana Agribusiness Tour was eye-opening. Gleaners was founded in 1980 by concerned citizens who felt no one in Indiana should go hungry and suffer from malnutrition. When Gleaners opened in 1980 - they were originally responsible for serving the entire state. Over 30 years later, there are ten other food banks serving Indiana that belong to the Feeding America food bank network.

Wilson says in addition to the volunteers and the suppliers that make the donations possible they have several partners in the agricultural community: Indiana Farm Bureau, Indiana Pork (in partnership with Feeding Indiana's Hungry - FisH), Indiana Beef Cattle Association, Indiana State poultry Association, FFA, Young Farmers & Ranchers, Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry, Adrian Orchards, Peeper Brothers and Rose Acre Farm.

Government to buy more bio-based products

February 22, 2012 By [Tom Steever](#)

The Obama Administration is expanding government purchases of biobased products. That, along with promoting rural job creation and developing a rural healthcare workforce are what the administration says will strengthen the economy and move the country forward.

The President wants to expand the list of biobased products including paints, soaps and detergents developed from farm grown plants, rather than from petroleum, said Tom Vilsack, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

"He's asked us to double the number of eligible items from the 9,000 that we have today to about 18,000, and the belief is that that's going to encourage more manufacturing, encourage better job growth in rural America and also provide yet

another income opportunity for our farmers, ranchers and producers," said Secretary Vilsack, during an interview with Brownfield Ag News Wednesday.

Biobased products can be produced from crops, crop residue and even livestock waste, according to Secretary Vilsack.

"Imagination is the only thing that basically limits what we can do here," said Secretary Vilsack, "and I think America's getting back in the business of innovating, creating and being imaginative, and I think the ag economy and the biobased economy are two great opportunities for us."

Additionally, the USDA and other agencies are providing about \$15 million to promote innovation-fueled jobs. Plus, the Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services will work with community and technical colleges to train Health Information Technology professionals to work in rural hospitals and clinics. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates the need for those workers will increase by 20 percent by 2016.

Francis and Susan Thicke "Organic Farmer of the Year"

February 22, 2012 By Bob Meyer

Francis and Susan Thicke of Fairfield, Iowa have been named the Organic Farmer of the Year by the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES). The Thicks purchased their land in 1996 which they say was "a worn out and heavily eroded row crop farm." Today, Radiance Dairy is home to 80 Jerseys and well-suited for growing grass and raising cattle. They pasture the cows from April through December and rotate hay and small grains.

Since 2003, the annual MOSES Organic Farmer of the Year Award has been presented to an outstanding organic farmer or farm family to recognize those who practice outstanding land stewardship, innovation and outreach. The honor will be commemorated during the annual **MOSES Organic Farming Conference** this Thursday through Saturday at the La Crosse Center in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

Francis and Susan will share with conference attendees their successful philosophies and strategies on Thursday evening. The Organic Farmer of the Year award will be officially presented to the Thicks at 10:30 am Friday.

Pork, beef supplies up on year

February 22, 2012 By John Perkins

USDA's monthly cold storage report showed larger than expected supplies of pork and beef along with a big cut in poultry.

Beef stocks were pegged at 482.070 million pounds, 4% above last month and 5% larger than last year including a 7% year to year increase in boneless beef with Dow Jones Newswires citing a general slowdown in demand. Pork came out at 584.431, 8% more than a month ago and a 21% jump from a year ago due to a slowdown in sales to China and

weaker domestic demand. The total amount of red meat in cold storage at the end of January was 1.089 billion pounds, up 7% on the month and 13% on the year. Total poultry was reported at 909.927 million pounds, 8% higher than last month but down 11% from last year on a slowdown in domestic production. Chicken made up the bulk of the total at 609.776 million pounds, 3% lower than a month ago and 21% lower than a year ago, with turkey up sharply on both the month and the year at 297.632 million pounds.

Wisconsin legislature passes wetlands bill

February 22, 2012 By [Bob Meyer](#)

On a voice vote, the Wisconsin State Assembly passed the bill relaxing restrictions on building on wetlands Tuesday night. The bill requires developers to sign mitigation agreements to build specialized projects on wetlands, the developers must either replace the wetlands which are lost, buy credits from those who have created wetlands or pay the DNR's general wetland protection program. The Senate passed the bill along party lines last week; it now goes to Governor Scott Walker who says he will sign it. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulates wetlands along navigable waters in the state; the bill does not affect those.

Both the Assembly and the State Senate passed SB 410 on a voice vote on Tuesday, that bill allows manure haulers to exceed weight limits by up to 15 percent from September 1st through December 31st each year. That bill now goes to the governor as well.

IDEAg Interconnectivity Conference coming to Altoona, Iowa

February 22, 2012 By [Cyndi Young](#)

A first of its kind event where inter-connected agriculture solutions providers, precision ag users and producer thought leaders will meet to share ideas on the future of connected ag will be held in Altoona, Iowa at the Prairie Meadows Racetrack and Casino March 19 - 21, 2012.

[Matt Bechdol](#), founder and President of GeoSilos, is content co-chair, speaker and moderator for the IDEAg Interconnectivity Conference. Bechdol told Brownfield that originally the idea of the event came about in a somewhat traditional way, talking about the role of technology as an enabling force in agriculture - primarily precision agriculture - at the field or farm level. However, Bechdol explains, agriculture today is really truly a system of systems in its integrated technology. Markets, policy, regulations, natural resources and others are really very tightly connected. Because of this interconnection, planners broadened the scope of the event content into a more holistic look at agriculture in a system of systems approach.

The [conference agenda](#) covers and addresses interconnectivity and role of geography, people, mobility, physical infrastructure, processes and data, and how even a subtle change in one area can ripple across the country and world.

Foward leaning thinkers in production agriculture and agribusiness are the most likely to participate in this conference, but Bechdol believes everyone involved in agriculture will benefit.

Analysts see another round of lower placements

February 22, 2012 By John Perkins

Ahead of Friday's USDA cattle on feed numbers, on average, analysts expect smaller placements against a very slight increase in marketings.

The average projection for placements during January is 98.8% of a year ago, reflecting the continued tight supply of cattle. Projections run from 94.2% to 101.4%. Marketings are pegged at 100.3% of a year ago with a fairly wide range of estimates, from a 5.8% decline to a 3.7% rise.

The total number of cattle on feed as of February 1 is seen at 102.5% of a year ago, with expectations ranging from 102% to 103.3%

Animal care review panel formed

February 22, 2012 By Dave Russell

The public attention that hidden camera livestock investigations have generated has prompted The Center for Food Integrity to create an Animal Care Review panel. CFI's Terry Fleck tells Brownfield it's an independent panel of animal well-being experts, including veterinarians, animal scientists as well as ethicists.

"These are specialists that donate their time to provide credible feedback in an effort to promote continuous improvement in farm animal care," said Fleck. "It's designed to really bring more information, more balance to the public discussion about undercover videos."

Fleck adds that the goal is to have a review of the undercover video completed within 48 hours of CFI receiving the video.

Established initially for the pork industry, the Center for Food Integrity believes other sectors of animal agriculture will be interested in the review process as well and if executed properly, Fleck says the Review Panel will be a strong mechanism for food animal agriculture to look objectively at an evaluation of the content of the videos.

Closing Grain and Livestock Futures: February 23, 2012

February 23, 2012 By [John Perkins](#)

Mar. corn closed at \$6.39 and 1/2, up 1 and 1/4 cents
Mar. soybeans closed at \$12.76 and 3/4, up 4 and 1/2 cents
Mar. soybean meal closed at \$332.90, up \$1.60
Mar. soybean oil closed at 54.20, down 2 points
Mar. wheat closed at \$6.41 and 3/4, down 2 and 3/4 cents
Feb. live cattle closed at \$127.30, down \$2.05
Apr. lean hogs closed at \$89.60, down 72 cents
Apr. crude oil closed at \$107.83, up \$1.55
Mar. cotton closed at 87.48, down 109 points
Mar. Class III milk closed at \$15.23, down 14 cents
Dow Jones Industrial Average: 12,984.69, up 46.02 points

Futures prices as of February 24th, 2012 - 12:54 CST

Contract	Month	Open	High	Low	Last	Change	Time	Links
Grains								
Wheat	Mar 12	642-0	643-6	632-4	639-2	-2-4	12:44	Q / C / O
Corn	Mar 12	638-4	640-6	634-4	640-6	+1-2	12:44	Q / C / O
Soybeans	Mar 12	1276-4	1284-6	1272-0	1280-4	+3-6	12:44	Q / C / O
Soybean Meal	Mar 12	333.1	336.4	332.0	335.4	+2.5	12:44	Q / C / O
Soybean Oil	Mar 12	54.20	54.30	53.99	54.19	-0.01	12:44	Q / C / O
Meats								
Live Cattle	Apr 12	129.700	130.125	129.400	129.525	-0.150	12:44	Q / C / O
Feeder Cattle	Mar 12	157.650	158.175	157.225	157.825	+0.175	12:43	Q / C / O
Lean Hogs	Apr 12	89.800	90.350	89.650	90.125	+0.525	12:44	Q / C / O
Class III Milk	Mar 12	15.25	15.35	15.21	15.27	+0.04	12:32	Q / C / O
Live Cattle (P)	Apr 12	129.950	130.050	129.500	129.525	-0.150	12:43	Q / C / O
Feeder Cattle (P)	Mar 12	157.325	158.000	157.325	158.000	+0.350	11:36	Q / C / O
Lean Hogs (P)	Apr 12	90.050	90.300	89.750	90.050	+0.450	12:28	Q / C / O
Class III Milk (P)	Mar 12	0.00	15.37	15.23	15.23s	-0.14	02/23/12	Q / C / O

Current Conditions [\[Move Down\]](#)

**Fair with
Haze and
Breezy**

**30 °F
(-1 °C)**

Humidity:	59 %
Wind Speed:	W 21 G 29 MPH
Barometer:	30.01"
Dewpoint:	18 °F (-8 °C)
Wind Chill:	17 °F (-8 °C)
Visibility:	5.00 mi.
More Local Wx: 3 Day History:	

Forecast at a Glance

This Afternoon	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
								
30% Chance Snow	Blustery	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny	30% Chance Snow	60% Showers Likely
Hi 32 °F	Lo 18 °F	Hi 33 °F	Lo 25 °F	Hi 48 °F	Lo 25 °F	Hi 37 °F	Lo 31 °F	Hi 44 °F

Detailed 7-day Forecast

This Afternoon: Scattered snow showers. Partly sunny, with a high near 32. Windy, with a northwest wind between 16 and 22 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph. Chance of precipitation is 30%. Total daytime snow accumulation of less than a half inch possible.

Tonight: Mostly cloudy, then gradually becoming mostly clear, with a low around 18. Blustery, with a northwest wind between 8 and 16 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

Saturday: Sunny, with a high near 33. Northwest wind around 8 mph becoming south southeast.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 25. South southeast wind between 8 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 21 mph.

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 48. South wind 9 to 15 mph becoming west. Winds could gust as high as 21 mph.

Sunday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 25.

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 37.

Monday Night: A 30 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 31.

Tuesday: Showers likely. Cloudy, with a high near 44. Chance of precipitation is 60%.

Tuesday Night: Rain and snow likely. Cloudy, with a low around 30. Chance of precipitation is 70%.

Wednesday: A 30 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 34.

Wednesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 21.