



United States Department of Agriculture

Economic Research Service

The Economics of Food, Farming, Natural Resources, and Rural America

New or updated information is available from [USDA ERS](#).

This update covers Monday, July 6, 2009 to Friday, July 10, 2009

SEASON-AVERAGE PRICE FORECASTS

A futures-price forecasting model is used to provide season-average price forecasts for corn, soybeans, and wheat. In addition to the monthly forecasts for prices received, the model computes a forecast for the counter-cyclical payment rate for each commodity. The 2002 Farm Act provides for counter-cyclical payments when prices are below specified levels.

Released Friday, July 10, 2009

See <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/PriceForecast/>

LATEST U.S. AGRICULTURAL TRADE DATA

This data product announces USDA's monthly release of calendar year, fiscal year, year-to-date, and monthly value of U.S. agricultural exports, imports, and trade balance.

Released Friday, July 10, 2009

See <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/FATUS/MonthlySummary.htm>

WORLD AGRICULTURAL SUPPLY AND DEMAND ESTIMATES

Issued monthly, WASDE provides the most current USDA forecasts of U.S. and world supply-use balances for major grains, soybeans and products, and cotton, and U.S. supply and use data for sugar and livestock products.

Released at 8:30 a.m. ET.

Released Friday, July 10, 2009

See <http://www.usda.gov/oce/commodity/wasde/>

THE INTERPLAY OF REGULATION AND MARKETING INCENTIVES IN PROVIDING FOOD SAFETY

This report examines the impact of process regulations mandated under the Pathogen Reduction/Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (PR/HACCP) rule by the Food Safety and Inspection Service of USDA on food safety process control. The current level of food safety found in U.S. meat and poultry food products is a result of process and performance regulations and management-determined actions brought about by market incentives. Processing regulations include sanitation and other tasks related to food safety; management-determined actions include capital investment and other actions independent of process regulations, but possibly driven by performance standards. Performance standards—regulations that allow manufacturers to reach an acceptable level of food safety in any manner they see fit—are not a subject of this report. This study used the share of samples testing positive for *Salmonella* spp. as a measure of food safety process control in meat and poultry processing plants and found empirically that management-determined actions account for about two-thirds of the reduction in samples testing positive for *Salmonella* spp., while process regulations account for about a third of the reduction. The

importance of process regulation varies, but accounts for 50 percent or more of process control in about a quarter of plants, and in some plants accounts for the entire process control system.

Released Friday, July 10, 2009

See <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/ERR75/>

U.S. WATERMELON INDUSTRY

Includes data on number of farms, U.S. and state acreage, yield, production, prices, and crop value; per capita consumption; U.S. trade; U.S. grades, varieties, planting and harvesting dates; world area, production, and trade; and more.

Released Thursday, July 9, 2009

See <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1399>

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS FOR COMPETITIVE GRANT AWARDS TO ESTABLISH RIDGE CENTERS FOR FOOD AND NUTRITION ASSISTANCE RESEARCH

The Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program (FANRP) announces the recompetition of the grants that fund partner institutions in the Research Innovation and Development Grants in Economics (RIDGE) Program. ERS invites applications from university-based institutions for competitive grant awards to oversee the application, peer review, subgrant award, and quality-assurance processes of the RIDGE Program. ERS expects to fund two RIDGE Centers for Food and Nutrition Assistance Research beginning in fiscal 2010—one center focusing on food and nutrition assistance research at the national level (the RIDGE Center for National Studies) and the second center targeting specific populations (the RIDGE Center for Targeted Studies). Subject to the availability of funds, initial year grants will be approximately \$250,000 each for the RIDGE Center for National Studies and the RIDGE Center for Targeted Studies. This publication describes Center responsibilities and application requirements. **The deadline for submission of applications is September 15, 2009.**

Released Thursday, July 9, 2009

See <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/AP/AP038/>

CHINA AGRICULTURAL AND ECONOMIC DATA

The China agricultural and economic database is a collection of agricultural-related data from official statistical publications of the People's Republic of China. Analysts and policy professionals around the world need information about the rapidly changing Chinese economy, but statistics are often published only in China and sometimes only in Chinese-language publications. This product assembles a wide variety of data items covering agricultural production, inputs, prices, food consumption, output of industrial products relevant to the agricultural sector, and macroeconomic data.

Released Tuesday, July 7, 2009

See <http://www.ers.usdagov/Data/China/>

IMPORTS FROM CHINA AND FOOD SAFETY ISSUES

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) increased attention to food imports from China is an indicator of safety concerns as imported food becomes more common in the United States. U.S. food imports from China more than tripled in value between 2001 and 2008. Addressing safety risks associated with these imports is difficult because of the vast array of products from China, China's weak enforcement of food safety standards, its heavy use of agricultural chemicals, and its considerable environmental pollution. FDA import refusal data highlight food safety problems that appear to recur in trade and where FDA has focused its import alerts and monitoring efforts. FDA refusals of food shipments from China suggest recurring problems with "filth," unsafe additives, labeling (typically introduced in food processing and handling), and veterinary drug residues in fish and shellfish (introduced at the farm). Chinese authorities try to control food export safety by certifying exporters and the farms that supply them. However, monitoring such a wide range of products for the different hazards that can arise at varying points in the supply chain is a difficult challenge for Chinese and U.S. officials.

Released Tuesday, July 7, 2009

See <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB52/>

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